

Lesson Plan Title: Comparison Snake

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Education level: Kindergarten, Elementary

Genre: Poetry

Time frame: 25-30 minutes

Objectives: Practice and play with image, metaphor, and simile. Introduce descriptive language to early writers.

Prior knowledge and skills: Some prior familiarity and practice with comparisons, metaphors, and similes is helpful. I like to do this activity after a class-long activity where students spend an entire session writing about just one object.

Required materials:

- **Bag of instructor-selected objects:** Can include sticks, stones, shells, feathers, pens, measuring tapes, paintbrushes, pens, etc. Anything the teaching artist wants to bring is usable.
- Pencils, papers, colored pencils, or markers if desired

Literary model: None

Sequence of activities: Activity can be done in small groups or as a class. I like to do this activity sitting on the floor in a circle.

Warm-Up (5 minutes): Tell students you have brought in a bag of special objects and that you are going to look at them together, describe how they look, feel, and smell, etc.

Pull an object from the bag, place it in the center of the circle, and ask students what they see.

Start to describe the object aloud using descriptive similes, etc. Let the students jump in with their ideas.

Introduction (5 minutes): Explain that you are going to play a game where each student will draw an object from the bag and compare their object to the original object (still sitting in the center of the circle) using creative descriptions. Then, the whole class will write a poem including each student's comparisons.

Object Observation + Line Construction (7 minutes): Pass out objects from the bag from the students. Let them be surprised by your selection for them.

Questions to ask students to get them engaging with their object:

- How is that object like the other objects in the circle?
- How do they look alike? Do they feel alike?
- Do you imagine that they sound, taste, and/or smell alike? How?
- If you were going to show somebody else what your object was like what would you say to make them get it?
- If your object had a personality / mood / flavor / weather pattern associated with it what would it be?

Students will take a few minutes to observe their objects quietly on their own before coming up with a line to offer to the rest of the group.

After students have observed their objects for a while, ask them to come up with a creative description that compares their object to the one in the circle. Tell them they will come up with this line in their head to share with the rest of the class in a minute. This line will be their contribution to the group poem.

Give them some examples, then give each of them a minute or two to think.

Examples:

- *This stone is like a pencil making dark marks on the carpet*
- *The paint set is like a pencil spilling black ink*
- *The pill is a pencil holding dark power*
- *The hat is like a pencil hiding woodchips under its head*
- *The leaf is like a pencil with room for ants in its creation*
- *The stick is a pencil scratching men in the garden*

Line Sharing + Poem Building (5 minutes): Go around in a circle, giving each student an opportunity to share a comparison with the class. Facilitator should record each line on a large piece of butcher paper.

Read the poem back to the class and see what they notice.