

Minnesota Writing Project: Demonstration Lesson

Everyone Can Write Poetry

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Approximate Length:

This lesson is used as an introduction to a four week unit on writing different types of poetry.

Grade:

This activity is taught in fifth grade but could be adapted for any grade level.

Summary of Unit:

During the poetry unit students are introduced to many types of poetry. Examples are read, the format is introduced and students write their own poems. When the unit is over students will have written the follow types of poems:

- *Why I Can't Write A Poem
- *Me Poem
- *Haiku
- *Acrostic
- *Cinquain
- *Concrete
- *I Used To Think ...
- *What's In My Desk
- *Color Poem
- *Limerick
- *I Wish
- *My Favorite Place

Each poem is edited for spelling and format errors. When the final draft is written we illustrate each piece with a different art activity. For example I have used tear art, colored pencil drawing, finger painting and thumb painting, as well as many other fun art forms.

Unit Objectives:

- * To introduce students to various styles of poetry.
- * To access student knowledge on these various styles of poetry and their format by creating their own examples.
- * To create a poetry book showing all the different examples.

Lesson Objective:

- * To introduce the writing of poetry in a fun manner so that the students become excited about the unit.

Process:

- I would begin by telling students that we are going to start our poetry unit. I really enjoy teaching this unit so I am pretty excited about it.
- I would introduce the different types of poems that we are going to learn to write. I would possibly put up an overhead with the table of contents on it.
- I would then read some of my favorite poems to the class. I usually use poems written by Shel Silverstone.
- I then instruct the students to make a list of all of the reasons that they can not write poetry. I tell them that it is even ok to exaggerate. A great example of exaggerating in poetry is Shel Silverstone's poem "Sick."
- After they have brainstormed their list I have them add the words, "I can't write a poem because..." before each item on their list. I ask them if there are any items that could be put together on one line if they have an extremely long list. Then they need to write a closing line, for example: What I just wrote a poem? I love poetry. Something along those lines. Before the students realize it they have written the first poem in their poetry book.
- I then edit everyone's poem for spelling errors. The students are bringing them to me when they are finished so this goes quickly. When they are edited I then have them write their final draft and complete the assigned illustration.
- If a student would like to share the poem that he or she wrote we will do that before we move on to the next subject.

Literature Connection:

Love That Dog by Sharon Creech

Resources:

A Light in the Attic, poems and drawing of Shel Silverstone

Where the Sidewalk Ends, poems and drawing of Shel Silverstone

Favorite Poems by Dennis Lee: Dinosaur Dinner (With a Slice of Alligator Pie), selected by Jack Prelutsky and illustrated by Debbie Tilly.