

*Bridge to Terabithia*

**Similes:**

A *simile* is a figure of speech used to describe something through comparison. A *simile* use words such as *like* or *as* to indicate that a comparison is taking place. For example: “The stars sparkled *like* diamonds on black velvet.” In this simile stars are being compared to diamonds.

Find and complete these similes from Chapters 3 and 4. Then write down the two things being compared in each. The first one is done for you as an example.

1. Surprise swooshed up from the class like steam from a released radiator cap.

sudden surprise compares to released steam

2. Jess planned to give old Fulcher a *le-etle* surprise come noon. It was as though he had \_\_\_\_\_ . He could hardly wait.

\_\_\_\_\_ compares to \_\_\_\_\_

3. The boys quivered on the edges of their seats like \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

\_\_\_\_\_ compares to \_\_\_\_\_

4. Gary lowered his head like \_\_\_\_\_ .

\_\_\_\_\_ compares to \_\_\_\_\_

5. . . . she gave him a look with those blue eyes of hers that made him zing

like \_\_\_\_\_ .

\_\_\_\_\_ compares to \_\_\_\_\_

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6. He was drifting, drifting like \_\_\_\_\_  
back and forth across the blue.

\_\_\_\_\_ compares to \_\_\_\_\_

7. There were parts of the woods that Jess did not like. Dark places where it was  
almost like \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ compares to \_\_\_\_\_

**Questions:**

1. What is meant by the term “first impressions”? Describe how Leslie looks the first day of school and compare it to what the other children wear. What impression does Leslie make?
2. Why does Jess ask Leslie to join the races at recess?
3. Jess can't imagine why anyone would choose to leave the suburbs for a place like Lark Creek. Why have Leslie's parents moved to Lark Creek?

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4. When Jess is assigned to write about his favorite hobby, what does he choose to write about? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. How does Jess feel as he listens to Leslie's composition about scuba diving?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What happens when Jess tries to draw "the quivering life about him"?

**Thinking About the Story:**

7. Why do you think Jess won't show his drawing to Gary Fulcher?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. There seem to be unwritten social rules regarding what one did or didn't do on the playground. What are some of these "rules"? How does Leslie break these rules?

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9. In Chapter 3 as Jess watches each heat, he becomes more sure that he will win. When Leslie reaches the finish line three feet ahead of him, what is his reaction? What is the reaction of the other boys?
  
10. Why do you think Jess challenges Gary Fulcher a second time on Leslie's behalf?
  
11. Why do you think Jess avoids Leslie the rest of the day?
  
12. The author writes:

Caught in the pure delight of [the singing], Jess turned and his eyes met Leslie's. He smiled at her. What the heck? There wasn't any reason he couldn't. What was he scared of anyhow? Lord. Sometimes he acted like the original yellow-bellied sapsucker. He nodded and smiled again. She smiled back. He felt there in the teachers' room that it was the beginning of a new season in his life, and he chose deliberately to make it so.

What do you think is this "new season" in Jess's life? (*Discuss:* Why is it important to "choose deliberately" in order to make changes for the better?)

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13. Leslie and Jess create Terabithia because, as Leslie says, “We need a place, . . . just for us.” Why do you think Leslie feels they need such a place?

14. Near the end of Chapter 4 the author writes:

Leslie was more than his friend. She was his other, more exciting self—his way to Terabithia and all the worlds beyond.

Explain what the author means by this.

**Dig Deeper:**

15. What are two fears of Jess’s that we learn about in this section of reading? How does Jess feel about having these fears?

Is it wrong to feel afraid, or are some fears okay? Explain your answer.

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16. There are many words of comfort in the Psalms. Read Psalm 3:5,6; Psalm 23:4; and Psalm 56:3, 4. Who or what is the source of comfort mentioned in these verses? Considering these verses, what can you do when you feel afraid?
  
17. Leslie is very obviously different from the other students at Lark Creek in the way she dresses, in her hobbies, and in the way she lives. Jess, on the other hand, feels different on the inside, but tries very hard to appear like the other boys on the outside. How does he try to fit in? Does Leslie try to fit in? How can you tell?

Is it important to you to fit in to your group of peers? If so, why is it important? How do you try to fit in? If you don't see it as important, explain why.

18. Read 1 Corinthians 9:19–23. In these verses Paul talks about becoming “all things to all men.” What does he mean by this? What is his purpose for doing so?

Considering these verses, what might be a good reason for wanting to fit in with your group of peers?