W2g. Can use simple similes e.g. It was as yellow as the sun

Teachers' Notes

❑ In this therapy, pupils learn to identify and write similes.

❑ Pupils are reminded that similes are one of the techniques of figurative language.

❑ They learn which similes usually use **'as'** and which use **'like'**.

❑ Pupils are encouraged to select from possible similes before attempting to think of their own.

❑ Throughout the therapy, there are opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas and appreciate that there is often more than one good answer.

Vocabulary warm-up – shades of meaning.
Put these words in order. Explain the reasons for your decision.

nap

doze

slumber

sleep

rest

What is figurative language?
Figurative language means the tricks and techniques that writers use to make their words more interesting and enjoyable to read. It is often an important part of descriptive writing as it helps the reader to gain a clearer understanding of what the author means. Here are a few examples.

Metaphor
cold needles of rain

Onomatopoeia
splishing and splashing through the puddles

Idiom
raining cats and dogs

Alliteration
sharp shards of rain

Similes

Similes are another form of figurative language. They help the reader to get a better idea of what you mean by comparing one thing to another, usually joined by the word **as** or **like**. Generally speaking, you use '**as**' to compare adjectives and '**like**' to compare verbs .

The arrow flew **as** high **as** a kite.

Each girl could swim **like** a fish.

Similes

It is important to think of similes that are helpful. That means that you have to compare your word with something that shares the same characteristic, even though it is from a different category. It should also be something that is likely to be familiar to the reader. Which of these are useful similes? Can you say why?

The pony ran as fast as a horse. ✖

She was as heartless as attainder. ✖

He could sing like a pancake. ✖

She squealed like a piglet. ✔

In short, similes should be useful, relevant and familiar.
Your turn: can you think of a better word to use instead? Have a go and then click for our suggestions.

The pony ran as fast as a train_____.

She was as heartless as a stone_____.

He could sing like an angel_____.

Remember to change the 'a' to 'an' if your word starts with a vowel.

Take care with your choice of words. You want to create the best effect possible in your reader's mind.

Your turn: choose the best word from the selections given below. There might not be a right answer, so be prepared to discuss it with your group and justify your decision.

She was as happy as a **daisy/clown/puppy**.

He could climb like a **snail/creeper/monkey**.

She was as rich as a **prince/pudding/country**.

He pounced like a **kitten/tiger/blackbird**.

Some similes have become well established over the years. Although it can be perfectly acceptable to use them, they can also seem lazy. Always think twice when you're reaching for a simile you've heard lots of times before and see if you can think of a better one.

Your turn: read these well-known similes and think up your own alternative choices. If you're stuck, click to see some suggestions.

Run like the wind.   a hare/a cheetah/a rogue

As quick as a flash.   a thought/a slip/a snap

As pretty as a picture.   a posy/a blush/a primrose

As bold as brass.   banter/gold/a braggart

Your turn: think of a simile, inspired by each of these pictures, that could be used to describe something else. For example, 'as sharp as winter'. Click for our own suggestions. Are your ideas better?

as wild as the waves

as quaint as a cottage

as white as winter

Your turn: think of a simile, inspired by each of these pictures, that could be used to describe something else. For example, 'as cold as winter'. Click for our own suggestions. Are your ideas better?

stretch like a beach

as chirpy as a sparrow

float like a duck

Remember

❑ Similes are a sort of figurative language.

❑ They make comparisons using the words '**like**' and '**as**'.

❑ The better your choice of words is, the more effective your simile will be.

❑ Avoid using well-know similes – try to think of your own.