

LESSON PLAN TITLE: Sometimes I Feel

Writer-in-Residence: Peter Markus

Grade Level: 2nd-8th

Model Works Used: excerpt from The Battlefield Where the Moon Says I Love You, Frank Stafford

Literary Learning objective(s): Students will be able to express how they feel using similes and metaphors.

Themes: It's okay to feel certain ways at certain times especially in these uncertain times.

MDE/SEL Standards: Self Awareness, Knowledge of Language: Choose words and phrases for effect.

Materials Needed: paper and pencil, view video, if possible

Opening Activity/Pre-Discussion/Model Poem Discussion

Think about all the different ways out there in the world for us to feel.

Here are some of mine: afraid, peaceful, anxious, tired, angry, etc.

Create a list for yourself:

There are always different ways to say the same thing and this lesson is for helping you think about and practice that idea.

Here's an example that uses a simile and a metaphor: A simile is something writers use to compare two things using the word, "like." This writer also uses a metaphor to describe the world. A metaphor is comparing two things without using the word "like."

*Sometimes I feel like a spotlighted deer
and the world is a pick-up truck
full of toothless hunters.**

What feelings does this image make you think of? Write a list of all the feelings you think of when you read it:

Here are some that come to mind for me: I'm afraid, I'm trapped, bullied, ganged up on, treated unfairly.

Does the sentence actually say what the feeling is, directly? No.

And yet we understand how the poet is feeling, in a more interesting way than simply saying, “I feel afraid.”

Sometimes poets like to say things in a unique way with language, like using a secret code. Similes and metaphors are two examples.

Let’s practice that today by expressing how we sometimes feel, but not directly saying the feelings:

Here’s another example:

*Sometimes I feel like
a tree with no roots
and the world is a tornado
blowing its way around town.*

Do we always just feel one way? Are we always feeling helpless, or afraid, or happy?
No.

There are always “other times.”

So let’s write about some other feelings we might also feel.

*Other times I feel like a newborn bird
and the world is a tree
holding me in her arms.*

Writing Prompt:

Write a poem that begins:

Sometimes I feel like a _____ (noun to activate the simile)... then stretch out your sentence, give the noun an action (verb)_____

Keep the sentence going (connect it with the line that follows, “and the world is...

and the world is a _____ (noun as metaphor), then stretch out the feeling.

Other times, though, I feel like_____.

Think about a specific time: When I’m on the football field, when I’m playing Fortnite, when I’m in church, when I’m hanging out with my mom, etc.

I feel like a _____,

And the world is _____.....

End on this:

Right now, writing this poem, I feel like a _____.....

And the world is a _____ (stretch out, end poem).

Share / Reflect:

Once you’ve finished your poem, read it out loud to yourself. Maybe there are words you want to add? Share it aloud or via email with someone. Maybe even record yourself reading it. I’d love to see what you wrote. You can email me at Pete@insideoutdetroit.org

Reflection: How did writing your poem help you understand your emotions? In what ways can writing help us understand ourselves or help others understand us?

Your Poem

Sometimes I feel like a _____ (noun to activate the simile)

_____ (verb) and the world is a _____ (noun as metaphor),

Other times, though, I feel like _____.

When I am _____ (name about a specific activity)
I feel like a _____,

And the world is _____ ...

Right now, writing this poem, I feel like a _____ ...

And the world is a _____ (stretch out, end poem).

MDE/SEL Standards:

- Close reading or other analysis
- A step of the writing process
- Planning & Reflection Strategy
- New device, concept or theme
- Social-Emotional Learning
 - Self-Management
 - Social Awareness
 - Relationship Skills
 - Self-Awareness