

Literary Devices In the Bible: Extended Metaphor

This lesson may be used in conjunction with any work of literature where metaphor is used.

GRADE LEVEL

7-12

TIME REQUIREMENT

2-3 Periods (50 min each), depending on how much time is used to review the metaphor and how much time is given in class for student work

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Review what a metaphor is (this can be developed into a class of its own)
- Understand what an extended metaphor is
- Analyze the extended metaphor of "shepherd" in Psalm 23
- Explore personal interests, needs, etc. (optional)
- Identify and reflect on a personally selected metaphor for God (other than "Shepherd") that applies to their own life
- Rewrite Psalm 23 using their own, personalized metaphor
- Share their rendition of Psalm 23 with the class
- Creatively display their Psalm 23

JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE CONNECTIONS

- Acceptance of God
- Interpersonal Relationships
- Intellectual Development
- Communication Skill
- Personal Management
- Aesthetic Appreciation

MATERIALS

- ✓ Overhead of definition of metaphor with examples
- ✓ Overhead of definition of an extended metaphor

- ✓ Copies of Psalm 23 (NIV)
- ✓ Highlighters (pen/pencil works, too)

PRE-ACTIVITY

- Optional: To prepare for this assignment, students could be asked to list or free-write about their interests or hobbies (and share orally, if time permits). What do they like to do? What kind of work would they like to do someday? What are they good at doing? (This will tie in with David using the metaphor of *shepherd* since that was his expertise and interest)
- Optional: Have students free-write about what they need from God right now in their life. Where are they weak? What are their struggles? What are their desires? Encourage them to move beyond surface, materialistic things to needs and desires of the heart and soul

ACTIVITY

Review

1. Ask if anyone knows what a metaphor is
2. Show definition (overhead) and examples
3. Optional: Have students create a metaphor; voluntary sharing

Define

1. Ask if anyone knows what an **extended** metaphor is
2. How does it differ from the regular metaphor?

Analyze

1. Ask if anyone can think of an extended metaphor in the Bible
2. Pass out Psalm 23 copies and read together; what's the extended metaphor?
3. Have students go through and highlight words/phrases of Psalm 23 that directly relate to the shepherd metaphor; then go through it together
4. Have students go through the Psalm again, this time noticing the content progression in 6 segments as the metaphor develops. Note the basic idea in each of those segments

Explore

1. Ask students why David used the metaphor of Shepherd for God, and then ask them to return to their own life experiences and select

a metaphor for God that flows out of their own life interests/abilities: i.e. "God is my coach," "God is my ski patrol," "God is my teacher," etc. Their metaphor could also be selected on the basis of what their need of God is: No father-figure? "God is my dad." Have a health condition? "God is my Doctor." Fearful? "God is my Body Guard," etc.

2. Read samples of what previous students have done (if available; this is very helpful to the students and gets them inspired quickly!)

Create

1. Set them loose to rewrite the psalm extending their own metaphor throughout. Remind them they need to extend their metaphor in 6 segments, and encourage them to try to follow the progression of the original Psalm 23.
2. Assign students to creatively and attractively present their 23rd Psalm for the teacher to display in the classroom. On the due date, they will read their psalm to the class.

ALTERNATE APPROACH

Have students rewrite Psalm 23 with the goal of communicating David's main ideas using a metaphor that would get the message across to a specific culture or social class (white collar, Buddhist, 3rd World community, etc.)

RESOURCES/SUGGESTIONS

- *A Shepherd's Look At the Twenty-third Psalm* (Out of print, but if you can get a hold of it, it's a gem!)

The Metaphor

...is defined as an indirect comparison between two or more seemingly unrelated subjects that typically uses "is a" to join the first subjects.

Shakespeare:

“All the world’s a stage...”

David:

“God is my fortress...”

Extended Metaphor

(web definitions)

...a figure of speech that compares two essentially unlike things in great length.

...a figure of speech that is used throughout an entire work, or a great part of it. It is common in poetry, but it is often used in prose, as well.

...a metaphor that continues throughout a series of sentences with the purpose of expanding or clarifying an idea.

Psalm 23 (NIV)

A Psalm of David

1 The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall not be in want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
3 he restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil,
for you are with me; your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

6 Surely goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house
of the LORD forever.