

Minnesota Writing Project

--- Demonstration Lesson Template ---

Title of lesson: Using Models – Writing Poetry

Suggested grade/age: 6-12

Approximate time needed to complete lesson: 50 minutes

Learning objective(s) and significance of lesson:

While this lesson is focused specifically on using poetic devices and mentor texts to inspire original poetry, the model for this approach can be easily modified for any genre, grade level, or content area, to help students use the techniques of writers and disciplines (*ex: what does science writing look like?*). Of course, with consistent practice, students loosen up in their own writing after modeling different styles. The reflective practice and metacognitive writing with vocabulary follow-up is really helpful for both teachers and students to drive future learning goals.

Learning Objective(s):

Students will...

- Use the language of poetry to discuss mentor texts
- Identify poetic devices in mentor texts
- Create original poems, inspired by mentor texts

Best Practices:

- Using models in writing
- Structured use of academic vocabulary
- Engaging in the writing process
- Metacognitive Writing

Brief summary/outline of lesson:

Context: I currently use this lesson in an eighth grade, one-quarter, elective poetry class (but I have used this same lesson in 9-12). The first genre we delve into is poetry, so this lesson typically falls early in the course. Prior to this element of the lesson, we have worked together to examine a poem together, responding to the question: “What do we notice?” We have also held two separate discussions in response to the questions “What is poetry?” and “What do poets do?” Students have also examined William Carlos Williams’ poem *This is Just to Say*, and written their own “Apology Poems” after the model.

Review + Anticipatory Set:

- Revisit *What is Poetry?* and *What do Poets Do?* posters
- Revisit poetic devices and other poetry terms by paraphrasing definitions

Input + Model:

- Together, read *Introduction to Poetry* by Billy Collins
- Respond to the question “What do we notice?”
- Mark up the text according to discussion, focusing on structure, style, and sound devices

- Consider “SOAPSTONE” acronym/mnemonic device for analysis
- Connect to personal experiences with poetry

Checking for Understanding + Guided Practice:

- Students choose poems to mark up, then after demonstrating understanding via annotation, students begin work on an original poem. (*Students were also guided through this process with the Williams poem*)
- Independent Practice: Students craft a poem inspired by their chosen model, then write a brief metacognitive paragraph using academic vocabulary, and finally, share their work with classmates.

Related Resources:

Links:

- [Excerpt from "Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?"](#)
- [Poetry 180](#)
- [Middle School Poetry 180](#)
- [United States of Poetry](#)

Possible extensions or adaptations for different purposes/student needs:

- Teachers can choose specific authors for students to choose from, to control specific techniques
- Apply to content writing other than English, nonfiction, fiction, digital writing, etc.
- Use modeled writing and reflections for inclusion in portfolio creation.

For additional information, contact:

Jen Kohan -- jenkohan@gmail.com