

Teaching ideas



- Comparison charts can be used to explore similes and metaphors with the children. Take, for example, 'He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven', by WB Yeats. In the poem, Yeats describes his dreams as being like a carpet on which someone can walk:

*I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.*

Divide a sheet of paper into two columns and use the two things likened in the metaphor – dreams and carpet – as the headings of the two columns.

Next, ask the children to think of something about one of the things listed at the top of one of the columns and record their thoughts in that column, for example they might write *You put these out for special people* under 'carpet'. Then ask them to draw an arrow to the other side of the page and, in that column, record why the first thought may link to the heading of the second column. The chart might look like this:

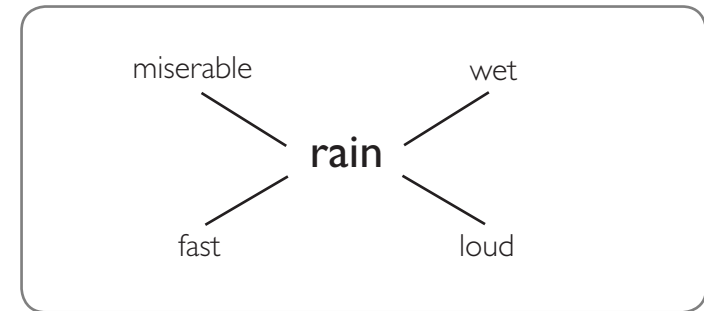
dreams	carpet
The dreams are a way of saying 'you're special'	You put these out for special people

Through making comparisons such as these children explore and extend the image beyond the boundaries the poet might have intended.

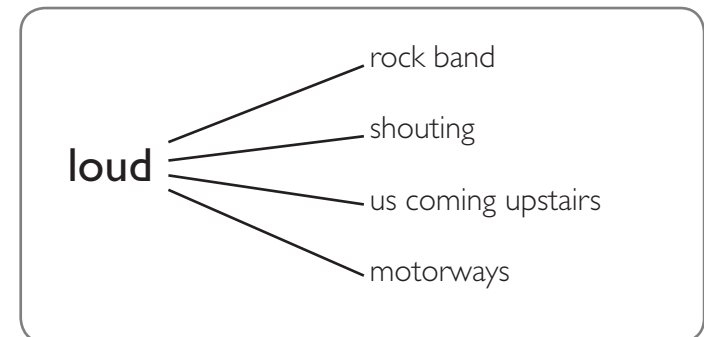
- A simple way into exploring imagery with young children is to create some similes. Give the children a tray of objects that look and feel different. Get them to take turns to pick one object and

say what it is like. They may decide that a key is *old*. They then need to think of something else that is *old* to make the simile link, such as *as old as the school* or *as old as a granny*.

- Create a simile web with the children. Choose a familiar word that can be described in different ways, such as *rain*, and write it in the centre of a sheet of paper. Write around the subject four words that could describe it. For example:



Ask the children to pick one of the describing words and to think of four things that also possess this quality:



These webs can be used to create similes, such as *rain as loud as shouting*, *rain's noise like a rock band* or *rain as loud as a class running upstairs*.

- Metaphors can be explored as disguises. Give each child a slip of paper on which is written the name of an object or a feeling. Tell them that they have to write four metaphors for their word. If, for example, they are given 'fear' as a subject they