

Name _____

LANGUAGE ARTS: Figurative Language (*Colorful Language*)

Examples from

1. *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse
2. Woody Guthrie Lyrics from *Dust Bowl Ballads*;
"Dust Storm Disaster" (The Great Dust Storm)

The language in this book and song offer many wonderful opportunities to explore different poetic devices and figurative language. For example:

metaphor: "heaven's shadow crept across the plains"

personification: "soothed the parched lips of land"

repetition: "certain the grass would grow again,
certain the weeds would grow again,
certain the wheat would grow again, too."

simile: "like a curtain of black rolled down"

hyperbole: "We thought it was our judgment,
We thought it was our doom."

Use a yellow marker and highlight the metaphor:

"We saw outside our window,
Where wheat fields they had grown,
Was now a rippling ocean
Of dust the wind had blown."

Identify and write down other metaphors while reading.

Later, be prepared to share these with the class.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Personification is found in the "character" of Nature in the book, *Out Of the Dust*. It affects the other characters, affects events, has a life and will of its own. When reading the book, write examples of the personification of nature. Try to find examples which are also examples of personification where possible.

Examples showing the ways in which Nature is a character in *Out of the Dust*:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Use a yellow marker, and highlight the simile:

"After the dust bowl, farmers learned new plowing practices. Instead of cutting straight furrows in the earth, their tractors now made big, sweeping arcs, like waves in the ocean, to keep the soil from blowing away."
(from *Angels in the Dust* by Margot Their Raven)

What are the phrases below an example of?

- a) simile
- b) metaphor
- c) personification
- d) hyperbole

"a long-legged girl with a wide mouth and cheekbones like bicycle handles"
"the dust turned toward the house like a fired locomotive"
"winds came, bringing a red dust like prairie fire, hot and peppery"
"his legs like willow limbs"

Identify and write down other similes while reading.
Later, be prepared to share these with the class.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

YOUR WAY

Billie Jo often used colorful language in her poems. Read each of the passages on this page. Then, in your own words, write what Billie Jo means. Identify the poetic technique used.

<u>Passage from book</u>	<u>is an example of...</u>	<u>and, in my own words, means.....</u>
"She's (ma) an old mule of the subject of my schooling."	<u>metaphor</u>	
"Ma is bittering. I can see it in her mouth."		
"My fingers leave sighs in the dust."		
"The wind took my voice and busted it into a thousand pieces."	<u>personification</u>	
"On the first clear day we staggered out of our caves of dust."		

"James Kingsbury, photographers from the <i>Toronto Star</i> , ...came to Joyce City looking for some other piece of oddness."		
"... my throat felt like a trap had snapped down on it"	<u>simile</u>	
"I could see there was room for her (Louise) in Daddy."		

PROJECT: Double Timeline

Billie Jo mentions a number of news events in her poems. Work to create a double time line. On one side, list important story events. On the other side, list events in the world or national news. Research to add comments from people you interview to the events mentioned in the book. Begin your timeline with these events, and write them on roll paper. Add notes to your timeline while reading the book and research sources.

