

6 **Figurative Language**

Read It, Write It, Tell It Episode: "Johnny Appleseed"

Lesson Overview

The purpose of the lessons in this unit is to help Ohio students in grades 3-7 learn the characteristics of the literary text FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE indicators that they must master for their respective Ohio achievement tests. Special care has been taken to dovetail the lessons with the indicators and the types of questions commonly asked on Ohio tests. The lessons are divided into two sections: Grades 3-4 and Grades 5-7.

Ohio Academic Content Indicators

2001.EL.S05.GKG-03.BD.L03.I05 Explain how an author's choice of words appeals to the senses.

2001.EL.S05.G04-07.BG.L04.I08 Identify figurative language in literary works, including **idioms**, **similes** and **metaphors**.

Ohio Achievement/Proficiency Tests Figurative Language Question Types

- The author used the words "xxx." What do the words mean?
- The author used the words "xxx." What is the author describing?
- Given a list of quotations from the figurative language used in the selection, choose the quotation that means "xxx."

Johnny Appleseed

Episode Overview

The episode begins with some factual information about Johnny Appleseed who traveled through Ohio selling and giving away apple trees and apple seeds. The tall tale portion of the episode finds Johnny dealing with a giant bear with a thorn bush stuck in its paw – and then the jealous Ant brothers, Ignor Ant and Arrog Ant.

Facts:

- Johnny Appleseed's (1775-1845) real name was John Chapman.
- He knew the ways of nature and apples, he was a constant traveler, and he dressed very simply.
- He was a friend to all and a stranger to none.
- During the War of 1812, Chapman ran 30 miles to get reinforcement to help Mansfield, Ohio, and to warn other settlers of impending Indian attacks. (The attacking Indians were allies of the British.)

Fiction:

- Fiction: Johnny Appleseed wore a pan for a hat. Fact: A *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* article from November, 1871 states that Appleseed tried wearing the tin vessel he cooked his mush in as a hat. The pan did not keep the sun out of his eyes so he made a pasteboard hat that "became his permanent fashion." <http://mason.gmu.edu/~drwillia/apple/ja4sm.html>
- The episode gives the impression that earning money was not a part of John Chapman's life. He believed in helping others but he was also an entrepreneur. Chapman tried to predict where the pioneers were likely to settle in the early days of the Northwest Territory. He would get there before most of the settlers with his apple seeds, find a fertile piece of land to claim or buy, plant

Figurative Language

he seeds, and wait. By the time the bulk of settlers arrived, he would have an orchard of two- to three-year old apple trees ready to sell at five or six cents apiece.

<http://www.straightdope.com/mailbag/mjappleseed.html>

Tall Tale:

- Johnny Appleseed was a friend of Paul Bunyan and Daniel Boone.
- A giant bear with an injured paw threatens a town until Johnny, with the help of giant birds and tiny honey bees, helps the grateful bear.
- Ignor Ant and Arrog Ant try to attack Johnny because they are jealous of his hero status. The giant bear returns to help Johnny.

Vocabulary

The following words used by the storyteller in the *Read It, Write It, Tell It* episode “Johnny Appleseed” may be unfamiliar to some students.

familiar
fierce

harvest
hive
ignorant

trance
vanished

Figurative Language in Johnny Appleseed

hyperbole eat a whole tree of apples all at the same time

hyperbole a giant bear – at least 100 feet tall

hyperbole they were so scared and shaky that they shook their rifles apart

idiom..... live off the land

idiom..... fit to be tied

idiom..... know them like the back of my hand

personification nature played out all four seasons

slang..... hornswoggled (deceived, tricked, cheated)

slang..... horsefeathers (nonsense, worthless, insincere talk)

simile they were as quiet as a mouse

Figurative Language

Before Viewing

1. Ask: How quiet is a mouse? Have you ever been as quiet as a mouse? Think about where you were and why you were being quiet.
2. Say: When I call on you, be ready to make the phrase “as quiet as a mouse” a complete sentence. Add your name (or another name) in front of the phrase and then tell where you were and why you were quiet. Here are a couple of examples:
 - a. Ms. Smith was as quiet as a mouse when she tiptoed in to check on her sleeping baby.
 - b. Jimmy was as quiet as a mouse because he did not want his grandmother to know he was sneaking pretzels from the cupboard.
3. Ask: What else is very quiet? When I call on you, be ready to finish the phrase “as quiet as a _____” with something that is very quiet.
4. Ask: Why do you think a storyteller or a writer would say “He was as quiet as a mouse” instead of just saying “He was very quiet?”
Answers will vary. Use the responses to discuss reasons why authors use figurative language such as: to make it sound more funny, to make it more meaningful, more interesting, more exact, more beautiful, etc.
5. Say: All of the phrases you have shared for “as quiet as a” are examples of similes. They describe something by comparing it to something else.
6. Say: We are going to watch the *Read It, Write It, Tell It* episode about Johnny Appleseed. While you watch listen for words and groups of words that paint a picture for your mind.

After Viewing

Pre/Post Questions: If the students cannot easily answer the following questions, you may wish to use the Lessons (Section 4) and/or the Extensions (Section 5) about figurative language.

1. Think about the phrase “all the rest of his born days.” What does that phrase mean?
The phrase “all the rest of his born days” means for the rest of his life or for as long as he lived.
2. Think about the phrase “fit to be tied.” What does that phrase mean?
The phrase “fit to be tied” means very angry.
3. Think about the phrase “live off the land.” What does this phrase suggest about Johnny Appleseed?
The phrase “live off the land” suggests that Johnny is intelligent and resourceful. He is able to get all the water, food, clothing, and shelter he needs without any outside help and with few outside supplies. Students may also think that it suggests that he is a hard worker.
4. Rewrite the sentence “John was as quiet as a mouse” as a metaphor.
The simile rewritten as a metaphor would be “John was a quiet mouse.”

4 Lessons

Idiom

Materials:

- Locate or create a list of idioms with which the children can work. The following websites may be of help:
 - “English Idioms and Proverbs”
 - Includes illustrations drawn by students, meanings, and examples.
 - <http://humanities.byu.edu/elc/student/idioms/idiomsmain.html>
 - “A to Z List of Idioms”
 - <http://www.usingenglish.com/reference/idioms>
 - “ESL Idiom Page” – Dennis Oliver
 - <http://www.eslcafe.com/idioms/id-list.html>
 - “American English Idioms”
 - Includes 600 idioms with meanings by Paul and Bernice Noll.
 - <http://www.paulnoll.com/Books/Clear-English/English-idioms-01.html>
 - “Appendix: English Idioms” Wikipedia
 - [http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Wiktionary:List_of_idioms_\(alphabetic\)](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Wiktionary:List_of_idioms_(alphabetic))
- Drawing, painting, or computer graphic supplies. See #1 below for ideas and suggestions.

Procedure:

1. Divide the class into groups. Assign each group one or more idioms to interpret and illustrate for inclusion a dictionary of idioms. The dictionary could be used by ESL students. Illustrations may be produced in any medium to which the students have access. Examples include: pencil, paper, paint, poster board, dry erase board, and computer creations using word processing, presentation, or graphic organizer software, etc.
2. Tell the students that two illustrations will be needed for each idiom.
 - a. One illustration will depict and list the literal meaning of the idiom.
 - b. The other will depict and list the figurative meaning of the idiom.

Example: For the idiom “frog in his throat” students might draw a picture of a person with a frog sitting in his/her throat for the literal meaning. A drawing of a person standing before a group of people with a pained look on the person’s face.
3. Share and post the students work.
4. Have the students orally create or write sentences using both the literal and figurative meanings of five or more idioms.

Simile

Materials:

- Select one to three similes that are often overused and for which the figurative meanings are easily understood. *Examples: “light as a feather” or “strong as an ox.” The following websites have lists of similes.* The following websites may be useful:
 - “Similes” from Said What
 - <http://www.saidwhat.co.uk/spoon/similes.php>
 - Wikipedia
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simile#Examples_of_similes_in_everyday_speech
 - “Striking Similes”
 - <http://www.ansible.co.uk/misc/striking.html>

Figurative Language

- “English Similes List”
 - Includes similes with meanings and comments.
 - <http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/figures-similes-list.htm>
- “A Crop of Clichés from the Garden”
 - <http://www.gardendigest.com/cliche.htm>

Procedure:

1. Discuss the figurative meanings of the selected simile(s).
For example: “light as a feather” means very light and “strong as an ox” means very strong physically.
2. Challenge the students to come up with several alternatives to replace an overused simile while maintaining its basic meaning.
For example: Change “as light as a feather” to as light as a cloud, as light as a butterfly’s wing, as light as a rose petal, as light as a milkweed seed floating on the wind, as light as the single hair that tickles my cheek, etc.
3. Have the students choose the alternative(s) that they prefer and use them to write complete similes.
Example: Heath walked through the woods with footsteps as light as a milkweed seed floating on the wind.

Metaphor

Materials:

- Student Handout “Similes and Metaphors”

Procedure:

1. Use the student handout “Similes and Metaphors” worksheet found in this section or create your own list of 5 to 10 sentences that use similes. Have the students locate the simile in each sentence. See the Similes lesson above to locate websites that list similes or you may create your own list.
The examples below match the Simile and Metaphor worksheet.
 - *The overfed dog was as big as an elephant.*
 - *The boy’s hair was as black as coal.*
 - *The child waiting his turn at the dentist’s office was as brave as a lion.*
 - *It might only be thirty minutes after lunch but he was as hungry as a bear.*
 - *She was like a hornet when she learned that her sister was using her jacket.*
 - *Sam was as proud as a peacock when he got a 95% on his math test.*
 - *As quick as lightning, Marika raced to the office to warn the school about the dark cloud she had seen.*
 - *The little horse was like an oak tree able to carry twice as much as other horses.*
 - *She was only 10 years old but she stood as tall as a giraffe compared to her classmates.*
 - *He acted as if he was as tough as nails but most of the time he just felt scared.*
2. Have the students interpret each sentence.
The examples below match the Simile and Metaphor worksheet.
 - *The dog was very fat.*
 - *The boy’s hair was black in color.*
 - *The child waiting his turn at the dentist’s office was brave.*
 - *It might only be thirty minutes after lunch but he was really hungry.*
 - *She got very angry when she learned that her sister was using her jacket.*
 - *Sam was proud when he got a 95% on his math test.*
 - *Marika was very fast when she raced to the office to warn the school about the dark cloud she had seen.*
 - *The little horse was very strong and able to carry twice as much as other horses.*

Figurative Language

- *She was only 10 years old but she was very tall compared to her classmates.*
- *He acted tough but most of the time he just felt scared.*

3. Have the students rewrite the similes as metaphors.

The examples below match the Simile and Metaphor worksheet.

- *The overfed dog was an elephant.*
- *The boy's hair was coal.*
- *The child waiting his turn at the dentist's office was a brave lion.*
- *It might only be thirty minutes after lunch but his hunger was a bear.*
- *She became a buzzing hornet when she learned that her sister was using her jacket.*
- *Sam was a peacock when he got a 95% on his math test.*
- *Marika was a bolt of lightening as she raced to the office to warn the school about the dark cloud she had seen.*
- *The little horse was an oak tree able to carry twice as much as other horses.*
- *She was only 10 years old but she was a giraffe compared to her classmates.*
- *He was a tough nail on the outside but most of the time he just felt scared.*

Figurative Language

Similes and Metaphors

Name: _____ Date: _____

Part A. Directions: In each sentence below underline the simile. Then write the simple meaning of the sentence. The first one has been done for you.

1. The overfed dog was as big as an elephant.

The overfed dog was very fat.

2. The boy's hair was as black as coal.
3. The child waiting his turn at the dentist's office was as brave as a lion.
4. It might only be thirty minutes after lunch but he was as hungry as a bear.
5. She was like a hornet when she learned that her sister was using her jacket.
6. Sam was as proud as a peacock when he got a 95% on his math test.
7. As quick as lightning, Marika raced to the office to warn the school about the dark cloud she had seen.
8. The little horse was like an oak able to carry twice as much as other horses.
9. She was only 10 years old but she stood as tall as a giraffe compared to her classmates.
10. He was as tough as nails on the outside but most of the time he just felt scared.

Part B. Directions: Rewrite any five of the sentences so that the simile is changed into a metaphor. You may use the back of this paper or a sheet of your own paper. *For example: 10. He was a tough nail on the outside but most of the time he just felt scared.*

Extension Activities

Johnny Appleseed • Information Links

- Fact Monster.com: <http://www.factmonster.com/ce6/people/A0811384.html>
- Straight Dope.com: <http://www.straightdope.com/mailbag/mjappleseed.html>
- Apple of Your Pie.com: http://www.appleofyourpie.com/apples/johnny_appleseed.html
- Swedenborg.org: <http://www.swedenborg.org/jappleseed/history.html> (John Chapman was a missionary for the Swedenborg Church founded by the Swedish theologian Emanuel Swedenborg.)

Figurative Language • Internet Resources

Ohio Information Management System

- <https://ims.ode.state.oh.us> Use the IMS Quick Search:
- Chose Lesson Plans, Content Area: , Grade Level: , Keyword: type part or all of the title of the lesson. Click Search.

“Descriptive Language and Theme – Grade Three”

- Students tune their ears to listen for and appreciate descriptive language within texts. They identify and synthesize description and consider how it shows, supports or enhances an author’s intended message.

“Visions of Poetry – Grade Four”

- See, feel, hear and experience mood! This lesson offers students an opportunity to internalize the meaning of mood and its expression in a variety of different media.

“The Right Mood – Grade Six”

- In this integrated lesson, students compare how the three disciplines of music, art and literature create mood. They use this information to produce a piece of descriptive writing based on a piece of art or music selected to evoke a particular mood. While the concept of mood is introduced to students in the fourth grade, it remains a challenging concept for many. This lesson helps make the concept come alive at the same time it requires students to take a more advanced look at the meaning of mood.

Ohio Resource Center • Reading http://www.ohiorc.org/search/search_adv.aspx

- Advanced Search: Choose Free Text and ORC Number from the drop down menus and type the ORC Lesson number in the center box. Scroll down and click Submit. For example:
Search for resources that...contain in the in the

“I Have a Metaphor” ORC Lesson #2674, Grades 4 - 7

- Topics: Reading – Reading-Strategies & Skills; Reading; Literature; Nonfiction
- Professional Commentary: Many teachers integrate the speeches of Martin Luther King Jr. into their classroom instruction.

“Figurative Language Awards Ceremony” ORC Lesson #2799, Grades 4 - 5

- Topics: Reading – Vocabulary; Children's Literature; Reading; Writing; Writing Strategies; Communication; Speaking; Literature
- Professional Commentary: Using their knowledge of figurative language, students complete activities to identify examples of similes, metaphors, and personification heard during read aloud. Students compile a list of phrases, then nominate and vote on the best terms.

Figurative Language

“Lift Every Voice and Sing” ORC Lesson #4540, Grades 5 - 7

- Topics: Reading -- Vocabulary; Literature; Poetry
- Professional Commentary: How does a poem or a song express feelings and meanings? Using the book *Color Me Dark* and a poem by James Weldon Johnson entitled “Lift Every Voice and Sing”, this lesson explores the use of figurative language and imagery. Students explore the origins of the poem and come to understand how it conveys a sense of hope and unity despite hardship.

Other Internet Resources

“Directed Reading Activity Lewis Carroll’s Alice Adventures in Wonderland” Grades 6-7

- http://pirate.shu.edu/~koellnth/additional%20pages/directed_reading_activity.htm
- Online text: <http://home.earthlink.net/~lfdean/carroll/nursery/index.html>
- Audio version: <http://wiredforbooks.org/alice/>

“Pictures in Words: Poems of Tennyson and Noyes,” Grades 6-8

- http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=426

“Figurative Language Lesson Plans & Activities”

- <http://languagearts.mrdonn.org/figurative.html>

Hyperbole

- “Hyperbole” by Celine Ellison
 - This lesson uses “Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out” from Shel Silverstein’s *Where the Sidewalk Ends*.
 - http://faculty.rcoe.appstate.edu/smithtw/RE_3150_web/Craft_Minilessons/RE_3150_s03/Celine_Ellison_Hyperbole.htm

Idioms

- “In Step with Idioms” Story and Interactive Quiz: <http://library.thinkquest.org/4382/idiom.html>
- “Face Idioms” Interactive activity. Match idioms with their definitions: <http://www.quia.com/jg/66234.html>
- “Figurative Language: Teaching Idioms,” Grades 3-5: http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=254
- Valentine's Day Hearts, ESL 3-12
 - Use Valentine's Day to give your students an interesting opportunity to learn and use figurative language in English.
 - http://www.everythingsl.net/lessons/valentine_hearts.php

Similes and Metaphors

- “Poetry: Simile and Figurative Language,” Grades 3-4
 - eMINTS began in Missouri - eMINTS is an acronym for the project enhancing Missouri's Instructional Networked Teaching Strategies. eMINTS can be found in classrooms across the United States.
 - <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00001448.shtml>
- Interactive Simile Practice
 - <http://international.ouc.bc.ca/cultureshock/simile.htm>

Figurative Language

- “Lonely as a Cloud: Using Poetry to Understand Similes”
 - Includes links to poems that have similes such as "Willow and Ginkgo" by Eve Merriam, "A Red, Red Rose" by Robert Burns, "spring is like a perhaps hand" by E.E. Cummings, "Lost" by Carl Sandburg, "People Who Must" by Carl Sandburg, "Since Hannah Moved Away" by Judith Viorst, and "The Daffodils" by William Wordsworth
 - http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=907
- “A Simile and Metaphor Sample Lesson Plan for Teaching Similes and Metaphors,” Grades 5-12
 - <http://volweb.utk.edu/Schools/bedford/harrisms/2poe.htm>
- “Writing: Similes and Metaphors”
 - <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00000561.shtml>
- “The Bilingual Students: Understanding Language Imagery” by Ruth M. Wilson
 - <http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1984/3/84.03.10.x.html>
- “Language Arts Lesson 1: Word Analysis, Fluency and Vocabulary Development,” Grades 4-6
 - http://etap.org/demo/langart4_6/langart1/instructiontutor_last.html
- Proteacher.net Discussion Threads
 - “Figurative Language”: <http://www.proteacher.net/discussions/showthread.php?t=26560>
 - “Teaching Similes and Metaphor,” Middle/School-Junior High: <http://www.proteacher.net/discussions/showthread.php?t=1686>
- “Creating Original Characters, Themes, and Visual Metaphors for Your Digital Short Film”
 - Scroll down the page to the Metaphor and Symbol Charts
 - <http://www.peachpit.com/articles/article.asp?p=174318&seqNum=3&rl=1>