

In order to write the most imaginative and striking writing, you will need to use a wide variety of descriptive techniques. The following activities should help you to develop your use of imagery in writing.

Remember the following techniques:

A **simile** is a comparison using 'like' or 'as' e.g. *The moon hung low, like a buckle fastening earth and sky ...* from *Mornings in Jenin* by Susan Abulhawa.

A **metaphor** is a comparison where one thing is described in terms of another, different, thing i.e. as if it is that thing e.g. '*... a cool web of language winds us in,*' from 'The Cool Web' by Robert Graves.

Personification is a type of metaphor where inanimate (non-living) things are given the attributes of the living, so being like a person e.g. '*The gray-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,*' from *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare.

Making metaphors

Have a go at this exercise to practise making interesting metaphors.

There is a list of noun phrases in both the left and right columns. Your task is to match three of these to create interesting and powerful images that work well together.

For example: an elephant's tread *and* dusty cobwebs

Then work on your chosen pair to develop it into a powerful image.

For example: At dawn, no dew, but the dusty cobwebs of an elephant's tread in the dry savannah.

an elephant's tread	dusty cobwebs
a rusty old car	hope of rain
a feather drifting away	a scream in space
the sound of arguing voices	dawdling down the lane
soft skirts swirling	a silken sail in the wind
cool water spraying	lilac petals blowing in the breeze
the smell of baking cakes	wafting memories
a hollow laugh	a cavernous black hole

Choose three pairs of noun phrases to develop into a full sentence. Use the example above to help.

1.

2.

3.

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Now create your own metaphors, by pairing two of your own ideas and then combining these as a sentence.

Idea 1

Idea 2

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Personification

Use this exercise to practise using personification.

Fold a piece of paper in half lengthways. Keep it folded, and with the crease on the right, list ten nouns.

e.g. water, children, tulips, **footsteps**, ...

Turn the folded paper over and write an occupation.

e.g. a teacher

Now list ten verbs associated with the occupation.

e.g. instruct, **nurture**, listen, help ...

Open the page and try to make a link between the nouns and the totally different verbs.

e.g. Tired **footsteps** **nurture** the sodden earth ...