

**THE
RED
ROOM
COMPANY**

POETRY IN UNUSUAL
AND USEFUL WAYS

THE RED ROOM COMPANY

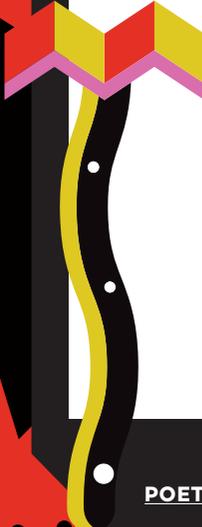


2015

**Overcoming
Cliché**



OVERCOMING CLICHÉ AND USING SPECIFIC IMAGERY



Discuss what we mean by a cliché.

1. Ask students why English teachers have such an aversion to clichés. List the reasons why clichés make for bad writing on the board.

Cliché alert / Image Excavation Exercise

2. Students then complete the table by filling in the cliché before composing their own personal or specific image. This can make a good 'list poem' activity if they list all their specific images. Get them to play with the order of their images i.e. look for a good opening and concluding line. You can add a fourth column where the student develops the image: as in the development/ elaboration of the image in an Imagism poem.

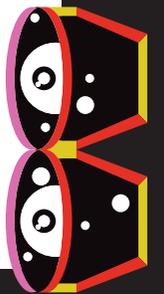
It may help to read Mauree Applegate's poem '[Be Specific](#)' before you begin this task.

Feeling/ Sense Metaphor Activity

3. This is a useful exercise for looking at the difference between direct and indirect comparisons. You can discuss the effect of choosing to use a simile instead of a metaphor in this task. Again this can make an effective list poem. You might put A3 sheets up around the room with a heading of a specific emotion. Get students to move around the room adding their metaphor to the relevant sheet. This will create a collaborative poem that ideally can be read aloud to the class.

Reading, Listening, Sharing

4. Sharing their personal and specific images with the class group is recommended. Offer a 'prize' or sticker for the best specific and personal image and for the worst cliché.



CLICHÉ ALERT EXCAVATION EXERCISE

STARTER	CLICHÉ/OBVIOUS IMAGE	SPECIFIC/INDIVIDUAL IMAGE	IMAGE DEVELOPMENT
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As black as

-Night
-Coal

The piercing glow of fluorescent bulbs in
the 7/11 on Enmore Road at 2:30AM

Brighter than torch beams, it scares
the shadows from the city

As cold as

As strong as

As good as

As comforting as

As difficult as

As soft as

FEELING, SENSE, & METAPHOR ACTIVITY

FEELING

SENSE

METAPHOR

Surprise

-is the taste
-has the smell

-of a birthday cake
-of a fresh squeeze of citrus

Peaceful

Happiness

Anger

Excitement

Sadness

