

Poems Across the Board

By Rachel “Raych” Jackson

Purpose

The purpose of Poems Across the Board is to supply teachers with practical ways to incorporate contemporary and culturally relevant poetry into their classroom environment.

A closer look into poems and the benefits of bringing them into the classroom. This workshop acknowledges the challenges of teaching poetry and shows you a different door to enter through.

Align with Common Core while still remaining fresh.

Introduction

My name is Rachel “Raych” Jackson.

- Winner of 2017 NUPIC
- Debut collection *Even the Saints Audition* out now through Button Poetry.
- Taught 3rd/4th grade in Chicago Public Schools for five years.
- Taught poetry workshops in classrooms (K-12) throughout the Chicagoland area for ten years.

Warm Up

Please answer these questions on your sheet.

What poets did you learn in school?

Who is/was your favorite writing teacher?

CHALLENGE: Who is your favorite living poet / poem?

After you finished turn and talk to a neighbor to share your answers. Any similarities?

Free Write

Identity: Self Portrait with No Flag- Safia Elhillo

List 3 things that make up your identity.

List 3 ways you identify a friend.

Free Writes are a good introduction to poetry. Free writes can be applied as introductions to units. This poem is a great introduction to contemporary poetry.

Common Core Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3 -College Career Readiness Anchor Standards

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5,-8.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

Common Core Standards

Reading Literature - Craft and Structure

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5-8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5-8.5

Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5-8.6

Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

In Defense of - Workshop

Jot Down:

Actions that are disrespectful only in your household.

- example not taking your shoes off when entering a house, no matter to type of flooring is a punishable offense in my mom's house. Another example is not finishing your plate at dinner.

Words/ phrases you hesitate to say in front of your elders (mom, grand-uncle, pastor)

Words/ phrases that carry inside jokes

What are words YOU love that other people hate?

TEXTS FOR REFERENCE

[Look I'm No Good at Eating Chicken - Fatimah Asghar](#)

What's the hook to your unit? The lists. With a monitored discussion engagement in the classroom should be high.

[In Defense Of "Moist" by by Hanif Abdurraqib](#)

Prompt: Defend an action that is usually looked down upon.

Defend a word to someone who wants to take it away from you.

Extensions

- Find etymology of the word you're defending.
- Character traits
 - Determine character traits by a characters actions and words.
 - Name three character traits for this author using examples from the text.
- Word Choice
- Finding types of figurative language in the text
- Author's Purpose (lower level)

Persona Poems Workshop

Jot Down:

- List the living things you saw today and where.
 - If it helps to narrow it down start with this room.
 - Expand the scope to your travel here.
 - (Are automobiles living since they run off energy?)
- PICK ONE
- Did other living things notice it?
- What were the “dead” things around them doing?
- Who is the enemy of the living thing?

What and Why Persona Poems?

- Poetry Foundation definition
 - A dramatic character, distinguished from the poet, who is the speaker of the poem
- Poetry Archive definition
 - A persona from the Latin for mask, is a character taken on by a poet to speak in a first-person poem
- Simply put
 - Persona Poems are poems written in the voice of a speaker not the poet.
 - Hence “In Someone Else’s Shoes”
- Persona poems provide a different way into art.
- Challenge students into seeing poetry in the nontraditional sense.
- Persona poems are an excellent hook across subjects.

Pidgeon Man by Jamila Woods

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iu3z-wJ5rXY>

What is the poem about?

What does the laughter do to this piece?

PROMPT

Write in the perspective of your living thing. Imagine they are finally getting an interview with the world.

Persona Poems as Hooks

Whether it's a certain era of history, mythology or math, persona poems provide an added level of interest.

Medusa by Patricia Smith

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sf-UCBxZlFs>

Hook for Greek Mythology

Polling the class' knowledge of the myth before hand is a plus/ great pre-assessment.

There are tons of poems written as characters to standard units.

Persona Poems as Secondary Sources

- Secondary Source
 - Interprets and analyzes primary sources.
 - A lot research goes into writing and reviewing a persona poem.
- April 5, 1968 -What happened?
 - Martin Luther King Jr.'s Assassination and Chicago rioted.
 - Persona Poem - Eve Ewing
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=7&v=IOZ3id-koxc

Persona Poems Quick Ideas for the Class

- Math Teachers
 - Students writing as operations or functions
 - Captures students who prefer writing/ reading over math
- Geography/ History
 - Above writing as a state or place.
 - Writing as a historical place, street, time.
- Science
 - Water, Liquid, Gas
 - Elementary
 - Chemical Reaction Skits
 - High School

Poem Ideas Across Your Units

Erasures

Take a few predictable poems.

Have students erase words and form new poems.

Same could happen with historical texts.

<https://therumpus.net/2017/01/the-rumpus-inaugural-poems-aira-d-matthews/>

Collaging Poems

Quick Poem Ideas

Ekphrastic

Write a poem as a person / animal
in the picture.

Write a poem about the picture.

This can apply to historical

Photographs and act as a type of pre-assessment.



Persona Poems as Secret Jokes

Lorena by Lucille Clifton

<https://www.americanpoems.com/poets/lucille-clifton/lorena/>

Obviously for a final adult laugh

Access to another historical moment.

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THANK YOU