**Metaphor and Simile in Songs**

**Grade Level:**

4th grade

**Pedagogical Objective:**

Students will gain an understanding of the workings of metaphor and simile and will be able to apply that knowledge in conversation, song, and analysis.

**Artistic Output**

Students will create a song which uses metaphor and simile to tell a story in song.

**Lesson Overview:**

The students will learn to identify metaphor and simile in several songs, then identify the same in the text, and in the songs they create and share.

**Length of Lesson:**

1 hour class period

**Sources:**

Text: Open Court : Bridge Dancers  
CD Player, keyboard.

For the warm-up section, have student listens to songs which use metaphor and simile: such as:

* Gordon Lightfoot, “The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald”
* Led Zeppelin: “Stairway to Heaven”
* George Harrison: “While My Guitar Gently Weeps”
* Bob Seger, “Like a Rock”
* Bob Dylan, :”Like a Rolling Stone”

For the journaling section, provide a series of CDs of different types of music designed to promote relaxation:

* J S Bach *Brandenburg Concertos*
* Music of Steven Halpern, Ph. D, music specifically designed to equalize the energy of the brain, and to promote relaxation
* Pat Metheny, a beloved contemporary jazz artist
* Various Latin Jazz artists, including Poncho Sanchez

**Notes:**

This class took place at Maybury Elementary School

**Instructional Objectives:**

1. Warm-up: Group listen to the song: Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald Ask the students to recap/retell the story depicted in the song
2. Have students recap/retell the story of “Bridge Dancers”
3. Introduce the concepts of metaphor and simile one a time and develop a corresponding song for each concept. End unit with a five minutes stretching exercise.
4. Continue developing songs in small groups
5. Recapitulation and journaling to music

**Supplies:**

Journals

**Instructional Plan:**

**Warm Up**Have students listen to the song: “Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald” Ask the students to recap/retell the story depicted in the song**.**

***Introductory Activity***Review concepts of metaphor and simile. Have students give an example of each from the song.  
Definition:  
Simile: an expression which directly compares two dissimilar objects using the words “like” or “as”. i.e. as in the song “Twinkle, twinkle, little star/ how I wonder what you are/Up above the world so high/Like a diamond in the sky./  
Metaphor: an expression which describes an object as another object for poetic purposes. i.e., “You are the sunshine of my life”

**Developmental Activity**Have students develop a list of nouns using the story “Bridge Dancers” as the source. Combine nouns into meaningful and nonsense similes and metaphors. For example, “worker, handsaw, lunch bucket, foreman” “The worker was a handsaw in knotty hard wood.” “The foreman was like a lunchbucket in the late afternoon”. Have students share their examples.

***Guided Practice***Have students come up with a list of 4-6 well known songs. (such as *Home* *on the Range*, *On Top of Old Smoky, This Land is Your Land*, etc) Using the similes and metaphors just developed (or adding new ones), have groups of 3-4 students write short songs segment using the well known melodies.  
Example: (To the melody of *On Top of Old Smoky*)  
“On top of a high bridge/men work hard all day/they look like the sunshine/and shine like a ray”

After each group have developed at least one phrase, stop for a 5 minute stretching exercise.

***Reflective Practice***Give groups time to perform their metaphor or simile song phrase for the whole group.. . Identify the metaphor or similes used in each song. End the sessions with students journaling about the day’s session while they listen to the music.

**Assessment Standard**

Identify the behavior which supports the content standard.

1. Create (cognitive)
   1. The student will identify similes and metaphors in a variety of usages
   2. The student will combine nouns to create a variety of similes and metaphors
   3. The student will apply appropriate elements from the text to create short song segments
   4. Student songwriting conveys detailed information about the text’s content
2. Perform (psychomotor)
   1. The student will be able to describe the decision to use specific nouns from the texts in similes or metaphors of the songs
   2. The student uses elements from several texts to generate songs
   3. Students enthusiastically join the group singing
3. Respond (affective)
   1. The student will make comparisons between various songs and usages as depicted in the texts, songs, and recordings.
   2. The student will be able to describe the process in their groups use of simile and metaphor in their songs
   3. Students offer specific suggestions to improve songs.

**Content Standard(s)**

**English Language Arts: Speaking**  
S.4.3.a Participate actively in cooperative group activities and projects.  
S.4.3.b Participate actively in content area discussions with peers and teachers.  
S.7.3.a Prepare and deliver short presentations on ideas, images and topics obtained from various common sources.

**English Language Arts: Listening**  
L.2.4.b Respond to messages by asking questions, challenging statements or offering examples that affirm the message.  
L.4.3.b Use knowledge of language and develop content area vocabulary to support comprehension of the speaker’s message

**English Language Arts: Writing**  
W.3.3.a. Select words from an expanded personal vocabulary to accurately communicate ideas clearly and concisely across the curriculum.  
W.4.3.d. Organize ideas in writing to ensure coherence, logical progression, and support for ideas.  
W.6.3.a Write responses to selected literature that exhibit understanding of the text, using detailed sentences and transitions.  
W.8.3.a Write in a voice and style appropriate to audience and purpose

**Elementary Music – Performing**  
1. Sing and play independently, on pitch and in rhythm, with appropriate timbre, diction, posture, and tempo.  
1.5. Sing and play in groups, blending timbres, matching dynamic levels, and responding to the cues of a conductor.  
Elementary Music- Creating  
3. Improvise simple rhythmic variations and simple melodic embellishments on familiar melodies.  
4. Create and arrange short songs and instrumental pieces within specified guidelines.

**Extensions:**

Continue developing a whole song based on the images developed  
Create a series of images or movements which depict the similes and metaphors developed by the students  
Combine the songs to create a short playlet/musical telling the story in the text.

*By Teaching Artist Eileen Orr*