Adventures in Language: Similes and Metaphors

Learning objective: To identify and use figurative language, specifically similes and metaphors, to describe characters and settings.

Read the story about Nova the owl below. Look for the descriptive phrases and answer the questions to show how well you understand them.

Nova the owl sat upon her favourite branch, watching the night sky. To Nova, the moon was a silver coin tossed into the velvet pocket of the night. She felt as wise as an ancient wizard as she gazed at the stars. Below her, the forest floor was a dark blanket, quiet and still. The wind whispered through the leaves like a soft secret, tickling the feathers on her wings. Nova loved how these word pictures painted a scene in her mind, making the world feel magical.

Word bank: Simile · Metaphor · Description · Comparison · Imagine · Vivid

1. Find a simile in the passage that describes how the wind sounds. How do we know it is a simile? (2 marks)

2. Nova describes the moon as 'a silver coin'. Is this a simile or a metaphor? Explain why. (2 marks)

3. What does the author mean when they say the forest floor was 'a dark blanket'? (2 marks)

4. Write your own simile to describe how bright the stars look in the sky. (2 marks)

5. Why do writers use similes and metaphors instead of just saying 'the wind was quiet' or 'the moon was bright'? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Nova the owl looking at the 'silver coin' moon and the 'dark blanket' forest. Include one extra detail from the story in your drawing.

Extension challenge: Choose your favourite animal character, like Max the monkey or Finn the dolphin. Write three sentences about them using one simile and one metaphor to describe their personality or where they live.