

Metaphors

A **metaphor** is a type of figurative language that compares two unlike things and shows how they are similar. Authors use metaphors to describe things and to make their writing more interesting.

A metaphor is like a simile except for one big difference: Metaphors *do not* use the clue words *like* or *as* in the comparison. In these examples, the simile uses the word *like*, while the metaphor does not.

Simile: She moved on the tennis court like a dancer.

Metaphor: She was a dancer on the tennis court.

In both the simile and the metaphor, the writer compares a tennis player's movements to a dancer's. The comparison suggests that the person is smooth and graceful.

To understand a metaphor, ask yourself these questions:

- What two things are being compared?
- What are the qualities of the two things?
- How is the writer saying that these two things are alike?

Here is an example of how to analyze and understand a metaphor.

The highway was an arrow across the state.

- What two things are being compared? *the highway and an arrow*
- What are the qualities of the two things? *A highway is where cars drive, and an arrow can move straight.*
- How is the writer saying that these two things are alike? *The highway moves straight across the state, like an arrow that's been shot.*





Each of these sentences contains a metaphor. Answer the questions that follow each sentence.

1. During the whole crisis, the firefighter was a rock.

What two things are being compared? a firefighter and a rock

What are the qualities of the two things? A firefighter helps people in trouble, and a rock is solid and hard.

How is the writer saying that these two things are alike? The firefighter was strong and brave, or solid, like a rock.

2. In the morning, the snow was a blanket over the yard.

What two things are being compared? _____

What are the qualities of the two things? _____

How is the writer saying that these two things are alike? _____

3. The third base player was a wall in front of left field and did not let one ball get past her.

What two things are being compared? _____

What are the qualities of the two things? _____

How is the writer saying that these two things are alike? _____

4. The ferocious wind was an animal howling and clawing at the window.

What two things are being compared? _____

What are the qualities of the two things? _____

How is the writer saying that these two things are alike? _____