

Writing Metaphor Assignment

After reading and analyzing Richard Wilbur's poem "The Writer," consider your experiences as a writer—the frustrations and the satisfactions you felt as you shaped words into meaning.

For this assignment, choose a metaphor that will tell others about you as a writer. You will build an extended metaphor, just as Wilbur has in his poem. Your goal is to show others what you are like as a writer.

Tips

- The metaphor you choose can take the form of an animal (e.g., an elephant, a fox, an ostrich), a machine (e.g., a bulldozer, a tank, a computer), or something else. Any metaphor you choose will be correct if you support your assertion.
- Your definition of yourself as a writer is crucial to your metaphor: Are you thinking of yourself as a paper writer, a letter writer, or something else? If your definition is not implied in the metaphor, you need to define it early in your project.
- Remember to provide detailed support for your metaphor. Think about specific characteristics of yourself as a writer that compare to the item you have chosen for your metaphor.

Project Options

- Write a *paper* that presents your metaphor. Choose the format that works best for your explanation. You might choose comparison/contrast to work through the ways that you compare to the object you've chosen. You could choose to write a persuasive paper that explains why the metaphor you've chosen is best. Other formats will work as well. Don't feel limited to these two.
- Create a *scrapbook* that presents your metaphor to a reader. You can include photos, magazine clippings, drawings, text, and decorations—whatever makes sense for your metaphor. You can create a paper-based scrapbook, or work online in PowerPoint, using a slide for each page of your scrapbook.
- Design the *CD cover* for a soundtrack for a movie of your writing process. Your soundtrack should include songs that directly connect to your metaphor. Create the CD cover that includes the song list with artists' names and liner notes that explain the choices. The cover should communicate your metaphor to someone who looks at the details there. If desired, you can burn a CD of your playlist to include, but including musical files is not required.
- Compose an *acrostic poem* that spells the metaphor that you have chosen with the first letters of each word. The poem should demonstrate how the metaphor you have chosen describes you as a writer. If desired, you may include a short explanation that points out additional details.

- Write a *letter* to the class that describes and explains the metaphor that you have chosen. Since none of us know much about you as a writer, this is your chance to tell us—using first-person, friendly language—what we should know about you!
- Create a *transcript* for a cartoon interview with the object/person that you have chosen for your metaphor. Use some make-believe to guess what the object/person would tell you. If it helps, think of a Disney version of the interview as you get started. As part of the interview, make sure that the connections between you as a writer and the object/person are clear. Ask it to share its feelings about the comparison, for instance.
- Compose a *short story* that tells the story of you and your metaphor. You might think of any short story format, but in particular fables or picture books might be a good place to start since they are often shorter texts that communicate a message quickly. Remember that your story must show how you as a writer are like your metaphor.
- Write a *script* for a silent movie that communicates your metaphor. Your script should include details on the images/actions that will appear on the screen as well as the text that will appear on the intertitles (the text that appears on screen between the video of actions). If desired, you could film your movie or create a storyboard mock-up in PowerPoint.
- Compose a *song* that communicates your metaphor. By reading (or listening to) your lyrics, others should understand why you have compared yourself to the object or person that you did. You can compose your lyrics to an existing tune or write your own music for the song. If desired, plan to perform or record your song in addition to turning in your lyrics (but performance isn't required).
- Reveal all in a *tabloid exposé* that tells readers about you as a writer. Detail your metaphor in a newspaper story like those that you see in the checkout line at the grocery store (e.g., *The National Enquirer*, *Star*). If you prefer a more mainstream magazine, pretend you are a celebrity author and your metaphor is being described in *Us* or *People*. To get started, imagine that the magazine's writer has secret footage of you writing. Write the story that the reporter would turn in to the editor.