

## A metaphorical poem

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### Mother to Son

Well, son, I'll tell you:  
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

By Langston Hughes

1. In pairs, read the poem. Try putting on an accent.
2. What is the mother saying about her life? What sort of things do you think have happened to her? Find evidence from the poem to prove you are right.

3. Complete this sentence:

The poet uses the metaphor of \_\_\_\_\_  
to show what the woman's life is like. It tells us that she \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ and that her life has been hard.

4. Why do you think the poem is called 'Mother to Son'?
5. What else could life be compared with? Once you have thought of a few suitable ideas which could be metaphors for life try to list the images that go with the metaphor. For example, Hughes uses a metaphor and extends it by referring to life having, '... tacks in it / And splinters / And boards torn up'.