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Postscript One: Using "Using the Literature"

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Postscript One:
Using "Using the Literature"
by
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It was interesting to see the varied reactions to my piece. Some picked up on literature placement, others on what literature is for and how it is (or should be) used - for example, whether it is legitimate to use literature as an authority. There were even those who wondered what kinds of literature to draw upon, asking whether, for example, fiction, poetry or popular psychology count.

I thought it might have been fun to add a challenge at the end, asking people to submit an analogy of their own. It reminds me of the Buddhist saying "Even a stone can be a teacher" - there is always something new to be learned. For example, you could start a methodology teaching exercise with "If literature was like a, it would" And it may be better not to be too fussy or clever with choice of analogies. In the first space, how about trying wardrobe, scalpel, gardening centre, wall, balloon ... all kinds of junk starts spilling out of my mind. But sitting with some of these might produce some really handy insights.

An extension of that would be to look at the resulting analogy to see if it had a positive or negative slant; whichever it had, then explore the same analogy to find its shadow or opposite. For example, my 'conjuror's assistant' analogy put using literature in an unfavourable light (tricking the reader to believe/accept perhaps more than she or he should). I could learn more by asking myself (with no cynicism) what is the positive aspect of the conjuror's assistant. Well, perhaps the assistant is a genuine support in the difficult business of performing in public - it is okay to get some help. That is what started me spinning again to explore the last three analogies.

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