

Exercise walk-through

The function of a simile ■ 2.5

eXercise

You must be able to

- define a simile
- state what a simile does between its two terms
- name the two subjects of a comparison
- write about a simile in terms of transfer

Method — Definition

A simile uses the words “like” or “as” to liken two objects or concepts to each other. The signal words are part of the definition.

Method — Transfer

Similes liken two different things to transfer the traits or qualities of one to the other. The transfer is the function; identifying the simile is not yet analysis.

Method — Two subjects

The thing being compared is the main subject; the thing to which it is being compared is the comparison subject. Naming them keeps an answer from reversing the transfer.

Method — The form of an answer

“The comparison subject is X, whose quality of Y is transferred to the main subject Z, so the reader now sees Z as...” — state the quality, not just the pair.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

Define a simile.

Solution 2.1

Worked steps

a comparison using “like” or “as” **B1** to liken two objects or concepts to each other **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 3 marks

State the function of a simile and name the two subjects.

Solution 2.2

Method: Transfer

Worked steps

it transfers the traits or qualities of one to the other (B1); the main subject is the thing being compared (B1) and the comparison subject is the thing it is compared to (B1).

Practice 2.3 ■ 2 marks

Identifying a simile is not analysis.

- (a) State what an analysis must add.
- (b) Give the form of an answer.

Solution 2.3

Method: Transfer

Worked steps

(a) which quality is transferred **B1** and what effect the transfer has on the reader **B1**. (b) “the comparison subject is X, whose quality of Y is transferred to the main subject Z” **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

In “her voice was like gravel”, the comparison subject is

A her voice

B gravel

C the reader

D the poem

Solution 3.1

A her voice

B gravel 

C the reader

D the poem

Worked steps

B. gravel is what the voice is compared to.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

A simile transfers

A traits or qualities

B page numbers

C rhyme

D metre

Solution 3.2

A traits or qualities



B page numbers

C rhyme

D metre

Worked steps

A. traits or qualities.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A poem likens a city to a furnace.

- (a) Name the two subjects.
- (b) Explain what quality is transferred and to what effect.

Solution 3.3

Method: The form of an answer

Worked steps

(a) the city is the main subject and the furnace the comparison subject **B1**. (b) heat and containment transfer **B1**, so the city reads as something that consumes what it holds **B1**.