

Poetry Module

Content:

How can poetry be utilized as an effective medium of expression in an English/language arts classroom?

Process:

- Lesson One: Look, Listen and Learn
- Lesson Two: The Poet's Toolbox
- Lesson Three: The M&M's of Poetry
- Lesson Four: The Poet Within

Objectives:

- To develop an understanding of poetry as a medium of expression
- To define poetry
- To read poetry by various poets
- To identify the techniques of poetry
- To analyze and interpret how the techniques enhance or affect meaning in poem
- To respond to the meaning of poems
- To plan, draft, revise, edit, proof and publish personal poems

Poetry Lesson #1

Title:

Look, Listen and Learn

Question:

Why is poetry important?

Objectives:

to develop an understanding of poetry as a medium of expression

to define poetry

to read poetry by various poets

to respond to the meaning of poems

Process/Activities:

Ask students to answer the question “What is Poetry?” and discuss their answers. (Examples: Use index cards, transparencies, or Inspiration software concept web)

Share with students various quotations of how various poets define poetry. (See attached list for examples.)

Have students individually or in small groups browse through the poetry section of their textbooks or through various poetry collections (such as those found in your school library).

Ask students select and respond to two to three poems that they find interesting or intriguing.

Use the following questions for response:

-Why did you pick this poem?

-What interests you about this poem?

-What do you especially notice in this poem?

-What surprises you about this poem?

-What do you think this poem is saying?

-What does this poem remind you of?

-In what way(s) is this poem similar to or different from the other two that you selected?

Have each student or group read aloud one of the poems s/he or they have selected. They may also share why they selected this poem.

Have students listen to professional readings or performances of poems.

Have them discuss or respond in writing to what they notice about the poems and the ways they are read.

Ask students to revise their definition of poetry after having read and shared poems as a class.

Product/Application: (Options)

Write an essay that explains why poetry is important. Use the poems read individually and as class as support.

Create a bulletin board with answers to the sentence starter, "Poetry is important because.

Assessment/Evaluation: (Options)

Individual or group grade assigned to activities and/or product.

Conclusion:

Use what students found interesting or intriguing to begin the study of techniques of poetry.

Resources/Comments:

Fooling with Words (PBS series, book, and teacher's guide) Bill Moyers
Writers On Writing (quotations) -- selected and compiled by Jon Winokur
Inspiration software

NOTE: In preparation for Lesson #4 of this unit, have students begin keeping a word journal and a free writing journal. (See Lesson #4 for details.)

Attachments:

“What is Poetry?” Quotations

Response to Poetry Questions

Time Frame: 2-4 days

Grade Level: adaptable for grades 6-12

TEKS:

6.11 (A-D)

6.12 (B), (E)

7.8 (A, B)

7.11 (A)

Eng. II (8) (A, B, C)

Eng. II (10) (B)

Eng. II (11) (A-F)

Poetry Lesson #2

Title: The Poet's Toolbox

Question: What tools do poets use to construct poetry?

Objectives:

- to read poetry by various poets
- to identify the techniques of poetry
- to analyze and interpret how the techniques enhance or affect meaning in poems
- to respond to the meaning of poems

Process/Activities:

1. Read a selected poem aloud to the class. Have students write down words, phrases or lines that strike their attention. (They should not have the poem in front of them yet.)
2. Pass out copies of the poem. Have students reread the poem silently and add to their list additional words, phrases or lines that strike their attention.
3. Ask students to write a 1-2 sentence interpretation of the poem's meaning.
4. Have students share their individual interpretations in small groups and form a group interpretation. They should also select words, phrases, and lines that support this interpretation.
6. At this point, select one of the following options:
 - For upper level students:
 - Hand students a list of poetic devices.
 - Ask students to identify the devices the poet has used in the words, phrases or lines they have selected.
 - Have each group share its interpretation with the class and include in their presentation an explanation of the devices the poet used and how those devices enhanced or affected their interpretation.
 - For lower level students:
 - Have groups share with the class their interpretations and the words, phrases and lines that support these interpretations.
 - Identify and define for them the poetic devices used by the poet in the words, phrases, and lines they selected.
7. Discuss with the class the idea of the poet's toolbox.
8. Read another poem together as a class. Discuss the poem's meaning. Identify specific examples of poetic devices (tools) used in the poem. Analyze how these devices (tools) enhance or affect the meaning of the poem. (Repeat as needed.)

Product/Application:

- Provide and have students read 2-3 poems.
- Have each student select one of the poems to read for interpretation and identification of "tools."
- Have them write 1-2 sentences that state the meaning of the poem. Then have

them list/highlight and identify examples of specific devices (tools) used within the poem.

Assessment/Evaluation:

As a class, reread the assigned poems and check for understanding of the meanings and the devices (tools) used. With additional poems, review and practice any devices students have struggles to understand.

Conclusion:

Use students understanding of basic interpretation and the poet's toolbox to further their understanding of how poets create meaning.

Resources:

Selections of poetry found in textbooks and individual collections. We recommend using accessible poetry, such as poetry for young adults. Examples: collections by Paul Janeczko, Angela Shelf Medearis, Naomi Shihab Nye, and Pat Mora.

Time Frame: 2-3 days

Grade Level: grades 6-12

Web sites: Glossary of Poetic Terms (<http://shoga.wwa.com/~rgs/glossary.html>)

TEKS:

6.12 (H-K)

6.11 (A, C, D)

7.7 (D)

7.9 (A)

7.10 (D)

8.8

8.12 (B, C)

Eng. II (10) (B)

Eng. II (11) (B), (D)

Poetry Lesson #3

Title: The M & M's of Poetry

Question: How do methods that poets employ in their writing create or enhance meaning?

Objectives:

- to analyze and interpret how the techniques enhance or affect meaning in poetry
- to respond to the meaning of poems

Process/Activities:

For lower grade levels:

Kenneth Burke's Pentad (See attachment.)

1. Select a poem for study.
2. Discuss the poem's topic and/or read the poem as a class.
3. Ask students to draw a five-pointed star, write the title of the poem in the center, and label each point with the following: Actor (Who did the action?), Action (What was done?), Scene of Action (Where did it occur?), Agency (How did it happen?), and Purpose (Why did it happen?).
4. Next to each of the star's points, have students answer the question in relation to the poem you have read. (This could be done individually or in small groups.)
5. Ask students to select from the five points, the three that best enable them to understand the meaning of the poem.
6. Then have students reread the poem to cite the words, phrases, and lines that reveal these three points.
7. Ask students to identify the tools used in these words, phrases, or lines.
8. As a class, discuss the connection between the tools and the meaning.

For upper grade levels:

TP-CASTT (See attachment)

1. Select a poem for study.
2. Introduce the TP-CASTT guide for analyzing poetry. Include a thorough explanation of each term.
3. Guide students through application of TP-CASTT with the selected poem. Take time for discussion after each step. (See attachment for detailed explanation.)
4. Have students work in small groups and repeat the TP-CASTT procedure with a new poem.
5. Then as a class discuss the methods used in the poem to create meaning.

Product/Application:

For lower grade levels:

Give students a selected poem and a copy of Burke's Pentad.

Have students read the poem, complete the Pentad, and identify the tools used in the poem that help create the meaning.

Have students select three points from the Pentad and at least one tool used to illustrate that point.

Have students use this information to write an essay explaining the meaning of the poem.

For upper grade levels:

Give students a selected poem or have them select their own poems.

Have students complete the TP-CASTT and make notations either in the margins of the poem or on their own paper.

Have students compose an essay analyzing the meaning of the poem and using specific examples from the text.

Assessment/Evaluation:

Assess student understanding of the process by examining their pentads or TP-CASTT notations.

Evaluate the quality of their analysis by examining how well they support their interpretation of the poem's meaning and the poet's methods.

Conclusion:

This lesson should lead students to understanding the roles of the poet's toolbox in constructing meaning and help them begin to see how they can use the toolbox to create their own poems and meanings.

Resources:

Attachments:

Burke's Pentad

TP-CASTT (found in the Advanced Placement Vertical Teams Guide)

Timeline: 2-3 days

Grade Level: 6-12

TEKS:

8.11 (A-D)

8.12 (H-K)

Eng. II (10) (A-C)

Eng. II (11) (A-D)

Poetry Lesson #4

Title: The Poet Within

Objective:

to plan, draft, revise, edit, proof and publish personal poems

Academic Question:

How can we take ideas and words and shape them into poetry?

Process/Activities:

1. Have students keep a word journal where they record words that intrigue or interest them, words that they know or that they see used in other places.
They may also play with words in this journal -- inventing new words giving words colors (for example, "Vermilion regret," as suggested by Susan Goldsmith Woolridge in her book *Poemcrazy*).
2. Have students keep a free writing journal where they explore various ideas.
3. Have students practice writing poetry using one or more of the following strategies:
 - a. Spinoff Poems -- Have students select a line or stanza to "borrow" from a selected poem. Then they can use this line or stanza as the beginning of a new poem.
 - b. Copy Change -- Select one or two stanzas from a poem. Remove the nouns and adjectives to create a skeletal outline of a poem. Have students insert their own nouns and adjectives to create a new version of the poem.
 - c. Extended Metaphor -- Have students select an idea from their journals. Then have them brainstorm a list of possible symbols that could represent the idea (person, place, belief, etc.). Next have students select one of these symbols and list words or phrases that define or describe or are related to the symbol. Using the symbol and the list of words and phrases, students then should draft a poem that expresses their idea through the metaphor they have created.
 - d. Found Poetry -- Have students select poetic words, phrases and images from literature they are reading or from other sources. Make a list of these. Then have them join these words, phrases and images together to create a piece of poetry that expresses an idea. The point is to use words they have "found" to create their own poetry.
4. Have students select one of their practice poems to revise. Try one or more of the following revisions activities:
 - a. Have students copy onto a new sheet of paper the line they feel is the strongest or best. Then have them rewrite the poem from that line. They should not look at their first draft while writing this version.
 - b. Have students highlight words, phrases or lines containing sensory images. Then ask them to add color words to these images.
 - c. Have students write a short description of the poem's speaker. Then have reread and revise their poem to reflect that speaker's voice more clearly.

- d. Have students draw a picture that reflects the idea of their poems.
Then have students rework their poem based on what they noticed in their drawing.
 - e. Have students review their list of poets' tools. Then have them identify examples of these tools in their own poems. They may need to revise, adding or changing words to better utilize certain tools or poetic devices.
5. After editing, students are ready to "publish" their work. Here are some ideas:
- a. Create a class poetry collection with a cover designed by one or more students.
 - b. Have students create a portfolio of their poems.
 - c. Hold a formal poetry reading where students read their poems aloud to the class.
 - d. Create a class bulletin board of poetry either on the wall or on the computer.
 - e. Have students submit poems to various publications. (See resources list for ideas.)

Product/Application:

- This would be the way you have chosen to publish students' work. You could also consider having students write additional poems using the methods above or their own methods for creating original poems.

Assessment/Evaluation:

- If you choose to assess individual poems or collections of poems students have written, you might set up a rating scale that ranks several qualities of poetry that you have worked on with students, such as use of specific poetic devices or tools. You might also create with your students a list of criteria for an evaluating a portfolio or the poems selected for the class book, bulletin board, or to be sent to a publisher.

Conclusion:

- After the poetry unit has been completed and assessed, consider implementing poetry in connection with the study of other fiction and non-fiction works. Try to select poetry with similar themes and ideas. Now you can begin to point out how the poet's tools are used in prose as well.

Resources:

Poemcrazy by Susan Goldsmith Wolbridge
 Inside Out by Dan Kirby and Tom Liner
 After the End by Barry Lane
 Acts of Meaning by Joyce Armstrong Carroll and Edward E. Wilson
 Teaching POETRY in High School by Albert B. Somers
 Getting the Knack by William Stafford and Stephen Dunning
 Go Public: Encouraging Student Writers to Publish by Susanne Rubenstein

Time-frame: 4-6 weeks

Grade level: 6-12

TEKS:

8.15 (A-H)

Teacher tips:

Publication resources -

The 21st Century Poetry Journal
Box 30
Newton, MA 02461

Merlyn's Pen
P.O. Box 910
East Greenwich, RI 02818-0910

The Highschool Writer
P.O. Box 718
Grand Rapids, MN 55744-0718

Web sites:

Poetry Society of America (<http://www.poetrysociety.org/>)
The Academy of American Poets (<http://www.poets.org/>)
Poetry Daily (<http://www.poems.com/>)
Poets & Writers Magazine (<http://www.pw.org>)
The Poetry Page
(<http://www3.sympatico.ca/ray.saitz/poetry.htm>)
Global School House (<http://www.gsn.org>)