

Clark University Master of Arts in Teaching Program  
Learning Activity Plan

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8th Grade English  
January 22, 2016

- I. Content: Describe *what* it is you will teach. What is the content? - This lesson is finishing up teaching about different forms of poetry. Specifically, this lesson will cover free verse poetry, and will begin an activity to review the six different forms of poetry that the class has been learning about (haiku, ode, ballad, sonnet, concrete, free verse).
  
- II. Learning Goal(s): Describe what specifically students will *know* and *be able to do* after the experience of this class.
  - a. Students will be able to listen to poetry being read aloud and respond with their observations.
  - b. Students will be able to identify six different forms of poetry and know the basic characteristics of these forms.
  - c. Students will be able to discuss the basics of a particular form of poetry in a small group.
  - d. Students will begin to plan for writing poetry of their own based on the different forms that they just learned.
  
- III. Rationale: Explain how the content and learning goal(s) relate to your Curriculum Unit Plan learning goals. - My goals for this unit include having my students be able to read, think about, talk about, and write about poetry, as well as write original poetry. In learning about different forms of poetry, I want my students to be able to understand formal qualities so that when they are reading and writing about, and talk about poetry, they can identify the forms of particular poems. At the end of the unit, they will be compiling an anthology of original poems, and before they can create this anthology, they will need to write poetry of their own. After learning about these forms, they can choose to write their poetry either in free verse or in any of the other forms.
  
- IV. Assessment: Describe *how* you and your students will know they have reached your learning goals.
  - a. Students will be responding in their poetry journals to poems being read aloud.
  - b. Students will help me create a better definition the particular form of poetry that we will be focusing on (free verse poetry); their ability to do so will show that they have been able to look at different examples of free verse poetry and figure out what free verse poetry is.
  - c. Students' participation in the jigsaw activity will show that they have learned the basics of a particular form of poetry, and will help review the other forms that they have learned.
  
- V. Personalization and equity: Describe how you will provide for individual student strengths and needs. How will you and your lesson consider the needs of each student and scaffold learning? How specifically will ELL students and students with learning disabilities gain access and be supported?
  - a. For this particular lesson, I have been having my students work in groups, and have made the groups strategically. Each group has at least one very strong student, and all high-needs students have been placed in groups where they will be

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supported most by their peers. I do not have many ELL students, but my students with IEPs have all been placed in groups with other students whom they will work effectively with. By focusing this lesson on group activities, I am hoping that my strong students will support higher needs students, and that the students will be able to learn from each other.

VI. Activity description and agenda

- a. Describe the activities that will help your students understand the content of your class lesson by creating an agenda with time frames for your class. Be prepared to explain why you think each activity will help students on the path toward understanding.
  - i. 0-10 Mindful Listening - students start with a Mindful Minute, and then transition into a listening activity where I read a short poem twice, and they respond in their poetry journals with a 1-2 sentence reaction to the poem.
  - ii. 10-25 “What Do You Notice” pt. 1- continuation of this activity from previous lessons; students are given a hand out in their groups with different examples of a form of poetry (free verse for this particular lesson) and given 7 minutes in their groups to determine what the particular characteristics of this form are and what they notice about it.
  - iii. 25-45 “What Do You Notice” pt. 2 - students will share some of their observations, and then I will show them the definition that I have for free verse poetry and ask them to help me make my definition better using their observations.
  - iv. 45-60 Jigsaw Preparation - Students will look back at the different forms of poetry we learned about this week and last week and decide which one they feel they are an “expert” in. We will break into expert groups and within these groups, students will begin to fill in part of the jigsaw packet that and determine, in their expert opinion, what the most important thing to remember about their particular form of poetry is. Students will finish this for homework and meet back in expert groups during the next class we have together.
- b. What particular challenges, in terms of student learning or implementing planned activity, do you anticipate and how will you address them?
  - i. My biggest challenge with these students is managing transitions and pacing. I frequently have to pause and wait for them to stop talking over me or each other. I have adjusted my practice to avoid talking over my students as much as possible in order to show them that talking over others is not acceptable, but this often slows the lessons down. Thus, even though parts of an activity should only take a small amount of time, I have built more time into the lesson in order to be able to fit in everything that I need. This built in time should also accommodate the extra time that it may take to transition from one lesson to another.

VII. List the Massachusetts Learning Standards this lesson addresses.

1. L.8.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. (identifying figurative language when responding to poetry)

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2. SL.8.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. (jigsaw activity)
3. W.8.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (low-stakes writing in their poetry journals)
4. L.8.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
5. W.8.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences. (poetry journals)
6. RL.8.5. Compare and contrast the structure of two or more different texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style. (looking at different forms of poetry)