Activities

Similes and Quotes

Grades: 6–8

Street Magic
By Tamora Pierce
The Circle Opens Quartet
Book 1: Magic Steps
Book 2: Street Magic
Book 3: Cold Fire
Book 4: Shatterglass

Style: Each of the tales in The Circle Opens is enriched by and derives both depth and individual expression through the author's choice of language and stylistic devices.
**Simile:** A metaphoric expression using "like" or "as", in which a word or phrase ordinarily used for one thing is applied to another, a *simile* employs vivid language to clarify or enhance an image in the reader’s mind. Discuss the structure and impact of the following similes:

"As silent as a shark streaking toward prey, Alzena Dihanur ran across the cobblestones." (Book 1, page 101)

"I'm weak as an overcooked noodle." (Book 1, page 164)

"Nevertheless, she sent out magic like a calming bath..." (Book 2, page25)

"...the lines staggered across the page like drunken men." (Book, 3, page76)

"Everyone knows a prathmun lies as easily as he breathes." (Book IV, p. 30)

"…said Poppy, her voice as tart as vinegar." (Book 4, page 54)

Search the books for other figurative descriptions of this kind. Share and discuss some of your favorites. Create your own similes in different descriptive writing tasks.

- Discuss the significance of the following quotes in the contexts in which they were spoken as well as in the broader context of life in general.

  "Too much education does ruin a perfectly good mind." (Duke Vedris IV, Book 1, page 213)

  "Even an ill wind blows some good..." (Sandry, Book 1, page 165)

  "Sometimes, thinking ahead was just as good as magic." (Rosethorn, Book 2, page78)
"You're born with magic, it just gets frustrated if you get older and you don't do anything real with it, so it breaks out." (Briar, Book 2, page 90)

"Don't fight the body the gods send you." (Olennika Potcracker, Book 3, page 120)

"You don't know what you can do until you're tested." (Frospine, Book 3, page 235)

"We are great believers in time... and the eternal balance of things."
(Jumshida, Book 4, page 237).

"It [teaching] is a matter of persuasion, not orders." (Book 4, page 120)

Subjects:
Literature, Vocabulary, Writing, Arts and Creativity