Metaphors

Read this poem aloud.

What is the Sun?
the Sun is an orange dinghy
sailing across a calm sea
it is a gold coin
dropped down a drain in Heaven
the Sun is a yellow beach ball
kicked high into the summer sky
it is a red thumb-print
on a sheet of pale blue paper
the Sun is a milk bottle’s gold top
floating in a puddle

Wes Magee

How many metaphors for the Sun can you find in this poem? Make a list of them below. Remember: A metaphor is something described as if it were something else. It is like a simile but does not include the words like or as.

an orange dinghy

Rewrite one of the five verses, and change the metaphor to a simile. To do this, you only need to add one word.

Pick a verse from the poem, and write a short paragraph explaining what is meant by the description of the Sun.

Which of the metaphors in the poem seems most effective to you? Why?
Write your own metaphors

Use the pattern of the poem *What is the Sun* to write a poem of your own that includes metaphors. Choose one of the titles below or make up your own.

What is a cloud?

What is the sea?

What is the Moon?

What is .........................? (your choice)

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How many metaphors for the Sun can you find in this poem? Make a list of them below. Remember: A metaphor is something described as if it were something else. It is like a simile but does not include the words like or as.

an orange dinghy, a gold chain, a yellow beachball, a red thumb-print, a milk bottle’s gold top

Rewrite one of the five verses, and change the metaphor to a simile. To do this, you only need to add one word.

the Sun is like an orange dinghy
sailing across a calm sea

Pick a verse from the poem, and write a short paragraph explaining what is meant by the description of the Sun.

Which of the metaphors in the poem seems most effective to you? Why?

This page helps your child to appreciate how metaphor works and to differentiate between metaphor and simile. Again, the questions are open-ended – accept any answers that can be sensibly argued from the poem.
Here the task is to write a poem using metaphors. This activity gives your child practice in finding effective metaphors for use in his or her own writing. Encourage your child to read the finished poem to you. Remember to praise his or her efforts.