



What Does Poetry Mean to You?

2015 7GP Poetry Lesson Plan

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Table of Contents

A Guide for Instructors: Teacher to Teacher	3
About this Unit	4
DAY ONE What is Poetry?	6
DAY TWO Tone	21
DAY THREE Revision	34
DAY FOUR Personification	49
DAY FIVE Theme	58
DAY SIX Mood	69
DAY SEVEN Poetic Devices	81
DAY EIGHT Concrete Poems	97
DAY NINE Ballad	104
DAY TEN Reflection	111
Bonus Lesson 1 Poems (and Resources) for the Struggling Writer	115
Bonus Lesson 2 A Voice for Hard Issues	121
Acknowledgments	138

A Guide for Instructors: Teacher to Teacher

As a 22-year veteran in the Missouri public school system, I believe in the importance of exposing students to all forms of writing, especially poetry. I particularly enjoyed diving into poems with the younger elementary students, but when I transitioned to 7th grade, I struggled with how to approach poetry with middle school students. Then along came *The 7GP 7th Grade Poetry Lesson Plan*—no more struggling. I found the plans to be easy to follow and most engaging for the students. I ran the *7GP Contest* in my classroom at Antonia Middle School for three years, and each year looked forward to implementing these lessons. So, when asked by Aaron Williams, Founder of The 7th Grade Poetry Foundation, to update the lessons for the 2016 contest, I was thrilled.

By implementing these lessons early in the school year, it enabled me to build stronger bonds with a majority of my students, even the most apprehensive ones. I learned so much about my students that I may not have otherwise. As middle school teachers, we all know that students at this age are dealing with many social and emotional issues. Poetry can be a tool that offers students an outlet to deal with such issues. I received a letter from an 8th grade student expressing to me that poetry helped her through the contemplation of suicide. I was shocked. This confirmed my belief that poetry does impact students.

The ultimate goal of this poetry unit is for students themselves to be excited about poetry as a means for self-expression. Believe me, it can and will happen. It became apparent the impact this plan had on the students when the contest began making a “buzz” with the 6th graders who then looked forward to their 7th grade year—what more could a teacher ask for? Even my most reluctant students would express to me that, through poetry, they feel they have a “voice” and that their voice matters.

This plan may seem overwhelming, but just take it one day at a time. Do what works best for you and your students. On several of the Lesson Goals pages (lessons one, three, four, seven, nine, ten, and bonus lesson two) you will find “Teacher Tips.” These are ideas that I have found to be helpful in my own classroom. The most helpful tip I can offer is to always give your students the opportunity to write and to read aloud their writing in an environment free from judgement. Not only does this aid in speaking skills, it also builds a student’s self-confidence.

Another important component of reading poetry aloud is that it helps with the process of revision. I cannot stress enough the fact that students need to understand and value this process (see **Lesson Three**). Aaron Williams, 7GP Founder stresses, “If we want students to become better readers, we need to have them become, and want to become, better revisers. Every student’s poem should be celebrated as a trophy.”

Lastly, and most importantly, have fun with these lessons and be flexible. You will be astounded by what your seventh graders have to say.

Stacey B. Knight
Retired Educator & Educational Programming Advisor
The 7th Grade Poetry Foundation

About this Unit

This lesson plan was designed for you, the instructor. Whether you have taught poetry for years, or this is your first time, this plan has something for everyone to use. This ten-day plan is unique because it introduces poetry through peer-level student authors to help educators inspire students to write their own poems.

Your school's contest must end on **January 19, 2016**, with the winning poem due no later than **January 29, 2016**. We strongly suggest teaching this unit as soon as possible to give students the necessary exposure to various poems and several months' time to devote to their own poetry writing. This contest is not designed for students to produce a poem in one class period. It is imperative to not only give students ample time to write poetry, but time to make revisions to the poem(s) they want to submit to *The 7GP Contest*.

The lesson plans are optional, but they include many poems from previous 7GP winners. *The 7GP Contest* winning poems are included not only as a teaching tool to compare student writing with famous poets, but also to motivate students to achieve their greatest potential.

The lessons are organized beginning with **Core Curriculum Standards**. For each day, there is a set of standards that the lesson follows. In order to make this lesson plan usable across the nation, it does not contain individual state standards—that is up to you, the instructor, to incorporate. However, these lessons are flexible and easily modified.

After the standards, there is a section for each of the following:

Outcomes relates to the goals students will accomplish that day.

Themes, Issues, Concepts are ideas that come from the readings and activities.

Literary Terms are the specific words that students will be exposed to in the particular lesson.

Materials list anything that you might need for that lesson.

Each lesson plan is set up in the following order:

DO NOW is a warm-up activity to get your students' brains going for the day.

WHOLE GROUP means that the entire class will participate.

PARTNERS/SMALL GROUPS breaks the class into either pairs or groups of three, maybe four.

INDIVIDUAL is the time for each student to work on his or her own.

REFLECTION is the time where the whole class gathers together again.

HOMEWORK is a suggested activity at the end of each day's lesson for lesson reinforcement.

You will notice that some lessons have an "Adapted from" section. This means that the particular lesson for that day was inspired by whatever website and/or book was cited.

Reflections on a Gift of Watermelon Pickle is also a great resource you might find useful. This book is a collection of modern poems that appeal to young people. You may even want to use children's books as a means to inspire good writing. Cathy O'Brien, 7GP Educator Liaison, suggests *Saturdays and Teacakes* for examples of verbs, figurative language, and descriptive language.

We hope this lesson plan will be helpful and inspiring to both you and your students. As 7GP's Founder Aaron Williams states, "Anyone can write a great poem and everyone deserves that chance."

Sincerely,

The 7th Grade Poetry Foundation



Remind your students each day to think of the poem they want to write for *The 7GP Contest*. Winning poems are due and must be submitted to 7GP no later than January 29, 2016.

DAY ONE | What is Poetry?

Core Curriculum Standards

Reading Literature: Craft and Structure

- RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.
- RL.7.5** Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

Reading Informational Text: Craft and Structure

- RI.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- RI.7.5** Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.

Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- SL.7.2** Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue.

Speaking and Listening: Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- SL.7.4** Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- SL.7.6** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

DAY ONE | What is Poetry?

Lesson Goals

Outcomes

Students will question and analyze the meaning of poetry. It is also imperative that at some point during this lesson students understand the meaning of plagiarism (see reference handout). Also, check out the free website grammarly.com to help spot plagiarism and errors in grammar. By the end of this unit, students will acknowledge the importance of poetry as a means of creative self-expression.

Themes, Issues, and Concepts

what is a poem, love, nature, farm life, notes, taking what is not yours, what poetry means to you, plagiarism

Literary Terms

style, compare and contrast

Materials

“How to Eat a Poem” by Eve Merriam (optional)
“Eating Poetry” by Mark Strand (optional)
“Unfolding Bud” by Naoshi Kuriyami (optional)
What is a Poem? Handouts
“What Cats Think” by Alvin Do, 2012 7GP Winner (optional)
“Lucky Lake” by Joshua Macy, 2014 7GP Winner (optional)
“The Dinkey Bird” by Eugene Field (optional)
YouTube (optional)
Writer’s notebooks

Teacher Tips — *Want to get the students excited about this year’s contest?*

- If you are a previous participant, kick off this unit by inviting and showcasing your school’s 7GP winner. Your student can recite his/her winning poem to the class from the 7GP anthology. If you are new to *The 7GP Contest*, please review the content on the 7gp.org website which contains past 7GP winning poems and videos of students reading their work. Pick one or two to share with your class.
- Collaborate with the music teacher to discuss poetry and figurative language in song lyrics (using, of course, music that is popular with 7th graders).
- Encourage students to simply write about what they know or what they are passionate about; *authenticity is important*. Refer to student examples, “Muddin’ in Missouri” (**Lesson 7**) and “Lucky Lake” (**Lesson 1**).
- Give students an opportunity to play with language and unleash their creativity. Students can practice imitating or creating a parody of known authors’ poems much like Weird Al Yankovic does with music. By the way, “Word Crimes” by Weird Al is a great parody to share with your students for ELA. My students loved it.

Plagiarism Reference Handout

Plagiarism is intentionally or inadvertently taking credit for somebody else's words or ideas.

Acts of Plagiarism

- Copying another student's work
- Turning in another student's paper as your own
- Copying any an amount of text from an electronic source (including, but not limited to, the Internet)
- Copying any amount of text from a print source
- Purchasing work and turning it in as your own
- Working with a partner or group on an individual assignment
- Having someone write the paper for you
- Expressing ideas other than your own without citation
- Passing off the ideas of another as your own

Guidelines for Avoiding Plagiarism

- Use quotation marks to show when you are borrowing material from another writer, even if it is only a phrase or key word.
- Be careful to separate your own ideas from the ideas of others, especially when summarizing and paraphrasing. *
- Make sure to properly cite and credit all ideas that are not your own, (See section on citations.)
- When in doubt, cite. It is better to be too careful than not careful enough. Remember, teachers are there to help you. Ask the teacher any and all questions about the assignment and ask questions about when and how to document others' ideas.
- Regardless of your intention, do not loan or share your work with others.

*Paraphrasing is a restatement of a text or passage in another form in order to clarify or inform. When paraphrasing, you must always give credit to the original author.

Adapted from Mt. Greylock Regional School (Williamstown, MA) 7th Grade Academic Integrity Agreement, 2014.

DAY ONE | What is Poetry?

Lesson Plan

PAGE 1

DO NOW (5 minutes)

In their writer's notebooks, have students write a definition for poetry. If students have access to a device, you may also have students post their ideas on Padlet (refer to example: padlet.com/knights7/7i8c6l8onxex) or go to padlet.com to create your own unique Padlet wall.

WHOLE GROUP (20 minutes)

Explain to the students that by the end of this unit, they will be required to write a poem. As we go through our unit, they should keep that in mind as they learn more about poetry. Any time something sparks their imagination, they should make a note of it (perhaps in their writer's notebook). Explain The 7th Grade Poetry Foundation's contest to them. Explain that they are going to be the poets. *The 7GP Contest* is their chance to be an author. You may want to let them know that, though they only have one poem due at the end of this unit, they will hopefully be inspired to write many and choose their favorite and best for entry into the contest.

EXTRA — What is art?

You may want to ask the students what they consider to be art. One form of art is literary art, which includes poetry. By writing a poem, they are also becoming a literary artist. Ask the students what they wrote for their definitions of poetry. Write them on the board. As you go through this lesson plan, the definition of what poetry is will be constantly questioned. It might be helpful to have students write the definitions other students had below their own definition. Since this is the beginning of the poetry unit, "How to Eat a Poem," by Eve Merriam, might be a good poem to start off the unit. "Eating Poetry" by Mark Strand is also a good poem to begin a poetry unit. Now that everyone has discussed what they think a poem is, ask the following questions:

Is music poetry? Why or why not? What about rap or country music?

Before asking this question, play them a variety of music with lyrics. If you don't have access to YouTube, perhaps try printing out some song lyrics and having the students look at those instead.

If you take a sentence out of a book, could that be considered a poem? Why or why not?

Read a random sentence out of a book and see if students think that could be a poem.

PARTNER/SMALL GROUPS (15 minutes)

Now that the class has discussed what they think does or doesn't make a poem, pass out the Comparison Poetry Handout. It contains four very different poems. "To My Dear and Loving Husband" by Anne Bradstreet seems to fit the stereotype of what people think of poetry—love, heightened language, and a predictable rhyme scheme. There is a poem by Lily Nathanson a winner of The 7GP Contest in 2013. There are also two poems by William Carlos Williams. These poems are very different from the Anne Bradstreet poem because they don't rhyme, the themes are harder to find, and the structure is unpredictable. Students can create their own poems following this same basic pattern.

With a partner, have students fill out the **Comparison Poetry Handout** together. Once everyone has completed the handout, the students will share their answers with the class.

EXTRA — “What Cats Think” by Alvin Do

You can apply the same questions from the Comparison Poetry Handout to this light and humorous poem “What Cats Think” challenges how students might view poetry because it isn’t stuffy or stereotypical.

EXTRA — Demonstrate Writing Inspiration

The author of “The Preserve” was inspired by the poet, Gerard Manly Hopkins. If your students particularly liked this poem, you may want to show them a poem by Hopkins to demonstrate how writing can inspire you.

INDEPENDENT (10 minutes)

Have students write down their answers to the following questions in their writer’s notebook:

1. Based on our lesson today, what do you think a poem should have?
2. What should a poem not have?
3. What did you notice that was different about the Bradstreet poem versus the Williams poems?
4. What similarities did you see in these poems?

REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Students share their answers from the INDEPENDENT section with the class.

HOMEWORK

In their writer’s notebook, students should reflect on this prompt: What surprised you about today’s lesson? Look back at the definition of poetry that you wrote. How does it compare to what your classmates said?

How to Eat a Poem

by Eve Merriam (1916–1992)

Don't be polite.
Bite in,
Pick it up with your fingers and lick the juice that
 may run down your chin.
It is ready and ripe now, whenever you are.

You do not need a knife or fork or spoon
or plate or napkin or tablecloth.

For there is no core
or stem
or rind
or pit
or seed
or skin
to throw away.

Eating Poetry

by Mark Strand (1934–)

Ink runs from the corners of my mouth.
There is no happiness like mine.
I have been eating poetry.

The librarian does not believe what she sees.
Her eyes are sad
and she walks with her hands in her dress.

The poems are gone.
The light is dim.
The dogs are on the basement stairs and coming up.

Their eyeballs roll,
their blond legs burn like brush.
The poor librarian begins to stamp her feet and weep.

She does not understand.
When I get on my knees and lick her hand,
she screams.

I am a new man.
I snarl at her and bark.
I romp with joy in the bookish dark.

Unfolding Bud

by Naoshi Koriyama (1926–)

One is amazed
By a water-lily bud
Unfolding
With each passing day,
Taking on a richer color
And new dimensions.

One is not amazed,
At first glance,
By a poem,
Which is tight-closed
As a tiny bud.

Yet one is surprised
To see the poem
Gradually unfolding,
Revealing its rich inner self
As one reads it
Again
And over again.

What is a poem?

To My Dear and Loving Husband by Anne Bradstreet (1612–1672)

If ever two were one, then surely we.
If ever man were loved by wife, then thee;
If ever wife was happy in a man,
Compare with me, ye women, if you can.
I prize they love more than whole mines of gold
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.
My love is such that rivers cannot quench,
Nor ought but love from thee, give recompense.
They love is such I can no way repay,
The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray.
Then while we live, in love let's so persevere
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

Is this a poem? Why or why not?

What is a poem?

The Preserve

By Lily Nathanson (7GP Winner, 2013)

This is my hope and
work. The land is fallow,
fickle and fleshy with water
that's barbarous and brink.
It sounds like a million
people hitting chestnut wood.

This is my place. It's serene
and pacific. The ground dazzles
and soon dims from within. It
has the power to possess you
from within.

When I see it every Thursday
I scream, "Bonanza, brilliant, blank,
alive." The ground enchants and
enlightens with one simple
slight step.

Once again, this is my
simple, special, sweet, slimy love.

Is this a poem? Why or why not?

What is a poem?

This is Just to Say

by William Carlos Williams (1883-1963)

I have eaten
the plums
that were in
the icebox

and which
you were probably
saving
for breakfast

Forgive me
they were delicious
so sweet
and so cold

The Red Wheelbarrow

by William Carlos Williams (1883-1963)

so much depends
upon

a red wheel
barrow

glazed with rain
water

beside the white
chickens.

Are these poems? Why or why not?

What Cats Think

by Alvin Do, (7GP Winner, 2012)

Litter box not here
You must have moved it again
Your shoe will be fine.
Humans are so strange
Mine lies still in bed, then screams!
My claws aren't that sharp...
Small brave carnivores
Kill pine cones and mosquitoes.
Fear vacuum cleaner.
You never feed me
Perhaps I'll sleep on your face
That will sure show you!
The rule for today
Touch my tail, I shred your hand.
New rule tomorrow.

Lucky Lake

by Joshua Macy (7GP Winner, 2014)

There was a time when Lucky Lake waited for us to find it
And one day fish there...offering us the fish that swim about

A muskrat visited, almost like it was wishing us luck
The ducks that fly over look at the fish from the sky

Lucky Lake...a place where there is life everywhere...the houses that
Surround it in a circle comfort it like a blanket

And it's always there when we go back
And it will always be there when we go back

When we leave...it will be waiting for us to come back
And fish again

The Dinkey Bird

by Eugene Field (1850–1895)

In an ocean, 'way out yonder,
(As all sapient people know)
Is the land of Wonder-Wander,
Whither children love to go;
It's their playing, romping, swinging,
That give great joy to me
While the Dinkey-Bird goes singing
In the amfalula tree!

There the gum-drops grow like cherries,
And taffy's thick as peas--
Caramels you pick like berries
When, and where, and how you please;
Big red sugar-plums are clinging
To the cliffs beside that sea
Where the Dinkey-Bird is singing
In the amfalula tree!

So when children shout and scamper
And make merry all the day,
When there's naught to put a damper
To the ardor of their play;
When I hear their laughter ringing,
Then I'm sure as sure can be
That the Dinkey-Bird is singing
In the amfalula tree!

For the Dinkey-Bird's bravuras
And staccatos are so sweet--
His roulades, appoggiaturas,
And robustos so complete,
That the youth of every nation--
Be they near or far away--
Have especial delectation
In that gladsome roundelay.

The Dinkey Bird *continued* **by Eugene Field (1850–1895)**

Their eyes grow bright and brighter,
Their lungs begin to crow,
Their hearts get light and lighter,
And their cheeks are all aglow;
For an echo cometh bringing
The news to all and me,
That the Dinkey-Bird is singing
In the amfalula tree.

I'm sure you like to go there
To see your feathered friend--
And so many goodies grow there
You would like to comprehend!
Speed, little dreams, your winging
To that land across the sea
Where the Dinkey-Bird is singing
In the amfalula tree!

Core Curriculum Standards

Reading Literature: Key Ideas, and Details

- RL.7.1** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.7.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Reading Literature: Craft, and Structure

- RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

Reading Informational Text: Craft and Structure

- RI.7.6** Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.

Writing: Texts Types and Purposes

- W.7.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Writing: Production and Distribution of Writing

- W.7.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- W.7.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

DAY TWO | Tone

Lesson Goals

Outcomes

Students will be able to pick out words that convey tone.

Themes, Issues, and Concepts

anger, resolution of anger, frustration, importance of expressing feelings

Literary Terms

Tone, rhyme, plot, metaphor

Materials

“Anger” by Charles Lamb
Poetry On Their Terms (2013 edition)
 “Listen” by Teandra Wilkins
 “Who Are You?” by John Smith
Poetry on Our Terms (2015 edition)
 “No More” by Nia Williams
Tone Handout
Tone Words Handout
SchoolTube (optional)
Writer’s notebooks (optional)

DAY TWO | Tone

Lesson Plan

PAGE 1

DO NOW (5 minutes)

Review the students' ideas about what poetry is from the Lesson One.

WHOLE GROUP (20 minutes)

Have students read "Anger," and ask them to underline any words they don't understand. After they have finished reading, have a discussion about the troublesome words, and ask for volunteers to help explain the words. In particular for poetry, every single word is important; therefore, knowing what all the terms is important. Improving vocabulary gives students greater resources to express themselves through words and express what feelings, thoughts, or emotions they want to convey.

EXTRA — The Importance of Word Choice

Show students the importance of word choice by asking them to explain the differences between feelings, thoughts, or emotions. These words may seem similar at first, but they are not the same. Note: Another good poem that would pair well with "Anger" is "A Poison Tree" by William Blake. (refer to SchoolTube)

Explain the following:

1. Tone is the attitude a writer takes toward a subject. Poets establish tone through their choice of words and use of details.
2. One example of tone would be when you send a text to someone that you meant to be funny, but the person receiving it thought you were being serious. Another example is that you know you are in trouble with your parent when she/he has a certain tone in her/his voice.
3. In order to figure out the tone of a poem, one can look at the choice of words used in the poem.

Pass out the Tone Words Handout

This handout is useful to give students more ways to describe a tone with more descriptive words and avoid ones that are too basic (Ex.: "The tone is sad.") This handout helps them to be more specific and to learn new words at the same time. For more words go to goo.gl/LRKgh5.

Ask students to underline other words that might suggest a tone. Ask why they underlined the words that they did. Why/how do those words convey tone?

PARTNER/SMALL GROUPS (15 minutes)

Continue underlining tone words using either "Listen" or "Who Are You?" or "No More". The poem not chosen will be used next for students to analyze individually.

INDEPENDENT (10 minutes)

With the poem that wasn't used with the partner's section, have students underline tone words, then discuss their findings with the class.

REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Ask the students to discuss the following: How do you deal with anger at another person? Using evidence from the poems, explain how it is similar or different to Blake's narrator, or the narrator in "Listen" or "Who Are You?". Do you usually explain to the person you're angry at why you feel that way? Or do you let your anger get away from you, like with Blake's narrator?

Have a conversation with the students about what they wrote about, what discoveries they made about themselves, and how what they've written could be made into a poem.

HOMEWORK

In their writer's notebook, have students write about discoveries they made about themselves from their answers in the reflection section, and how what they've written could be made into a poem.

Anger

by Charles Lamb (1775–1834)

Anger in its time and place
May assume a kind of grace.
It must have some reason in it,
And not last beyond a minute.
If to further lengths it go,
It does into malice grow.
'Tis the difference that we see
'Twixt the serpent and the bee.
If the latter you provoke,
It inflicts a hasty stroke,
Puts you to some little pain,
But it never stings again.
Close in tufted bush or brake
Lurks the poison-swelled snake
Nursing up his cherished wrath;
In the purlieux of his path,
In the cold, or in the warm,
Mean him good, or mean him harm,
Whensoever fate may bring you,
The vile snake will always sting you.

Listen

by Teandra Wilkins (7GP Winner, 2013)

Should I listen?

Should I listen if you're the one who caused me scarring pain?

Should I listen to your problems?

Should I listen to your tortured mind?

Should I listen to your broken heart?

Should I even listen to the words that leave your mouth?

Should I listen to your weeping soul, if you're the one who caused me sorrow?

Should I listen to your tears, if you caused my misery?

Will I listen to your depression, if you caused me to be depressed?

Will you listen?

Will you look into my fiery eyes, and stop with the trash that flows
out of your mouth?

Will you look into my raging heart, and see the pain you have caused me?

Will you look into my infuriated mind?

Which made it stream with pain?

Do you think that the garbage that rains from your mouth helps you?

My angry, raging, furious, infuriated mind is about to burst into a big destruction.

The depths of my despair will only hurt you, but me even more.

Will you stop?

Is your heart just an empty void, that hasn't been created yet?

Is your brain an empty thoughtless tunnel?

is your spirit as dark as space without a star in sight?

Will you change your mindset for others to serve?

Will you change your heart so someone won't think the words that come
out of your mouth are true?

Will you just change?

Who Are You?

by John Smith (7GP Winner, 2013)

Who are you to tell me how to be me?
How are you going to tell me to be me
 you don't know how I feel
 you say you know but you don't
Who are you to tell me how to be me?
you haven't seen what I've seen, felt what I feel
Who are you to tell me how to be me?
you have no relation to what has happened to me and my family
 Who are you to tell me how to act?
 you don't know my life and how I live it
 Who are you to tell me how to act?
saying that I need to take anger out of the picture
 Who are you to tell me how to feel?
 When I feel unloved and left out...
 who are you?

No More

by Nia Williams (7GP Winner, 2015)

You whisper peace
But you scream war
Well, we are here to say, "No more"

You say, "Don't fight"
But you raise your fists to the sky
Well, we are here to say, "No more"

You promised it would end
But then...
Boom! Pang!
Another bomb lands
And then comes the pain

You promise to dry them
But you ignore our tears
Why say you will help us
When you're the root of our fears?

We say, "No more"
But you don't seem to hear us
We knock on opportunity's door
But it never opens

No more...
Words with so much meaning
Mean little to you...
You never make peace
when you say you will,
But you make war
wherever you can

We have stomped, shouted, and said, "*No more*"
But still you do not listen
Well, once again we say to you, "NO MORE"

NAME _____ CLASS _____ DATE _____

Tone — Response to “Anger”

HANDOUT PAGE 1

1. How do you think the author feels about expressing anger?

2. What words does the author use to convey these feelings?

**3. What tone (or attitude) comes through in this poem?
How does the tone progress/develop throughout the poem?**

NAME _____ CLASS _____ DATE _____

Tone — Response to “Listen”

HANDOUT PAGE 2

1. How do you think the author feel towards the “you” mentioned in the poem?

2. What words does the author use to convey those feelings?

**3. What tone (or attitude) comes through in this poem?
How does the tone progress/develop throughout the poem?**

NAME _____ CLASS _____ DATE _____

Tone — Response to “Who You Are?”

HANDOUT PAGE 3

1. How do you think the author feel towards the “you” mentioned in the poem?

2. What words does the author use to convey those feelings?

**3. What tone (or attitude) comes through in this poem?
How does the tone progress/develop throughout the poem?**

NAME _____ CLASS _____ DATE _____

Tone — Response to “No More”

HANDOUT PAGE 4

1. How do you think the author feel towards the “you” mentioned in the poem?

2. What words does the author use to convey those feelings?

**3. What tone (or attitude) comes through in this poem?
How does the tone progress/develop throughout the poem?**

Tone = Author's Attitude

A special thank you to Rachael Phillips for providing 7GP with this list.

POSITIVE	Admiring	Compassionate	Excited	Laudatory	Self-assured
	Adoring	Complimentary	Exhilarated	Light	Sentimental
	Affectionate	Conciliatory	Expectant	Lively	Serene
	Appreciative	Confident	Facetious	Mirthful	Silly
	Approving	Contented	Fervent	Modest	Straightforward
	Bemused	Delightful	Flippant	Nostalgic	Sympathetic
	Benevolent	Earnest	Forthright	Optimistic	Tender
	Blithe	Ebullient	Friendly	Passionate	Tranquil
	Calm	Ecstatic	Funny	Playful	Whimsical
	Casual	Effusive	Gleeful	Proud	Wistful
	Celebratory	Elated	Hilarious	Reflective	Worshipful
	Cheerful	Empathetic	Interested	Romantic	Zealous
	Comforting	Encouraging	Introspective	Sanguine	
	Comic	Euphoric	Jovial	Scholarly	

NEGATIVE	Abhorring	Cold	Disappointed	Hopeless	Psychotic
	Acerbic	Conceited	Disliking	Hostile	Sarcastic
	Ambiguous	Condescending	Disrespectful	Impatient	Sardonic
	Ambivalent	Confused	Doubtful	Inflammatory	Scornful
	Angry	Contemptuous	Embarrassed	Insecure	Selfish
	Annoyed	Curt cynical	Enraged	Lethargic	Sinister
	Antagonistic	Demanding	Fearful	Mocking	Solemn
	Anxious	Depressed	Forceful	Nervous	Suspicious
	Apathetic	Derisive	Foreboding	Ominous	Tense
	Apprehensive	Derogatory	Frantic	Outraged	Threatening
	Belligerent	Desolate	Furious	Paranoid	Uneasy
	Biting	Despairing	Gloomy	Patronizing	Wry
	Bitter	Desperate	Greedy	Pedantic	
	Blunt	Detached	Haughty	Pensive	
	Bossy	Diabolic	Holier-than-thou	Pretentious	

NEUTRAL	Commanding	Objective	Unconcerned
	Direct	Questioning	Understated
	Impartial	Speculative	
	Meditative	Unambiguous	

DAY THREE | Revision

Core Curriculum Standards

Language: Knowledge of Language

- L.7.3** Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

Reading Literature: Ideas and Details

- RL.7.1** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Reading Literature: Craft and Structure

- RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

Reading Informational Text: Craft and Structure

- RI.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

Writing: Production and Distribution of Writing

- W.7.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- W.7.5** With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- SL.7.2** Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue.

Adapted from:

Brown, Amanda C. "Thank You, Thesaurus: Experimenting With the Right Word vs. the Almost-Right Word." Learning.blogs.nytimes.com. The New York Times, 15 Nov. 2012. Web. 10 July 2013. <http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/11/15/thank-you-thesaurus-experimenting-with-the-right-word-vs-the-almost-right-word/?_r=0>.

Heard, Georgia "Welcome to Writing Poetry" Writing Matters presented by Teaching Matters 2010. <http://www.teachmatters.org/files/poetryunit.pdf>

DAY THREE | Revision

Lesson Goals

Outcomes

Students will understand the importance of revision and recognize that their first written thoughts should not be considered final drafts. The previous lesson demonstrated how word choice, or diction, is extremely important for a poem. In this lesson, students will see with hands-on activities the impact a single word or line-break can have on a poem.

Themes, Issues, and Concepts

originality, revision, personification, longing, tension in poetry, performing under pressure, fame, active verbs, imagery

Literary Terms

diction, synonym, alliteration, repetition, structure, line breaks, craft, poetic license

Materials

Thesaurus

Altered Poems Handout

“Lady Luna” by Nina Maricano, 2012 7GP Winner

“Foul Shot” by Edwin A. Hoey

Plain Paragraph Handout

Revise Handouts: “April Rain Song” by Langston Hughes and “Teenagers” by Pat Mora

“Arabian Knights” Revision Handout

Teacher Tips — *Want to get the students excited about this year’s contest?*

- Provide students the “opportunity” to write poetry and/or share a piece of their writing as often as possible even if it’s just for five minutes. Pick a day (or two) of the week, and make it a routine. Encourage students to continue writing outside the classroom.
- Students can also use this time to ask their classmates for suggestions in regards to “altering/revising” a particular piece of writing. Not only does this help with the revision process, but aids in speaking and listening skills as well. Incorporate this during “Writer’s Workshop” time.
- Collaborate with students to create a revising and editing checklist for students to use when evaluating their own poems as well as others. The teacher should use this checklist as well.

DAY THREE | Word Choice & Altering Poems

Lesson Plan *You may need two days for this lesson if you wish to complete all of the activities.*

PAGE 1

DO NOW (5 minutes)

Complete one or both of the following activities:

1. Ask the students to free write about some words or phrases that describe their personality.
2. Pick an object (a pencil, a brick wall, a clock, anything). Then write down everything you notice about that object.

WHOLE GROUP (20 minutes)

Distribute the Altered Poems Handout. Explain that one version is the originally published poem, and the other version has been altered with the use of a thesaurus. Ask the students to compare the differences between the originals and the altered poems. When finished ask the students to answer the following questions:

1. Which passage flows more smoothly and sounds better to your ear—the original or the altered?
2. Which words in the altered passage seem awkward to you?
3. The original reflects what the author actually wanted to say. How do the synonyms selected from the thesaurus change her/his meaning? Do any of the word changes affect the structure of the poem?
4. What exactly is a synonym? Do words like “celestial” and “otherworldly” mean the same thing? What about “stuck” and “adhered?” Or “inky” and “murky?”

EXTRA — Stanzas/line-breaks, punctuation and capitalization

Challenge students by showing a poem with stanzas and then that same poem without stanzas or vice versa. (See Extra Handout One “Teenagers” by Pat Mora) Explain how line-breaks give a poem rhythm. They tell the reader how to read the poem when the poet is not present. Stanza breaks are longer pauses and can be used between different ideas or images. You can also use this poem to discuss the impact capitalization and punctuation has on a poem. Is it necessary to capitalize the first word of every line? Discuss with students.

PARTNER/SMALL GROUPS (15-20 minutes)

Activity One Pass out the Plain Paragraph Handout, and have students use a thesaurus to write two different versions of it. The first version should be ridiculously overblown with five-dollar words. Have students read them aloud to pick the most over-the-top one. The second version should be a better version of the original paragraph with more interesting and descriptive words. They will share what they have created again. Then, ask the students these questions:

1. Why were the overblown paragraphs ineffective?
2. How did you decide what words to use for the second version?
3. In what ways did the second version end up being more effective than the original?
4. What lessons did the exercise teach us about how to use a thesaurus to revise our writing?

DAY THREE | Word Choice & Altering Poems

Lesson Plan

PAGE 2

Activity Two Distribute and/or project the Revise Handout One. Brainstorm a list of vivid words or figurative language that could be used to fill in the blanks of the poem, “April Rain Song” by Langston Hughes. Then, ask the students these questions:

1. Which words listed create a picture in your mind (i.e. imagery)?
2. What, if any, figurative language is listed? Explain (See Lesson Poetic Devices).

EXTRA

Review poem “Arabian Knights” by Abigale Houchins along with the revision feedback suggested by 7GP’s Educator Liaison, Cathy O’Brien. Discuss the suggestions with students.

INDEPENDENT (10 minutes)

Complete the second part of the **Revise Handout One**, “Refine Your Choice of Words.”

EXTRA

Have students use what they wrote for their free-writing activity to arrange the words to form lines of poetry and/or stanzas. Then, ask students to write their answers to these questions below their free write:

1. Circle words might you replace to make your description more detailed and interesting.
2. Use a thesaurus to look up alternate words for words you’ve circled and make a list.
3. How do the line breaks create rhythm to the poem?

Have a conversation with the students on their findings.

REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Students share their answers from the independent activity for “April Rain Song”. Then, display the poet’s actual words (see Revise Handouts One and Two “April Rain Song” by Langston Hughes).

HOMEWORK

Based on the lesson today, ask students to write a paragraph or two about why revision and word choice are important for poetry in particular. Also, remind students that any poem(s) they write should be considered as **first drafts**. Stress the importance of continually reflecting on a piece of writing for improvement.

Tip: When writing poetry, have students get in the habit of including a few sentences explaining their poems, reasons for line endings, stanzas, punctuation, capitalization, etc.

First draft:

Lady Luna

by Nina Marciano (7GP Winner, 2012)

Looking up at nightfall,
You see above the otherworldly Luna Lady,
Steadily shining luminous-like in the skyline.
When she is out, the Luna Lady shines brightly,
Her lovely, waxen face calmly watching everything.
The Luna Lady is whole, incomplete, and renewed again,
Blubbering at the loss of Darkness and the beginning of Day.
Over and again she comes, and sways to the owl's tune.
Her dexterous Luna-Lady Trot circling the murky black sky.
The tides also dance back and forth to Luna Lady's will.
The stars, her and Sir Sun's children, light Luna's way,
Until it is time to leave, and let Sir Sun light the world.
Immortal and everlasting she is, but all day she is not.
Many millions have laid eyes on her, but only in darkness.
She wishes to stay all day, not only at night.
And that is Luna Lady's unanswered trouble.
And it will forever be static.
Luna will be as Luna was.

Final Draft:

Lady Luna

by Nina Marciano (7GP Winner, 2012)

Looking up at nighttime,
You see above the celestial Luna Lady,
Steadily gleaming lucent-like in the skyline.
When she is out, the Luna Lady shines luminously,
Her lovely, white face tranquilly watching everything.
The Luna Lady is whole, partial, and renewed again,
Weeping at the loss of Darkness and the beginning of Day.
Over and again she comes, and dances to the owl's song.
Her graceful Luna-Lady Trot circling the inky black sky.
The tides also dance back and forth to Luna Lady's will.
The stars, her and Sir Sun's children, light Luna's way,
Until it is time to leave, and let Sir Sun light the world.
Immortal and everlasting she is, but all day she is not.
Many millions have beheld her, but only in darkness.
She wishes to stay all day, not only at night.
And that is Luna Lady's unanswered plight.
And it will forever be unchanging.
Luna will be as Luna was.

Original:

Foul Shot

by Edwin A. Hoey (b. unknown approx 1935)

With two 60s stuck on the scoreboard
And two seconds hanging on the clock,
The solemn boy in the center of the eyes,
Squeezed by silence,
Seeks out the line with his feet,
Soothes his hands along his uniform,
Gently drums the ball against the floor,
Then measures the waiting net,
Raises the ball on his right hand,
Balances it with his left,
Calms it with his fingertips,
Breathes,
Crouches,
Waits,
And then through a stretching of stillness,
Nudges it upward.
The ball
Slides up and out,
Lands,
Leans,
Wobbles,
Wavers,
Hesitates,
Plays it coy
Until every face begs with unsounding screams—
And then

And then

And then,

Right up before ROAR-UP,
Dives down and through.

7GP Altered Version:

Foul Shot

by Edwin A. Hoey (b. unknown approx 1935)

With two 60s adhered on the scoreboard
And two seconds swinging on the clock,
The somber boy in the center of the eyes,
Compressed by silence,
Seeks out the line with his feet,
Becalms his hands along his uniform,
Gently tattoos the ball against the floor,
Then measures the waiting net,
Raises the ball on his right hand,
Balances it with his left,
Assuages it with his fingertips,
Breathes,
Squatting,
Waits,
And then through a stretching of noiselessness,
Prods it upward.
The ball
Glides up and out,
Lands,
Reclines,
Teeters,
Staggers,
Hesitates,
Plays it timid
Until every face begs with unsounding howls—
And then

And then

And then,

Right up before ROAR-UP,
Ducks down and through.

Revise

April Rain Song

By Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

Brainstorm your choice of words.

Let the rain kiss you

Let the rain _____ your head with _____ drops

Let the rain sing a _____

The rain makes _____ on the sidewalk

The rain makes _____ in the gutter

The rain plays _____ _____ on our roof at night

And I love the rain.

Refine your choice of words:

Let the rain kiss you

Let the rain _____ your head with _____ drops

Let the rain sing a _____

The rain makes _____ on the sidewalk

The rain makes _____ in the gutter

The rain plays _____ _____ on our roof at night

And I love the rain.

Revise

April Rain Song

By Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

Let the rain kiss you/

Let the rain beat upon your head with silver liquid drops/

Let the rain sing you a lullaby/

The rain makes still pools on the sidewalk/

The rain makes running pools in the gutter/

The rain plays a little sleep song on our roof at night/

And I love the rain.

Revise “Extra”

Teenagers

By Pat Mora (1922-)

One day they disappear
into their rooms.
Doors and lips shut
and we become strangers
in our own home.

I pace the hall, hear whispers,
a code I knew but can't remember,
mouthed by mouths I taught to speak.

Years later the door opens.
I see faces I once held,
open as sunflowers in my hands. I see
familiar skin now stretched on long bodies
that move past me
glowing almost like pearls.

Teenagers

By Pat Mora (1922-)

One day they just disappear into their rooms doors and lips shut and we become strangers in our own home
I pace the hall hear whispers a code I knew but can't remember mouthed by mouths I taught to speak years
later the door opens I see faces I once held open as sunflowers in my hands I see familiar skin now stretched
on long bodies that move past me glowing

“Arabian Knights” Revision Handout

First Draft:

Arabian Knights by Abigale Houchins (7GP Winner, 2015)

Always watch your surroundings.
Even though he might lie,
You will still believe him,
And give your soul to stay alive.
You see your family,
But will soon have to say
Goodbye forever
And face your death.
They trust you,
But you don't think they'll find out.
So you take them
With no regrets.
He'll find out
And you'll feel bad.
You'll still face
Your devastating punishment.
You help them,
But they still chase you.
You love her
But you can't have her.
He says he's kin,
But that's just a sin.
You've always known
What's really going to happen.
He's better than you.
He's richer than you
But he's still jealous.
He will soon find out jealousy
Will easily take his life
And you will miss him,
But not too much

“Arabian Knights” Revision Handout

Feedback for Abigale Houchins

7GP Feedback from 7GP Educator Liaison Cathy O'Brien

Arabian Knights certainly provoke images of mischief, romance and inner and outer conflicts. What a great topic and what a great idea for a poem. But the poem is a bit confusing. Is this poem a book report? A conversation? A soap opera? An extension of an Arabian Knight tale? Below are a few suggestions.

Capitalization: Did Abigale intend to capitalize the beginning of every line? If not, ask Abigale to consider which words to capitalize. Think it through. Be intentional and consistent in the strategy for how capitalization is used.

Clarify: Abigale has some good ideas, but the meaning is not clear. Who is the narrator and about what and whom is he/she thinking or talking? Who is “you”? Who is “he”? Who is “her”? Who is “they”? Has Abigale written this poem to be read like a stream of conscious? Ask Abigale to consider using some of the actual names in this poem to give readers a point of reference for better understanding. Maybe assume some readers might not be familiar with Arabian Knights.

Change/cut some words: This goes with the clarify suggestion above. Ask Abigale to consider replacing “he”, “you”, “they”, “her” with more specific names and even deleting some of the extra “you” and other words. For example, some form of “He” is repeated in lines 25 through 28. Once “he” is established, that repeat might not be necessary. “He’s better than you/ richer than you/ but still jealous”. Can “jealousy” in the next line be replaced with a different word?

Some other extra words to consider deleting: “even”, “and”, “but”, “so”. Ask Abigale to read this poem out loud and listen for extra words that might not be necessary and, when omitted, let the other words stand out more.

Voice: In short, who is the narrator addressing?

Word choice: Words are everything in poetry. One individual word choice can alter completely a poem’s meaning and themes. With this in mind, ask Abigale to consider raising the vocabulary bar in this poem. Words and phrases like “devastating”, “surroundings”, “jealous”, “give your soul to stay alive” provide great images and meaning for readers. Can Abigale think of similar, meaningful words to replace “really going to happen”, “find out”, “say” and other such words?

“Arabian Knights” Revision Handout

Revised Poem after consideration of feedback:

Arabian Knights by Abigale Houchins (7GP Winner, 2015)

Open the book.

Read the tales.

Merchant, always watch your surroundings.

Even though genies lie,
date pits will bring you peril.

A merchant soul is the price
for you to see your family,
before saying goodbye
forever.

Turn the page.

Another tale.

The merchant trusts you;
you don't think he'll find out.

The gold is yours,
undeniably yours.

You have buried your shame
in a vat of olives.

Your secret discovered,
by a youth playing Caliph...
your punishment awaits.

A Sultana spins
tales in the night.

A vigilant woodcutter
finds a worthy secret.

Oh woodcutter,
Kassim is better off than you,
richer than you;
he envies what you have.
Kassim will find that jealousy
easily takes a life.

Turn the page.

The tales continue to spin
into freedom.

DAY FOUR | Personification

Core Curriculum Standards

Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details

- RL.7.1** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.7.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL.7.3** Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

Reading Literature: Craft, and Structure

- RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

Reading Informational Text: Craft and Structure

- RI.7.3** Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

Reading Informational Text: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- RI.7.7** Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).

Writing: Text Types and Purposes

- W.7.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- SL.7.2** Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue.

Speaking and Listening: Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- SL.7.4** Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

DAY FOUR | Personification

Lesson Goals

Outcomes

Student will be able to recognize personification in a poem.

Themes, Issues, and Concepts

hope, dreams, determination, loneliness

Literary Terms

personification

metaphor

Materials

“Hope’ is the Thing with Feathers” by Emily Dickinson

“Dreams” by Langston Hughes

Poetry On Their Terms book (2013 edition)

“The Lonely Life of a Letter” by Olivia DuCharme (page 22)

Poetry On Our Terms book (2014 edition)

“The Pen” by Joey Dougherty (page 127)

Poetry On Our Terms book (2015 edition)

“I Am the Penny” by Megan Hulser (page 35)

SchoolTube

TeacherTube

YouTube

Writer’s notebooks for students

Teacher Tips

- Students seem to enjoy this lesson especially the poem by Olivia Ducharme. This is another great opportunity for students to write and share their poetry. Students can develop their own ideas for “The Lonely Life of a _____” (tell students to use their imagination and be creative; the poem doesn’t have to be about a letter).
- Collaborate as a class to create a unique version of “The Lonely Life of a Teacher, Student, etc.”

DAY FOUR | Personification

Lesson Plan

PAGE 1

DO NOW (5 minutes)

To warm up, read the definition of “personification”. Ask students to write down several examples of personification. Cartoons are great examples of personification, like Spongebob Squarepants. You can explain to them that personification means giving human traits/characteristics to inanimate objects (and, sometimes, animals).

WHOLE GROUP (20 minutes)

Have a student read aloud Emily Dickinson’s poem “‘Hope’ is the Thing with Feathers” or listen to a reading of the poem on YouTube:

EXTRA — Video of “‘Hope’ is the Thing with Feathers”

This video has a claymation version of this poem:

<http://www.schooltube.com/video/d21dad2144034d5f8bb8/>

Afterward, ask the students the following questions:

1. How is hope portrayed in this poem? How does this relate to personification? Give examples from the text to support your answer.
2. What is “hope” doing in this poem? What does the narrator mean when she says: “Yet--never--in Extremity,/It asked a crumb of me.”?

Have a student read aloud Langston Hughes’s poem, “Dreams.”

EXTRA — Video of “Dreams”

This video reads Hughes’s poem and has a visual interpretation to it as well:

http://www.teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?video_id=41522

Afterward, ask the students the following questions:

1. What is being personified in this poem? How do you know that?
2. What is Hughes trying to say about dreams and life? How are they connected?

PARTNER/SMALL GROUPS (15 minutes)

Have students read “The Lonely Life of a Letter” by Olivia DuCharme, “The Pen” by Joey Dougherty, or “I Am the Penny” by Megan Hulser.

EXTRA — Video of “The Lonely Life of a Letter” and “The Pen”

Olivia reading her poem: <http://www.7gp.org/olivia-the-lonely-life-of-a-letter>

Joey reading his poem: <http://www.7gp.org/joey-the-pen>

DAY FOUR | Personification

Lesson Plan

PAGE 2

Then, ask the students to answer these questions with their group/partner:

1. What is personified in each poem? How is it personified?
2. In the poem, “The Lonely Life of a Letter”, what (or who) do you think the “Q” symbolizes? Why do you think author particularly chose to use the letter “Q” in her poem?
3. In the poem, “The Pen” what (or who) do you think the “pen” symbolizes? Why do you think the author chose to use a “pen” in his poem?

INDEPENDENT (10 minutes)

Ask the students to free write the answer to this question: If you were a letter, what letter would you be and why? Give students the opportunity to share with the class.

REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Have students write a brief reflection over the poetry they read and listened to today. Ask them to include any ideas that popped into their head, lines that really stuck out to them, and/or techniques they may want to try when they write their own poetry.

HOMEWORK

In their writer’s notebook, have students write a paragraph about how today’s lesson added to their idea of what a poem is.



Remind students this is their chance to write a poem for the contest. They can choose any topic and any style. Winning poems are due no later than January 29, 2016.

‘Hope’ is the Thing with Feathers **by Emily Dickinson (1830–1886)**

“Hope” is the thing with feathers—
That perches in the soul—
And sings the tune without the words—
And never stops—at all—

And sweetest—in the Gale—is heard—
And sore must be the storm—
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm—

I’ve heard it in the chillest land—
And on the strangest Sea—
Yet, never, in Extremity,
It asked a crumb—of Me.

Dreams

by Langston Hughes (1867–1902)

Hold fast to dreams,
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams,
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

The Lonely Life of a Letter

by Olivia DuCharme (7GP Winner, 2013)

I am the letter “Q” on a hardly used typewriter, printed and crisp,
Gathering dust with each minute,
Smelling of musty ink and old moth balls,
Dehydrating because squishy finger pads seldom push on me,
Staring up at the cold, hard case that entombs me like a coffin.

I am the letter “Q” on a hardly used typewriter,
Hidden from the other letters in a corner,
Depending on the letter “U” to make my words shine through, though resentfully,
Listening as the popular vowels make fun of the outcast I am,
Sniffing sadly as the “Wheel of Fortune” stars R, S, T, L, N, and E giggle at the
vowels’ comments.

Ringling silence of numbers that never say anything to me breaks my heart,
Clicks sounding, clacks surrounding, but my own are hardly ever heard,
So I sound as a sad ballad with the many rests in between my clicks,
Bells ringing, chimes dinging, as an end of a sentence draws near,
With no Q, with no me.

I am the letter “Q” on a hardly used typewriter, branded and forlorn,
Exhaling noisily one last time to defeat my self-pity,
Because I am the letter “Q” on a hardly used typewriter,
And that is who I am meant to be.

The Pen

by Joey Dougherty (7GP Winner, 2014)

I am a pen,
Leaping for the blank white page
Eager to write and draw inspiring tales
Tracing lines up and down the paper
Feeling the motions of the desktop below me

Drawing creativity with ink,
I place black upon white like a chessboard.
I like to write stories with my swift motions.
I feel energy rush through me when I create worlds with my mind.

Unlike a pencil, I am not messy.
The pencil lines smudge at random.
But I am the swift and sturdy pen.
I create stories in the blink of an eye.

Ink staining, I race up the page.
Lines sketching back and forth,
I create ideas on paper.
I am the mighty pen.

The pen saved lives.
The pen crossed seas.
The pen stops hunger.

How?
Humans use the pen.
They sketch laws and rules.
They write letters and essays.

The pen inspires.
I inspire.
I am the pen.

I Am the Penny

by Megan Hulser (7GP Winner, 2015)

I am the penny
Not number one, just one
Alone down in the bottom of the bag
Not hated nor loved, just worthless

I am the penny
I've seen too much
Poor people treasure me like I am their one possession
rich people seem to not care if they receive their full change

I am the penny
sitting down here in the dark
My head looking up at the longing light of the world
My tail sitting beneath me

I am the penny
1992 branded on my chest
Below the statement "In God We Trust"
Next to liberty

I am the penny
With an insult written on my back
"One Cent" in big bold letters
But there is something you should know

I am the penny
But when lots of us come together
We can make a nickel
We can make a dollar

Core Curriculum Standards

Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details

- RL.7.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Reading Literature: Craft, and Structure

- RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama

Reading Informational Text: Key Ideas and Details

- RI.7.1** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RI.7.2** Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Reading Informational Text: Craft and Structure

- RI.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

Writing: Production and Distribution of Writing

- W.7.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

DAY FIVE | Theme

Lesson Goals

Outcomes

Students will be able to recognize themes in poetry.

Themes, Issues, and Concepts

achieving your dreams, being the best that you can be, courage, peace, war, bullying, surprise, idealism

Literary Terms

theme

Materials

“If—” by Rudyard Kipling

Poetry on Their Own Terms (2013 edition)

“A Perfect World” by Allison Bettlach (page 74)

Poetry on Our Terms (2014 edition)

“In the Moment” by Shatavia Franklin (page 47)

Poetry on Our Terms (2015 edition)

“Sara’s Story” by Sara Steffens (page 19)

“Discrimination” by Tenzin Gendun (page 38)

“Until Next Year” by Gabriela Del Risco (page 116)

“Dear Dad” by Brandon Chatmon (page 127)

Writer’s notebooks

DAY FIVE | Theme

Lesson Plan

PAGE 1

DO NOW (5 minutes)

Ask the students to do the following: jot down some dreams you have, whether they are big or small. Explain why these dreams are important to you.

WHOLE GROUP (20 minutes)

After reading “If—” to themselves, ask a student to read the poem aloud. Then, ask the students to answer the following questions:

1. What is the tone (see **Lesson Two**) of the poem? (The tone is instructive.)
2. Review the term personification (see **Lesson Four**). How are “triumph and disaster” being personified in the poem? (They are referred to as “imposters.”)
3. Are there any words you don’t understand? (Have students help each other to define the words.)
2. What is the main idea/lesson/moral of the story that you see in this poem? What clues did you find in the poem that led you to that answer?

Now that the students have found the main idea behind the poem, explain that there is a term for that in the literary arts, it is called **theme**. Have your students consider what theme they might choose for their poem and remind them to be thinking about *The 7GP Contest*.

PARTNER/SMALL GROUPS (15 minutes)

Have students read “A Perfect World” by Allison Bettlach, “In the Moment” by Shatavia Franklin, “Sara’s Story” by Sara Steffens, “Discrimination” by Tenzin Gendun, “Until Next Year,” by Gabriela Del Risco, and “Dear Dad,” by Brandon Chatmon.

EXTRA — Video of “A Perfect World” and “In the Moment”

Allison reading her poem: <http://www.7gp.org/allison-a-perfect-world>

Shatavia reading her poem: <http://www.7gp.org/shatavia-in-the-moment>

With partners or in small groups, students will discuss what theme(s) they find in the poems. Ask them to underline the lines that hint towards the theme(s) of the poems. Afterward, have students share their discoveries with the class. Poet Robert Frost once said, “No tears in the writer, no tears in the reader. No surprise in the writer, no surprise in the reader.” Ask to students to discuss how this quote relates to theme and the poems just discussed. 7GP 2013 winner, Porscha Hayes, wrote an excellent poem titled, “So Alone.” This is a great example to discuss the element of surprise. ([7gp.org](http://www.7gp.org)).

INDEPENDENT (10 minutes)

Ask students to respond to the following questions: Looking back at the warm-up, what theme emerged from the dreams you wrote about? Underline any key words or lines in regards to theme.

DAY FIVE | Theme

Lesson Plan

PAGE 2

REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Have students share the following:

1. What happened in their dream?
2. What is the theme?
3. What key words or lines provided hints to the theme?

HOMEWORK

Have students write a brief reflection over the poetry they read and listened to today. Ask them to include any ideas that popped into their head, lines that really stuck out to them, and/or techniques they may want to try when they write poetry. If they were going to turn their dream free write into a poem, what would they change?



Remind students this is their chance to write a poem for the contest. They are the author and they can choose any topic and any style. Winning poems are due and must be submitted to 7GP no later than January 29, 2016.

If—

by Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936)

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on";

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man my son!

A Perfect World

by Allison Bettlach (7GP Winner, 2013)

Wouldn't it be nice to live in a perfect world?
If war was just a card game?
If color only had to do with crayons,
And being in debt meant losing Monopoly?
Wouldn't it be nice if we trusted each other?
If guns were just big muscles,
and knives were only used in kitchens?
Wouldn't it be nice if we loved each other?
If churches were filled rather than arenas?
If best friends were actually true,
And no one was afraid to be themselves?
Wouldn't it be nice if we cared?
If smoke came from bonfires rather than cigarettes?
If peace meant more than just quiet,
And everyone had a place to call home?
Wouldn't it be nice if this were more than a poem,
But our reality?
If it didn't seem impossible?
If we lived in a perfect world?

In the Moment

by Shatavia Franklin (7GP Winner, 2014)

As I stand here, I feel the breeze
Slither down my spine
My hair flowing with the wind
Birds chirping, bees buzz
It's almost as if time has stopped

A single moment frozen
A dog's mouth open ready to catch a Frisbee
A boy's ice cream drip, drip, dripping
But the drip hangs suspended in mid air
Leaves hang swirling on the breeze
And, for a moment the breath of the world is held

What happens next?
What happened right before?
I don't care.
I'm in the moment.

Sara's Story

by Sara Marie Steffens (7GP Winner, 2015)

You read the cover
and turn the page
You stop reading
Then, you judge me
You read the cover, not my story

I know my flaws
more than you will ever know
Yet you think you know it all
You read the cover, not my story

I'm not going to tell you what it says
You're the one who has to read the book
It's not my fault you got me wrong
It's your responsibility to get to know me
Your choice

Chapter after chapter, my story is not over
Maybe if you read it
You'll understand
You read the cover, not my story

Discrimination

by Tenzin Gendun (7GP Winner, 2015)

A trash bag isn't a trash bag
till you put trash in it
until then, it's just a bag

Until Next Year

by Gabriela Del Risco (7GP Winner, 2015)

I sit there,
Crying a river,
Listening carefully,
As the facts hit me each time,
Like needles to skin,
The sound of my mother's voice,
"He was drunk, driving, and made the worst mistake of his life."
How my father was leaving my life,
Into a life full of criminals, guards and bars.

I think things over,
Repeating them each time in my head,
Over and over and over again,
Imagining the horrible accident,
How my dad hit the back of that SUV,
Taking three children away from a father,
And even a father away from me,
I'll see him once a year,
Limited time,
A blue jumpsuit,
His beautiful hair shaved down,
Oh no...

The worst part—Leaving.
Leaving the visiting room,
I hear the guard tell us,
It's time to go,
I get up and hug him harder than ever before,
Trying to find that sweet cologne I loved of his,
Not there.

Dear Dad

by Brandon Chatmon (7GP Winner, 2015)

Dad, I remember
The memories fresh in my mind
The pain imprinted on my heart

Dad, our mother you hurt
A good woman, she did her time
She never set us apart

My brother and I
When we did well
We were just like our old man

My brother and I
When we did badly
We were just like our mom

We were hurt like our mother
Who wiped our eyes
Who assuaged our fears

Here I am becoming a man myself
Will it please you
If someday I hurt a woman too?

Will it please you
If someday my own children
Never call me "Dad"?

Core Curriculum Standards

Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details

- RL.7.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Reading Literature: Craft, and Structure

- RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

Reading Informational Text: Craft and Structure

- RI.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

Reading Informational Text: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- RI.7.7** Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).

Writing: Texts, Types and Purposes

- W.7.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

Writing: Production and Distribution of Writing

- W.7.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- W.7.5** With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- SL.7.2** Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue.

Adapted from:

Scott, Gary. "Tone and Mood" Our English Class. WordPress, n.d. Web. 26 June 2013.

<<http://ourenglishclass.net/class-notes/writing/the-writing-process/craft/tone-and-mood/>>.

DAY SIX | Mood

Lesson Goals

Outcomes

Students will build on their previous knowledge about mood in order to distinguish mood from tone. They will learn what tone means, and the significance of both mood and tone in relation to poetry. Understanding mood and tone will also show them the connection between an author and the reader.

Materials

Colored pencils

SchoolTube, YouTube

Tone Words Handout from Day 2

Mood Words Handout

“Bullet” by William Keller or “Haters” by La’Nesha Clark, 7th Grade Poetry Foundation, (2011).

Poetry On Our Terms (2014 Edition) “Ripples” by Bridget Dawson (98)

Poetry On Our Terms (2015 Edition) “The Dark Cloud” by Hope McCabe (32)

“Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night” by Dylan Thomas Handout

“Spirits of the Dead” by Edgar Allan Poe Handout

“Alone” by Maya Angelou

Writer’s notebooks

DAY SIX | Mood

Lesson Plan

PAGE 1

DO NOW (5 minutes)

In their writer's notebook, ask students to free write on these questions:

1. Name a song(s) that has made you very emotional—made you angry, made you cry, made you energetic, etc.?
2. Why did the song make you feel that way?

WHOLE GROUP (20 minutes)

Explain to your class that today's lesson will be expanding on what we know about tone. Today's lesson is all about mood, which is how the reader feels when they read someone's work. Another way to explain it might be that mood is the atmosphere of the text (like mood lighting). The freewriting they did today is an example of mood. You listen to a song, and it made you feel a certain way. The singer may or may not have intended you to feel that way, but you did. It may be helpful to write on the board:

Tone=Author

Tone= Author's Attitude

Mood=You

Mood= Your (the reader's) Feelings.

Pass out the **Mood Words Handout** for students' reference. As with the Tone Words Handout, students can get stuck with not knowing the right words to describe mood. You might find it fun/useful to add words that are not on the handout that your students come up with (the same goes for the **Tone Words Handout**).

View the **Mary Poppins Trailer**. One is the original; the second has been edited to appear like a horror film. After watching the trailer, the class will discuss the mood and tone of each trailer, and how content, music, setting, etc. can change how the audience feels (mood) about it. The class will also discuss how they (the students) felt about each one.

Original Trailer on SchoolTube: <http://bit.ly/oORsrV>

Scary Trailer on SchoolTube: <http://bit.ly/ApKGq5>

Pass out "Haters" by La'Nesha Clark, "Bullet" by William Keller, "Ripples" by Bridget Dawson, or "The Dark Cloud" by Hope McCabe. Have a student read the poem(s) out loud. Together with the students, explain any words they don't understand. Afterward, circle words that convey tone that might give us a hint to what the author's attitude is toward the subject of the poem. Next, ask students what they personally felt when they heard/read the poem. Did it remind them of anything they experienced? Maybe they felt angry when they read "Haters," but the author seems triumphant.

EXTRA — Videos of "Bullet" and "Ripples"

Watch William read "Bullet": <http://www.7gp.org/william-bullet>

Watch Bridget read "Ripples": <http://www.7gp.org/bridget-ripples>

DAY SIX | Mood

Lesson Plan

PAGE 2

PARTNERS/SMALL GROUPS (15 minutes)

Pass out the Dylan Thomas, Edgar Allan Poe, and Maya Angelou handouts (each student only gets one). Pair students up with other students with the same poem, and have them read the poem, discuss its meanings and any words they don't understand, and circle the words that convey tone.

INDEPENDENT (10 minutes)

By themselves, they will use colored pencils to turn their poem into a piece of art that depicts their mood when they read the poem.

REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Students will share their artwork with the class. They will explain why the words they circled are tone words, and what inspired their artwork. Is the author's tone similar or different to the reader's mood?

HOMEWORK

Have students find a song/poem that made them feel angry, sad, inspired, or happy. In their writer's notebook, have them list tone words for this song/poem as well as why they personally felt the way that they did.

Ask them to consider what makes them feel certain ways and consider writing a poem for *The 7GP Contest* with one of those emotions in mind.



Remind students this is their chance to write a poem for the contest. They are the author and they can choose any topic and any style. Winning poems are due and must be submitted to 7GP no later than January 29, 2016.

Mood = Emotional Effect

A special thank you to Rachael Phillips for providing 7GP with this list.

POSITIVE

Amused	Energetic	Liberating	Satiated
Awed	Enlightened	Light-hearted	Satisfied
Bouncy	Enthralled	Loving	Sentimental
Calm	Excited	Mellow	Silly
Cheerful	Exhilarated	Nostalgic	Surprised
Chipper	Flirty	Optimistic	Sympathetic
Confident	Giddy	Passionate	Thankful
Contemplative	Graceful	Peaceful	Thoughtful
Content	Harmonious	Playful	Touched
Determined	Hopeful	Pleased	Trustful
Dignified	Hyper	Refreshed	Vivacious
Dreamy	Idyllic	Rejuvenated	Warm
Ecstatic	Joyous	Relaxed	Welcoming
Empowered	Jubilant	Relieved	

NEGATIVE

Aggravated	Discontented	Heartbroken	Morose	Somber
Annoyed	Distressed	Hopeless	Nauseated	Stressed
Anxious	Drained	Hostile	Nervous	Suspenseful
Apathetic	Dreary	Indifferent	Nightmarish	Tense
Barren	Embarrassed	Infuriated	Numb	Terrifying
Brooding	Enraged	Insidious	Overwhelmed	Threatening
Cold	Envious	Intimidated	Painful	Uncomfortable
Confining	Exhausted	Irate	Pensive	Vengeful
Confused	Fatalistic	Irritated	Pessimistic	Violent
Cranky	Foreboding	Jealous	Predatory	Worried
Crushed	Frustrated	Lethargic	Rejected	
Cynical	Futile	Lonely	Restless	
Depressed	Gloomy	Melancholic	Scared	
Desolate	Grumpy	Merciless	Serious	
Disappointed	Haunting	Moody	Sick	

Bullet

by William Keller (7GP Winner, 2012)

On the streets of Saint Louis I reign
gangbangers get hit by me everyday
choose wisely, for if you make the decision to fire,
you can't call me back
I cut the air swiftly toward a new target,
screams from parents when I am inside their child's body
I make you want to fight and survive,
but it's not that easy,
I kill the enemy with cold passion, with no consequences.
I am the bullet

Haters

by La’Nesha Clark (7GP Winner, 2011)

Sometimes I get tired of all the haters
They try to judge you all the time
They don’t want you to be successful
Or even have any hope at times
The world is full of haters
They don’t like you when you’re smart
Or when you are friendly
Or even just plain old nice
The world is full of haters
Now don’t take this the wrong way if you’re not a hater
Just stay who you are
But if you are a hater and you know who you are
You can take this up down and all around
You can take it any direction you want
Just try not to be a hater for very long
Haters I suggest that you take it this way
If you hate on someone they take good from it
They are happy they have haters
It means they are very successful in life
Haters make us famous

Ripples

by Bridget Dawson (7GP Winner, 2014)

Drop a stone into the water
In a moment it is gone
But there are a hundred ripples
Circling on and on and on.
Say an unkind word this moment
In a moment it is gone
But there are a hundred ripples
Circling on and on and on
Say a word of joy and splendor
In a moment it is gone
But there are a hundred ripples
Circling on and on and on

The Dark Cloud

by Hope McCabe (7GP Winner, 2015)

There is a dark cloud just waiting for me.
It's over my head and under my feet;
it's just waiting for me.
I try to ignore the people
who drag me down.
I try to resist the dark cloud.

As the roots consume my heart
the dark cloud grows as I fall apart.
I keep my feelings locked up inside;
not good enough to tell.
People never forgive you, but
they forgive the dead.

Pain and sorrow is all I know;
it's like being trapped in the rain.
I wish I could arise and make the pain go away.
My suffering is connected to the world,
but I'm the only one who can feel it.

My body dies, the anger builds,
the clouds merge, and the road breaks apart.
I try to laugh and smile, but they take it away.
A smile on my face is not for them to gain.

When my heart breaks, I feel myself dying.
I try to keep up my appearances
and have a winning life.
Finally, as I start to live,
I realize that I have it nice.

It's just a matter of time,
people realize life has meaning.
The hate, the love,
the connection, the feeling.

Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night by Dylan Thomas (1914–1953)

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Spirits of the Dead

by Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849)

I.

Thy soul shall find itself alone
'Mid dark thoughts of the grey tombstone;
Not one, of all the crowd, to pry
Into thine hour of secrecy.

II.

Be silent in that solitude,
Which is not loneliness- for then
The spirits of the dead, who stood
In life before thee, are again
In death around thee, and their will
Shall overshadow thee; be still.

III.

The night, though clear, shall frown,
And the stars shall not look down
From their high thrones in the Heaven
With light like hope to mortals given,

But their red orbs, without beam,
To thy weariness shall seem
As a burning and a fever
Which would cling to thee for ever.

IV

Now are thoughts thou shalt not banish,
Now are visions ne'er to vanish;
From thy spirit shall they pass
No more, like dewdrop from the grass.

V.

The breeze, the breath of God, is still,
And the mist upon the hill
Shadowy, shadowy, yet unbroken,
Is a symbol and a token.
How it hangs upon the trees,
A mystery of mysteries!

Alone

by Maya Angelou (1928–2014)

Lying, thinking
Last night
How to find my soul a home
Where water is not thirsty
And bread loaf is not stone
I came up with one thing
And I don't believe I'm wrong
That nobody,
But nobody
Can make it out here alone.

Alone, all alone
Nobody, but nobody
Can make it out here alone.

There are some millionaires
With money they can't use
Their wives run round like banshees
Their children sing the blues
They've got expensive doctors
To cure their hearts of stone.
But nobody
No, nobody
Can make it out here alone.

Alone, all alone

Nobody, but nobody
Can make it out here alone.

Now if you listen closely
I'll tell you what I know
Storm clouds are gathering
The wind is gonna blow
The race of man is suffering
And I can hear the moan,
'Cause nobody,
But nobody
Can make it out here alone.

Alone, all alone
Nobody, but nobody
Can make it out here alone.

DAY SEVEN | Poetic Devices

Core Curriculum Standards

Reading Literature: Craft, and Structure

- RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

Reading Informational Text: Key Ideas and Details

- RI.7.1** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Reading Informational Text: Craft and Structure

- RI.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

Reading Informational Text: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- RI.7.7** Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).

Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- SL.7.2** Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue

Speaking and Listening: Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- SL.7.4** Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- SL.7.6** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Adapted from:

Kawasaki, Emi. "Poetic Devices." Bookbuilder.cast.org. Bookbuilder, n.d. Web. 26 July 2013.
<http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_print.php?book=72815>.

DAY SEVEN | Poetic Devices

Lesson Goals

Outcomes

Students will be able to define several key poetic devices/figurative language: alliteration, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, onomatopoeia, simile, refrain. They will be able to use this knowledge to find these devices in poems.

Themes, Issues, Concepts

poetic devices, poetry in music

Literary Terms

simile, refrain, anaphora, alliteration, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, onomatopoeia

Materials

Schooltube, YouTube

Poetic Devices Worksheet

Poetry collections (Poetry on Their Terms, online collections, poetry collections from a library, etc.)

Poetry on Their Own Terms (2013 edition)

“Cowboy Forever” by Seth Shorb (105)

“Muddin’ in Missouri” by Tyler Shuman (54)

“They Lied” by Jermell Howard (85)

“Different” by Tanveer Sandhu (42)

Poetry on Our Terms (2014 edition)

“Click Clack” by Amber Draayer (64)

“Do I Matter” By Isabelle Clawson (optional)

Poetry on Our Terms (2015 edition)

“Shoes From the Past” by Tajai Gude (66)

“My Place” by Jeri Hautzig (86)

“Recuerdo” by Edna St. Vincent Millay

“As I Walked Out One Evening” by W. H. Auden (optional)

“O Captain! My Captain!” by Walt Whitman

Writer’s notebooks

Teacher Tips — *Most students absorb, comprehend, and internalize language through music, so here’s an idea that may continue to engage students in their thinking of poetic devices:*

- Implement a “Lyric of the Week” using music that the students love or are familiar with. Each week present the students with a particular song lyric to be analyzed with a partner for various poetic devices, themes, word choice, tone, mood, etc.
- Take it a step further by having the students come together to discuss their annotations in a Socratic Seminar that fosters critical thinking, shared dialogue, and active listening skills. To see a Socratic seminar in action: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pGVR6ZF_2M. The Socratic method may be used to analyze student poems as well.

DAY SEVEN | Poetic Devices

Lesson Plan *This lesson covers a variety of poetic devices. It may be better to split this lesson up into two days.* **PAGE 1**

DO NOW (5 minutes)

Ask students to free write about the following prompt:

Think about your favorite song right now. Based on what we've learned so far, how might you compare your favorite song to poetry? Do you think it could be considered as a poem? Why or why not?

WHOLE GROUP (20 minutes)

Students will be introduced to various poetic devices as well as be reminded of devices previously discussed (like personification).

Students will watch the following SchoolTube videos. Please note: you may choose whatever music selections you think your students will relate and respond to best. All videos are on SchoolTube.

A fun and catchy rap with figurative language/poetic devices

<http://bit.ly/1aLLukJ>

Metaphors, idioms, hyperbole, and similes in Alicia Key's "This Girl is On Fire"

<http://bit.ly/12ES3P9>

Hyperbole, similes, personification, metaphor, and alliteration in several Selena Gomez songs

<http://bit.ly/YIUD4A>

Hyperbole, alliteration, and personification in Coldplay's "Stars"

<http://bit.ly/P8zCAF>

Additional videos with poetic devices

<http://www.schooltube.com/search/?term=poetic+devices>

Together as a class, fill out the poetic devices worksheet (the name and short description) to ensure that everyone understands what each device is and its function. You might have to replay some of the videos since the videos tend to go through the devices fairly quickly.

PARTNERS/SMALL GROUPS (15 minutes)

Students should be put into groups of 2 to 3 people with mixed language and academic levels. Each group will choose 3 poems from a collection of poetry. Students could use *Poetry on Their Terms*, collections online, poems from other lessons in this plan, or you could bring some collections from the local or school library from which they can choose.

"Cowboy Forever" and "Muddin' in Missouri" from *Poetry on Their Terms* (2013) and "Click Clack" from *Poetry on Our Own Terms* (2014) as well as W. H. Auden's "As I Walked Out One Evening" have been provided. Students will find at least two lines that match each of the poetic devices from the WHOLE GROUP exercise. Then, students will write the examples they find in the "Example" section of the poetic device sheet.

DAY SEVEN | Poetic Devices

Lesson Plan

PAGE 2

EXTRA — Alliteration

“Reuerdo” by Edna St. Vincent Millay is great example of alliteration.

Watch Millay reading “Reuerdo” on YouTube: http://youtu.be/mYQkEkB_fhk

EXTRA — Anaphora

“Reuerdo” and “They Lied” are good examples of anaphora. Anaphora is the use of repetition a word or group of words (in the Millay poem it is “We” and “and”, in “They Lied” it is “They said” and “They lied”) at the beginning of each line of a poem. Anaphora can be used to create a driving sound, giving the reader a sense of momentum or to heighten emotion in a poem. Anaphora is most successful when it heightens emotion and creates tension.

EXTRA — Interdisciplinary Approach

If you’d like to take an interdisciplinary approach, you could use “They Lied” by Jermell Howard, “Different” by Tanveer Sandhu, and “Do I Matter” by Isabelle Clawson. “They Lied” was inspired when learning about the Holocaust. The poet of “Different” was influenced by the Little Rock Nine. “Do I Matter” was inspired by a poet studying astronomy. In addition, Walt Whitman’s “O Captain! My Captain!” is another poem that would fit well with the interdisciplinary approach because it was inspired by Lincoln’s assassination and the mourning of a country.

INDEPENDENT (10 minutes)

Students will choose two to three of the poetic devices (like onomatopoeia, metaphor, simile, etc.) and then come up with their own examples.

REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Students will share their examples. Have a conversation with the students on what they learned today that they didn’t know about poetry. What sort of poetic devices have they seen in poems from previous lessons? What does this say about poetry as a whole?

HOMEWORK

Going back to the **DO NOW** exercise, ask students to look at their favorite song and find at least two different poetic devices. List the poetic device and the clues that show which device is being used.



Remind students this is their chance to write a poem for the contest. They are the author and they can choose any topic and any style. Winning poems are due and must be submitted to 7GP no later than January 29, 2016.

Cowboy Forever

by Seth Shorb (7GP Winner, 2013)

An old cowboy
Grizzled gray beard
And hair
Blue watchful eyes
Everything from his sweat-stained hat
To his holey pants covered with old leather chaps
A worn wooden Colt handle hung on his weathered leather holster
His boots worn with wear.
A wool lined leather coat for warmth to fight the cold
In his pocket:
12 silver dollars
A pocketknife from when he was eight
And his grandpappy's silver pocket watch.
He watched the cold midnight stars
Atop his bay mare
Singing and tending to the restful cattle.
He sat there
Regretting that he didn't go west like he said he would.
Disappointed in himself that he only trailed cattle.
Thinking with the frost of his breath
The row of smoke from his cigarette.
Time to move on
With the clothes on his back
His horse and saddle with his rope
Canteen and saddlebags with pliers
Some jerky and hard tack.
Only to ride out on one last cattle drive
That ended with a cold pelting rainstorm
Ear cracking lightning
That stampeded the cattle
Trampling the old cowboy
Who finally realized that he was only meant to be...
A cowboy.
And he rode off to heaven.

Muddin' in Missouri

by Tyler Shuman (7GP Winner, 2013)

On my birthday, I take a trip
To one of the coolest places on earth
Man, I think you would flip

This place has hills, holes, and even ditches
If you're not careful, you might even get stitches

I pull in with my F-250 Ford,
Always ready to give her a go
She screams and scoots and her engine roars

This place is by a backcountry pond
Down a gravel road, only a few have found
But those who do, let it show

Toyotas, four-wheelers, Fords, and Dodges
And even a Chevy
Smiles on everyone's faces because they think they're ready

The engines are loud
The dirt is always flying
Man, this place is great
Without even trying

There is a Dodge flipped upon its side,
This man in a Jeep shouldn't even be trying
I bet my old Ford could give him a run for his money
Oh, wait, that's a girl
Do you need help, honey?

The trucks are amazing
All built to the T
When I'm in my Ford, they all stare at me.

Muddin' in Missouri *continued*
by Tyler Shuman (7GP Winner, 2013)

A Chevy stuck all the way to his bumper
Man, that is bad
Oh, what a bummer

You see this place I know is called Bricks
It's all the way in the woods
Far back in the sticks

Say what you want about people and their misery
There is only one place left to play
And it's in Missouri

I know this may sound bad
Some may think it is cruel
I live in Missouri
And only Ford and Dodge Rule!

They Lied

by Jermell Howard (7GP Winner, 2013)

They told us we were going to a better place.
They lied.

They told us we would have fun.
They lied.

They said we would eat.
They lied.

They said we were going to see our family.
They lied.

They said a man named Hitler would fix this.
They lied.

They said it's just a shower.
They lied.

Shoes from the Past

by TaJai Gude (7GP Winner, 2015)

Inspired by Elie Wiesel & His Experience

Millions of shoes walking
Some say the shoes are talking
Telling a story in so many ways
But lost from their owners in a couple of days

Thousands of shoes skipping
So many end up tripping
These are the children you see
None of them as happy as they should be

Hundreds of shoes running
The owners trying to escape
Sadly, the shoes are not fast enough
The Nazi soldiers spit in their faces

Silence—that is all I hear
No one there, no one here
They all are gone, they all are dead
Their shoes in a pile filling up a shed

Millions of shoes no longer walking
But some say the shoes still are talking
The shoes in the sheds can now be free
The shoes—yes, shoes—can tell their stories to you and me

Different

by Tanveer Sandhu (7GP Winner, 2013)

We was always treated differently
Pushed around an' told what to do

We was always treated differently
They thought we was like animals
Always thinking we was lower than them

We was always treated differently
Given nasty looks an' called ugly words

We was always treated differently
Always separate from them, segregated

One day they will break away from the dark
An' see the true light within us

We was always treated differently
But one day we will be treated right

Click, Clack

by Amber Draayer (7GP Winner, 2014)

It's a rainy day
And I have nothing to do
So, instead of feeling blue
I'm going to put on my tap shoes.

When the rain falls
It sounds like a drumbeat,
Which makes me want to move my feet.

The toe goes click,
The heel goes clack,
Well, don't you like the sound of that?

Click, click, clack,
I get my cane and hat.
And spin around on my shoes that tap.

The raindrops stop pouring
One by one,
But I don't notice
Because I am having too much fun!
Clack, click, click, clack!

Do I Matter?

by Isabelle Clawson (7GP Winner, 2014)

You are small.
You are small in this nation,
And smaller on this Earth.
Where are you in this universe?
No matter how small you are,
You matter.
Everyone does.
You have a story,
Though you choose to tell it or not.
Life can be hard,
And how you respond can define who you are,
Not for your neighbor or friend
for you.
What you do does matter.
Even though you are small,
You make a difference.
You might not notice it right away,
But keep trying,
Others will notice.
Put yourself out there,
Take risks,
Be you.
In the end, the best person you can be is yourself.

Recuerdo

by Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892–1950)

We were very tired, we were very merry
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry.
It was bare and bright, and smelled like a stable
But we looked into a fire, we leaned across a table,
We lay on a hill-top underneath the moon;
And the whistles kept blowing, and the dawn came soon.
We were very tired, we were very merry
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry;
And you ate an apple, and I ate a pear,
From a dozen of each we had bought somewhere;
And the sky went wan, and the wind came cold,
And the sun rose dripping, a bucketful of gold.
We were very tired, we were very merry,
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry.
We hailed, “Good morrow, mother!” to a shawl-covered head,
And bought a morning paper, which neither of us read;
And she wept, “God bless you!” for the apples and pears,
And we gave her all our money but our subway fares.

As I Walked Out One Evening by W. H. Auden (1907–1973)

As I walked out one evening,
Walking down Bristol Street,
The crowds upon the pavement
Were fields of harvest wheat.

And down by the brimming river
I heard a lover sing
Under an arch of the railway:
“Love has no ending.

“I’ll love you, dear, I’ll love you
Till China and Africa meet
And the river jumps over the mountain
And the salmon sing in the street.

“I’ll love you till the ocean
Is folded and hung up to dry
And the seven stars go squawking
Like geese about the sky.

“The years shall run like rabbits
For in my arms I hold
The Flower of the Ages
And the first love of the world.”

But all the clocks in the city
Began to whirr and chime:
“O let not Time deceive you,
You cannot conquer Time.

“In the burrows of the Nightmare
Where Justice naked is,
Time watches from the shadow
And coughs when you would kiss.

“In headaches and in worry
Vaguely life leaks away,
And Time will have his fancy
To-morrow or to-day.

“Into many a green valley
Drifts the appalling snow;
Time breaks the threaded dances
And the diver’s brilliant bow.

“O plunge your hands in water,
Plunge them in up to the wrist;
Stare, stare in the basin
And wonder what you’ve missed.

“The glacier knocks in the cupboard,
The desert sighs in the bed,
And the crack in the tea-cup opens
A lane to the land of the dead.

“Where the beggars raffle the banknotes
And the Giant is enchanting to Jack,
And the Lily-white Boy is a Roarer
And Jill goes down on her back.

“O look, look in the mirror,
O look in your distress;
Life remains a blessing
Although you cannot bless.

“O stand, stand at the window
As the tears scald and start;
You shall love your crooked neighbour
With your crooked heart.”

It was late, late in the evening,
The lovers they were gone;
The clocks had ceased their chiming
And the deep river ran on.

O Captain! My Captain!

by Walt Whitman (1819–1892)

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
 But O heart! heart! heart!
 O the bleeding drops of red,
 Where on the deck my Captain lies,
 Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
 Here Captain! dear father!
 This arm beneath your head!
 It is some dream that on the deck,
 You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip, the victor ship comes in with object won;
 Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
 But I with mournful tread,
 Walk the deck my Captain lies,
 Fallen cold and dead.

Poetic Devices

NAME	SHORT DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
<i>Similie</i>	<i>Comparing two things using "like" or "as"</i>	<i>"Boy, you play through my mind like a symphony" in "Love you Like a Love Song" by Selena Gomez</i>

Source: Kawasaki, Emi. "Poetic Devices." Bookbuilder.cast.org. Bookbuilder, n.d. Web. 26 July 2013. <http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_print.php?book=72815>.

DAY EIGHT | Concrete Poems

Core Curriculum Standards

Reading Literature: Craft and Structure

- RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.
- RL.7.5** Analyze how a drama’s or poem’s form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

Reading Informational Text: Craft and Structure

- RI.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- RI.7.5** Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.

Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Lesson Goals

Outcomes

Students will be able to recognize the traits of a concrete poem. They will analyze the importance of imagery in poetry.

Themes, Issues, Concepts

importance of word choice, the impact of imagery, longing, loneliness, hope, Thanksgiving, Christmas

Literary Terms

concrete poem, shapes, imagery

Materials

“Hope” by Aaron Williams

“Hope on a Windowsill” by Aaron Williams

Poetry On Their Terms book (2013 edition): “Christmas Tree” by Maggie Chanault (page 106)

Poetry On Their Terms book (2014 edition): “Field Goal!” by Michael T. Miller (page 63)

“The Mouse’s Tale” by Lewis Carroll

Writer’s notebooks

DAY EIGHT | Concrete Poems

Lesson Plan

PAGE 1

DO NOW (5 minutes)

Ask students to look around them. Have them to find an item, and spend five minutes freewriting about that item. The freewrite can describe the item, what or who the item reminds them of, what they like or don't like about the item, and so on.

WHOLE GROUP (20 minutes)

Today's lesson is on concrete poetry. Poetry often relies heavily on imagery, and concrete poetry takes that a step further. With concrete poetry, the poem takes the shape of the subject.

With the class, read "Hope on a Windowsill" by Aaron Williams. This poem was originally in a traditional poetry form (as can be seen on the "Hope" handout, which shows the original draft of this poem), and then it was changed to look like a wishbone to show distance and longing. Ask the students the following questions:

1. What is this poem about?
2. What is the shape of this poem in? How does the shape contribute to the meaning of the poem?
If this poem weren't in a wishbone shape, would that change how you interpret it? Why or why not?
3. How can you use imagery to your advantage when writing a poem?

PARTNERS/SMALL GROUPS (15 minutes)

With partners, students will read "The Mouse's Tale" by Lewis Carroll. Together, they must answer:

1. What is this poem about?
2. What is the purpose of this poem's shape?
3. Would it still have the same meaning and effect if it weren't in a shape? Why or why not?

INDEPENDENT (10 minutes)

Have students read "A Christmas Tree" by Maggie Chenault and "Field Goal!" by Michael T. Miller. Have them answer these questions:

1. What shape is this poem?
2. What is the poem about?
3. How does the shape contribute to the meaning of the poem?
4. Would a different shape be better for this poem? Would single line spacing affect the shape of the poem? Why or why not?

DAY EIGHT | Concrete Poems

Lesson Plan

PAGE 2

REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Reveal to the students that “A Christmas Tree” was originally turned in as a triangle. Then, it was suggested by 7GP editors that the author consider moving the last word to the center, hoping the author would make mental connections and see the change formed a trunk for the tree. Have a conversation with the students about the following:

1. How does moving the word “tree” affect or change the poem? What does this say about the importance of revision and proofreading when writing a poem?
2. What does this say about the importance of word choice in poetry?
3. What have you learned about the effects of imagery in poetry from today's lesson?

HOMEWORK

Students will re-read their free write from the beginning of the class. They will write their answers to these questions:

1. What are some ways you could change your freewrite into a concrete poem?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using the concrete form?
3. How does this add to your idea of what poetry means to you?

Hope

by Aaron Williams (7GP Founder)

Original Draft

A wishbone
one Thanksgiving day
met another
left the year before
wanting
waiting too patiently
for that special some one
to pull on the other side

Hope on a Windowsill

by Aaron Williams (7GP Founder)

Revised Draft

a
wish
bone
one
thanks
giving
day
met
another
left the
year before
wanting waiting
too patiently
for that special
some one
to pull
on the
other side.

Christmas Tree

by Maggie Chenault (7GP Winner, 2013)

Oh
my lovely
Christmas tree.
So bright and green,
with lots of tinsel and a little
string. Some popcorn and some
mistletoe, golden ornaments, and a bow.
On top there's a shining star. You can see it
from afar. Shining so bright, giving off a brilliant
light. As you can plainly see, I love my Christmas
tree.

The Mouse's Tale

by Lewis Carroll (1832–1898)

Fury said to a mouse,
That he met in the
house, 'Let us
both go to law:
I will prosecute
you.-- Come, I'll
take no denial;
We must have
a trial: For
really this
morning I've
nothing to do.'
Said the mouse
to the cur,
'Such a trial,
dear Sir, With
no jury or
judge, would
be wasting
our breath.'
'I'll be
judge, I'll
be jury,'
Said cunning
old Fury:
'I'll try
the whole
cause, and
condemn
you
to
death.'

Core Curriculum Standards

Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details

- RL.7.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL.7.3** Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

Reading Literature: Craft and Structure

- RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.
- RL.7.5** Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.
- RL.7.6** Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

Reading Informational Text: Key Ideas and Details

- RI.7.3** Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

Reading Informational Text: Craft and Structure

- RI.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- RI.7.5** Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.

Writing: Texts Types and Purposes

- W.7.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Writing: Production and Distribution of Writing

- W.7.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

DAY NINE | Ballad

Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Speaking and Listening: Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- SL.7.4** Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

Lesson Goals

Outcomes

Students will learn the structure of a ballad. They will also see how a poem can also tell a narrative rather than simply describing an image. *Students will have to have completed the Day 7 lesson covering poetic devices/ figurative language in order to successfully participate in this lesson.*

Themes, Issues, Concepts

classic poem, keeping a promise, survival, man vs. nature, greed

Literary Terms

ballad form, plot, metaphor, simile, free-verse

Materials

YouTube (optional)

SchoolTube

“The Ballad of Patrick Constantine” by Maggie Fox, 2012 7GP Winner

“The Cremation of Sam McGee” by Robert W. Service

Teacher Tips — *Are some of your students reluctant to submit a poem to the contest? Here's an idea:*

- Provide an area where poems are placed anonymously for consideration. The student should label the paper “poetry contest” with his/her class period. This also helps to provide subjectivity when selecting the winning poem.
- Post the “winning” poem during that particular period for the student to claim. From my experience, the poem will be proudly claimed.

DAY NINE | Ballad

Lesson Plan

PAGE 1

DO NOW (5 minutes)

Ask students to freewrite about the following prompt: Are there any stories that your family tells that you've heard many times? Or, perhaps there is a story about yourself that you like to tell friends to entertain them. Write a summary of one of these stories for someone who had never heard that story before.

WHOLE GROUP (20 minutes)

Play one (or more) of the following videos:

“Wayfaring Stranger” by Johnny Cash on SchoolTube
www.bit.ly/12rRH17

Maggie Fox (7GP Winner, 2012) reading “The Ballad of Patrick Constantine”:
www.7gp.org/maggie-the-ballad-of-patrick-constantine

EXTRA— Additional Videos

“Wake Me Up When September Ends” by Green Day: <http://youtu.be/NU9JoFKlaZ0>

“Grapevine Fires” by Death Cab for Cutie: <http://youtu.be/H8ZUV9IBEXY>

“Home Again” by Michael Kiwanuka: <http://youtu.be/kJ4s3G7hgR4>

After the students have watched the videos, ask them what they have in common. They are all ballads! Explain the following:

- The stanza in a ballad is called a “quatrain.”
- Ballads always tell a story.
- A ballad has a rhyme scheme (Ex: abcb or aabb).
- Ballads have a repeated part. This part is called a refrain

Have students read “The Cremation of Sam McGee” by Robert W. Service. Assign parts so that the students read the poem aloud, which will allow them to hear the repetition and the musical aspect of a ballad. Have them circle any words they don't understand, underline parts or details they like, etc. Then, as a class, decipher the words they don't understand.

EXTRA — Reading “The Cremation of Sam McGee”

Watch someone reading “The Cremation of Sam McGee” on SchoolTube:
<http://bit.ly/V4TylD>

Ask students what are the characteristics and themes in “The Cremation of Sam McGee.” Responses may include: narrative, four line stanzas, rhyming pattern, repetition, dialogue, told in 1st person, keeping a promise, survival, etc.

DAY NINE | Ballad

Lesson Plan

PAGE 2

PARTNERS/SMALL GROUPS (15 minutes)

Divide the class into four sections. Each section will be assigned five or six stanzas of the poem. The students must underline/highlight examples of poetic devices/figurative language in this poem. Students will report their findings to the class.

INDEPENDENT (10 minutes)

All students will read “The Ballad of Patrick Constantine” by Maggie Fox. Again, students must underline/highlight examples of poetic devices/figurative language in this poem, and afterward, they will share what they discovered.

REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Now that they are familiar with the ballad form, what does this add to their knowledge of what makes a good poem? How does the ballad compare to forms, such as the haiku? Why write a poem in a ballad rather than a haiku, or free-verse poem?

HOMEWORK

Ask students to come up with their own definition of what poetry is to bring in for Day Ten.



Remind students this is their chance to write a poem for the contest. They are the author and they can choose any topic and any style. Winning poems are due and must be submitted to 7GP no later than January 29, 2016.

The Ballad of Patrick Constantine

by Maggie Fox (7GP Winner, 2012)

That good ol' Patrick Constantine,
But good is the wrong word.
He loved his money and was mean,
His antics were absurd!
All his wishes were our command,
His selfish spirit soared.
His dreaded rule controlled the land,
The voice of hell had roared!
How to control this brawny beast,
Was much a mystery.
"Well, we could stuff his mouth with yeast,
Then shove him up a tree!"
That was the end of Constantine,
The plan had worked out well.
No longer was this dreaded man
Creating living hell!

The Cremation of Sam McGee

by Robert W. Service (1874–1958)

*There are strange things done in the midnight sun
By the men who moil for gold;
The Arctic trails have their secret tales
That would make your blood run cold;
The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,
But the queerest they ever did see
Was that night on the marge of Lake Lebarge
I cremated Sam McGee.*

Now Sam McGee was from Tennessee, where the cotton blooms and blows.
Why he left his home in the South to roam ‘round the Pole, God only knows.
He was always cold, but the land of gold seemed to hold him like a spell;
Though he’d often say in his homely way that “he’d sooner live in hell.”

On a Christmas Day we were mushing our way over the Dawson trail.
Talk of your cold! through the parka’s fold it stabbed like a driven nail.
If our eyes we’d close, then the lashes froze till sometimes we couldn’t see;
It wasn’t much fun, but the only one to whimper was Sam McGee.

And that very night, as we lay packed tight in our robes beneath the snow,
And the dogs were fed, and the stars o’erhead were dancing heel and toe,
He turned to me, and “Cap,” says he, “I’ll cash in this trip, I guess;
And if I do, I’m asking that you won’t refuse my last request.”

Well, he seemed so low that I couldn’t say no; then he says with a sort of moan:
“It’s the cursèd cold, and it’s got right hold till I’m chilled clean through to the bone.
Yet ‘tain’t being dead—it’s my awful dread of the icy grave that pains;
So I want you to swear that, foul or fair, you’ll cremate my last remains.”

A pal’s last need is a thing to heed, so I swore I would not fail;
And we started on at the streak of dawn; but God! he looked ghastly pale.
He crouched on the sleigh, and he raved all day of his home in Tennessee;
And before nightfall a corpse was all that was left of Sam McGee.

There wasn’t a breath in that land of death, and I hurried, horror-driven,
With a corpse half hid that I couldn’t get rid, because of a promise given;
It was lashed to the sleigh, and it seemed to say: “You may tax your brawn and brains,
But you promised true, and it’s up to you to cremate those last remains.”

Now a promise made is a debt unpaid, and the trail has its own stern code.
In the days to come, though my lips were dumb, in my heart how I cursed that load.
In the long, long night, by the lone firelight, while the huskies, round in a ring,
Howled out their woes to the homeless snows— O God! how I loathed the thing.

And every day that quiet clay seemed to heavy and heavier grow;
And on I went, though the dogs were spent and the grub was getting low;
The trail was bad, and I felt half mad, but I swore I would not give in;
And I'd often sing to the hateful thing, and it hearkened with a grin.

Till I came to the marge of Lake Lebarge, and a derelict there lay;
It was jammed in the ice, but I saw in a trice it was called the "Alice May."
And I looked at it, and I thought a bit, and I looked at my frozen chum;
Then "Here," said I, with a sudden cry, "is my cre-ma-tor-eum."

Some planks I tore from the cabin floor, and I lit the boiler fire;
Some coal I found that was lying around, and I heaped the fuel higher;
The flames just soared, and the furnace roared—such a blaze you seldom see;
And I burrowed a hole in the glowing coal, and I stuffed in Sam McGee.

Then I made a hike, for I didn't like to hear him sizzle so;
And the heavens scowled, and the huskies howled, and the wind began to blow.
It was icy cold, but the hot sweat rolled down my cheeks, and I don't know why;
And the greasy smoke in an inky cloak went streaking down the sky.

I do not know how long in the snow I wrestled with grisly fear;
But the stars came out and they danced about ere again I ventured near;
I was sick with dread, but I bravely said: "I'll just take a peep inside.
I guess he's cooked, and it's time I looked"; ... then the door I opened wide.

And there sat Sam, looking cool and calm, in the heart of the furnace roar;
And he wore a smile you could see a mile, and he said: "Please close that door.
It's fine in here, but I greatly fear you'll let in the cold and storm—
Since I left Plumtree, down in Tennessee, it's the first time I've been warm."

There are strange things done in the midnight sun

By the men who moil for gold;

The Arctic trails have their secret tales

That would make your blood run cold;

The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,

But the queerest they ever did see

Was that night on the marge of Lake Lebarge

I cremated Sam McGee.

Core Curriculum Standards

Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details

- RL.7.1** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.7.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Reading Literature: Craft and Structure

- RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.
- RL.7.5** Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

Reading Informational Text: Craft and Structure

- RI.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- RI.7.5** Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.

Reading Informational Text: Integration of knowledge and Ideas

- RI.7.9** Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.

Writing: Production and Distribution of Writing

- W.7.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- SL.7.6** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate..

DAY TEN | Reflection

Lesson Goals

Outcomes

Students will reflect on the past nine days of the course and review their definitions of poetry.

Themes, Issues, Concepts

reflection, what is a poem?

Literary Terms

Definition

Materials

Writer's notebooks

Poetry on Our Terms (2014 edition)

“All These Poems” by Grace Stotler (page 147)

Copies of poems from previous lessons for students to review (Optional)

Teacher Tips

- As a final culminating activity, hold a Writer's Buffet or Writer's Gallery for students to celebrate their writing. This is where all of the poems from all classes are displayed on tables, posted around the room, or “thrown” into the middle of the floor so students have an opportunity to read as many different student writings as possible. Celebrate these young authors and their accomplishment. *Note: This activity would also work well as a revising and editing activity.*
- Don't forget to refer to the resource, “Picking a Winning Poem” found at www.7gp.org/contest-documents when choosing your winning student poem.
- I am hopeful that by now, at least a few students may have surprised you by coming to class with a poem(s) they have written at home, anxiously awaiting you to read. Even if it is just one student; embrace the moment, and give yourself a pat on the back. Believe me, there are students who will continue to write poetry because of you.

DAY TEN | Reflection

Lesson Plan

PAGE 1

DO NOW (5 minutes)

In their writer's notebooks, ask students to answer the following question: What do you like and/or not like about poetry?

WHOLE GROUP (20 minutes)

Have students read, "All These Poems" by Grace Stotler. Ask the students "What is a Poem?" and write their answers on the board.

Other questions to ask: What must a poem have? What must a poem not have?

PARTNERS/SMALL GROUPS (15 minutes)

With a partner, have students ask each other:

1. What was your favorite poem of the unit and why?
2. How does it fit (or doesn't it fit) with the class's definition of what a poem is?

Have each pair share with the class.

INDEPENDENT (10 minutes)

In their poetry notebook, ask students to write down three things they learned about poetry that they didn't know before. This could relate to the definition the class came up with, or it could be about something else. Maybe they learned something about themselves in relation to poetry.

REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Ask students to share what they learned with the class.

HOMEWORK

Now that students have seen several different styles of poems and learned about many poetic devices, it's their turn to choose a poem (from the Writer's notebook) they've previously written or construct a new poem for the contest. In accordance with *The 7GP Contest* rules, students must be allowed to write a poem on any topic they want (as long as it is not inappropriate), in any style they want.



Winning poems are due and must be submitted to 7GP no later than January 29, 2016. Please ask students to refer back to their writer's notebook for ideas and inspiration and to create an authentic poem for the contest.

All These Poems

by Grace Stotler (7GP Winner, 2014)

All these poems are floating in my mind.
Some are mean and some are kind.
I must catch them and write them all down.
Some are lost and some are found.

I carry them with me where ever I go.
I carry them with me in the sun and snow.
In the spring and fall, they follow me around,
And even when I can't be found.
I want them here all written down.

So I must write as fast as I can
With great care so people will understand.
For now I will carry on.

But when I must say so long
To those that I hold dear,
"All These Poems" will be right here.

BONUS LESSON | Poems and Resources for the Struggling Writer

Core Curriculum Standards

Reading Literature: Craft and Structure

- RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.
- RL.7.5** Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

Writing: Production and Distribution of Writing

- W.7.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Lesson Goals

Outcomes

Students will recognize the characteristics of the following types of poems: I Am, Acrostic, Haiku, and Erasures. Students who are struggling with getting started may find these poems to be less intimidating to create.

Literary Terms

short poem form, syllable count

Materials

Sample Haiku Handout and worksheet

Sample Student Short Form Handout

"Rain" by Charnishia Burgess, 2011 7GP Winner

<http://www.7gp.org/charnishia-rain>

"The Sunset" by Helen Baraki

<http://www.7gp.org/helen-the-sunset>

"The Silly Little Lighthouse" by Jaci Street, 2011 7GP Winner

<http://www.7gp.org/jaci-the-silly-lighthouse>

Writer's notebooks

BONUS LESSON | Poems and Resources for the Struggling Writer

Lesson Plan

PAGE 1

DO NOW (5 minutes)

Provide a “grab bag” of words and/or themes to help students gather ideas to write poetry. You can also use various photos to prompt students to begin writing poetry.

WHOLE GROUP (20 minutes)

Explain to the class they will be learning about the characteristics of four types of poems: I Am, Acrostic, Haiku, and Erasure. Most students are familiar with these poems and often find success in creating poems with these poetic structures.

Discuss with students that an **I Am** poem is one that can be used to describe any character, setting, idea or concept found in language arts (literature), social studies, science, math, and art.

Copy and paste the following link for a handout to help students create their own *I Am* poems: http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson391/I-am-poem.pdf

Discuss with students that an **acrostic** poem has a topic idea running down the left side of the poem. Each letter in the topic word has a new thought that runs off the side from left to right and is relevant to the topic word. The topic word is typically the title. Copy and paste the following link for students to create their own acrostic poems: <http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/acrostic>

Discuss with students that **haiku** is a form of Japanese poetry. It expresses a single feeling or impression. Read the Sample Haiku Handout and Student Short Form Samples. Use the Haiku Writing Handout to create poems together as a class; then have students write a Haiku with a partner. Finally, have students write their own Haiku and share it with the class. A Haiku typically follows these rules:

Written in 17 syllables. Syllable count is typically 5-7-5

Written in the present tense

Contains seasonal word/reference

Usually a pause at the end of the 1st or 2nd line.

Note: The poem, “The Silly Lighthouse” (Student Short Form Samples) is not a haiku.

Ask students if they know what type of poem this exemplifies. (See “Extra”).

Discuss with students that an **erasure** is a form of found poetry or found art created by erasing words from an existing text in prose or verse and framing the result on the page as a poem. The results can be allowed to stand in situ or they can be arranged into lines and/or stanzas. For samples of erasure poetry, refer to the website www.erasures.wavepoetry.com. This site is also interactive and enables students to create their own erasure poems.

EXTRA — Other Short Poem Forms

There are many short form styles, old and new, including one called a shadorma. The syllable count is usually 3-5-3-3-7-5. Another is a cinquain, a French short form of poetry. It has five lines and the syllable count is 2-4-6-8-2. Sometimes cinquains have a rhyme scheme such as abccb, ababb, or abaab. There are many variations on cinquains, but most are identified by the syllable count.

BONUS LESSON | Poems and Resources for the Struggling Writer

Lesson Plan

PAGE 2

A limerick is another example of a short poem form. The standard form of a limerick is a stanza of five lines, with the first, second and fifth lines rhyming. “A Silly Light House” by Jaci Street is an example of a limerick. One final example, the tanka, is recognized by its syllable count (5-7-5-7-7). Convey to students that although short form poetry contains few words, it can effectively and creatively capture a thought, emotion or feeling.

PARTNERS/SMALL GROUPS (15 minutes)

With a partner or in small groups, have students create an example of each type of poetry discussed, and then share their collaborative works with the class.

INDEPENDENT (10 minutes)

In their writer’s notebooks, have students write either an “I Am”, “Acrostic”, “Haiku”, or an “Erasure” poem independently. Students may want to use some of the words/themes pulled from the beginning during the “Do It Now” activity.

REFLECTION (10 minutes)

For those students who were having difficulty writing a poem, ask them to reflect upon their confidence level after this lesson.

Sample Haiku Handout

by Anonymous

Haiku is fun but
It doesn't always make sense
Refrigerator

by Basho (1644–1694)

Killed by the great snowfall,
All dead and withered lies the grass
That lately waved so tall.

by Basho (1644–1694)

The old pond —
a frog jumps in,
sound of water.

by Basho (1644–1694)

The first cold shower
even the monkey seems to want
a little coat of straw

by Richard Wright (1908–1960)

Whitecaps on the bay:
A broken signboard banging
In the April wind.

Student Short Form Samples

Rain

by Charnishia Burgess (7GP Winner, 2011)

Pours so wet and loud
Water that comes from gray clouds
Plants need it today

The Sunset

by Helen Baraki (7GP Winner, 2014)

The sun setting low
Lighting up the night so bright
It is beautiful

The Silly Lighthouse

by Jaci Street (7GP Winner, 2011)

The cat in the lighthouse meowed.
She attracted quite a crowd.
The seahorse laughed,
As did the sea lion calf.
Her mother was so proud.

NAME _____ CLASS _____ DATE _____

Haiku Writing

TOGETHER

five syllables

seven syllables

five syllables

PARTNERS

five syllables

seven syllables

five syllables

BY YOURSELF

five syllables

seven syllables

five syllables

BONUS LESSON | A Voice for Hard Issues

Core Curriculum Standards

Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details

- RL.7.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Reading Literature: Craft and Structure

- RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

Reading Informational Text: Craft and Structure

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Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.7.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

BONUS LESSON | A Voice for Hard Issues

Lesson Goals

Outcomes

Students will discuss the benefits of poetry in difficult situations, such as when someone is bullied. Students will also learn about the resources available to them at their schools to help them deal with these problems. *Basic knowledge of personification and theme are needed for this lesson.*

Themes, Issues, Concepts

bullying, loneliness, dangerous environments, being an outcast, loss of hope

Literary Terms

theme, personification, repetition

Materials

“Is She Invisible,” by Gloria Haukap, 2004 7GP Winner
“If Kennerly Street Could Talk” by Camille Wilson, 2004 7GP Winner
¿Qué Pasó? by Evette Aguayo, 2012 7GP Winner
“This Little Song Called Darling” by Chloe Fletcher, 2014 7GP Winner
“Me” Kevin Cates, 2004 7GP Winner
“Best Friend” by Kalise Harris, 2013 7GP Winner
“Life” by Jemma, 2014 7GP Winner
“My Bully” by Haley Page, 2014 7GP Winner
“Bystander” by Emma Watson, 2014 7GP Winner
Information on your school’s resources for bullying and counseling
Writer’s notebooks

Teacher Tips — *The 7th Grade Poetry Foundation strongly believes in the positive impact that poetry can have on a seventh grader’s social and emotional well-being. Here are some other resources you may find helpful in regards to this topic:*

- 2015 Casel Guide Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs
<http://secondaryguide.casel.org/casel-secondary-guide.pdf>
- www.teensofamerica.net
- Edutopia “Kids Feel the Power of Poetry in Performance”
<http://www.edutopia.org/poetry-slam-global-writes>
- Video of Sophia Saitta, 2015 7GP Winner reciting her poem, “Seeing Myself”
<http://www.7gp.org/sophia-seeing-myself>
<http://tinyurl.com/o5ppcxm>

BONUS LESSON | A Voice for Hard Issues

Lesson Plan

PAGE 1

DO NOW (5 minutes)

Students will freewrite on the following prompt: Have you ever been bullied before, or have you seen someone bullied? What happened? How did you handle the situation?

WHOLE GROUP (20 minutes)

In light of recent events regarding bullying, schools have been spent more time focusing on developing anti-bullying programs. With your students, go over what they think it means to be a bully. Have they been bullied before? Have they ever been a bully? What do they do when they feel unsafe in their own environment? What resources does your school have to handle issues like these?

Writing poetry can be a great outlet for dealing with these matters. You can communicate what you are feeling, but you can also demonstrate what you see happening in your environment.

Pass out "Is She Invisible" by Gloria Haukap. Have a student read the poem out loud.

Afterward, ask students to answer the following questions:

1. What is going on in this poem?
2. What is the theme (or themes) of this poem?
3. How does this poem relate to being bullied or feeling like an outcast?
4. In relation to this poem, what does it mean to be invisible?

PARTNERS/SMALL GROUPS (15 minutes)

"If Kennerly Street Could Talk" is a poem about a bad environment. Kennerly Street is personified as being "abused" and "taken advantage of."

Hand out the "If Kennerly Street Could Talk" and put students into pairs. Ask students to read the poem. With their partner, have students discuss the answers to the following questions:

1. What is going on in this poem?
2. What is the theme (or themes) of this poem?
3. How does this poem relate to being bullied or abused?
4. What is the importance of the line "If Kennerly Street Could Talk?"
Why is this line repeated several times?

BONUS LESSON | A Voice for Hard Issues

Lesson Plan

PAGE 2

INDEPENDENT (10 minutes)

By themselves, students will read “¿Qué Pasó?” by Evette Aguayo and “This Little Song Called Darling” by Chloe Fletcher. Students will then answer these questions:

1. What is going on in this poem?
2. What is the theme (or themes) of this poem?
3. How does this poem relate to being in a negative environment?
4. What is the importance/significance of the title of this poem?

REFLECTION (10 minutes)

As a class, go over the answers everyone came up with for the INDEPENDENT section. You might want to ask students how the poems they read today are related. Which poem did they feel most connected to and why?

EXTRA — Additional Poems

“Me” and “Best Friend” are two poems that address bullying in powerful ways.

“Best Friend” by Kalise: <http://www.7gp.org/kalise-best-friend>

“Me” by Kevin: <http://www.7gp.org/kevin-me/>

Kalise Harris was also interviewed by KPLR, a St. Louis News Channel, about her poem and bullying: <http://kplr11.com/2013/06/13/7th-grade-poetry-winner>.

“My Life” by Jemma

“My Bully” by Haley: <http://www.7gp.org/haley-my-bully>

“Bystander” by Emma: <http://www.7gp.org/emma-bystander>

“This Time, It’s Queer” by Chloe Charbonneau, 2015 7GP Winner
<http://www.7gp.org/chloe-this-time-its-queer>

HOMEWORK

In their writer’s notebook, students will write two paragraphs (5 sentences each) on how poetry can be beneficial to handling a difficult situation. This can relate to bullying, being in a negative environment, and/or feeling like an outcast.

Is She Invisible

by Gloria Haukap (7GP Winner, 2004)

“Am I invisible?” she asks herself one day
Why do people walk right through me?

No one sees this hurt, lonely, defenseless little girl.
But I do. She’s sitting over there crying...

Crying and calling for that special person
I go over to her, scoop her up in my arms, and say to her

I know I am not that person you have been calling for
But maybe someday...maybe someday I can be that person for you.

She grew, and she grew with me
She may not be beautiful, she may not be great, but she isn’t invisible.

Some people still don’t see.
But that little girl was the little girl living inside of me.

If Kennerly Street Could Talk

by Camille Wilson (7GP Winner, 2004)

If Kennerly Street Could Talk,
It would tell of its past.
How people, unruly people, abused its beauty and how it could not last.

If Kennerly Street Could Talk,
It would sing a song of hurt and cry tears of sorrow,
searching for a new beginning, as if there is no tomorrow.

If Kennerly Street Could Talk,
It would tell you of all its wonders
and how it was taken advantage of, through drugs and drive-bys.

If Kennerly Street Could Talk.

¿Qué Pasó? ¹

by Evette Aguayo (7GP Winner, 2012)

What happened to the times when getting “high”
meant seeing who could go the highest on a swing set?
What happened to the times when going to the “corner”
meant you were getting in trouble?
What happened to the times when seeing how “low” you can go
meant playing limbo?
What happened to drugs being a cure for a tummy ache?
I thought Facebook and MySpace were safe.
I thought AIDS were Band-Aids.
I thought “race” meant who was the fastest.
I thought when you said, “I love you,” you had to mean it.
I thought the word “virgin” was only used when you’re praying.
What happened to grown-ups having kids, not kids having kids?
What happened?
¿Qué Pasó?

¹Spanish for “What happened?”

This Little Song Called Darling by Chloe Fletcher (7GP Winner, 2014)

There's this little song called *Darling*
That brings back lots of thoughts
For every time I hear this song
It haunts and haunts and haunts

This song brings back bad memories
That I've tried to just let go
This is why we all have secrets
For we can't let our sorrow show

This little song called Darling
Always brings me to tears
For when I hear the lyrics
I just want to shut my ears

Self-harm, Anorexia
All these things bring back great pain
These things can tear someone apart
And leave them deep in pain

I can see the hate in people's eyes
I can sense the sadness
I can tell if you want to stop and cry
Because I have dealt with this madness

You look in the mirror
And don't like what you see
So you turn around and walk away
Just leave the reflection be

You don't have a thigh-gap
You don't have a perfect figure
You don't have a flat stomach
And you couldn't possibly be bigger

These things I just described
Can poison one's mind
This thing is called
Anorexia And it is never kind

This Little Song Called Darling *continued* by Chloe Fletcher (7GP Winner, 2014)

You wear bracelets almost every day
That go all the way up your arm
You say it's only fashion
But I know it's self-harm

Every night after school
You go home and cry
Your dad doesn't like you
You can see it in his eyes

Your mom is always insulting you
And putting you down
She tells you you're not good enough
So you always wear a frown

All these thoughts spin through your head
You don't know what else to do
So you slide your blade against your wrist
Then down go your sleeves; no one has a clue

All these things I just described
Can drive someone insane
Especially when the thoughts won't leave
And they're stuck inside your brain

Someone out there cares about you
Don't let them tell you otherwise
You may think it's silly
But you're an angel in disguise

This little song called *Darling*
Is about all of these things
So please stop hating yourself
It's not time to grow your wings

Me

by Kevin Cates (7GP Winner, 2004)

I'm constantly running
On rough terrain.
Some days I feel
I may go insane.
I am chastised for
The color of my skin.
It seems there is no place
That I can fit in,
Too white to be black.
And too black to be white,
It seems I exist
Only to fight.
By the same spirit
We have all been created
But from my own kind
I have been berated.
I long for kind words
But only receive cruelty.
People notice my skin,
But ignore my ingenuity.
I hope and I wait
For a better day
One when my children
Are free to say
Accept me for what
I am inside
There's beauty in us all
We don't want to hide
I am as good as you
So just let me be me
Stop judging this person
By what you think you see
But for now all I can do
Is just live each day
And overcome the obstacles
That may come my way.

Best Friend

by Kalise Harris (7GP Winner, 2013)

I'm-a tell you a story 'bout my best friend,
about how she took her life and the world almost ended.
She was teased by some people who thought they were cool.
They were actin' like a fool and thought nothing of school.
I helped her through all the drama,
'cus she couldn't get help from her own momma.
And I'm going to spill a little secret.
When she got anything, she couldn't keep it.
If you wanna know why this secret is true,
she was in a foster home that's the worst times two.
She came up to me when she was feeling sore.
She said, "Kalise, I'm sorry I can't do it anymore."
And I swore to the day I die,
that she will be my friend in the afterlife.

Life

by Jemma Aline Moccasin (7GP Winner, 2014)

What is life?

Most people never realize how precious life is
Until their life is almost gone.
I've heard elders tell me regrets they have had in their lives.
I have many regrets just like the others.

After I had lost my father, I realized how precious one's life is.
He did lots to help other people, and he loved what he did.
He made the most out of his life for he knew he didn't have long.
He told me his reason for living was because he knew I was coming.

I hope to make my father proud.
I wish more people could be like him.
I wish people would love who they are
And what they do.

What is life?

Instead of hearing people say they love their life,
I hear them say they hate their life and themselves.
I know someone like this. She is a good person,
But she feels bullied and... for what reason?

She doesn't understand, so she doesn't talk anymore.
She isn't who she used to be; she's afraid to make a mistake.
I miss her; I miss who she used to be.
Why do people hurt others? Is it because they have been hurt themselves?

What is life?

Hurting others is not okay. When you see someone hurting others,
Have you ever thought why? Has he or she been hurt too?
Is that the cause of most bullying?
Everyone targets the bully, calling them bad.

At times I feel sorry for the bully.

Life continued **by Jemma Aline Moccasin (7GP Winner, 2014)**

I wonder what has happened to make him or her that way.
I hope one day the hurting goes away;
No pain, no fights, no violence.

What is life?

I want people to get along, and disagreements can be healthy.
Fights that turn to violence are not okay.
Not everyone has to like each other; not everyone has to be friends,
But we need to stand among one another and stick up for each other.

So...if you see someone being hurt
Then do something.
Anything would be helpful
To a person in need.

What is life?

Will this question ever be answered? I guess it doesn't matter.
All that matters is that you learn to love yourself.
Learn to love your life; learn to love your mistakes.
Mistakes are healthy; learn from those mistakes.

What is life?
Life is temporary,
Death is not.
What is life?

My Bully by Haley Pate (7GP Winner, 2014)

Please tell me where things went wrong
We were friends, best as can be
So, what happened?
Please tell me
Just give me a reason!
Is there a problem?
It's eating at me – "What did I do??!!"
I hear you laughing
I know it's at me
I see you point
I see you stare
I hear you laughing
My "bestie"
My bully

Bystander

by Emma Watson (7GP Winner, 2014)

I gaze at them
at the city being bombarded
at the buildings crashing down.
Amazement runs through me—
what a couple of words can do
to hurt someone,
to kill someone.

The murderer
and the others laugh
while the victim sits there
with such a pale
blank face,
so blank
it looks like a white piece of paper.

I gaze at them
while the bullies
kill their victim.
I gaze at them
knowing that I'm
a bystander...
but I'm no longer innocent.

This Time, It's Queer

by Chloe Charbonneau (7GP Winner, 2015)

This time, it's different.

This time it isn't the haircut,
thighs, height, weight, anxiety, laughs,
or shoves, or the in-betweens.

This time, it's queer.

Girl, they call me,
she, her.

An abomination of femininity shoved into my face,
shoved through my ears,
pushed to my brain and plastered to a body that I do not believe is mine.

This time, it is the separation between the boys and the girls.
And where do I belong?

I do not belong here,
I do not belong in that bathroom,
I am not meant to be placed in line with those girls in dresses,
with the makeup and beautiful, feminine clothes.

"Be yourself," I am told.
But little do they know,
you cannot be yourself when you are being told exactly who you need to be.
You cannot be yourself when you have families to approve of your choices, friends to accept who you are.

You cannot be yourself when who you are isn't even up to you to decide.

How am I supposed to become myself when I have an entire society to please?
How am I supposed to become myself when I do not even have
a gender to identify with?

She, she, she.
Girl, her, herself...
wrong!

You are female, you are girl, they tell me.
Wrong.

"It's wrong, it's all wrong."
I wish to plaster that phrase onto the insides of their eyelids,
I wish to give them a looking glass that would show them what I see,
give them the feelings that I feel,
the pain that I've felt...but not for too long.

This Time, It's Queer *continued* by Chloe Charbonneau (7GP Winner, 2015)

Because though I am hurt,
I do not wish it upon anyone else.
I do not want people to be scared,

I do not want people to be hurt because it hurts too much
and that kind of pain cannot be erased.

But how am I to be genderless when they tell me I have far too many feminine flaws?
People point them out as if I am blind to them,
as if I don't see them when I look into the mirror,
when I am forced to face my body,
when I take that step into the shower.
That shower that cannot be avoided,
the whispers that cannot go unheard,
the stares I can't help but see.
How am I supposed to be addressed as they, as them, as their?
When people only see it as plural.
And *ey*, *em*, and *eir* sound too foreign to use,
too unimportant to learn.

They say I am too short.
They tell me the glasses will never pass for neutral but there is nothing else I look okay in.
They tell me the button ups look gay – surprise, surprise! I am gay.
They say the hair is still feminine as if I couldn't tell.
They tell me my chest is not flat enough, that it will never appear flat.
They say I have no muscle that my arms are too thin and my body too curved.
They say these words as if I'm blind.
But no, they are blind for not realizing the harm they've put me through,
the struggles they've caused.

This time it's when I am told who I need to be
while asked what I want to be when I grow up,
as if demanding I be different than I am now.
I do not wish to be different when I grow up,
I wish to be they and them and their.

This time it's when I am told it's a phase.
Confused. Too young.
I don't know what I'm saying.
Don't know who I am.
Or which bathroom to step foot in.

This time, it's queer.

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