

Minnesota Writing Project

Demonstration Lesson Template

Title: Cathy Wegener's lesson on seeing Poems with Poets' Eyes

Grade appropriate: K-12

Approximate Length of time to complete lesson/unit: This lesson – 30-45 minutes. Poetry unit encompasses three to four weeks.

Learning objectives and significance of lesson:

TLW work a poem, experimenting with line breaks

TLW rewrite their own poem, changing the line breaks

TLW analyze the process, conferencing with peers

Brief summary/outline:

This lesson is in the middle of the poetry unit. It builds upon the previous student knowledge of poetry in various forms, especially non-rhyming poetry. Students have also been introduced to a poetry museum and written several poems, which are housed in their poetry journals. Students have recited poetry out loud, listening for the music of poetry. Students are asked to look at several poems written as a single paragraph with no line breaks. Children are then asked to observe how the poet wrote the poem with line breaks, comparing the feeling in the two versions.

The teacher then displays a poem written in paragraph form from *Poetry Speaks to Children*, then plays a cut from the CD *Poetry Speaks to Children* that has been written out in poetic form, demonstrating a poet reading his/her own poem.

The teacher hands each pair of students 8 cards with the word drip on them, 8 cards with the word drop on them, and 3 cards with the word sunshine on them. The pairs are to arrange their cards with line breaks to show a spring shower. Share with group.

Next the pair uses the same cards and arranges them to show a sudden downpour.

Discuss how line breaks with the same words meant different things in their poems.

The students now experiment with line breaks in their own poems in their poetry journals.

Related Resources:

Poetry: Powerful Thoughts in Tiny Packages by Lucy Calkins and Stephanie Parsons

Poetry Speaks to Children by Sourcebooks, Inc. (a collection of poetry by several authors)

Possible extensions or adaptations for different purposes/student needs:

The students may write their spring shower/downpour poems instead of using cards.

Older students may use their own poems and cut them and play with line breaks.

Older students may benefit from more complex poems at their developmental level.

For additional information, contact:

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