

English Assignment: May 12 - 15

This week we are going to learn 3 more poetic devices: **metaphor**, **personification** and **synesthesia**. Each of these poetic devices are used by writers to create pictures in their reader's minds. They help make the writer's message clear by **showing instead of telling**.

- **Metaphor** is the comparison of 2 unlike things *without* using the words 'like' or 'as'. Example: 'The toaster is a silver-scaled dragon'. 'The house is a beast'.
- **Personification** is when things that are not human are given human qualities like thoughts or actions. Example: 'The sun smiled upon us'. 'The kettle sang'.
- **Synesthesia** is when one sense (seeing, hearing, tasting, touching) is used to describe another sensory experience. Another way to think about it is when senses are mixed up. Example: 'Smell the quiet'. 'Drink-in that smell'.

Remember, we learned a few weeks ago that a **simile** is the comparison of two unlike things *using* the words 'like' or 'as'. Example: 'The toaster is as shiny *as* a dragon's scale'.

Exercise 1: Write whether each example is a metaphor, personification, synesthesia, or simile.

1. He is drifting like a ship without a sail. _____
2. Sasha was a tower of strength to us. _____
3. Her eyes smelled of danger. _____
4. Their house was a prison. _____
5. The brook babbled happily to itself. _____
6. The answer is as obvious as the nose on your face. _____
7. The clouds danced across the sky. _____
8. He could taste the fear in the air. _____

Exercise 2: Write a sentence about the 2 listed things. Make the sentence use the poetic device that is specified. Ex: (wind & orchestra) Make the sentence a simile. *That wind is as loud as an orchestra.*

1. (fence posts & a row of soldiers) Make the sentence a simile.

2. (car & racehorse) Make the sentence a metaphor.

3. (forest fire & skipping). Make the sentence a personification.

4. (taste and darkness). Make the sentence a synesthesia.

Exercise 3: Practice personification by adding a human action to the following list of words.
Example: Trucks giggle. Spoon dances. Then extend the sentence by answering a 'W' question.
Example: Trucks giggle (when?) as they race down hills. Spoon dances (where?) across my tongue.
Other human action words include: says, asks, whispers, sings, laughs, tells, wants, yells, dreams of, wants, etc.

1. Moon _____
2. Spring _____
3. Germs _____
4. Wind _____
5. Night _____
6. Anger _____
7. Boredom _____
8. Viruses _____

Exercise 4: Take your favourite sentence above and add more detail to it to make a short personification poem. Choose line breaks carefully. Here are 2 examples written by kids.

Stars whisper in the silence of space
while far below,
wind sing songs
to sleeping snapdragons.

By Caitlin, age 9

A forest sings to the sky.
The day whispers as it goes by.
A flower brags to a weed
and earth beckons to a seed.
The rainbow says goodbye to day
And night comes out to play.

By Caroline, age 11

Write your personification poem here.

Exercise 5: Sit still somewhere and notice the sights, sounds, or smells around you. Write 2 sentences that describe what you notice, using metaphors. Here is an example I wrote:

Night sounds

The wind outside my window is an angry child.
The refrigerator is a hive of steadily buzzing bees.

Write your metaphor lines here. Add a title that names the place or moment being described.

Exercise 6: Write a poem about an experience that has happened recently. Try to think of something that is related to the pandemic, or social distancing, or learning at home. It helps if you choose an experience that really happened, so your descriptions will be more vivid and include more detail. Include at least 2 of the poetic devices in this week's assignment (metaphor, personification, synesthesia, and simile) and label them in brackets.

Remember to choose line breaks carefully, to include sensory language (what you see, hear, smell, taste, touch) as well as your own thoughts, feelings, questions, observations, worries, wishes, etc. Here is a rather long and sad poem I wrote recently.

First Zoom with Nana

Her eyes light up like sparklers (simile)
when she sees us all on the screen;
Me and Douglas and our two kids
all gathered around the computer
like baby chicks to a warming light. (simile)
How else could we all fit in the frame?

She is more alert than usual,
asks more questions, laughs like she used to,
a tulip bulb waking from her winter nap. (metaphor + personification)

I can tell she was looking forward to our call;
combed her hair and put on her fancy, white & black, striped top.
Leans into the screen when she talks,
wants to get closer,
as if there weren't 5000 km between us,
as if touch hadn't recently been outlawed.

But she gets tired quickly.
I feel her wilting, (synesthesia)
taste the nap she will need to recover. (synesthesia)

So we agree to call again next week
and say goodbye.
I close the window on the screen
and feel her loneliness blooming (personification)
like a bloodstain on my heart. (simile)

Write your poem here. It doesn't need to be as long as mine, but needs to include at least 2 poetic devices from this week's assignment (labelled), and lots of vivid description (sights, smells, sounds, tastes, touch). Your writing will be far more detailed if you write about something real that actually happened, and also more interesting to read if it includes some of your thoughts, wishes, questions, worries, etc.

Don't spend too much time deciding what to write about. Just choose a single event that you remember well or that carries a lot of emotion for you. The rest will come. Some ideas of what you can write about include: walking on an empty beach, seeing people wearing masks, staying up too late, doing schoolwork at home, playing with your sibling, another rainy day, biking, another day inside your house or your room, listening to the news, watching TV or playing board games with your family, or anything else you feel inspired to write about.