Kennings

A kenning is a figurative, usually compound expression used in place of a name or noun, especially in Old English and Old Norse poetry; for example, *storm of swords* is a kenning for *battle.*

Examples of modern day kennings: *headhunter* and *gas guzzler*

Kennings can come in 3 forms. Look at the examples in the chart below and write down the name or noun represented beside each example of a kenning.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Compound Words | **Prepositional Phrases** | **Possessives** |
| Sky-candle (sun)  Whale-road (ocean)  Ring-giver (king)  Gold-ringed (king’s followers)  Battle dew (blood)  Sea stallion (ship) | Wolf of wounds (warrior)  Winters of grief (mourning)  Shepherd of evil (Grendel or devil)  Storm of swords (battle)  Guardian of the people (king)  Path of the sea (river) | Seabird’s bath (ocean)  Ocean’s face (waves or shore)  Heaven’s joy (morning)  Arrow’s storm (attack)  Water’s chain (frost)  Battle’s torch (sword) |

Once you have the idea, develop a sentence of your own that contains 5 kennings and then create a picture or cartoon that illustrates your sentence. We will share these sentences and illustrations in class, so be creative!

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**Part One: Consider carefully how you could creatively rename each of the following through the use of the kenning technique.**

**1. a teacher  
  
2. a bus driver  
  
3. firemen  
  
4. television  
  
5. meatloaf  
  
6. police  
  
7. pop tarts  
  
8. music  
  
9. love  
  
10. computer**

**Part Two: Create a kenning that renames you.**