

Imagery

Objective and Purpose- The student will be able to identify patterns of images and how these images relate to themes and abstract ideas.

Bell ringer- Ask the students to draw an image that they believe encompasses their being. Then, students should write a paragraph explaining why they chose this image and how it relates to them. Allow students to share.

Modeling- (Lecture based introduction to imagery) Give students the following definition of imagery taken from The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms, Third Edition. You may summarize or paraphrase the definition if you'd like. I typically give the students this definition along with examples and then summarize the definition in more familiar terms:

Imagery- A term used to refer to: (1) the corpus of image or in a text; (2) the language used to convey a visual picture (or, most critics would add, to represent any sensory experience); and (3) the use of figurative language, often to express abstract ideas in a vivid and innovative way. Imagery of this third type makes use of figures of speech such as simile, personification, and metonymy.

Imagery is a central component of almost all imaginative literature and is often said to be the chief element in poetry. Literal imagery is purely descriptive, representing an object or event with words that draw on or appeal to the kinds of experiences gained through the five senses (sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell). Figurative imagery may call sensory experience to mind but does so as a way of describing something else—often some abstract idea that cannot be depicted literally or directly. Whether literal or figurative, however, imagery is generally intended to make whatever the author is describing concrete in the reader's mind, to give it some tangible and real existence rather than a purely intellectual one. Imagery also provides the reader with a sense of vividness and immediacy.

Imagery has a specific and special relation to symbolism. All symbols depend on images, often repeated to give the symbol cogency and depth...Some critics have suggested that the key to unlocking the meaning of a work lies in identifying its image patterns and understanding how they work together to suggest or symbolize larger meaning or themes. These critics believe that the pattern of imagery in a work more truly reveals meaning than an author's or character's assertions.

Examples may include "Fish" by Elizabeth Bishop, "Underwear" by Lawrence Ferlinghetti (with older students), and "In the Station of the Metro" by Ezra Pound. I also like to use "Kubla Khan" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Allow students to view Itka Zygmuntowicz's testimony and poem. You may have to do this several times. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=khs9MsCnI38>

Check for Understanding- Ask them to write down each image she uses and what that image conveys. Also, they should note what types of figurative language is used and how that helps to convey Ms. Zygmontowicz's message.

Independent Practice- Ask students to write down something (shoes, posters, picture, book, etc.) they see in the classroom and explain it in concrete and abstract terms. Students will then play bingo to see if they can correctly identify each item. The winner will receive a prize.

Homework- Pick a poem and have students analyze the imagery. This can be done in essay form or summarization.