

Facts and Faith: Biblically Responsible Lessons For Diverse Classrooms



Crafted by a dedicated team of expert educators and ministers from diverse Christian denominations, these lesson plans by Defense of Democracy are designed to meet Oklahoma Academic Standards and Superintendent Walters' OSDE Instructional Support Guidelines for Teachers directive. Our mission is to promote inclusivity and ensure emotional and physical safety for all students. These rigorous, Bible-based lessons reflect our commitment to historically and scientifically accurate education, fostering shared experiences across all backgrounds.



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Lesson: Dogs and Lions and Thorns, Oh My!



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Lesson Plan

Dogs and Lions and Thorns, Oh My!



Summary

1. **Subject(s):** Literary Devices - Metaphors 5.3.R.4
2. **Topic or Unit of Study:** English, Language Arts
3. **Grade/Level:** 5th Grade
4. **Objective:** Identify and discuss metaphors within Biblical texts
5. **Time Allotment:** 1 hour

 **Pro Educator Tip:** The provided text is from the most current version of the [Updated New Revised Standard Version](#) of the Christian Bible. Many scholars consider this version to be the most accurate translation. If your learners ask that is why this text was included. It is abbreviated "NRSVue." Some of your learners may be more familiar with other versions and you can tell them that is great, but for this class, the NRSVue will be the version that you intend to use.


Implementation

Learning Context:

This is a standard 5th-grade metaphor lesson. The twist here is that you will be utilizing exclusively The Bible to source your metaphors. The Bible is rich with metaphors and the examples in this lesson are designed to be exciting and engaging for your learners.


Procedure:

- a. **Anticipatory Set:** To begin with read your learners the definition of "metaphor" found on the worksheet. Say *"A metaphor is a word or phrase applied to something else, as representative or symbolic of that thing. They are seldom literally applicable and often abstract."* Tell your learners that you are going to wait for 30 seconds for them to think about this definition before you respond to any questions.


 **Pro Educator Tip:** Metaphors may be an advanced literary device for your learners, so, after a couple of questions, you should jump into the examples provided in the "Metaphors" below.

Procedure cont.:

b. **Direct Instruction:** Before you begin encourage your learners to take notes. Let them know that you intend for them to hold their questions until after you are through with the examples. Read the first four metaphors. (Don't read the last one.) After each of the metaphors provide your learners with the explanation provided. Be sure to pause for 15-20 seconds between the metaphors and the provided explanations so your learners have the opportunity to work out the metaphors on their own. After you read the explanation about women being compared to poorly constructed containers wait 30-45 seconds to allow your learners to write down any thoughts they may have. NOW you may field questions.

 **Pro Educator Tip:** The verse from 1 Peter (read as "First Peter") is listed as "The First Epistle of Peter." This may be a good time to sneak in "Epistle" as a bonus vocabulary word. Epistle is a fancy way to say "Letter" with the connotation of "writing someone a letter." Many famous works of literature are composed of people writing letters back and forth to each other. These are known as "epistolary." ([pronunciation](#))


c. **Guided Practice:** Read the last metaphor. Before you read the explanation tell your learners that there were two metaphors in that verse. Ask them to write down the two metaphors in that verse. If any of your learners ask (or if any of your less vocal learners seem to be struggling) read the verse again. Ask your learners to pair off and have them compare what they have written down with their partners. (If your learners are already in larger groups that is also sufficient.) Ask your learners to designate a speaker and select three speakers from three different groups to see if they can identify the "Lost Sheep" and two "Dog" metaphors in this verse. See if any of the other groups have other explanations for the metaphors from what the first speakers give.

 **Pro Educator Tip:** Your learners may, very well, identify the "Lost Sheep" as "Christians." You can inform them that "Christians," as such, didn't exist yet. Jesus considered himself and was considered to be a Jew.

d. **Check for Understanding:** Hand out the worksheet found at the end of this lesson plan. Remind your learners to put their names and the date on the worksheets. Learners should take the first 5 minutes to work on this alone and then either pair off or work with their groups from before to complete the worksheets. The total time spent on this worksheet should be about 10 minutes.


e. **Closing:** As you collect the worksheets ensure that your learners remember to put their names on them. If you have a word of the week, this may be a good time to work it in.

Differentiated Instruction

 **Pro Educator Tip:** Recognize that learners exhibit diverse learning modalities. You can employ a range of pedagogical strategies to effectively engage and instruct a heterogeneous student body by deliberately considering this variability.

- a. Visual Learners - May benefit from seeing the verses up on a projector or smartboard.
- b. Auditory Learners
- c. Kinesthetic Learners
- d. ESL Students - All of these verses should be available in any languages you have represented in your district. The worksheet, on the other hand, you will need to work with your district to translate ahead of time, so, ensure that you give them enough time.
- e. At-risk Students
- f. Advanced Learners

Materials & Resources

 **Pro Educator Tip:** The worksheet is designed to be printed front and back. Again, please ensure that you provide your district staff plenty of time for duplication. Everyone in your district is working to ensure the success of your learners and the more time you can provide your support professionals, the better they can assist you.

- a. **Instructional Materials:** see included Metaphor Worksheet



Metaphors

Numbers 33:50-55 NSRVue

50 In the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho, the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 51 “Speak to the Israelites, and say to them: When you cross over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, 52 you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, destroy all their figured stones, destroy all their cast images, and demolish all their high places. 53 You shall take possession of the land and settle in it, for I have given you the land to possess. 54 You shall apportion the land by lot according to your clans; to a large one you shall give a large inheritance, and to a small one you shall give a small inheritance; the inheritance shall belong to the person on whom the lot falls; according to your ancestral tribes, you shall apportion it. 55 But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then those whom you let remain shall be as **barbs** in your eyes and **thorns** in your sides; they shall trouble you in the land where you are settling.

(Indigenous people are being compared to barbs and thorns.)

Proverbs 22:15 NSRVue

Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far away.

(Disciplining a child is being compared to hitting them with a stick, a practice, in modern times we recognize is barbaric and cruel. In fact the [American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry](#), [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), [American College of Emergency Physicians](#), [American Medical Association](#), [American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children](#), [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), [Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling](#), [National Association of Counsel for Children](#), [National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners](#), and [National Foster Parent Association](#) all recommend that parents avoid using physical discipline and are in agreement that it is ineffective in the short term and harmful in the long term.)

Metaphors

Joel 1: 6-7 NSRVue

For a nation has invaded my land, powerful and innumerable; its teeth are lions' teeth, and it has the fangs of a lioness. It has laid waste my vines and splintered my fig trees; it has stripped off their bark and thrown it down; their branches have turned white.

(Foreigners are being compared to wild animals, specifically lions and lionesses.)

The First Epistle of Peter 3:7a NSRVue

Husbands, in the same way, show consideration for your wives in your life together, paying honor to the woman—though the weaker vessel,

(Women are compared to a poorly constructed container like a jug or a jar that would easily break.)

(If any of your learners ask our earliest and best source texts for this verse have this word as "skeuos" ([pronunciation](#)) (If this won't load in your district it sounds kind of like "skay way") in Greek. That word is associated with merchandise, specifically, jars, and dishes.

Matthew 15: 22-27 NSRVue

22 Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the **lost sheep** of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the **dogs**." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the **dogs** eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

(This verse has two metaphors. Jews who aren't practicing the correct version of their religion are compared to sheep and a foreigner (specifically a foreign woman) is compared to a dog. The foreign woman continues this metaphor.)


Metaphor Worksheet



Name: _____

Date: _____

Metaphor Meaning and Writing Worksheet

 **What is a metaphor?** A metaphor is a word or phrase applied to something else, as representative or symbolic of that thing. They are seldom literally applicable and often abstract.

Directions: For each metaphor given below, write what you think it means. Some may have two.

 **Example, please!?!?**

Example A: When he ran, he was the wind.

Answer: He was very fast.

1. If you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then those whom you let remain shall be as barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides. Numbers 33: 55a

2. For a nation has invaded my land, powerful and innumerable; its teeth are lions' teeth, and it has the fangs of a lioness. It has laid waste my vines and splintered my fig trees; it has stripped off their bark and thrown it down; their branches have turned white. Joel 1: 6-7

3. Husbands, in the same way, show consideration for your wives in your life together, paying honor to the woman—though the weaker vessel, 1 Peter 3:7a

Directions: For each metaphor given below, write what is being compared.

😬 **Example, please!?!?**

Example B: When he ran, he was the wind.

Answer: Wind is compared to fast running.

1. [Jesus] answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."
Matthew 15: 24

_____ is compared to _____

2. [Jesus, speaking to a foreign woman] answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." Matthew 15: 26

_____ is compared to _____

3. Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far away. Proverbs 22:15

_____ is compared to _____



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