

2.5 The function of a simile

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 13 marks**

KEY WORDS simile 明喻

Objective

Build the skills to explain a **simile** 明喻.

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

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

2 Practice

2.1 Define a simile. [2]

2.2 State the function of a simile and name the two subjects. [3]

2.3 Identifying a simile is not analysis.

(a) State what an analysis must add. [2]

(b) Give the form of an answer. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 In “her voice was like gravel”, the comparison subject is [1]

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | B |
| C | D |
- A** her voice
B gravel
C the reader
D the poem

3.2 A simile transfers [1]

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | B |
| C | D |
- A** traits or qualities
B page numbers
C rhyme
D metre

3.3 A poem likens a city to a furnace.

(a) Name the two subjects. [1]

(b) Explain what quality is transferred and to what effect. [2]
