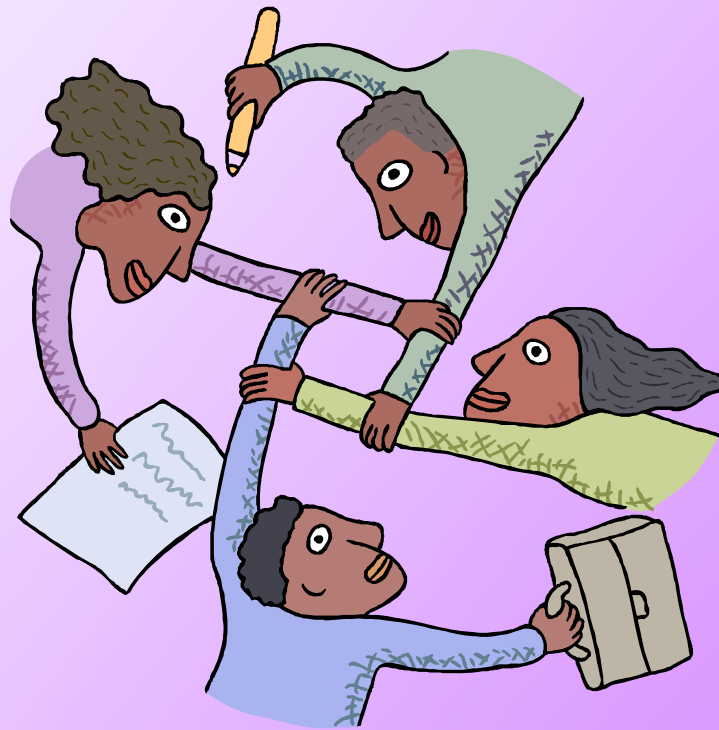


# Collaborative Comparison Poems



Laura Candler  
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# Collaborative Comparison Poems

## What are Collaborative Poems?

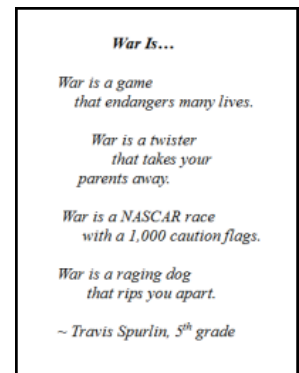
Collaborative Poems are poems written by more than one person. This might be an entire class, a team, or pairs of students.

Collaborative poems could even be written through the use of live, online chat or video conferencing. In the collaborative model, groups of writers choose a topic and brainstorm their ideas together. Then each person writes one stanza of the poem and the group decides on the final order of the stanzas. Finally, the group chooses a presentation method and prepares their poem to be shared with others.



## What are Comparison Poems?

Comparison poems are topic-based poems that use extended similes and/or metaphors for imagery. One object or idea is compared to something completely different; the poem could be based on a single extended metaphor or several smaller similes and metaphors. You can find a student example of a comparison poem on page 6.

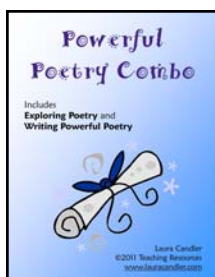


## Collaborative Comparison Poem Lesson Overview

Before the lesson, study the comparison poem example on page 6. Even though this poem was written by one student, it follows the format that will be used in this collaborative lesson. The final team poem will be focused on one topic and will have 3 or 4 stanzas that each consist of a single comparison. Students will brainstorm in teams of 3 or 4, and then each person on the team will select a single image to contribute to the final poem. This lesson will be most effective if you model it by creating a class poem on the first day and have teams create their collaborative poems on the second day. Finally, students will prepare a multimedia presentation of their poem for the class. You could also extend the lesson by allowing time for individual students to write their own comparison poems.

## Materials Needed

The following materials will be helpful in this lesson: individual dry erase boards, sticky notes, copies of the activity pages, and a method of displaying the examples used in the lesson and student work.



## Imagery Practice

If your students have not had any prior experience writing similes and metaphors, you may want to start with an introduction to imagery. You can find complete lessons for teaching imagery in the Powerful Poetry Combo Mini Pack at [www.lauracandler.com](http://www.lauracandler.com).

# Class Collaborative Poems

## Suggested Lesson Sequence



1. **Introduce Sample Poem** - To begin, you'll need an example of a comparison poem with four stanzas. For the purposes of this example, I'll use the sample poem, "War Is," but you can use another example that you create yourself. Show students the poem and ask them to identify the four metaphors. Ask if anyone can think of a different metaphor for war, and give them time to generate a few ideas. If they have dry erase boards, they can work alone or with a partner to come up with an alternate image. Let students share their images with the class and discuss whether each image is a simile or a metaphor. Some images may not be examples of either one, so this part of the lesson will give you the opportunity to clarify what types of images are appropriate for this type of poem. Personally, I find that metaphors work best for comparison poems because the imagery seems stronger.
2. **Brainstorm Poem Topics** - Now display page 7 or write the words "Comparison Poem Topics" on the board. Ask students to think of other topics besides war that would work as the subject of a comparison poem. If they have trouble thinking of topics, get them started with some of the ideas on page 8.
3. **Vote on a Class Topic** - When you have at least 10 items on the board, conduct a secret ballot or "heads down" vote to select a single topic for the class poem.
4. **Individuals Brainstorm Metaphors** - After the topic has been selected, ask individuals to think of metaphors for that topic. In addition to naming the metaphor, they need to develop it to show how the two are similar. For example, if the topic is "Fear" and the metaphor is "ghost," the full image might be "Fear is a ghost that haunts my dreams and chases me through a graveyard." As students begin to come up with suitable images, have them share their images with the class. This step will activate the imaginations of the other students as they begin to catch on, and soon they will all be writing metaphors. If some students finish with one, challenge them to write another.
5. **Select Four Metaphors** - After the class has generated at least 6 or 7 images, it's time to choose the four to be used in the class poem. You can do this with another secret ballot vote, or you can simply select the images you feel are the strongest.
6. **Editing and Revising** - Sometimes the images will need a little work to make them stronger, so this would be a good time to introduce the editing and revision process. Show students how to replace weak adjectives and nouns with strong words that have more impact. Then ask students to decide on the order of the stanzas so that they are presented in a logical sequence, usually with the strongest image last. Discuss the arrangement of the lines on the page so that there's plenty of white space and the poem flows well.
7. **Recording the Final Poem** - Ask your students to copy the final class poem into a journal or on paper to use as a reference later.

# Team Collaborative Poems



## Suggested Lesson Sequence

1. **Review Class Activity** - Start by reviewing the steps you followed to create a Class Collaborative Poem in your previous lesson. Review the difference between a simile and a metaphor.
2. **Brainstorm Additional Topics** - Show the page or chart of Comparison Poem Topics you brainstormed earlier. Ask students if they want to add any more topics to the list and give them a few minutes to make suggestions.
3. **Students Choose Topics** - Tell students that they are going to work in teams of three or four students to write a collaborative poem on one of the topics. First they will list the topics they prefer to use, and then you will form teams of students who want to write on the same topic.
4. **Form Poetry Teams** - Give each student one of the Collaborative Poetry Topic Slips found on page 9. Ask them to write down their 5 favorite topics from the class chart, and collect the slips. Use the slips to create teams of 3 or 4 students who chose the same topic. Not every student will be able to get his or her first choice, but using the slips will allow you to satisfy most students. Be sure to consider student personalities as you make your teams. It's perfectly fine to create teams of all boys or all girls for this activity; I've noticed that boys and girls seem more comfortable writing poetry in gender-alike teams.
5. **Team Members Brainstorm Metaphors** - Seat students in teams by their topics. Give each team a pad of sticky notes and have one person write their topic on one sticky note and place it in the center of the team. Then ask students to brainstorm metaphors for that topic, calling out their metaphors and writing each one on a different sticky note as they work. They should place the sticky notes with their ideas around the topic and brainstorm until they have at least 6 or 7 images.
6. **Select Four Metaphors** - After the team has generated a sufficient number of images, it's time to choose the four to be used in the team poem. Each team member will select ONE image to use for the team poem. If two people want to use the same image, the one who thought of the idea has priority. However, students may use an image that they didn't contribute to the brainstorming session as long as the author of the metaphor doesn't want to use it.
7. **Editing and Revising Metaphors** - Usually the images will need a little work to make them stronger. Ask students to spend a few minutes revising them to improve them. Encourage them to work together with their team to make sure all four images are equally powerful and effective. They should also check each other's spelling. Working on individual dry erase boards is very effective because it's easy for team members to see each metaphor, and it's easy for them to make revisions on the fly.

Collaborative Poetry Topic Slips		
1. My topic is _____	2. My topic is _____	3. My topic is _____
4. My topic is _____	5. My topic is _____	6. My topic is _____
7. My topic is _____	8. My topic is _____	9. My topic is _____
10. My topic is _____	11. My topic is _____	12. My topic is _____



8. **Determine the Stanza Order** - After all four images have been edited and revised, students should determine the order of the stanzas. Sometimes there will be a natural beginning and ending metaphor, but other times they may have to decide randomly. If students become overly focused on this issue, have them write the metaphors on index cards, shuffle them, and arrange them in random order.



9. **Record Team Comparison Poems** - Ask each person to record the entire team poem in a journal or on a sheet of paper. They should also record the date as well as the full names of all team members as contributing poets.

10. **Publish and/or Present Team Poems** - After the poems are finished, your students will want to share them with the class. You can create a class booklet of them or publish them on a class website, but it's also fun to have students stand up and share their written work. Here are some suggestions for team presentations:

- **Display and Read** - The simplest method is to display each team's poem while the team members take turns reading their own stanzas.
- **PowerPoint** - Another method is to let the team prepare a PowerPoint presentation of the poem with one stanza per slide. Students read aloud their own stanzas as they appear on the screen.
- **Prezi Presentations** - Prezi is like PowerPoint on steroids! Go to Prezi.com and watch the tutorial to learn a fun method of presenting content. Your students can create their own Prezi presentations of their poems to share with the class.



For more poetry lessons and printables by Laura Candler, please visit the Poetry page on Teaching Resources:  
[www.lauracandler.com/filecabinet/literacy/poetry.php](http://www.lauracandler.com/filecabinet/literacy/poetry.php)

Thanks to Francie Kugelman for her contributions to the lesson!

## Sample Comparison Poem

### *War Is...*

*War is a game  
that endangers many lives.*

*War is a twister  
that takes your  
parents away.*

*War is a NASCAR race  
with a 1,000 caution flags.*

*War is a raging dog  
that rips you apart.*

*~ Travis Spurlin, 5<sup>th</sup> grade*

# Comparison Poem Topics

## Comparison Poem Topics (Examples)

sadness  
joy  
friendship  
music  
Internet  
gossip

TV

anger  
love  
cell phones  
hope

war  
grief  
death  
computers  
books  
forgiveness

# Collaborative Poetry Topic Slips

<p>Name _____</p> <p><b>My Topic Preferences</b></p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____</p>	<p>Name _____</p> <p><b>My Topic Preferences</b></p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____</p>	<p>Name _____</p> <p><b>My Topic Preferences</b></p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____</p>
<p>Name _____</p> <p><b>My Topic Preferences</b></p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____</p>	<p>Name _____</p> <p><b>My Topic Preferences</b></p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____</p>	<p>Name _____</p> <p><b>My Topic Preferences</b></p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____</p>
<p>Name _____</p> <p><b>My Topic Preferences</b></p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____</p>	<p>Name _____</p> <p><b>My Topic Preferences</b></p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____</p>	<p>Name _____</p> <p><b>My Topic Preferences</b></p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____</p>



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Bingo Showdown:

Confusing Words Review

Character Bio Reports

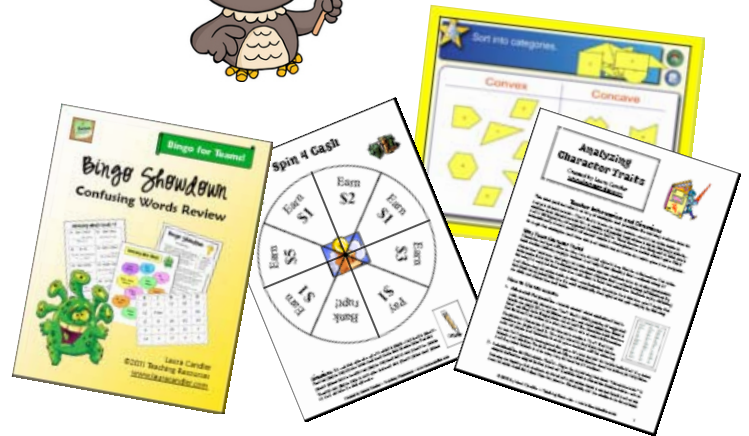
Analyzing Character Traits

Powerful Poetry Combo

Plural Noun Showdown

Sentence Go Round

Writing Powerful Poetry



Geometry: Exploring the Basics

Math Stations for Middle Grades (3-8)

Mastering Math Facts

Polygon Explorations

Polygon Explorations (Smartboard)

Place Value Spinner Games

Fraction Spinner Games

Simplify and Snap Fraction Game

Order of Operations Bingo

## Seasonal Teaching Packs

October

November

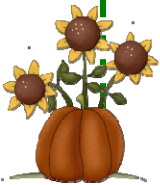
December

January

February (Free!)

March

April



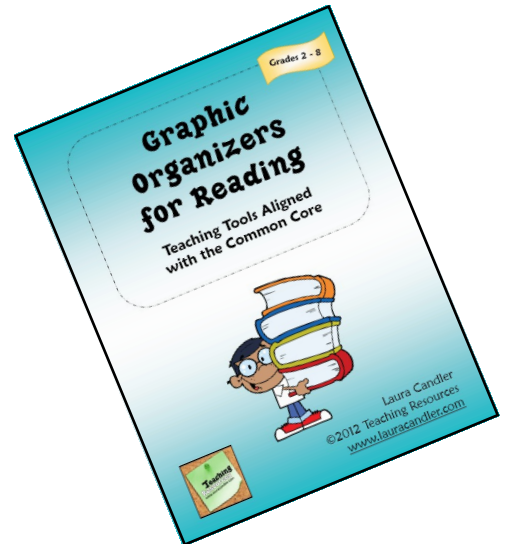
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