

Stave I

Cliché and Simile

Objective: Recognizing clichéd similes and writing more creative ones.

Activity

On page 11, the narrator tells us that Marley is “dead as a door-nail,” then goes on to comment that the phrase doesn’t necessarily make sense. As it is a time-honored, well-worn phrase, though, the narrator decides to stick with it.

“Dead as a door-nail” is a simile, but it is also a cliché: something that has been said so many times that it comes readily to the tongue but isn’t a fresh, original, lively use of language. To complete the **CLICHÉS TO ORIGINAL SIMILES** chart below, fill in the second column with the common, clichéd ending of each phrase in the first. Then, fill in the third column with your own fresh and original ending. Challenge yourself to be as creative as possible in creating your own similes. The first one has been done for you as an example.

CLICHÉS TO ORIGINAL SIMILES

BEGINNING OF COMMON SIMILE	COMMON, CLICHÉD ENDING	MY OWN ORIGINAL ENDING
dead as...	a doornail	a beach in winter
strong as...		
white as...		
black as...		
quiet as...		
smart as...		
wrinkled as...		
tough as...		