

## Similes

---

All the idioms in these exercises are examples of **similes**. A simile is an expression that compares one thing with another thing, containing either the word *as* or the word *like*. You use similes to give emphasis to descriptions, or to make those descriptions more interesting or amusing.

A typical example of a simile is the expression *as cold as ice*, meaning *very cold*.

The similes in exercises 1–3 all contain the word *as*.

**1** Complete the sentences with these nouns.

bat    ox    bird    flash    judge    bone    pancake    nails

- 1 I'm **as blind as a** ..... *bat* ..... without my glasses.
- 2 I was 21, with no job and no family to tie me down, travelling around the world. I was **as free as a** .....
- 3 Paul will easily lift those boxes. He's **as strong as an** .....
- 4 She's very nice when you meet her socially, but she's **as tough as** ..... in her business dealings.
- 5 'No way,' she replied, **as quick as a** .....
- 6 We can't dig this soil – it's **as dry as a** .....
- 7 The countryside around here is **as flat as a** .....
- 8 I'd been drinking water all evening so I was **as sober as a** .....

**2** Complete the similes with these adjectives.

old    cold    light    thin    clear    stiff

1 as ..... *stiff* ..... as a board

2 as ..... as a rake

3 as ..... as a bell

4 as ..... as the hills

5 as ..... as ice

6 as ..... as a feather

**3** Complete the sentences with similes from exercise 2.

1 Put some gloves on! Your hands are as ..... *cold as ice* .....

2 Celia doesn't need to lose weight – she's as .....!

3 I was lifting heavy boxes yesterday and today my back is as .....

4 Yes, I can hear you, as .....

5 He's been around for sixty years or more – he must be as .....  
by now.

6 I can lift you up easily – you're as .....!

The similes in exercises 4–6 all contain the word *like*.

**4** Match the first half of each simile with the second half.

- |             |                 |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 1 to eat    | a like a glove  |
| 2 to fit    | b like a drain  |
| 3 to laugh  | c like the wind |
| 4 to spread | d like a bird   |
| 5 to run    | e like wildfire |
- 

**5** Complete the sentences that explain the meaning of the simile in bold.

- Luca **ran like the wind** to meet her.  
He ran ..... *very fast* ..... to meet her.
- I'm really pleased with the dress. It **fits like a glove**.  
It fits .....
- I'm not surprised Rosa is so thin. She **eats like a bird**.  
She eats .....
- The news **spread like wildfire** and soon everyone knew.  
The news spread .....
- Philip **laughed like a drain** when he heard the news.  
He laughed .....

**6** Are these sentences positive ✓ or negative ✗?

- 1 Nothing will grow in this ground. It's as dry as a bone. ....✗
- 2 She hadn't done any exercise in ages and she was as stiff as a board. ....
- 3 Josie is good at athletics. She can run like the wind. ....
- 4 Viruses can spread like wildfire through contact with infected hands or surfaces. ....
- 5 The jacket fits like a glove. ....
- 6 He's very big for his age. He's as strong as an ox. ....

## Similes – Answer key

---

### Exercise 1

- 1 bat
- 2 bird
- 3 ox
- 4 nails
- 5 flash
- 6 bone
- 7 pancake
- 8 judge

### Exercise 2

- 1 stiff
- 2 thin
- 3 clear
- 4 old
- 5 cold
- 6 light

### Exercise 3

- 1 cold as ice
- 2 thin as a rake
- 3 stiff as a board
- 4 clear as a bell
- 5 old as the hills
- 6 light as a feather

### Exercise 4

- 1 d
- 2 a
- 3 b
- 4 e
- 5 c

### Exercise 5

- 1 very fast
- 2 very well
- 3 very little
- 4 very quickly
- 5 very loudly

### Exercise 6

- 1 ✗
- 2 ✗
- 3 ✓
- 4 ✗
- 5 ✓
- 6 ✓