

Name: Date:

Understanding metaphor

Read Steve Turner's poem *It's Raining Cats and Dogs* to the class or ask them to read it themselves. This poem can be found in the following collection: *The day I fell down the toilet, and other poems. Steve Turner, 1997. Lion publishing.*

It isn't really raining cats and dogs. If somebody says it's raining cats and dogs, they mean it is raining heavily, that there is a lot of rain. The metaphor isn't literal, it is figurative. It helps us understand the world.

- If I say: 'You eat like a pig' that is a simile.
- If I say: 'You are a pig' that is a metaphor.

It gives us a more powerful image than just saying 'you are a messy eater'

A lot of every day sayings and expressions are metaphors. Have you heard these expressions? Tick them if you have.

- I've got butterflies in my stomach.
- My legs turned to jelly and I couldn't move.
- We'd better go back to square one and start again.
- Shake a leg, come on, let's go.

Can you think of some more? Work in small groups and find at least 3 more sayings that use figurative language. Look through newspapers if you get stuck. Write them in the space below.

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In the humorous poem by Steve Turner, he imagined that it really did rain cats and dogs. Take one of the sayings literally and create a poem. Imagine if your legs really did turn to jelly! Or if you had little butterflies in your stomach! What then?

