

NAME _____ DATE _____

FIND A SIMILE

Read the following poem, then answer the questions.

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

It was four men of Indostan
 To learning much inclined,
 Who went to see the Elephant
 (Though all of them were blind).
 That each by observation
 Might satisfy his mind.

The First approached the Elephant,
 And happening to fall
 Against his broad and sturdy side,
 At once began to bawl:
 "God bless me! but the Elephant
 Is very like a wall!"

The Second reached out his eager hand
 And felt about the knee
 "What most this wondrous beast is like
 Is mighty plain," quoth he;
 "'Tis clear enough the Elephant
 Is very like a tree!"

The Third, who chanced to touch the ear,
 Said: "E'en the blindest man
 Can tell what this resembles most;
 Deny the fact who can.
 This marvel of an Elephant
 Is very like a fan!"

The Fourth no sooner had begun
 About the beast to grope,
 Than seizing on the swinging tail
 That fell within his scope,
 "I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
 Is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Indostan
 Disputed loud and long,
 Each in his own opinion
 Exceeding stiff and strong,
 Though each was partly in the right,
 And all were in the wrong!

—John G. Saxe

1. What two things are compared in the first simile? How are they alike?

2. What two things are compared in the second simile? How are they alike?

3. What two things are compared in the third simile? How are they alike?

4. What two things are compared in the fourth simile? How are they alike?

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SIMILE

Often when you're trying to describe something, it helps to compare it with something else. When you compare two very different things, linking them with the word "like" or "as," you are using a **simile** (for example, "She sings like a canary.") Some similes are used so frequently they have become **clichés**. Some examples of these overused phrases are "as red as a rose," "as green as grass," "as quiet as a mouse," "as dead as a doornail." Writing can be improved by discarding these old clichés and inventing new expressions. Create some original images by completing the following lines. Make your similes as new and fresh as possible.

1. *AS SHARP AS*

2. *AS TALKATIVE AS*

3. *AS WHITE AS*

4. *AS GREEN AS*

5. *HE HAS EYES LIKE*

6. *THE BALLERINA DANCES LIKE*

