

Minnesota Writing Project

Demonstration Lesson Template

Title: Postcards: Making Poetry of Sense

Grade appropriate: 9-12th **Approximate Length of time to complete lesson/unit:** This particular lesson takes one block class period, approximately 75 minutes, and the students write a poem at home to share the next day. They write one poem a day for a few weeks in order to choose their best work for a portfolio presentation.

Learning objectives and significance of lesson:

Objectives:

1. List the five senses and know how they work in creating images in poetry
2. Define imagery and visual literacy
3. Apply the example lesson to a similar, combined lesson as a group
4. Write/Create a postcard poem based on the exercises and past student examples
5. Listen to and evaluate completed poems.

Significance of the lesson: The class will have been working on recording and using literary terms all term. They keep a notebook/journal in which they respond to journal prompts. When they short story unit and drama unit are over we move into poetry. Students no longer write daily journals, but instead write at least one poem a day. We start with easy types. I have them do a poem where each student brings a thing to class, along with a poem written from the thing's point of view. They learn a concrete poem, where they can make a picture with words. The students continue learning literary terms, as well as a variety of poetic styles and devices before continuing on to harder forms of poetry.

Brief summary/outline:

This is just one lesson in a unit where we are trying to understand, learn, memorize and use literary devices in writing. This lesson specifically deals with imagery. It follows a lesson on concrete poetry (see attached document). As a large group, I give the students examples of pictures in a PowerPoint presentation, one for each of the five senses. Then I move them into groups. I have them write out their senses and look again at another picture in which we address all the senses. They work with partners to identify words and phrases that deal with these images. They are finally given a post card. They must use the ideas developed in the lesson to make their own poem from the postcard that was "mailed" by another student in the class. They bring the postcard and poem back the next day, and we read them aloud. They have to portion to turn in their poems as part of their final portfolios.

Related Resources: I guess you might need a thrift store or an antique store. That's where I get the cards for cheap. You might also want to get a camera, a computer and a trip to Europe. But you don't have to go through all that (see adaptations below). We will use the computer, overhead projector, journals, pens/pencils and post cards.

Possible extensions or adaptations for different purposes/student needs: You don't really need technology to present the same ideas. You don't need to do it with post cards, either. You could use newspapers, magazines, calendars, or art. You could change the idea around to a cause and effect idea: What will happen next? You could have students do character sketches of people this way. You could find paintings or pictures from a relevant time period to a novel or story they are reading and ask them to put a character in the picture and tell it from his or her point of view. If you have a student who has impaired vision, you could play part of a movie for sounds or have the student experience the project from another sense.

For additional information, contact:

Elizabeth A. Boeser
Jefferson High School
4001 West 102nd Street
Bloomington, MN 55437
eboeser@bloomington.k12.mn.us