

Language – analogies

Reading/discussion

Do you remember learning about metaphors and similes? Both are **figures of speech** which compare two different things, for example: The snow lay **like** a blanket on the ground = a simile. A blanket of snow lay on the ground = a metaphor. Similes and metaphors both enhance writing and give us a mental picture which helps us to understand the writer's meaning.

An analogy is also a comparison between two different things but it is a little more complex than metaphors or similes. An analogy is more than just a figure of speech, it can assist us in developing an argument, by helping to explain our reasoning - for example, if some things are similar in one way, they might be similar in other ways as well; it helps us understand an unfamiliar concept by comparing it to something which is familiar to us; and it shows the relationship between pairs of objects or ideas.

Here is an example of an analogy used to support an argument: *Pupils are more like oysters than sausages. The job of teaching is not to stuff them and then seal them up, but to help them open and reveal the riches within....* (Sydney J. Harris, "What True Education Should Do," 1964).

A good way to learn to use analogies, and to show that you understand them, is by showing the relationship between two pairs of concepts. In the example above Harris used sausages: stuff and seal, in comparison to oysters: open and reveal. So he used **antonyms** or opposites to make his point. Analogy word pairs can also be **synonyms**, where words have the same meaning: find is to locate as construct is to build; or **descriptive**, where one word describes the other: fast is to cheetah as slow is to snail; **part to whole**: piece is to puzzle as finger is to hand; or **item to category**: fork is to cutlery as plate is to crockery. Other analogy types include: **cause to effect**, **definitions**, **object to use** and **product to producer**.

Name _____

Date _____

Activities:

A. Complete the analogies

Fill in the missing word for each pair of concepts.

1. Unhappy is to sad as happy is to
2. Hot is to cold as rough is to
3. Cat is to mammal as lizard is to
4. Propeller is to boat as wing is to
5. Dark is to light as laugh is to
6. Sky is to blue as grass is to
7. Lemon is to sour as sugar is to
8. Doctor is to hospital as teacher is to
9. Music is to ears as books are to
10. Bird is to fly as fish is to
11. Monday is to day as January is to
12. Feather is to bird as fin is to

B. Create your own.

Now see if you can create your own analogies using the following types:

Synonym:

Antonym:

Descriptive:

Part to whole:

Name _____

Date _____

Answer Sheet

Activity A

1. Unhappy is to sad as happy is to glad.
2. Hot is to cold as rough is to smooth.
3. Cat is to mammal as lizard is to reptile.
4. Propeller is to boat as wing is to plane.
5. Dark is to light as laugh is to cry.
6. Sky is to blue as grass is to green.
7. Lemon is to sour as sugar is to sweet.
8. Doctor is to hospital as teacher is to school.
9. Music is to ears as books are to eyes.
10. Bird is to fly as fish is to swim.
11. Monday is to day as January is to month.
12. Feather is to bird as fin is to fish.

Activity B

The children should create analogies which correctly fit into the categories given.