

Watching Poetic Gardens Grow: Poetry Writing Lessons for Third Grade

Mary Beth Youngblut

Introduction

Poetry seeped into my soul many decades ago, planted itself there, and has become a part of my students' educational experiences ever since. Like a plant, reading and writing poetry with my students started out very small, but over time has put down its roots and has grown into what it is today. My students hear me read a poem each day, have a poetry notebook where they glue in a poem a week, and after experiencing poetry read to them and reading poetry themselves, they begin writing and sharing their own poems, not just during a poetry unit, but once a week throughout the year.

This is a set of poetry writing lessons to be used with third graders, I won't be going into the research of the many benefits there are to using poetry with students during reading lessons, but these include: helping students attain the foundational skills of phonemic awareness, word recognition, and reading fluency, enhancing vocabulary development, learning about figurative language, and an excellent genre for teaching visualizing and inferring. If you're interested in finding out more about these benefits you can read my Capstone Project on Hamline's Digital Commons.

It is important to mention that poetry is part of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy (NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010); it is in the Reading Literature strands (RL.3.4 and RL.3.5), the Reading Foundational Skills (RF.3.4B), the Language strands (L.3.5 and L.3.5A), the Speaking and Listening strand (SL.3.5), and Standard 10. Because of this, poetry should be integrated in all classrooms not only in the texts that teachers read with the students but as a prominent genre in classroom libraries.

Although these poetry writing lessons were developed to enhance the current third grade literacy curriculum, *Making Meaning* (Center for the Collaborative Literacy, 2015) and *Being A Writer* (Center for the Collaborative Literacy, 2014), which we use in my school district, it could be used with any writing curriculum. The *Being A Writer* curriculum has only a two-week poetry unit. In contrast, in this poetry curriculum, the students will be writing poetry one day a week throughout the year beginning in October.

The following will include five sections:

- ❖ The first section will include ideas of creating a poetry-rich classroom for your students.
- ❖ The second section will set the stage to begin the poetry writing lessons

and includes the twelve lessons I wrote.

- ❖ The third section will be a list of ideas for additional poetry writing lessons.
- ❖ The fourth section is optional. It is a student reflection that the students can fill out at the end of the year related to their thoughts and feelings about poetry.
- ❖ The fifth section will include some of my favorite poetry books from my classroom.

Section 1

Before the Writing Begins: Creating a Poetry-Rich Environment

Starting at the beginning of the year, before the students begin writing poetry in October, the students should be exposed to a wide variety of poetry. As poet Georgia Heard (1989) states, “every writer of poetry is first a reader of poetry” (p. 1). This can happen in a number of ways.

1) Reading poetry to the students: I recommend finding time to read a poem a day. Some suggestions of great places to insert poems would be at the end of morning meeting, right before or after lunch, right before or after specials, or at the very end of the day.

2) Offering a poetry-rich environment: Designate a section in your classroom library for poetry books. Include a wide selection of poetry books about all kinds of topics. Include books that have rhyming and non-rhyming poetry, books written by poets that are well-known and less well-known, and poetry from different cultures, countries, and time periods.

3) Individual Poem Books: Students can each have a composition notebook where they will glue a poem each week. The poems in these poem books can be a collection of poems by former students, poems from this unit, and poems by published authors (from resources that give teachers permission to copy poems for use in their classroom).

My rationale for having each student have an individual poem book is that it offers them opportunities to have access to a variety of poems by a diverse group of poets that the students can read during independent reading time, read with a partner, or that can be used for choral reading with the whole group, and also for delving deeper into the writer’s craft and the choices each poet made for their poems.

4) Find videos online of poets reading their own poems and share these with the students. One way to find videos is to go on YouTube and type in a poet’s name. Another great resource that has links to poets reading their poems is the website for the Center for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE) <https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poet-videos>

Section 2 Writing Poetry with Third Graders

Teacher Modeling and Poetry Writing

All of the poetry writing lessons in this unit have a teacher modeling component. The reason for this is that in my research I found that there are many benefits to teacher modeling. Kelly Gallagher, in his book *Write like this: Teaching Real-World Writing Through Modeling and Mentor Texts* believes that teacher modeling is the most effective way to teach students to write.

Teachers will also be writing poetry with their students during writing time and are encouraged to share poems they've written with their students during the sharing time.

I am well aware that some teachers feel very apprehensive about writing in front of their students and sharing their writing. This is exactly how I felt the first time I wrote in front of my students. I was very apprehensive and feared that if I shared one of my poems during sharing time, that the kids would think I was weird or would laugh, but this was far from the truth. In reality it was a very positive experience: in that my students started seeing me as a writer, just like them.

Also, when teachers model the writing that they expect the students to do, it gives the students the opportunity to watch and listen to a teacher writing and sharing their thinking about the choices they are making for their poem. This benefits the students because they get to see firsthand that adults encounter many of the same issues as they do when it comes to creating a poem.

So if you are reluctant to write with your students, have a growth mindset and try it. The benefits far outweigh the negatives.

About the Writing Lessons

- ❖ These lessons were written for third graders, but could be adapted for other grade levels.

- ❖ The writing of poetry fulfills the narrative text requirement in the Writing Standard 3.3 which states (in Appendix A) that narrative writing that is described in this standard, can include the writing of types of poetry (NGA Center & CCSSO, Appendix A, 2010).

- ❖ Each lesson consists of five parts.
 1. **Scaffolding.** This includes:
 - Learning Targets for the lesson
 - Building on prior knowledge

- Examples of sample poems like the students will be writing. (The majority of the poem samples in this unit are written by former students of mine. Feel free to copy them and use them in whatever capacity you want. (I received permission from the students to include them in the curriculum.)
- Teacher modeling example (I often think about what topic I'm going to write about before each lesson so that I have a preliminary plan in mind of what I am going to write in front of the students.)

2. Writing time

- During writing time, the expectations are that the students will be writing poems the whole time. If they finish one poem, they are encouraged to read back through the poem and then begin another.
- I recommend setting a timer for three minutes less than the time you expect the students to write. When the timer goes off the students learn that they have three minutes to finish getting their current thought written, can read back through the poems they wrote, and make a decision as to whether they want to share a poem with the class.
- Teacher's job during writing time
 - For the first part of the writing time, the teacher is encouraged to write along with the students. It is valuable for the students to see their teacher as a writer, just like them.
 - For the second part of the writing time, the teacher should move around the room observing students' work, giving quick feedback, and assisting those having a difficult time getting started.

3. Sharing

- It is important to give students an opportunity to share at the end of writing time.
- Having students choose just one poem to share allows time for everyone that wants to share to do so.
- I try to share a poem that I write during writing time at least twice a month. This again is a way to communicate to my students that I'm a writer just like them.

4. Reflection

The Reflection is meant to be short and give the students an opportunity to think about a few questions related to the lesson. (The students can answer these orally or jot their answers on a

post-it.)

5. **Teacher Reflection/Assessment**

After the lesson the teacher has an opportunity to ask themselves questions regarding how the lesson itself went and what they could do to make improvements to the lesson.

❖ Lesson breakdown by time

Total time of lesson: approximately 50 minutes

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Scaffolding | 10-15 minutes |
| 2. Writing Time | 20-25 minutes |
| 3. Sharing Time | 10-15 minutes |
| 4. Reflection | 2-3 minutes |

What follows are twelve specific poetry writing lessons. Beyond the first lesson, the lessons can be done in any order. Due to time limitations there are only 12 detailed poetry writing lessons included in this unit. As I already mentioned, I would begin doing the writing lessons with my students once a week beginning in October. I realize that if you did one lesson a week beginning in October, the 12 lessons would only take you into December. Since there is a new learning target for each of the twelve lessons, one suggestion would be to use the same learning target for two lessons, extending the lessons from 12 weeks to 24. An advantage of this is that it gives the students two weeks to practice using specific details in their poems or practice writing new types of poems. Section three also includes suggestions for additional poetry lessons that could be done.

Lesson 1 - Writing Free Verse Poems

(see notes in “About the Writing Lessons” for specifics about the parts of the lesson.)

1. Scaffolding

➤ Learning Targets:

- I will learn about free verse poems
- I will write free verse poems

➤ Prior Knowledge

- After reading and hearing poetry since the beginning of the year, how would you answer the question “What is Poetry?” (Begin a chart with the heading “What is Poetry?”)

Things that may be on the list include:

- ◆ Short
- ◆ Sometimes they rhyme
- ◆ Can be about anything
- ◆ Don’t have to be complete sentences
- ◆ Sometimes there’s words that are repeated

- Today you’re going to write a free verse poem. A free verse poem does not have any set rules on how to write it. It can be about anything. Here are some examples of free verse poems.

Spring

By: Maddyn

FINALLY

The snow is melting.

FINALLY

I get to ride my bike

FINALLY

I get to NOT wear a jacket and snowpants

FINALLY oh FINALLY

It is SPRING at last!

Elephant

By: Colt

BIG

Gray

Wrinkley

Strong

2 ton beast

16 feet tall

Don't worry,

It's a herbivore

Haunted House

By: Kai

Goosebumps crawling up my skin.

The lights in the house start to dim.

I'm out of here!

But wait.

The doors locked.

OH NO!

Monsters start to creep and crawl around.

What the heck is going on?

I guess I'll have to run.

AHHHH!

Stray

By: Nika

**Paws beating across the ground,
A scratch on my nose,
Digging through the trash can,
Eating all the scraps
Knotted Terrier fur,
Nobody knows
 how hard it is to be a stray.**

Swinging

By: Will

**Grab,
Pullup
Back,
Forth
Back, forth
Back, forth
Let go!
Jump!**

AAAAAAAAAAAA!

SMACK!

You all right?

No.

➤ Teacher Modeling

Demonstrate how you would write a free verse poem. Go through the steps -- picking a topic and sharing your thinking as you compose the poem. Below is one I composed. It is far from a masterpiece, but demonstrates to kids what a free verse poem might look like.

A Skunk

By: MB Youngblut

Smelly little furball

Looks cuddly

Black and white

Size of a cat

Surprising spray

Stinky all around

2. Writing Time

- Today we are going to write free verse poems. Free verse poems are poems that do not rhyme and can be about anything.
- Tell the students that if they finish a poem before the time is up, they should read back through their poem to see if they missed any words or want to add anything, and then begin another one.
- Tell the students that you are going to be setting a timer for 15 minutes. When the timer goes off, they will have three more minutes to finish getting their current thought written, can read back through the poems they wrote, and make a decision as to whether they want to share a poem with the class.

3. Sharing Time

Have those students that choose to share a poem bring their poem with them to the sharing area.

4. Reflection

- What was your favorite thing about writing poems today?
- What other things could you write a poem about?
- What were some phrases that you heard in your friends' poems that you especially liked?

5. Teacher Reflection/Assessment

- Were the students able to write free verse poems?
- Which students struggled? How could additional scaffolding be available for these students?
- What would I change about this lesson in the future?

Lesson 2 - Adding Similes to Free Verse Poems

(see notes in “About the Writing Lessons” for specifics about the parts of the lesson.)

1. Scaffolding

- Learning Targets:
 - Students will learn about similes
 - Students will write free verse poems with similes in them

- Revisit the “What is poetry chart” that we made yesterday.
- Today we’re going to add similes to our poetry chart.
- Explain that poets often compare things in their poems by using similes. Similes compare two things by using “like” or “as” (add “Similies” to the poetry chart)
- Have students practice using similes by having them finish phrases like the following.
 - The thunder was as loud as a _____
 - When my dog rolled in the mud he looked like _____

- Examples

Mom’s Hug

By: Genevieve

Mom’s hug

Is like a wrap of love

As soft as a teddy bear

As sweet as a million pieces of candy

The love is floating in the air

It’s the perfect cure for sadness

Mom’s hug

Butterflies

By: Jayda

Beautiful colors splatters across their wings.

Soaring through the sky

Like rainbow petals

that seem as if they had been hitchhiking across the wind.

Their wet wings spreading their first time,

Like a variety of wet paint.

➤ Teacher Modeling

Demonstrate how you would write a free verse poem that has similes in it. Go through the steps in front of the students sharing your thinking aloud with them.

2. Writing Time

- It's time for you to write! When you write your poems today I want you to try to incorporate similes into them.
- Tell the students that they will now have time to write their own poems. If they finish a poem before the time is up, they should read back through their poem to see if they missed any words or want to add anything, and then begin another poem.
- Remind the students that you are going to be setting a timer for 15 minutes. When the timer goes off, they will have three more minutes to finish getting their current thought written, can read back through the poems they wrote, and make a decision as to whether they want to share a poem with the class.

3. Sharing Time

Have those students that choose to share a poem bring their poem with them to the sharing area.

4. Reflection

- What is one of your favorite similes that you heard today?
- Did you hear a poem today that gave you an idea for something you could write about?

5. Teacher Reflection/Assessment

- Were the students able to put similes in their poems?
- Which students struggled?
- What would I change about this lesson in the future?

Lesson 3 - Poets and the Power of Words

(see notes in “About the Writing Lessons” for specifics about the parts of the lesson.)

1. Scaffolding

- Learning Targets:
 - Students will learn that as a poet, they have the power to choose words that will create images in their readers’ minds.
 - Students will write free verse poems adding not only similes, but trying to pick words that help their readers visualize the events in the poem.
- Review what similes are. Remind the students of some of the specific similes students used in their poems last week.
- Talk with the students about the incredible power poets have, almost like they are magical. Poets spend time finding just the right words to convey what they want to say in their poems so that their readers can get images in their minds of what is happening in the poem when they hear it. (Add “The Power of Words” to the poetry chart.)
- Examples

By: Brynne

**Snow is like popcorn
popping out of the sky!
Sparkles spinning down from the sky!
Snow flips and cries
with new tears.**

Snowshoeing**By: August**

**I struggle to strap on my gargantuan waffle feet
I keep tumbling like a frozen waffle leaping out of a toaster
when suddenly**

POP! My incredibly large boots slip into the soft stretchy rubber straps

and then I am off

**my large feather-shaped snowshoes make vine and waffle-like prints in the
fresh newly fallen snow**

**I never sink a bit
It was outstanding.**

Tiger**By: Colt**

Camouflaged in the grass

Stalking its prey

In seconds it's over.

Dinner is served.

Sharks
By Jorge

Sharks
Violent
Scary
Violent
Terrifying
Carnivores
Countless teeth
CHOMP!

➤ **Teacher Modeling**

Today when you model the writing of a poem, pick a topic and have the students visualize all the ways a poet could describe the topic. Make a list of their suggestions and then incorporate some of their ideas into your poem. Because you want to get the students writing as quickly as possible, you could begin your poem, but not finish writing it in front of them, but tell them that you will finish it while they are writing.

2. **Writing Time**

➤ It's time for you to write! Today I want you to not only think about trying to add similes to your poems, but also slow down and find just the right words so that you can help your readers and listeners to visualize the events in your poem.

3. **Sharing Time**

Have those students that choose to share a poem bring their poem with them to the sharing area.

4. **Reflection**

- What was difficult about choosing words for your poem today?
- What was one phrase that you wrote today that you think creates a great mind picture?

5. **Teacher Reflection/Assessment**

- How did the students do with word selection today?
- Are there certain words that are being overused in their poems like "cool"?

and “awesome”?

- What would I change about this lesson in the future?

Lesson 4 - Adding Sensory Details to Poems

(see notes in “About the Writing Lessons” for specifics about the parts of the lesson.)

1. Scaffolding

- Learning Targets:
 - Students will learn about adding sensory details in their poems.
 - Students will write free verse poems with sensory details
- Revisit the “What is poetry chart”
- Last week we talked about how poets work on choosing words that will create a certain image in their readers’ minds. Some of the images that poets create are ones that are related to the senses. For example, when they effectively describe how something tastes or smells it evokes a reaction from their reader.
- What words would you use to describe a warm chocolate chip cookie?
What about a rotten egg?
- (Add adding “Sensory Details” to the poetry chart.)
- Examples:

Fall

By: Siri

**My body is as cold as a
 tree without leaves.
 The wind makes me shiver when
 it rushes across my face.
 I hear the birds singing in the
 tree like a choir singing on stage.
 The leaves crackle
 and look like a fire that is out of control.
 The leaves float through the trees.
 They look so light.**

Mmm!

By: MB Youngblut

**The warm chocolate
dripping from the cookie.**

**Chewy Tootsie Rolls
sticking to my teeth.**

**Steaming hot chocolate
oozing down my throat.**

**Yummy raisins
adding sweetness to my oatmeal.**

**Brown,
not a favorite color, but certainly tasty.**

➤ **Teacher Modeling**

Write a poem today that demonstrates for the students how a poet can add sensory details into their poems.

2. **Writing Time**

➤ It's time for you to write! Today I want you to be aware of choosing words that will tap into your readers' senses.

3. **Sharing Time**

Have those students that choose to share a poem bring it with them to the sharing area.

4. **Reflection**

- What was a phrase that you heard in someone's poem today that evoked a reaction from you?
- What are you learning about the power of words in poetry?

5. **Teacher Reflection/Assessment**

- Which students could use more support with poetry writing? What could this support look like?
- Are there other charts that could be made to help students when they are writing poems?
- What would I change about this lesson in the future?

Lesson 5 - Adding Alliteration to Poems

(see notes in “About the Writing Lessons” for specifics about the parts of the lesson.)

1. Scaffolding

- Learning Targets:
 - Students will learn about alliteration.
 - Students will write poems adding word sequences with alliteration.

- Today we’re going to talk about how poets use alliteration in their poems. Alliteration is when two or more words that are next to each other begin with the same sound, like squirrels scurrying or unicycling unicorn.
- (Add “Alliteration” to the poetry chart.)
- Take a few minutes to have the students play around with alliteration. I often use students’ names and put them together with other words. For example Brave Brian brought us big baboons or Jolly Jim jumped.

- Examples:

The Sleepy Sloth

By: MB Youngblut

The sloth slumbers slumped on a branch

**Wakes from his sleep. Slowly, sluggishly,
Stretches
Looks leisurely left and right
Then lazily lounges against the branch
And lethargically drifts off to sleep.**

Snake**By: Kai****Snake slithering through the soggy grass.****Snapping and striking****Snooping****Looking for something to slurp****Sneaking up on something good.****SNAP!****Slurp****Yum!****Spring Sprouting****By: MB Youngblut****cardinals calling****bunnies bouncing****flitting finches****grass growing****dotty dandelions****little leaves****chirping chickadees****new nests****baby birds****fragrant flowers****wiggling worms****rowdy robins****lovely lilacs****beautiful blossoms****Spring Sprouting****➤ Teacher Modeling**

Write a poem today that demonstrates for the students how a poet can add alliteration into their poems.

2. Writing Time

- It's time for you to write! Your challenge is to try to integrate alliteration into the poems you write today.

3. Sharing Time

4. Reflection

- What was your favorite use of alliteration in your writing? Why?
- Why do you think poets put alliteration into their poems?

5. Teacher Reflection/Assessment

- Which students are always sharing and which ones never share? How can I change this? Would the students that do not want to share be willing to let me read their poems to the class?
- What "special features" are students most often adding to their poems (alliteration, similes, sensory details, or words that create mind pictures)?
- What would I change about this lesson in the future?

Lesson 6 - Onomatopoeia in Poems

(see notes in “About the Writing Lessons” for specifics about the parts of the lesson.)

1. Scaffolding

- Learning Targets:
 - Students will learn about onomatopoeia.
 - Students will write poems incorporating onomatopoeia into them.
- (Write the word onomatopoeia on the board.) Onomatopoeia are words that imitate a sound. Examples of onomatopoeia are croak, sizzle, splash.
- (Add “Onomatopoeia” to the poetry chart.)
- Generate a list of onomatopoeia words with the students. Write these words on a new “Onomatopoeia” chart. For an extensive list of onomatopoeia words visit <https://thinkwritten.com/onomatopoeia/>
- Examples:

The Bee and the Dog

By: MB Youngblut

The bee buzzed past the dog.

The dog snapped.

Missed

Growled

The bee buzzed past the dog, again.

The dog snapped.

Missed

Barked

The bee buzzed past the dog.

The dog was furious.

He frantically began chomping his food

The bee landed on the dog’s nose.

The dog stared at the bee.

The bee stared at the dog.

ROLLERCOASTER

By: Rosie

SLOW U P

D
O
W
N

ZING! ZAP! ZOOM! ZIP!
HOLD ON!
TILT
ROUND AND ROUND AND ROUND AND
SCREECH!
OUT....OF.....BREATH...
“THAT...WAS...FUN...
CAN I HAVE A....
HAMBURGER.....PLEASE?”

➤ **Teacher Modeling**

Today challenge yourself to not only write a poem with onomatopoeia in it, but also using sensory details and/or similes so that the students see you write a poem that has more than one of the “special features” that can be present in poems.

2. **Writing Time**

➤ It’s time for you to write! Today I want you to try adding onomatopoeia words to your poems. You can look at the onomatopoeia chart for ideas.

3. **Sharing Time**

4. Reflection

- What is one of your favorite onomatopoeia words? On the count of three all whisper that word.
- What do you like about onomatopoeia?

5. Teacher Reflection/Assessment

- Were students engaged in their writing today?
- Who are the students that are still struggling with writing poems. What scaffolding could be given to these students?
- What would I change about this lesson in the future?

Lesson 7 - Using Metaphors in Poems

(see notes in “About the Writing Lessons” for specifics about the parts of the lesson.)

1. Scaffolding

- Learning Targets:
 - Students will learn about metaphors.
 - Students will put metaphors in the poems they write.
- We learned about how poets use similes to compare things in their poems using like or as. Today we’re going to learn another way poets compare things in poems. They use what is called a metaphor. A metaphor is when you compare two different things without using the words like or as.
- Share some examples of metaphors. “My uncle is a grumpy bear.” “The snow was a white blanket.”
- For a list of metaphor examples you can go to <https://examples.yourdictionary.com/metaphor-examples-for-kids.html>
- (Add “Metaphors” to the poetry chart.)
- Examples:

Puddle

By: Rebecca

I am a duck

My yellow boots pull me

To a pond made by the rain right outside my house

I splash

sending a spray right at my mom

She doesn’t look pleased

I guess she isn’t a duck today.

The Monster Outside

By: MB Youngblut

The wind is a monster

Scaring children snuggled in beds

Jerking branches off of trees

Tugging at telephone lines

Turning off electricity

Go away!

Leave us alone!

You are not welcome here!

The monster slinks away.

Waiting to come out another day.

➤ **Teacher Modeling**

Pick a topic that you'll write about today and ask the students for suggestions of metaphors you could use to describe the topic.

2. **Writing Time**

- It's time for you to write! Think of something you want to write a poem about today. What could be a way you could compare it to something using a metaphor? Try making comparisons in your poems today using metaphors.

3. **Sharing Time**

4. **Reflection**

- Was it easier to use metaphors or similes to compare things in your poems? Why?
- What was your favorite metaphor that you heard during sharing today?

5. **Teacher Reflection/Assessment**

- How did the students do with the concept of metaphors?
- In what ways have their free verse poems improved since October?
- Which "special features" in poems have the students been most comfortable with putting in their poems?

➤ What would I change about this lesson in the future?

Lesson 8 - Acrostic Poems

(see notes in “About the Writing Lessons” for specifics about the parts of the lesson.)

1. Scaffolding

- Learning Targets:
 - Students will learn about Acrostic poems
 - Students will write Acrostic poems.

- Begin a new chart today with the heading “Types of Poems”.
 - Add “Free Verse” under the heading with a brief definition of a free verse poem.
 - Add “Acrostic”

- Up to this point in the year we have been writing free verse poems and adding all kinds of “special features” in the poem. Today we’re going to write another type of poem called an Acrostic poem. An acrostic poem is when the first letter of each line of the poem spell out a word.

- Examples: (Point out that in the samples the lines of the poem each are related in some way to the word that the poet chose to write about.)

SCHOOL
BY: ALEX

Super fun
Cafeteria in school
Happy people are there
Our place to learn
Open for fun
Laughing with friends

AUTUMN**By: Nika****A pple pie****U nique carved pumpkins****T errific Halloween costumes****U nder a leaf pile****M arvelous colors****N ever enough apple cider**

- Since the object is to come up with some words that start each letter, what letters might be the most difficult? Brainstorm what they can do if they get stuck on a letter?
 - Skip the letter and come back to it.
 - Look in a dictionary, either in the classroom or online.
 - Ask someone else for an idea.
- Teacher Modeling
Demonstrate writing an Acrostic poem. At this point in the year the students love to give you suggestions for ideas that you could use.

2. Writing Time

- It's time for you to write!
First, pick a word that you want to write a poem about.
Second, write the letters of the word down your page.
Third, write your first poem of the day. Remember to chose things for each line of the poem that are related to the word you picked.
- If you finish one Acrostic, try another one!

3. Sharing Time**4. Reflection**

- Did you encounter any challenges when you were trying to write your Acrostic poems today?
- Which classmates of yours wrote Acrostic poems that had powerful words in them?

5. Teacher Reflection/Assessment

- Did the students' Acrostic poems make sense?

- Which students were able to incorporate the other “special features” of poems into their Acrostic poems?
- What would I change about this lesson in the future?

Lesson 9 - Haiku Poems

(see notes in “About the Writing Lessons” for specifics about the parts of the lesson.)

1. Scaffolding

- Learning Targets:
 - Students will learn about Haiku poems
 - Students will review syllables
 - Students will write Haiku poems.

- (Add “Haiku” to the Types of Poems chart.)
- Today we’re going to learn a Japanese poem with a very specific recipe for writing it. It is called a Haiku poem. A Haiku poem only has three lines. The recipe for it is:
 - First line: 5 syllables
 - Second line: 7 syllables
 - Third line: 5 syllables
- Add the recipe for a Haiku to the “Types of Poems” chart
- If you remember, a syllable is the number of beats in a word. (Name a couple words and have the students tell you how many syllables are in each word.)
- Often the Japanese Haiku poems were about nature, but you can write them about anything.
- Because there are only 17 syllables in the entire poem, poets need to choose their words carefully so that their poem expresses a simple, short powerful message to their reader.
- Here are some examples of Haiku poems.

A Dog Named Dave

By: Nika

I run through the grass

And pick up a ball to chew

I’m a dog called Dave

Hermes**By: Carter**

**God of travellers
And communication and
Extremely skilled thieves**

Dog**By: Nika**

**Wet nose, straight, soft fur
Bushy tail, colored collar,
Sharp teeth, straight soft ears**

- Teacher Modeling
 - You may want to model a couple examples of Haiku poems since they are short and because they are very different than the other poems that students have written so far.
- 2. Writing Time
 - It's time for you to write! Remember the recipe for a Haiku!
- 3. Sharing Time
 - Have those students that choose to share a poem bring their poem with them to the sharing area.
- 4. Reflection
 - What did you like about writing Haiku poems today?
 - Did you encounter any challenges when you were trying to write Haikus?
- 5. Teacher Reflection/Assessment
 - Were students engaged with this specific form of poetry?
 - Which students had difficulty figuring out the number of syllables in words?
 - What would I change about this lesson in the future?

Lesson 10 - Point of View Poems

(see notes in “About the Writing Lessons” for specifics about the parts of the lesson.)

1. Scaffolding

- Learning Targets:
 - Students will pretend to be an animal or inanimate object and write a poem from its point of view.
- Read the following poem.

Squirrel

By: Lexi

Squirrel, Squirrel

Yup! Yup! I am a squirrel!

What do you think?

I am a squirrel.

I live in a tree.

I eat nuts, nuts, nuts!

- Who is speaking in this poem?
- Sometimes poets pretend to be someone or something other than themselves.
- Today you’re going to pretend you are an animal or an inanimate object. An inanimate object is something that is not alive like a chair, a pencil, or a rock.
- (Add “Point of View” to the Types of Poems chart.)
- Here are some other poems where poets have pretended to be animals or other things.

Anaconda

By: Gavin

Hi.....yesssss

it'sssss me.

What'sssss the matter?

You don't like me?

How dare you ssssay that.

Fine.

Let'sssss go eat some ratsssss shall we?

sssss

Ok.

Let'ssssss do it.

ssssssssssss

My Name is T-Rex

By: Harper

Well everybody says I'm a ferocious big beast

When really

I like to play.

Well everyone says I eat meat all day

When really

I'm a vegetarian.

Ok...maybe..once..I..ate my..friend Wilbur

BUT I WAS MAD AT HIM!

So there you go

That's the true story of dinosaurs.

Little Kitty

By: Leah

I'm Katie

I'm a little kitty.

My owner calls me

Violent.

I am not VIOLENT!

Gentle.

They

CALL ME

Sassy

I'M NOT SASSY!

I'm kind.

Last night I

tore off a

mouse's head, they

call that

disgusting!

I call that artistic.

They call me Katie.

HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE

TO TELL THEM

MY NAME IS LITTLE KITTY!

➤ Teacher Modeling

Here is a poem I wrote about our pet guinea pig. You can pick any animal or object. Kids love the humor in these poems by hearing what an animal or everyday object would say if they could speak their mind.

Guinea Pig in the Morning

By: MB Youngblut

Squeak! I'm up!

Squeak! Did you hear me?

Squeak! Helloooo!

SQUEEEAK!

Where is everybody?

Squeak! Squeak!

I'm hungry!

Squeak, Squeak, Squeak!!!

Come on, don't you know you're supposed to come running when I call?

SQUEAK!

Oh, humans can be so difficult!

2. Writing Time

- It's time for you to write! I can't wait to hear whose point of view you are going to portray in your poems today!

3. Sharing Time

4. Reflection

- What was fun about writing from another's point of view?
- Who else's point of view would you want to write about in the future?

5. Teacher Reflection/Assessment

- Were all the students able to write from an animal or object's point of

view? Which students found this challenging?

- What other scaffolding would have made the students more successful at writing these poems?
- What would I change about this lesson in the future?

Lesson 11 - Poems for Two Voices

(see notes in “About the Writing Lessons” for specifics about the parts of the lesson.)

1. Scaffolding

- Learning Targets:
 - Students will write a poem with two voices.
- Be ready to either display the following poems, or have copies of them for each student.
- Today we’re going to start our poetry writing time by reading some poems together. These are poems that sound like a conversation between two characters. They are fun poems because two people can read the poems together, each pretending to be one of the characters.
- (Add “Two Person Poems” to the Types of Poems chart.)
- Make copies of the following poems for all the students. Split the class in half designating one ½ the first voice in the poem and the second ½ the other voice.

Dog and Cat**By: MB Youngblut**

Dog: I'm a Dog

Cat: I'm a Cat

Dog: Grrrrrr!

Cat: Meow!
I like to chase mice.

Dog: I like to chase cats.
I think I will chase you!

Cat: Just try it!
You can't catch me!

Dog: We will see!

Cat: Here I go up a tree!

Dog: Wait a minute! That's not fair!

Cat: What do I care about fair?
I'm a cat!

Dog: I think I'll go chase something else.

The Elephant and the Mouse

By: MB Youngblut

Elephant: I am big.

Mouse: I am little.

Elephant: I am gray.

Mouse: Hey so am I!

Elephant: I am enormous!

Mouse: I am teeny tiny.

Elephant: I could squash you flat with my foot.

Mouse: I could scamper up your back.

Elephant: Hey where did you go?

Mouse: I'm up here behind your ear.

**Elephant: Hee, hee har, ho,
that tickles so.**

Mouse: I know!

- Last week we wrote poems from a different point of view. Today you are going to write a poem with two voices, like two characters having a conversation.
- Teacher Modeling
Ideas for your poem to model in front of the students could include:
 - a worm on a hook trying to convince a fish not to eat it,
 - a fiction book and a nonfiction book discusses who is better to read,
 - a bird trying to get a squirrel off the bird feeder,

- a bat and bird discussing how they're alike and different,
- a shark debating with a lion about who is a tougher animal.

2. Writing Time

- It's time for you to write! I can't wait to hear your poems.

3. Sharing Time

Since they will be sharing two person poems you can offer to be one of the voices in their poem, or have they could pick a classmate to be one of the voices.

4. Reflection

- What did you like best about writing the poems for two voices?
- Which poem that your heard today did you like the best and why?

5. Teacher Reflection/Assessment

- What was successful about this poetry experience for the students?
- What would I change about this lesson in the future?

Lesson 12 - Comparison Poems

(see notes in “About the Writing Lessons” for specifics about the parts of the lesson.)

1. Scaffolding

- Learning Targets:
 - Students will write a poem comparing themselves to another person.
- Think of someone in your life. How is this person similar to you? How are they different? Today we are going to write comparison poems where you will write about you and the person you’re thinking about. In the poem you may include special things you do together, things you both like and things that are different about the two of you.
- (Add “Comparison Poems” to the Types of Poems chart.)
- Here are some examples of comparison poems.

Emily

By: Natalie

She’s the one who cleans the room.

I’m the one who made it messy.

She’s the one who makes the bracelets.

I’m the one who wears them.

She’s the one who helps in the garden.

I’m the one who wrecks it.

Emily is my sister.

My only one.

My Older Brother**By: MB Youngblut****He's older than me by five years****He doesn't let me forget this.****When we go in the car, he gets to sit by the window.****I have to sit in the middle, cuz I'm the youngest.****It's not fair!****We build a city and drive Hot Wheel cars through the town.****He gets first pick at the cars, cuz he's older.****It's not fair!****He gets a bigger piece of cake.****My piece is smaller, cuz I'm younger.****It's not fair!****We go to the doctor to get shots.****I let him go first. Cuz he's older.****He stops, looks at me and says, "It's not fair!"****➤ Teacher Modeling**

You may choose a parent, sibling or child to write about in this poem.

2. Writing Time

- It's time for you to write! Think about how you can create a mind picture for your readers of your relationship with this person, things you have in common, and what makes both of you different and unique.

3. Sharing Time**4. Reflection**

- If you shared your poem with the person you wrote about, what might

their reaction be to the poem?

- How might the poem be different if it was written by the person you picked to write about in your poem?

5. Teacher Reflection/Assessment

- Were the students able to find interesting ways to compare themselves with the person they picked?
- What would I change about this lesson in the future?

Section 3

Ideas for additional poetry writing lessons

You may ask after reading through the above 12 lessons, why these? There are so many, many types of poems to teach students to write. I have explored writing many types of poems myself and teaching different types of poems to my students. I've included 12 that I have done in some form with students that the students have enjoyed.

What follows is a list of additional poetry lessons that could be developed and done with students.

Additional Poetry Lesson Ideas

- ❖ Concrete poems (Shape poems)
- ❖ Cinquain poems
- ❖ Color Poems
- ❖ Poems about antonyms
- ❖ Riddle poems
- ❖ Tongue Twister poems
- ❖ Rhyming poems
- ❖ Poems about food
- ❖ Poems with repetition
- ❖ Poems written about a photograph - students select a picture, then write a poem to go with it
- ❖ Lessons on Line breaks and the white space in poems
- ❖ Lessons on revising poems

Section 4 (optional)

Name: _____

Student Reflections on Poetry Writing

1. My favorite thing about poetry is _____

2. The thing I liked best about poetry writing was _____

3. The most challenging thing for me about poetry writing was _____

4. My favorite poem that I wrote this year was _____

The reason why I like it is because _____

5. Other thoughts and feelings you have about your poetry experiences this year.

Section 5

Some of my favorite poetry books from my classroom

Animal Poems

A Fuzzy-Fast Blur: Poems About Pets. Laura Purdie Salas. (2009). Mankato, MN: Capstone Press.

Beast Feast. Douglas Florian. (1994) New York, NY: Scholastic, Inc.

How Now, Brown Cow? Alice Schertle. (1994). Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace & Company.

Insectlopedia. Douglas Florian. (1998) New York, NY: Harcourt Brace & Company.

Lizards, Frogs, and Polliwogs. Douglas Florian. (2001) San Diego, CA: Harcourt, Inc.

Mammalabilia. Douglas Florian. (2000) San Diego, CA: Harcourt, Inc.

On the Wing. David Elliott. (2014) Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press.

On the Wing. Douglas Florian. (1996) San Diego, CA: Harcourt, Inc.

Who Swallowed Harold? And Other Poems About Pets. Susan Pearson. (2005). Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish.

List Poems

Falling Down the Page: A Book of List Poems. Georgia Heard. (2009). New York, NY: Roaring Brooks Press.

Under My Bed: List Poems. Brian P. Cleary. (2017). Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook Press.

Point of View

Cat Talk. Patricia MacLachlan & Emily MacLachlan Charest. (2013). New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.

I Didn't Do It. Patricia MacLachlan & Emily MacLachlan Charest. (2010). New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.

Our Farm: By the Animals of Farm Sanctuary. Maya Gottfried. (2010). New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

Once I Ate a Pie. Patricia MacLachlan & Emily MacLachlan Charest. (2006). New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.

Turtle in July. Marilyn Singer. (1989). New York, NY: Aladdin Books.

Two-Person Poems

Messing Around on the Monkey Bars: And Other School Poems for Two Voices. Betsy Franco. (2009). Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press.

Haiku

If it Rains Pancakes: Haiku and Lantern Poems. Brian P. Cleary. (2014). Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook Press.

Least Things: Poems About Small Natures. Jane Yolen. (2003). Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, Inc.

Acrostic Poems

Autumn: An Alphabet Acrostic. Steven Schnur. (1997). New York, NY: Clarion Books.

Silver Seeds. Paul Paolilli, P & Dan Brewer. (2001). New York, NY: Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers.

Concrete Poems

Ode to A Commode: Concrete Poems. Brian P. Cleary. (2015). Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook Press.

Splish Splash. Joan Bransfield Graham. (1994). New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin
Harcourt Publishing Company.

Science and Socials Studies Poems

A Leaf Can Be... Laura Purdie Salas. (2012). Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook Press.

A Rock Can Be... Laura Purdie Salas. (2015). Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook Press.

And Then There Were Eight: Poems About Space. Laura Purdie Salas. (2008). Mankato,
MN: Capstone Press.

Butterfly Eyes and Other Secrets of the Meadow. Joyce Sidman. (2006). New York, NY:
Houghton Mifflin Company.

Chatter, Sing, Roar, Buzz: Poems About the Rainforest. Laura Purdie Salas. (2009).
Mankato, MN: Capstone Press.

Dark Emperor and Other Poems of the Night. Joyce Sidman. (2010). New York, NY:
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

Peaceful Pieces: Poems and Quilts About Peace. Anna Grossnickle Hines. (2017). New
York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, LLC.

Poetrees. Douglas Florian (2010). New York, NY: Beach Lane Books.

Shaking Things Up: Fourteen Women Who Changed the World. Susan Hood. (2018).
New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishing

Song of a Water Boatman and Other Pond Poems. Joyce Sidman. (2005). New York,
NY:
Houghton Mifflin Company.

Spectacular Science. Lee Bennett Hopkins. (2002). New York, NY: Aladdin Paperbacks.

Water Can Be... Laura Purdie Salas. (2014). Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook Press.

Poems about the Seasons and Months of the Year

A Chill in the Air: Nature Poems for Fall and Winter. John Frank. (2003). New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books.

A Cold Snap: Frosty Poems. Audrey B. Baird. (2002). Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, Inc.

A Year Full of Poems. Michael Harrison and Christopher Stuart-Clark. (1991). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Once Upon Ice and Other Frozen Poems. Jane Yolen. (1997). Honesdale, PA: Windsong Boyds Mills Press, Inc.

Pieces: A Year in Poems & Quilts. Anna Grossnickle Hines. (2001). New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishing.

Swing Around the Sun. Barbara Juster Esbensen. (2003). Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books, Inc.

Winter Bees and Other Poems of the Cold. Joyce Sidman & Rick Allen. (2014). New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

Winter Eyes. Douglas Florian. (1999). New York, NY: Greenwillow Books.

Winter Lights: A Season in Poems & Quilts. Anna Grossnickle Hines. (2005). New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishing.

School Poems

Mrs. Cole on an Onion Roll and Other School Poems. Kalli Dakos.. (1995). New York.
NY: Aladdin Paperbacks.

School Supplies: A Book of Poems. Lee Bennett Hopkins. (1996). New York, NY:
Aladdin Paperbacks.

Stampede: Poems to Celebrate the Wild Side of School. Laura Purdie Salas. (2009). New
York, NY: Clarion Books.

Poems about Books and Words

Book Speak. Laura Purdie Salas. (2011). New York, NY: Clarion Books.

I Am the Book. Lee Bennett Hopkins. (2011). New York, NY: Holiday House.

In the Land of Words: New and Selected Poems. Eloise Greenfield. (2004). New York,
NY: HarperCollins Publishers.

Wonderful Words: Poems About Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening. Lee Bennett
Hopkins. (2004). New York, NY: Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Anthologies of Poems about Lots of Different Things

A Family of Poems: My Favorite Poetry for Children. Caroline Kennedy. (2005). New,
York, NY: Hyperion Books for Children.

A Light in the Attic. Shel Silverstein. (1981). New York, NY: Harper & Row.

A Stick is an Excellent Thing: Poems Celebrating Outdoor Play. Marilyn Singer. (2012).
New York, NY: Clarion Books.

All the Small Poems and Fourteen More. Valerie Worth. (1994). Canada: Douglas &
McIntyre Ltd.

Everything On It. Shel Silverstein. (2011). New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.

Here's A Little Poem: A Very First Book of Poetry. Jane Yolen & Andrew Fusek Peters.

(2007) Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press.

Something Big Was Here. Jack Prelutsky. (1990). New York, NY: Greenwillow Books.

The Great Frog race and Other Poems. Kristine O'Connell George. (2005). New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company.

The New Kid on the Block. Jack Prelutsky. (1984). New York, NY: Scholastic, Inc.

Where the Sidewalk Ends. Shel Silverstein. (1974). New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Publishers.