

## **Eating A Metaphor: Experiencing the Auditory, as well as the Visual Elements of Metaphor** (For younger students)

All of us are curious about what might be inside something like a closed box, especially if it is wrapped and has our name on it. But we don't often wonder about exploring the inside of a vegetable or a fruit. Teaching very early grades is an opportunity to introduce metaphor to children, to teach them, hopefully for a lifetime, that something as simple as an apple is like a closed box with their name on it, inviting them to go inside and discover the gift of poetry.

- 1) To prepare for this activity bring an apple (Fuji apples have a good star shape for this experience) and potato chips (Pringles are the most substantial for the activity) to class. In addition, bring a knife for slicing.
- 2) Gather students together in a comfortable place in the room.
- 3) Hold up the apple and let them look carefully at it. Suggest that the outside reminds you of the sky at sunset, because of the red color, and the little whitish dots could be the first stars appearing to greet the coming darkness. Allow time for them to notice and to volunteer other things they see in this evening sky.
- 4) Tell them they are going to go inside the world of this apple and find what's there. Slice the apple in half and hold up each half so they can see the star shape. Some children might have already seen this, but, like every beautiful painting, it is well worth looking at again!
- 5) Point out the little circle of dots around the star. Could they be other tinier stars, protecting the big star in the center? (Hopefully the possible scientist in the group will not go into a factual explanation of why this, or other ideas, could not be true!! If so, this would be a good time to remind them that they will be using their imaginations.) Ask for other observations.
- 6) Have them focus on the white part of the apple. Ask them to think of themselves outside at night, standing in the snow under this starlight. Perhaps the snow has been around for a long time and would make a crunchy sound if they or some kind of animal walked on it.
- 7) Prepare them to experience the sound of footsteps on crunchy snow. Tell them you are going to have two students hold a half of the apple and you are going to be an animal outside on a snowy night walking in that snow. When you take your first step, one of the appointed students will take a good, healthy bite out of the apple half. When you step down the second time, the other student will bite into the other half. Tell the group to be very quiet and listen for the sound of those footsteps. When the two bites are finished, ask

the group what kind of animal could have made that sound. Discuss why some thought they heard a deer or rabbit, or bird, etc.

8) Take out the potato chips. Each student will get one, but each needs to hold onto it to create another sound, perhaps the sound of someone walking in a field of crispy, autumn leaves. Divide the class into two sections. Appoint one student to be the walker while one section bites the potato chips on the first step and the other section repeats the sound on the second step. Did they hear leaves or something else? Discuss.

9) Lead them to make up a poetry idea about the inside of the apple in terms of what they saw and another idea about what they heard. See the sample poems for ideas. This activity brings up the concept of metaphor not only in terms of sight comparison, but also sound.

For a similar activity on another day, you could explore an orange, cucumber, red onion, tomato, or other food item. Obviously some would not lend themselves to the taste experience!

### Sample Poems

Inside an apple  
is a raindrop.  
When I bite,  
the raindrop falls  
on my tongue.

*-Jeni, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade*

Eating potato chips  
I hear a mother deer  
and her fawn  
walking on crispy leaves.

*-Emily, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade*

Inside the onion  
is a purple roller coaster  
making me dizzy.

*-Jeffrey, Kindergarten*

Inside the orange  
there is a sun  
dropping its sunbeams  
on my hands.

*-Amanda, Kindergarten*

Inside an orange  
there is a wagon wheel  
rolling in the sunny field.

*-Jacob, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade*

