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# Lesson Plan: The Heartbeat of a Song - Finding Poetry in Music

## Materials Needed:

- A notebook or journal dedicated to this 4-week unit
- Pen or pencil
- Device with internet access for playing music (e.g., computer, tablet, phone)
- Headphones (optional)
- Access to a music streaming service (like YouTube or Spotify)
- Printed copies of the lyrics for 2-3 of the student's favorite songs
- A printed "Poetic Device Cheat Sheet" (see below for content)

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## Lesson Plan (Week 1 of 4)

### Learning Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Identify at least two examples of simile and metaphor in song lyrics.
- Explain how these poetic devices create a specific feeling or image.
- Write a four-line stanza about a personal feeling using at least one simile or metaphor.

### Part 1: Introduction - What Does a Feeling Sound Like? (10 minutes)

1. **Activity: Musical Emotions.** Play short clips (30 seconds) of three very different songs: one that sounds happy/energetic, one that is slow/sad, and one that feels intense/dramatic. (Example: "Happy" by Pharrell Williams, "Someone Like You" by Adele, and the "Imperial March" from Star Wars).
2. **Discussion.** After each clip, ask:
   - "How did that music make you feel? What one word would you use to describe the mood?"
   - "What about the music made it feel that way? (e.g., the speed, the instruments, the singer's voice)."
3. **Make the Connection.** Explain: "Musicians use sound to create feelings. But they also use words in a special way, just like poets. Today, we're going to become 'lyric detectives' and find the poetry hidden inside your favorite songs!"

### Part 2: Mini-Lesson - The Poet's Secret Tools (10 minutes)

Introduce two of the most powerful "secret tools" that songwriters and poets use. Use the **Poetic Device Cheat Sheet** for this part.

1. **Simile (using "like" or "as"):** A simile compares two different things using the words "like" or "as" to make a description more vivid.
   - **Simple Example:** "The dog was *as fast as* lightning."
   - **Song Example:** "You make me smile like the sun." (from "Smile" by Uncle Kracker)
   - **Ask:** "How is this more interesting than just saying 'You make me happy'?"
2. **Metaphor (direct comparison):** A metaphor compares two things by saying one thing *is*

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another. It's a more direct and powerful comparison.
  - **Simple Example:** "Her voice *is* music to my ears."
  - **Song Example:** "'Cause baby, you're a firework." (from "Firework" by Katy Perry)
  - **Ask:** "What does it mean to call someone a 'firework'? What qualities are you giving them? (e.g., bright, exciting, beautiful)."

## Part 3: Guided Practice - Lyric Detectives (15 minutes)

1. **Choose a Song.** Take one of the student's pre-selected favorite songs with printed lyrics. Play the song while the student reads along.
2. **Go on the Hunt.** Together, read through the lyrics again, line by line. Use a highlighter or colored pencil to mark any potential similes or metaphors. Be a detective team!
3. **Analyze the Clues.** For each one you find, discuss:
   - "Is this a simile or a metaphor? How do you know?"
   - "What two things are being compared?"
   - "What feeling or picture does this comparison create in your head? Why do you think the songwriter chose those words?"

## Part 4: Creative Application - Your Feeling, Your Verse (20 minutes)

Now it's time for the student to become the songwriter!

1. **Brainstorm a Feeling.** Ask the student to choose a single, strong feeling. Examples: excitement, boredom, nervousness, peace, frustration. Have them write the feeling at the top of a fresh page in their notebook.
2. **Create a Poetic Comparison.**
   - For a **simile**, use this sentence starter: "[Your Feeling] is like _____." (e.g., "Boredom is like a clock with no hands.")
   - For a **metaphor**, use this sentence starter: "[Your Feeling] is a _____." (e.g., "Excitement is a rocket about to launch.")
3. **Write Your Stanza.** Instruct the student to write a four-line stanza (a mini-verse) about their chosen feeling. The goal is to include the simile or metaphor they just created. It doesn't have to rhyme perfectly; the focus is on expressing the feeling creatively.
4. **Share and Shine.** When finished, ask the student to read their stanza aloud. Give specific, positive feedback, such as, "Wow, saying nervousness is 'like walking on a tightrope' really paints a clear picture for me. I can feel that tension!"

## Part 5: Wrap-up & Looking Ahead (5 minutes)

1. **Review.** Ask: "In your own words, what is the difference between a simile and a metaphor?"
2. **Connect to the Unit.** Say: "You did an amazing job finding and using poetic tools today! Keep your ears open this week for any similes or metaphors you hear in songs on the radio or in things you read."
3. **Preview.** "Next week, we're going to explore another poetic tool called 'personification' and start thinking about the rhythm and beat of our words."

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## Differentiation & Extension

- **For Support:** Provide a pre-written list of similes and metaphors and have the student match them to the feeling they describe (e.g., Match "Anger is a volcano" to the feeling "Anger"). Use the sentence starters in Part 4 and offer to brainstorm ideas together.
- **For a Challenge (Extension):** Challenge the student to write a full song verse (6-8 lines) that includes both a simile AND a metaphor. Or, have them find 3 more examples of each in other songs and explain their effect on the listener.

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## Resource: Poetic Device Cheat Sheet

**Tool #1: Simile (Sounds like "sim-uh-lee")**

- **What it is:** A comparison between two unlike things using the words **LIKE** or **AS**.
- **The Clue:** Look for "like" or "as"!
- **Example:** "My love is **like** a red, red rose."
- **Purpose:** To help you see something in a new, more creative way.

**Tool #2: Metaphor**

- **What it is:** A direct comparison that says one thing **IS** another thing. It does NOT use "like" or "as".
- **The Clue:** Look for a statement that can't be literally true. (Can someone really BE a firework?)
- **Example:** "Life **is** a highway."
- **Purpose:** To create a powerful image and give the qualities of one thing to another.

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