

Thinking Metaphorically: A Learning Game
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“Ideal education? For me, ideal education is sitting on one end of a log with Mark Hopkins sitting on the other end.” This folk-saying is a simple word-picture of the equation of ideal education and the image of a worthy tutor in close relationship with a willing learner.

All metaphors are similar. They can be understood as parallel ideas—specifically, a concrete word-picture which is parallel in important ways to the more abstract idea that one wishes to clarify or illustrate.

Consider biblical metaphors:

Write the object, relationship, or proposition that is being illustrated.

1. _____ A tree planted by a river.
2. _____ A seed on stony ground.
3. _____ A tree so large that it provides space for all sorts of birds.

Try working in the other direction:

4. The Word (“Your Word is a . . .”) _____
5. Christ _____
6. The physical body of the godly person _____

Give four more from your recall of metaphors in Scripture:

- | | | |
|-----|-------|-------|
| 7. | _____ | _____ |
| 8. | _____ | _____ |
| 9. | _____ | _____ |
| 10. | _____ | _____ |

Now the Game Starts!

1. Preparation
 - a) Use 4 index cards
 - b) On each of two cards write the word or words that identify an object or idea which could be represented or illustrated through a metaphor. (Do not write the metaphor!) Mark I (for idea) in the upper right corner.
 - c) On each of the other two cards write two *metaphors*. Label these cards with a large M in the upper left corner. (Do not write the object or idea that the metaphor might illustrate.)
2. Quizzing
 - a) Offer your cards to another player. You draw a card from the other person’s hand; the other person draws one of yours. Each of you tries to think of an appropriate fulfillment of the card. For a metaphor, identify an appropriate object or idea. For an Idea card (the I cards) think of an appropriate metaphor.
 - b) For any response that you see as *appropriate* write the other person’s name and the response given by that person on the back of the card. (Be brief.)

- c) Take your cards to another person and repeat the process.
 - d) And again until time is called.
3. Scoring
- a) Each reasonable, clear, and valid metaphor-pairing response that you have collected counts as one point.
 - b) Deduct 2 points for each card that did not collect any acceptable responses.
4. Final task
- Keep the log, but don't include Mark Hopkins. Create a metaphor that expresses your view of *ideal education*. Try to use the log as a part of your metaphor.