

“HOME OF THE BRAVE” by Katherine Applegate  
TEACHER’S GUIDE by Carolee Dean  
Poetic and Literary Devices

*Home of the Brave* is a verse novel by Katherine Applegate. It is the story of a teenage boy named Kek, a Sudanese refugee who saw his father and brother killed in Africa and then came to America to live with his aunt. The spare verse is accessible for students ages 10 and up, yet the themes of relocation, ostracism, and political oppression make this book of interest for high school students as well, especially low readers (high interest-low readability). It fits well with themes of African studies. The variety of poetic and literary devices found in this story make it a good resource for covering those topics in preparation for SBA testing.

This teacher’s guide focuses primarily on exploring the poetic and literary devices found in the novel. It is geared toward low readers. The index on page 2 gives brief directions for each of the activities.

For additional teacher guides and other free writing tips visit the Teacher Resources Page at <http://caroleedean.blogspot.com>.

Questions or comments may be directed to [caroleedean@yahoo.com](mailto:caroleedean@yahoo.com)

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## INDEX

### **p. 3 Metaphors**

(Pass out this sheet and also display it on overhead or document camera. Discuss the examples of metaphor from the book and have students brainstorm examples that you write on the board. Then have the class do the assignment, creating examples of metaphor following the directions on the handout).

### **p. 4-7 Literary Terms – Treasure Hunt**

p. 4 - Terms Overhead – (Use this overhead to go over the terms *metaphor*, *simile*, *personification*, and *onomatopoeia*)

p. 5 – Examples from the book - (You may either copy these and hand these out to students, or cut them apart and post them around the room like a true treasure hunt).

p. 6 – Treasure Hunt Worksheet – (Have students write down the number of the sentence that is an example of each literary device AND write down the sentence AND underline the part of the sentence that is in bold that helps them know what kind of device is being used. Number 2 is an example of personification because the car is acting like a person, but some may think it is onomatopoeia because coughs and burps are sounds. You can debate this if you want. Do the words *cough* and *burp* sounds like coughs and burps? You can have them try to say the words so they sound like what they are describing.)

p. 7 – Answers Overhead – (project this on the board to go over the answers)

### **p. 8-12 More Literary/Poetic Terms**

p. 8 – Pass out the list of literary terms and review the definitions.

p. 9-12 Overhead – (Project the examples from the book found on pages 9-12 and discuss which devices are being used in each example. You may want to cover up the terms until the students have a chance to refer to page 8 to guess which devices are being used. Several passages use multiple devices.)

### **p. 13-16 TESTS**

p. 13-14 Practice Tests (let students use the page 8 definitions of literary devices to do the two practice tests.

p. 15-16 Combined Test (This test covers the same items as the practice test. Have students attempt this without the page 7 list. This is a good practice for SBA.)

p. 17 – test answers

# METAPHORS

from *Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate

**Directions:** Before you get started, read the poem on page 150 and discuss as a class. On a separate piece of paper write 10 lines of metaphor. They may be 10 different metaphors, or you may start with one metaphor and then write a poem based on that metaphor. Use the following examples to guide you.

*Hunger is a wild dog  
gnawing on a dry bone,  
mad with impatience  
but hoping still.*

A **metaphor** often uses a concrete symbol (something that can be seen or heard or touched) to represent an abstract concept like hunger or death or love.

*Summer is ice cream and skate boards  
and sweet grass  
under your free toes.*

A **metaphor** may be used to describe a season by listing some of the things that happen during that season.

*A cow is god with a wet nose.*

A **metaphor** may also be used to draw comparisons between two concrete objects to expand the understanding of the thing being described or to draw a comparison.

## Literary Devices:

(for use with overhead)

**Metaphor**-comparing two things without using like or as...

Ex. *Love is a battlefield.*

**Simile**- comparing two things using like or as

Ex. Love **is like** a battlefield. Love **is as** dangerous **as** a battlefield.

**Personification**- giving human qualities to a non-human object or animal.

Ex. The **moon laughed** at me.

**Onomatopoeia**- words that sound like you say them...moo, meow, buzz, hiss

Ex. The cat **hissed**. (the word “hiss” sounds like a hiss.)

## *Home of the Brave* TREASURE HUNT

Directions: cut apart and glue on construction paper. Put up around the room and ask students to write down the examples on the Literary Devices worksheet.

#1 This cold **is like** claws on my skin.

#2 His **car** is red and **coughs and burps**.

#3 A cow **is** god with a wet nose.

#4 She **moos**, a harsh and mournful sound.

#5 Only the **snow talks**.

#6 Inside my school, the floor shines **like** ice.

#7 When I take a breath of icy air, it **is like** swallowing an arrow.

#8 Hunger **is** a wild dog

#9 A car **whooshes** past.

#10 Summer **is** ice cream and skate boards.

Literary Devices Treasure Hunt:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Metaphor**-comparing two things without using like or as...

Ex. *Love is a battlefield.*

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Ex. The cat **hissed**. (the word "hiss" sounds like a hiss.)

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### **HOME OF THE BRAVE TREASURE HUNT**

**Directions:** Find the sentences from *Home of the Brave* that are examples of the literary devices listed above and write them on the lines below. Write the number next to the line. Write the number first, before you write the sentence. Circle the part of the sentences that lets you know what kind of literary device it is. This will be in **BOLD** in the sentence.

Metaphor:

# \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

Simile:

# \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

Personification:

# \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

Onomatopoeia:

# \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

## ANSWERS:

### **Metaphor:**

#3 A cow **is** god with a wet nose.

#8 Hunger **is** a wild dog

#10 Summer **is** ice cream and skate boards.

### **Simile:**

#1 This cold **is like** claws on my skin.

#6 Inside my school, the floor shines **like** ice.

#7 When I take a breath of icy air, it **is like** swallowing an arrow.

### **Personification:**

#2 His **car** is red and **coughs and burps**.

#5 Only the **snow talks**

### **Onomatopoeia**

#4 She **moos**, a harsh and mournful sound.

#9 A car **whooshes** past.

## LITERARY AND POETIC DEVICES FOUND IN THE NOVEL

**Alliteration:** the repetition of the initial consonant. There should be at least two repetitions in a row.

Ex. *Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.*

**Assonance:** the repetition of similar vowel sounds in a sentence.

Ex. The hoops of doom.

**Metaphor:** A comparison in which one thing is said to be another.

**Simile:** a figure of speech involving a comparison between unlike things using *like*, *as*, or *as though*.

Ex. Love **is like** a battlefield.

She acts **as though** love were a battlefield.

Love **is as** dangerous **as** a battlefield.

**Personification:** giving human qualities to animals or objects.

Ex. The **moon laughed** at me.

**Pun:** A word is used which has two meanings at the same time, which results in humor.

Ex. They took **the fork in the road**. (It could refer to where the road splits, but it could also mean a dinner fork).

**Onomatopoeia:** - the use of words to imitate the sounds they describe.

Ex. The cat **hissed**. (the word “hiss” sounds like a hiss.)

**Repetition:** the repeating of a word or phrase.

Ex. **I love** baseball, **I love** America, and **I love** apple pie.

## Examples of Literary and Poetic Devices Used in *Home of the Brave*

This cold **is like** claws on my skin. P. 3 (simile)

His **car** is red and **coughs and burps**. P. 6 (personification, maybe onomatopoeia )

We drive past buildings,  
**everywhere** buildings.  
**Everywhere** cars.  
**Everywhere** dead trees. P. 8 (repetition)

A cow **is** god with a wet nose. P. 15 (metaphor)

She **moos**, a harsh and mournful sound. P. 16 (onomatopoeia)

The **night** Ganwar lost his hand  
was the **night** I lost  
my father and brother,  
the **night** of men in the sky with guns,  
the **night** the earth opened up **like** a black pit (simile)  
and **swallowed** my old life whole. P. 21 (repetition) (personification)

In my old home back in Africa,  
cattle mean life.  
They are our reason  
**to** rise with the sun,  
**to** move with the rains,  
**to** rest with the stars.  
They are the way we know  
our place in the world.

Have you lost your ears, you stubborn **brother**? he would say.  
You must listen to our father and **mother**. P. 37 (internal rhyme)

Sometimes, it seems to **me**,  
a hole can **be**  
as real and solid  
as a boulder or a **tree**. (p. 39) (end rhyme). Not the entire poem, just this section.

Only the **snow talks**. P. 58 (personification)

In the camp we had a teacher

**Some days**, yes,

**some days**, no.

**Some days** I was too ill

with the fever to go.

**Some days** the teacher couldn't come

Because of the men with guns. P. 63 (repetition, slant rhyme with *come* and *guns*)

Inside my school, the floor shines **like** ice. P. 67 (simile)

She says, Don't eat the **mystery meat**,

if you value your life. P. 77 (internal rhyme with *eat* and *meat*, alliteration)

I stand still in the

stream of **students**. P. 77 (alliteration)

When my aunt leaves,

the apartment grows hushed

**as** the air before a storm. P. 92 (simile)

Then I close the top

and wait,

while all around me

the **machines hum and talk**. P. 94 (personification)

Hold on, he says.

We'll see about that soon enough.

You just got here, Kek.

You need some time **to get your feet wet**.

I check my shoes.

It's true enough that they are dry. P. 108 (pun)

Dave turns to Ganwar,

who's sprawled on the couch

like a **dozing dog**. P. 108 (alliteration)

Hannah tips my glove over the box

and the quarters slip in with

a happy **jangle**. P. 114 (onomatopoeia)

When I take a breath of icy air,  
it **is like** swallowing an arrow. P. 116 (simile)

I always **knew** what to **do**, he says.  
Morning they'd graze, (says and graze are slant rhymes)  
**noon** we'd **lead** them to a **stream**,  
**afternoon** we'd head for **home**. (alliteration with *head* and *home*)  
We always had somewhere to **go**.  
Not like here, stuck in the apartment  
or at **school**. P. 125 (assonance with *noon, afternoon and school, home and go, knew*  
and *do*.)

Ganwar's words **lie** in my **lap**  
**like** huge rocks. P. 127 (alliteration) also simile

The **wind slaps** my cheeks. P. 136 (personification)

When I bury my **face** in **Gol's old hide**  
I smell **hay** and dung and **life**.  
She shelters me **like** a warm wall,  
and that **is** enough for **this day**. P. 137 (assonance)

(*she shelters* and *warm wall* are alliterations. *Hay* and *day* are internal rhymes. *Hide* and *life* are slant rhymes.)

I wait for Ganwar  
to spit out the word **no**,  
but he gives a slow **nod**.  
Dave looks at his arm **clock**.  
Ten minutes, he says, **tops**. P. 138 (slant rhyme/assonance) notice that the final  
consonants (d,ck,p) are  
similar in that they are all stops.

Ganwar follows me  
through the thick **crunching** snow. P. 139. (onomatopoeia) through the thick is  
alliteration

To carry them, unseen as wind,  
**is** a heavy burden. P. 149 (metaphor? Maybe. *To carry them* is a concept, but not a thing,  
although a concept is a thing.)  
Hunger **is** a wild dog  
gnawing on a dry bone,  
mad with impatience  
but hoping still. P. 150 (metaphor)

By the time we get there  
the **sun** has already **said good night**. P. 155 (personification)

A car **whooshes** past. P. 157 (onomatopoeia)

Each book is **like** a door  
waiting to be unlocked. P. 160 (simile)

Summer **is** ice cream and skate boards  
and sweet grass  
under your free toes. P. 189 (metaphor)

Hannah tips my glove over the box  
and the quarters slip in with  
a happy **jangle**. P. 114 (onomatopoeia)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Practice Test – Part One – Literary/Poetic Devices in *Home of the Brave*

Directions: The following lines are from *Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate. The words in bold are examples of a variety of literary devices. Circle the letter that best corresponds with the literary device being used in each excerpt.

1. This cold **is like** claws on my skin. P. 3  
a. personification    b. simile    c. allusion    d. hyperbole
2. His **car** is red and **coughs and burps**. P. 6  
a. personification    b. metaphor    c. pun    d. oxymoron
3. We drive past buildings,  
**everywhere** buildings.  
**Everywhere** cars.  
**Everywhere** dead trees. P. 8  
a. simile    b. metaphor    c. onomatopoeia    d. repetition
4. A cow **is** god with a wet nose. P. 15  
a. metaphor    b. alliteration    c. hyperbole    d. assonance
5. She **moos**, a harsh and mournful sound. P. 16  
a. Metaphor    b. pun    c. onomatopoeia    d. repetition
6. The night Ganwar lost his hand  
was the night I lost  
my father and brother,  
the night of men in the sky with guns,  
the **night** the earth opened up like a black pit  
and **swallowed** my old life whole. P. 21  
a. personification    b. repetition    c. allusion    d. metaphor
7. Only the **snow talks**. P. 58  
a. personification    b. repetition    c. allusion    d. metaphor
8. Inside my school, the floor shines **like** ice. P. 67  
a. personification    b. simile    c. metaphor    d. hyperbole
9. She says, Don't eat the **mystery meat**,  
if you value your life.  
a. personification    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. hyperbole
10. I stand still in the  
stream of students. P. 77  
a. personification    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. hyperbole

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Practice Test – Part Two – Literary/Poetic Devices in *Home of the Brave*

Directions: The following lines are from *Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate. The words in bold are examples of a variety of literary devices. Circle the letter that best corresponds with the literary device being used in each excerpt.

11. When my aunt leaves,  
the apartment grows hushed  
**as** the air before a storm. P. 92  
a. personification    b. alliteration    c. pun    d. simile
12. Then I close the top/ and wait, /while all around me/ the **machines hum and talk**. P. 94  
a. personification    b. alliteration    c. pun    d. simile
13. Hold on, he says.  
We'll see about that soon enough.  
You just got here, Kek.  
You need some time **to get your feet wet**.  
I check my shoes.  
It's true enough that they are dry. P. 108  
a. personification    b. alliteration    c. pun    d. simile
14. The **wind slaps** my cheeks. P. 136  
a. personification    b. alliteration    c. pun    d. simile
15. I wait for Ganwar  
to spit out the word no,  
but he gives a slow **nod**.  
Dave looks at his arm **clock**.  
Ten minutes, he says, **tops**.  
a. assonance    b. pun    d. oxymoron    e. repetition
16. Hunger **is** a wild dog P. 150  
a. personification    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. simile
17. A car **whooshes** past. P. 157  
a. onomatopoeia    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. simile
18. Each book is **like** a door. P. 160  
a. onomatopoeia    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. simile
19. Summer **is** ice cream and skate boards. P. 189  
a. onomatopoeia    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. simile
20. Hannah tips my glove over the box/ and the quarters slip in with/ a happy **jangle**. P. 114  
a. onomatopoeia    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. simile

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Combined Test – Literary/ Poetic Devices in *Home of the Brave*

Directions: The following lines are from *Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate. The words in bold are examples of a variety of literary devices. Circle the letter that best corresponds with the literary device being used in each excerpt.

1. This cold **is like** claws on my skin. P. 3  
a. personification    b. simile    c. allusion    d. hyperbole
2. His **car** is red and coughs and burps. P. 6  
a. personification    b. metaphor    c. pun    d. oxymoron
3. We drive past buildings,  
**everywhere** buildings.  
**Everywhere** cars.  
**Everywhere** dead trees. P. 8  
a. simile    b. metaphor    c. onomatopoeia    d. repetition
4. A cow **is** god with a wet nose. P. 15  
a. metaphor    b. alliteration    c. hyperbole    d. assonance
5. She **moos**, a harsh and mournful sound. P. 16  
a. Metaphor    b. pun    c. onomatopoeia    d. repetition
6. . The night Ganwar lost his hand  
was the night I lost  
my father and brother,  
the night of men in the sky with guns,  
the **night** the earth opened up like a black pit  
and **swallowed** my old life whole. P. 21  
a. personification    b. repetition    c. allusion    d. metaphor
7. Only the **snow talks**. P. 58  
a. personification    b. repetition    c. allusion    d. metaphor
8. Inside my school, the floor shines **like** ice. P. 67  
a. personification    b. simile    c. metaphor    d. hyperbole
9. She says, Don't eat the **mystery meat**,  
if you value your life.  
a. personification    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. hyperbole
10. I stand **still** in the  
stream of **students**. P. 77  
a. personification    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. hyperbole

11. When my aunt leaves,  
the apartment grows hushed  
**as** the air before a storm. P. 92  
a. personification    b. alliteration    c. pun    d. simile
12. Then I close the top/ and wait, /while all around me/ the **machines hum and talk**. P. 94  
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13. Hold on, he says.  
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You just got here, Kek.  
You need some time **to get your feet wet**.  
I check my shoes.  
It's true enough that they are dry. P. 108  
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14. The **wind slaps** my cheeks. P. 136  
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15. I wait for Ganwar  
to spit out the word no,  
but he gives a slow **nod**.  
Dave looks at his arm **clock**.  
Ten minutes, he says, **tops**.  
a. assonance    b. pun    d. oxymoron    e. repetition
16. Hunger **is** a wild dog P. 150  
a. personification    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. simile
17. A car **whooshes** past. P. 157  
a. onomatopoeia    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. simile
18. Each book is **like** a door. P. 160  
a. onomatopoeia    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. simile
19. Summer **is** ice cream and skate boards. P. 189  
a. onomatopoeia    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. simile
20. Hannah tips my glove over the box/ and the quarters slip in with/ a happy **jangle**. P. 114  
a. onomatopoeia    b. alliteration    c. metaphor    d. simile

## **ANSWER KEY**

- 1. b (simile)**
- 2. a (personification)**
- 3. d (repetition)**
- 4. a (metaphor)**
- 5. c (onomatopoeia)**
- 6. a (personification)**
- 7. a (personification)**
- 8. b (simile)**
- 9. b (alliteration)**
- 10. b (alliteration)**
- 11. d (simile)**
- 12. a (personification)**
- 13. c (pun)**
- 14. a (personification)**
- 15. a (assonance)**
- 16. c (metaphor)**
- 17. a (onomatopoeia)**
- 18. d (simile)**
- 19. c (metaphor)**
- 20. a (onomatopoeia)**