

## Spotlight on Images

### SIMILES AND METAPHORS

In Lesson 7 you practiced creating strong images that show instead of just tell. Focusing on the senses is one way to ensure your lyrics are compelling and original. Similes and metaphors, both figures of speech that use comparisons, are another way you can illustrate your point in a colorful way.

**Note:** A simile is a comparison using “like” or “as.” A metaphor is a comparison that doesn’t use “like” or “as.”

### EXAMPLES

The song “Red” by Taylor Swift uses both similes and metaphors.

The first verse features a series of similes:

Loving him **is like** driving a new Maserati down a dead-end street  
 Faster than the wind, passionate as sin, ending so suddenly  
 Loving him **is like** trying to change your mind once you’re already flying through the free fall  
**Like** the colors in autumn, so bright just before they lose it all

Instead of saying “loving him is exciting but dangerous,” or “loving him is hard not to do,” or “loving him is beautiful but fleeting,” Swift uses similes to communicate each of these ideas through images.

- Look closely at the images Swift uses. How does each one communicate what loving him is like?

The chorus uses metaphors in lines 1, 2, 4, and 5 (and a simile in line 3):

Losing him **was** blue like I’d never known  
 Missing him **was** dark grey all alone  
 Forgetting him **was like** trying to know somebody you never met  
 But loving him **was** red  
 Loving him **was** red

- What is Swift saying by using these three metaphors? What does she mean that losing him and missing him were “blue” and “grey”, but loving him was “red?”

### ACTIVITY

1. Pick the most basic way to describe an object or a feeling. (Example: Being in love feels exciting.)
2. Brainstorm something else that shares that same characteristic. (Example: Driving a fast car down a dead-end street.)
3. Make a comparison between the two by using either a simile or a metaphor. Remember, you often can make a simile into a metaphor by simply removing “like” or “as” from the comparison.

**Note:** Verbs are the great amplifiers of description, much more so than adjectives. Use descriptive verbs to breathe more life into a description.