Title of lesson: Poetry in Three Parts

Suggested grade/age: 1st-5th

Approximate time needed to complete lesson:

Complete in small segments (10-40 minutes) over a series of days during a Poetry Unit.

Learning objective(s) and significance of lesson:

Students in my school don't get a lot of structured writing instruction in the early primary grades. They have minimal exposure to poetry. They may have been read poems or asked to follow a formula to make a poem. However, many have not felt the joy and freedom that can come from writing poetry. In our poetry unit (April/May) I want students to...

- Gain exposure to poets & different types of poetry.
- Explore figures of speech - simile, metaphor, onomatopoeia, alliteration
- Explore parts of speech – nouns, verbs, adjectives
- Begin to think critically about what they read.
- Write simple – free form – poems.
- Make poetry fun!!!

Brief summary/outline of lesson:

Three Activities:

1. Shel Silverstein for Morning Work - daily
   a. S. Silverstein includes a lot of small sketches with his poems. His poems are also short and quirky. They speak to a lot of different topics and can provide a variety of interesting prompts for conversations and/or writing. I do this as Morning Work Journal Prompts.
   b. Before discussion, students respond in their journal to the S. Silverstein image, and the poem is covered up. I ask: What do you notice (nouns, verbs, adjectives)? What questions do you have? (I wonder…?), What do you think or can you infer? (I infer _____ because ______)
   c. During Morning Meeting, I allow students to share what they wrote for each step.
   d. Then we reveal the poem, read aloud a couple of times, and discuss whatever it brings up.

2. Sensory Poems – visit as many places as you have time for!
   a. Review what your senses are.
   b. Travel to a place in or outside your site. Sit, stop, use your senses to write in lists or prose about the specific location.
   c. Share poems with a partner by reading back and forth a line or word from what you wrote in a specific location.
   a. Read the poem “My Creature” by Jack Prelutsky as a group and distribute copies as a reference for the project
   b. Distribute Play-Doh or something similar and allow kids to create their own monster
   c. Students list nouns, verbs, adjectives to describe their monster.
   d. Use a skeleton (sentence prompt style) of J. Prelutsky’s poem as a scaffold for students to write their own “My Creature” poem.
   e. Share with each other
   f. Photograph creatures and finalize and publish poems!

For more detail please reference the powerpoint from my MWP presentation.

Related Resources:

- I use Google Images Search to find Shel Silverstein sketches and poems.
- Silverstein and Prelutsky have each published a number of engaging poetry anthologies.
- We use a document camera to help us show and share our writing.
- I purchase small, blank-paged, notebooks from the dollar spot at Target every August to use as our poetry notebooks.

Possible extensions or adaptations for different purposes/student needs:

Any of these lessons can be scaffolded up or down depending on how you structure your pacing, conversations and text/word requirements. For example:

- Instead of asking students to list words during their sensory tour, have them free write in full sentences or practice using different figures of speech.
- Instead of using Play-Doh, have students draw a creature, using more detail.
- Instead of using the Jack Prelutsky poem as a sentence structure, have students write their own poem about their Creature.

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