Pre-Writing: Metaphor and Simile Exercise

Students need to understand metaphor and simile to create strong poems. It is important that students understand that metaphors and similes are forms of comparison. Simile is in an indirect comparison that uses either “like” or “as.” A metaphor is a direct form of comparison.

Students will
* Create stronger and more powerful imagery.
* Develop their independent poet’s voice.
* Utilize abstract and concrete concepts.
* Draw connections between the concrete world and abstract world.
* Understand how to write about the external landscape and the internal landscape.

Pre-writing: Metaphor and Simile Exercise

Step 1: Create Chart
Create three columns with the headings labeled “Abstract,” “Colors,” and “Concrete Nouns.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abstract</th>
<th>Colors</th>
<th>Concrete Nouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 2: List Words
Use the following prompts to fill in each column.
* Write three abstract words (i.e., feelings or concepts, e.g., freedom).
* Write three colors (specific color choices, e.g., cobalt and navy).
* Write three concrete nouns (anything visible to the naked eye).

Step 3: Create Metaphors and Similes
Write the word “verb” between “Abstract” and “Colors” on the graphic organizer chart. Follow the steps below to begin creating metaphors and similes. (See next page for an example.)
1) First, choose an “Abstract” word by circling it.
2) Then, ask what color best depicts the circled “Abstract” word.
3) Next, circle the “Concrete” word that best represents the “Abstract” word you have chosen.
4) Brainstorm a list of verbs by describing what the “Concrete” noun does. Come up with at least three verbs. Write your favorite verb choice after the “Abstract” word.
5) Create a sentence using a metaphor or a simile from the three words you have circled.
6) Using this process, create three sentences. Keep in mind that once you have circled a word, you cannot use it again.

Step 4: Share
Have students share their favorite sentence with a partner or the whole group. Providing time for students to share helps them to gain a “poetic ear.”
Example of Metaphor and Simile Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abstract</th>
<th>(Verb)</th>
<th>Colors</th>
<th>Concrete Nouns</th>
<th>Brainstorm Verbs related to Concrete Nouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Creativity</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Purple</td>
<td>2. Ribbon</td>
<td>Adorns, ties, and decorates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample sentences with similes or metaphors:
* Friendship adorns the heart like a golden ribbon binding all that is good and true in this world.
* Anger stalks a crimson eagle circling until justice is served.
* Creativity is the purple book that enlightens the heart, soul, and the mind.

Pre-Writing: Brainstorming Activity

Why Brainstorm?
The purpose for brainstorming is to excite the imagination and ensure students have plenty of ideas so that writing is next in the natural progression. This is not the ordinary, run-of-the-mill brainstorming. The purpose of brainstorming is to provide more in-depth word choices for students before they begin to write. This process also generates new ideas. Another added advantage to the brainstorming process is that it allows students to learn from each other. Inevitably during the process a student will respond to an answer with...“What is that?” and there is an opportunity for learning.

Students will
* enhance vocabulary.
* develop strong word choices.
* learn how to add texture and layer to each line.
* be involved in active wordplay.

Pre-Writing: Brainstorming Activity

Step 1: Create a Brainstorm Box
Draw a large square or rectangle on the board. Announce to the class that you are going to brainstorm as a group. Brainstorm answers to the five questions below. Have students limit their response to one word and answer only one time per question.
1) What is your favorite animal?
2) What is your favorite gem?
3) What is your favorite bird?
4) What is your favorite item in nature outside of the animal kingdom?
5) What is your favorite flower?
**Step 2: Connect Words in the Brainstorm Box**

1. Explain to students it is important to create new and fresh ideas. Ask them to think of the brainstorm box as a puzzle where they can create MORE EXCITING poetic and creative choices through these poetic terms:
   - **Texture**: utilizing color, imagery, and sounds to provide depth in poetry.
   - **Layering**: combining two word choices from the “Brainstorm Box” that might not normally be used together yet resonate poetically.

2. Return to the brainstorm box, circle two words and link them together, e.g., “moonstone” and “mountain.” Together they form the phrase “Moonstone Mountain.” Or circle “pond” and “emerald” forming “Emerald Pond”; “sapphire” and “heron” create “Sapphire Heron.” Ask students to stay away from using common or cliché word choices like “Green Mountain” or “Cold Ice.”

3. Practice circling words until students understand how to utilize the “Brainstorm Box” effectively. The key is to generate ideas that spur the imagination.

**Example of Brainstorm Box**

![Brainstorm Box Diagram]