

Exploring the Five Senses Through Metaphor

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Grade level: 7th grade

Time Frame: 45-51 minutes

Literary Model: Wallace Steven's poem "Someone Puts a Pineapple Together" from *Rose, Where Did You get that Red?* by Kenneth Koch

Learning Objectives:

We will discuss the five senses and describe several objects in terms of these senses. We will actively practice a non-literal way of observation. Instead of seeing an orange as just an orange, for example, we will discuss what qualities of an orange make it look like another object (i.e. "It is round and what else is round?"). This will segue into our discussion of how metaphor operates.

Supplies:

Objects to observe (a pineapple, spoon, an aloe vera frond, orange, piece of fabric, piece of wood, ear of corn), poster board with Wallace Steven's "Someone Puts a Pineapple Together" written on it

Sequence of Activities:

Introduction: Five Senses (5-10 minutes)

I will hold up an orange and ask a volunteer to describe the orange to me. For this first time I will not record what they say—this is simply a brainstorming session. Then I'll ask: "Does someone want to tell me what the five senses are?" Make sure to give enough time for them to answer and think of all five: touch, taste, sight, hearing, smell. Say: "Now we will describe the orange but you have to describe it to me in terms of the five senses." Write these answers down.

Introduction: Metaphor (5-10 minutes)

We will observe the orange even further, but after discussing what a metaphor is first. Give them some time to answer (ask if they have gone over this device in class before). Emphasize that it is comparing two different objects, and then emphasize that if we compare two different objects, there must be some similarity between them. We can compare two different things using the five senses.

Move them towards the third round of writing about the orange by saying, “Let’s return to the five senses we used to describe the orange. We said it looks round...what *else* is round?” If they are having trouble, give a boundary as in, “What else in this room is round?”

Pre-literary Model (5-10 minutes)

Hold up the pineapple and ask them to list observations and things they notice about the pineapple. Again, gear them towards the five senses and what else is round. Write this on the board.

Literary Model (5 minutes)

I found Wallace Steven’s poem “Someone Puts a Pineapple Together” in Kenneth Koch’s collection *Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?*. This will be written on poster board. I will hold up Steven’s poem “Someone Puts a Pineapple Together” and read it aloud. Point to certain lines and ask the students to explain the similarities between what Wallace describes and the pineapple. Read one of the student poems in *Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?* as one last example.

Individual Writing (15-20 minutes)

Place one of the objects in each row of seats in the classroom, so that that row is designated to write about that object. Doing this by row will limit moving chairs/unnecessary commotion and will save time.

Prompt: Describe this object to me using the five senses. Describe the object using at least two metaphors as well.

Sharing (5 minutes)

Students who want to will be invite to share their work.