



English Language Arts Lesson Idea: Building a Metaphor

This lesson uses collaborative LEGO building to explore abstract poetic concepts and visualise figurative language (like metaphor and simile), adhering to the five phases.

Phase 1: Planning

- **Lesson Subject:** English Language Arts (ELA)
- **Lesson Topic:** Poetry: Metaphor, Simile, and Imagery
- **Learning Objectives (SMART-aligned):**
 1. Students will be able to **define** and **identify** examples of metaphor and simile.
 2. Students will **collaboratively construct** a LEGO model that visually represents a chosen metaphor or simile (e.g., "The classroom was a zoo").
 3. Students will **orally present** and **justify** how the materials (bricks, colours, texture) and structure of their model convey the literal and figurative meanings.
- **LEGO Model Focus:** A **dual-representation model** showing both the literal object and the abstract concept it represents through figurative language.

Phase 2: Checking-In

- **Objective:** Establish a structured start and perform an emotional check-in to ensure meaningful engagement at the start of the lesson.
- **Activity: "Metaphor Warm-Up" (5 minutes):**
 - Display a simple simile (e.g., "The sky is like a blue blanket").
 - State the objectives clearly.
 - **"LEGO Word Association" Activity:** Call out a simple word related to emotion (e.g., "Calm") and students quickly build something representing that word, then place it on a "Feelings Chart". This provides an emotional check-in while engaging with materials.

Phase 3: Social Communication

- **Objective:** Enhance communication and foster collaboration through the structured use of LEGO Therapy roles, which forms the core focus of the learning pedagogy.
- **Activity: Collaborative Metaphor Build (20 minutes):**
 - Students work in small groups of three, rotating the roles of **Builder, Engineer, and Supplier**.
 - **The Task:** The group is assigned a metaphor or simile (e.g., "Time is a river," "Grief is a heavy blanket"). They must use **structured collaboration** to build a single model that visually expresses both the literal element (river/blanket) and the abstract meaning (time/grief).
 - This process develops social interaction, communication, and teamwork skills through purposeful building activities.

Phase 4: Learning

- **Objective:** Support the process of incorporating the desired learning aims and narratives to the previous phases' end material-product (LEGO model).
- **Activity: Poetic Interpretation and Narrative (15 minutes):**
 - Groups present their **Metaphor Model** to the class.
 - They must explain:
 - The literal object (the **tenor**).
 - The concept it is being compared to (the **vehicle**).
 - How the **structure, colours, and connection of the bricks** (the imagery) specifically link the tenor and vehicle to create the meaning of the metaphor.
 - This process fuses the tactile experience with the intellectual journey of interpreting figurative language, using the model as an invaluable teaching tool.

Phase 5: Reflecting on Learning

- **Objective:** Assess, evaluate, and reflect on the progress made within the lesson, including academic and informal assessments.
- **Activity: Poetry Reflection and Peer Feedback:**
 - **Learning Target Reflection (Formative):** Students write a short **similes/metaphor** based on another group's LEGO model (e.g., "Group B's model of time was a tangled mess of thought"), demonstrating their ability to apply the concepts.
 - **Reflect and Apply (Informal/Emotive):** Students journal their thoughts on how visualising the abstract concept (like grief or time) helped them understand the **emotional impact** of figurative language, fostering personal introspection and insight.