

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Hidden Comparisons - Metaphors

### Reading/Discussion:

“That man scares me, he has a smile like a shark and piercing eyes.”



Can you pick out the simile and the metaphor in the sentence above? Similes are quite easy to find, they all start with ‘like’ or ‘as’ which tells us that a comparison is coming. Metaphors also use comparisons but we have to be more clever about identifying them because they don’t give us any clues. This is why we call it a hidden comparison. In the sentence “a smile like a shark” is a simile and “piercing eyes” is a metaphor. Here is a simile and a metaphor using the same comparison:

The snow lay **like** a blanket on the ground = a simile

A blanket of snow lay on the ground = a metaphor

Another way to decide whether a phrase is a metaphor is to consider whether or not its meaning is **literal**, or factual. Is the snow really a blanket? Do the man’s eyes really pierce?

Why use metaphors? Often our feelings and experiences are difficult to describe satisfactorily using everyday language, so we try to describe them by comparing them to something else. “There is lots of snow on the ground” isn’t nearly as descriptive as a “blanket of snow”, is it?

Not all metaphors are easy to interpret, or understand, though. Why would we say someone has piercing eyes? Perhaps, because when he looks at us it feels as if he is looking right through us? Can you think of any other metaphors?

### Hidden Comparisons – Metaphors Questions

A: Find the hidden comparison

Put a red tick ✓ next to the sentence that contains a metaphor and a black cross ✗ next to the one that doesn't.

1. The water is icy cold.  
She gave me an icy stare.
2. I put Fido in the dog-box.  
Dad is in the dog-box.
3. This is the gateway to our house.  
Education is the gateway to success.
4. That last thing she did really takes the cake!  
When I gave him the choice, he always takes the cake.
5. We have a new animal in our farmyard – it's a pig.  
Bobby always gobbles his food, he's such a pig!

B: But what does it mean?

Underline the metaphors in the following sentences and write down what you think they mean.

1. My dad won't go hiking, he is a couch potato!

.....

2. That driver almost pushed us off the road; he is such a road-hog!

.....

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### Hidden Comparisons – Metaphors Questions (Cont'd)

3. My homework was a breeze; I finished it in no time.

.....

4. Jane thought she would win the argument but she was hitting her head against a brick wall.

.....

5. She's planning on becoming a super-model, but that is just pie in the sky.

.....

## Hidden Comparisons – Metaphors Answers

### Activity A

1. The water is icy cold. ✘
2. She gave me an icy stare. ✔
3. I put Fido in the dog-box. ✘  
Dad is in the dog-box. ✔
4. Education is the gateway to success. ✔  
This is the gateway to our house. ✘
5. That last thing she did really takes the cake! ✔  
When I gave him the choice, he always takes the cake. ✘
6. We have a new animal in our farmyard – it's a pig. ✘  
Bobby always gobbles his food, he's such a pig! ✔

### Activity B

1. My dad won't go hiking, he is a couch potato!  
A: Lazy; spends all of his time on the couch.
2. That driver almost pushed us off the road; he is such a road-hog!  
A: Greedy; wants the all of the road for himself
3. My homework was a breeze; I finished it in no time.  
A: Easy (as against a wind or a gale)
4. Jane thought she would win the argument but she was hitting her head against a brick wall.  
A: Wasting her time; not going to accomplish anything.
5. She's planning on becoming a super-model, but that is just pie in the sky.  
A: Something nice to have but unobtainable.