Similes

VOCABULARY PRACTICE

ADVANCED | C1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 Match each concept in simile analysis with its meaning.

1 tenor	____	a subject that is being described
2 vehicle	____	b image or domain through which the subject is viewed
3 ground	____	c quality or relation shared by the compared domains
4 aptness	____	d effectiveness and precision of a comparison
5 semantic tension	____	e productive strain created by partial mismatch between domains
6 defamiliarisation	____	f making an ordinary subject seem newly perceptible
7 evaluative loading	____	g value judgement carried by an expression
8 framing	____	h perspective that selects and organises features of a subject

2 Complete the analytical collocations.

conceptual | **evaluative** | **figurative** | **interpretive** | **semantic** | **source** | **target** | **visual**

1 the _____ domain that is described

2 the _____ domain used for comparison

3 a shared _____ ground

4 strong _____ loading

5 create _____ tension

6 activate a _____ frame

7 guide the reader's _____ inference

8 produce a vivid _____ image

3 Choose the concept that best explains the effect.

1 In *the city lay like circuitry*, the city is the *tenor / vehicle*.

2 In the same simile, circuitry is the *vehicle / ground*.

3 The shared pattern of connected lines is the *ground / framing*.

4 Calling negotiations *a chess match* highlights strategy through *framing / conventionality*.

5 A surprising comparison makes rain seem newly observable through *defamiliarisation / evaluative loading*.

6 Describing a policy as spreading *like a stain* introduces negative *evaluative loading / aptness*.

7 A comparison that is precise and illuminating demonstrates *aptness / semantic tension*.

8 A partial mismatch that invites interpretation creates *semantic tension / conventionality*.

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4 Complete the critical analysis with terms from the box.

aptness | conventionality | defamiliarisation | evaluative loading | framing | ground | semantic tension | tenor | vehicle | visual image

In the simile *memory opened like a locked archive*, memory is the **1** _____ and archive the **2** _____. Accessibility forms part of the shared **3** _____. The phrase creates productive **4** _____, while *locked* adds negative **5** _____. Because the comparison is not entirely familiar, its low **6** _____ supports **7** _____. Its **8** _____ depends on whether the context develops the idea of restricted access. The simile's **9** _____ guides us to interpret remembering as retrieval, and the concrete archive supplies a vivid **10** _____.

5 Read the text and answer the questions concisely.

Similes are arguments in miniature

A simile does not transfer every property of its vehicle to its tenor. Instead, it prompts readers to select a relevant ground, often under pressure from context. That selection is rhetorical: comparing public debate to a marketplace foregrounds exchange and choice, whereas comparing it to combat foregrounds conflict, sides and victory. Neither frame is neutral, and repeated comparisons can naturalise a particular account of reality. Critical reading therefore asks not only whether a simile is vivid, but which features it suppresses, whom its evaluation benefits and what alternative frame might disclose.

1 Does a simile transfer every property of its vehicle? _____

2 What helps readers select the relevant ground? _____

3 What does the marketplace comparison foreground? _____

4 What does the combat comparison foreground? _____

5 What can repeated comparisons naturalise? _____

6 Name two questions critical readers should ask. _____

6 Paraphrase using the expression in capitals.

1 The simile presents the reform as a journey. **FRAMES** _____

2 The vehicle carries a strongly negative judgement. **LOADING** _

3 The unfamiliar image makes routine work seem new. **DEFAMILIARISES** _

4 The imperfect correspondence produces interpretive strain. **TENSION** _

OVER TO YOU

Write a **160-190 word** critical analysis of one simile from literature, journalism, advertising or public discourse. Evaluate what it reveals and conceals.

[ ] Identify tenor, vehicle and ground. [ ] Analyse framing and evaluative loading. [ ] Propose and assess an alternative simile.

Similes

ANSWER KEY

1 Concepts in simile analysis

1 **a** 2 **b** 3 **c** 4 **d** 5 **e** 6 **f** 7 **g** 8 **h**

2 Analytical collocations

1 **target** 2 **source** 3 **conceptual** 4 **evaluative** 5 **semantic** 6 **figurative** 7 **interpretive** 8 **visual**

3 Analytical distinctions

1 **tenor** 2 **vehicle** 3 **ground** 4 **framing**
5 **defamiliarisation** 6 **evaluative loading** 7 **aptness** 8 **semantic tension**

4 Critical analysis

1 **tenor** 2 **vehicle** 3 **ground** 4 **semantic tension** 5 **evaluative loading**
6 **conventionality** 7 **defamiliarisation** 8 **aptness** 9 **framing** 10 **visual image**

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 No. 2 Context. 3 Exchange and choice. 4 Conflict, sides and victory.
5 A particular account of reality. 6 Any two: what is suppressed, who benefits, what another frame might reveal.

6 Paraphrasing - possible answers

1 The simile **frames** the reform as a journey. 2 The vehicle has negative evaluative **loading**. 3 The image **defamiliarises** routine work. 4 The mismatch creates semantic **tension**.

Over to you: Answers will vary. Check analytical precision, rhetorical consequences and the alternative framing.