

## A POEM USING METAPHOR

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### Abstract

Adjectives characterize nouns and are frequently used in metaphors to further enhance the metaphor.

The adjective is very likely to have the same meaning as the noun when the noun is metaphorical. In order to refer back to the original subject, it is also possible to utilize the adjective in opposition to the metaphor.

A typical noun can also be described metaphorically in adjectives, which adds interest.

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### Introduction

Adjectives strengthen the metaphor by broadening the comparison and giving it more weight. They can therefore be utilized to emphasize the metaphor's presence and emphasize its meaning, helping to make it more clear.

When used as metaphors, adjectives might result in a more concise form. For instance, the metaphor "blind death" is created when the phrase "death which is blind" is translated.

Adjectival metaphors can permit pairings that produce a fresh or contradictory sensation, as in "the black chimes of night."

A frequent poetic device called a metaphor describes the subject or an object in a poem as being similar to another, unrelated object. A lovely illustration can be found in the opening line of Alfred Noyes' poem *The Highwayman*: The moon was a spectral galleon being tossed through hazy waters.

What is an example of a metaphor in a poem?

What is an example of a metaphor in a poem? An example is "Hope is the thing with feathers" from the poem of the same name by Emily Dickinson. She compares hope in one's heart to a perching bird.

But sometimes a poet finds a simile too weak for their purposes. After all, by likening one thing to another thing using the actual term *like* (or *as*), you're also acknowledging that the two things are separate and different – otherwise you wouldn't need to draw them together via the simile.[1:45]

A metaphor is more direct and does without such weak terms as *like* or *as*. Instead of saying someone's heart is *as hard and cold as a stone*, you could simply say they have a *heart of*



*stone*. You can immediately see the difference: a metaphor acts as though the two things are literally the same for literary or rhetorical effect.

### Emily Dickinson, 'Fame is a Bee'.

Fame is a bee.

It has a song—

It has a sting—

Ah, too, it has a wing.

This brief four-line poem from Dickinson, whose work is filled with arresting metaphors, begins with a simple enough statement. But how is fame 'a bee'?

The succeeding three lines develop this idea: like a bee, fame has a beautiful song, it can be a transformative and magical experience; but it carries a sting, too, because the famous can so easily find themselves shunned by their former fans; and it can transport us to other places, making ordinary people extraordinary.[2:98]

### Christina Rossetti, 'Shut Out'.

The door was shut. I looked between

Its iron bars; and saw it lie,

My garden, mine, beneath the sky,

Pied with all flowers bedewed and green ...

This poem's central image – a garden from which the speaker has been 'shut out' – functions as a metaphor for those things which we have lost: things which attain a status which far exceeds their actual value, by virtue of being lost. We want the things we cannot have, and – equally – we long to regain the things which have been taken from us.[3:78]

### H. D., 'Oread'.

The imagists, a short-lived Anglo-American movement which flourished in London around the time of the First World War, loved metaphors, because they believed in directness of expression and put the *image* at the heart of their poetry.

In this brief poem, H. D. **takes metaphor a stage further**, by bringing two things together – the trees and the ocean – so completely that they effectively change places. Is the oread (mountain nymph) calling for the 'sea' of pine trees to 'wash' over her rocks, or is she calling for the pine-coloured (literal) sea to splash over the mountains?[4:67]

### Sylvia Plath, 'Metaphors'.

Given the focus of this post is examples of metaphors in poetry, the inclusion of a poem *called* 'Metaphors' seems appropriate enough. Plath (1932-63) often wrote about motherhood, and 'Metaphors' is an almost meta-poetic exploration of pregnancy and the poet's quest to capture this experience through metaphor, that stock-in-trade of poetic language.

Some of the metaphors are more logical and easily suggested than others, such as the loaf of bread rising like an expectant mother's belly. Others, like the coin-purse filled with new-minted money, are perhaps more surprising.[5:36]

### Audre Lorde, 'Coal'.

'Coal' is a 1968 poem by the African-American poet Audre Lorde (1934-92). Lorde was a self-described 'Black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet.'



In this cleverly constructed poem, coal is a metaphor for blackness (or Blackness: Lorde moves from the lower-case 'black' of the coal to the capitalised identity, 'I am Black', between the beginning and end of the poem). But carbon, which makes coal, also creates diamond if enough pressure is applied.

From this central metaphor, Lorde **develops other images**: the metaphor of diamond on window panes summons the power of writing, for instance ('cutting' words, at that: diamond is hard enough to score the surface of glass). A poem that is almost metaphysical in its use of metaphor, linked to the Civil Rights movement.

### Conclusion

The metaphor is one of the obvious stylistic devices that qualify language as poetic. Even ordinary, day-to-day language is full of metaphorical expressions. Poets use ordinary things that people can relate to in metaphors. Objects (living or non-living) in nature, actions, movements, and other things are often given a metaphorical value. The writer designates one phenomenon or object using another, associating the first object with the qualities of the second. Metaphors, alongside similes, fall into the general category of literary "tropes." Unlike similes, the comparison of two objects in a metaphor does not involve words of comparison such as "as" or "like."

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