Similes ² (with countable objects)

Ask your partner questions* and/or ask for some hints to complete these similes. Then think of something or someone you know that fits each one.

1. __________________________ as straight as ____________
2. __________________________ as quick as ____________
3. __________________________ as cool as ____________
4. __________________________ as pretty as ____________
5. __________________________ as dry as ____________
6. __________________________ as fresh as ____________
7. __________________________ as sharp as ____________
8. __________________________ as thick as ____________

*Sample Questions: How large is it? What’s it made of? Where can I find one? Is it a kind of food? What color is it? Are there any in this room? What shape is it? Etc. [ Give me a hint. ]

Give your partner some hints (but DON’T say the answer).

2. (a toothpick - pl. toothpicks)
   a) It’s made of wood.
   b) It’s for hygiene.
   c) ____________

4. (a pancake - pl. pancakes)
   a) It’s a (breakfast) food.
   b) The first letter is a “P.”
   c) ____________

6. (a ghost - pl. ghosts)
   a) It’s scary.
   b) It lives in a haunted house.
   c) ____________

8. (a board - pl. boards)
   a) It’s made of wood.
   b) It’s long and straight.
   c) ____________

10. (a pin - pl. pins)
    a) It’s made of metal.
    b) It has 3 letters.
    c) ____________

12. (a feather - pl. feathers)
    a) It comes from birds.
    b) It was once used for writing.
    c) ____________

14. (a fruitcake - pl. fruitcakes)
    a) It’s a dessert.
    b) The second letter is an “R.”
    c) ____________

16. (a bell - pl. bells)
    a) It’s made of glass or metal.
    b) A cow often wears one.
    c) ____________
SIMILES\(^2\)  
(with countable objects)

Ask your partner questions* and/or ask for some hints to complete these similes. Then think of something or someone you know that fits each one.

2. ___________________________ as thin as __________________
4. ___________________________ as flat as __________________
6. ___________________________ as white as __________________
8. ___________________________ as stiff as __________________
10. ___________________________ as neat as __________________
12. ___________________________ as light as __________________
14. ___________________________ as nutty as __________________
16. ___________________________ as clear as __________________

*Sample  How large is it? What’s it made of? Where can I find one? Is it a kind of food?  
Questions:  What color is it? Are there any in this room? What shape is it? Etc.  [ Give me a hint. ]

Give your partner some hints (but DON’T say the answer).  
[ pl. = plural ]

1. (an arrow - pl. arrows)  
   a) It’s used for hunting.  
   b) It has feathers.  
   c) __________________

3. (a wink - pl. winks)  
   a) Lovers do this.  
   b) The first letter is a “W.”  
   c) __________________

5. (a cucumber - pl. cucumbers)  
   a) It’s a green vegetable.  
   b) It’s popular in salads.  
   c) __________________

7. (a picture - pl. pictures)  
   a) It’s a common wall decoration.  
   b) It can be oil or water-color paint.  
   c) __________________

9. (a bone - pl. bones)  
   a) It’s part of a skeleton.  
   b) Dogs love them.  
   c) __________________

11. (a daisy - pl. daisies)  
   a) It’s a kind of flower.  
   b) It’s white and yellow.  
   c) __________________

13. (a tack - pl. tacks)  
   a) It’s made of metal.  
   b) We hang calendars with them.  
   c) __________________

15. (a brick - pl. bricks)  
   a) It’s rectangular.  
   b) Used for building houses.  
   c) __________________
Similes 2  
(with countable objects)

1. Student ability: High Beginner ~ Intermediate  
2. Approximate length of lesson: 30+  
3. Number of students necessary: 2+  
4. Preferred age/maturity: JHS, HS, College, Adult  
5. Type of lesson: Pair Work Activity

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Language Target: Using common similes to compare things, working with adjectives, articles, plurals and some vocabulary.

Setting Up: Briefly explain what a simile is and give a couple of descriptions using a few. Demonstrate that rather than saying someone is slow, add some zest to the sentence by saying someone is a slow as a snail.

It may be a good idea to define the meaning of unknown words from the bottom of the worksheets (without giving away the names of the animals) prior to handing them out. Words such as decoration, skeleton, rectangular may be new to many students.

Getting Started: Put students into pairs and give one student Worksheet A and the other Worksheet B.

Student A looks at the first simile: _____ as straight as _____. He or she then asks Student B some questions to find the correct animal to complete this simile. [Note: Sample questions are included on the worksheet.] When Student A asks Student B for a hint, Student B can refer to the sample hints on the lower half of Worksheet B or can think up different hints.

After Student A identifies the correct animal (in this case – as straight as an arrow), then he / she must think of a subject for the sentence. For example:

My best friend is as straight as an arrow.  
My boss is as straight as an arrow.

Student A reads the first completed simile to Student B and then students change roles with Student B trying to identify the first simile at the top of Worksheet B (…as thin as…).

Special Note 1: Lower ability students may need special guidance in not only using the correct verb (is), but also with the articles “a” or “an.”

Higher-ability students should be encouraged to use other verbs such as looks, feels, seems, etc.

Special Note 2: Many of these similes have both a literal and figurative meaning. It may be valuable to explain these to the students. For example, She is as straight as an arrow may refer to her posture as well as her character of honesty and integrity.

Variation 1: To increase the difficulty of this lesson for higher-ability students, scores can be given as in golf. The lower the points, the better the score. One point is given for each question asked and each hint given.

Variation 2: When the worksheets have been completed, encourage partners to...
explain why the subject of each sentence fits that simile. For example, Why is your sister as straight as an arrow? Why is your best friend as nutty as a fruitcake?

Students should encourage each other to give detailed examples of each one.

**Variation 3:** Encourage students to offer plural subjects and objects for these similes, i.e., *My teammates are as straight as arrows, My history classes are as dry as bones,* etc.

**Variation 4:** Write a short list of adjectives on the board and encourage students to create their own original similes. (For example: curious, dark, scary, happy, etc.)

**Discussion:** Although most of these similes are very common in English, students from other cultures and languages may be confused as to why someone is as cool as a cucumber, why something is as neat as a pin or why someone is as thick as a brick.

Since similes are common in many languages; ask the students to relate some of them (in English) from their own backgrounds.

**Similar Lessons:**
- **Similes 1** (with animals)
  (Lesson Collection Set #1 – Lesson 6a)
- **Similes 3** (with non-countable objects)
  (Lesson Collection Set #1 – Lesson 6c)

Contributed by Kurt Scheibner