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# *Elementary Poetry Syllabus*

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## **1) August/ September**

- A. Enjoyment of Poetry
  - a) Read Keep Poem In Your Pocket
  - b) Discuss Poem
  - c) Ask questions
  - d) KWL Chart
  - e) Read poetry throughout the week
- B. List Poetry
  - a) Students will construct and illustrate a list poem
    - 1) A list poem is a poem comprised of a list of persons, places, things, or abstract ideas, which share a common denominator.
  - b) Enables students to think about themselves and discuss who they are
  - c) This is a great way of “Getting to Know You” activity
- C. Acrostic Poetry
  - a) An acrostic poem is one in which the name of a person, place, or thing is written vertically.
  - b) Students will do name poetry
- D. ABC Poetry
  - a) ABC random lettering
  - b) Students will work cooperatively in a group.
  - c) Gives students a chance to express themselves without structure of sentence writing

## **2.) October**

- A. More ABC Poetry
  - a) Students pick consecutive letters from the alphabet to create a poem
  - b) Student will be creating a poem, which expresses emotion
  - c) It will consist of five lines with each of the lines beginning with a consecutive letter of the alphabet.
  - d) An ABC poem has 5 lines that create a mood, picture, or feeling
- B. Wish Collaboration
  - a) Writing a Wish Collaboration Poem will get students even more excited about writing poetry.
  - b) Students will write a class collaboration poem.
  - c) Every line starts with I wish.
  - d) Everyone contributes one line.
  - e) Poems will contain humor
  - f) Introduce nouns

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### C. Wish Poetry

- a) Review of nouns.
- b) Students will individually write their own wish poems.
- c) This time the wishes can be real or totally exaggerated.

### D. Class Color Poem

- a) Class will vote to pick one color and write about it.
- b) After teaching and practicing nouns and verbs you can use poetry to help with the adjectives.
- c) Colors can be heard, touched, smelled, as well as seen.
- d) Ask questions to the class and discuss them.
  - 1) You might want to use the five W's. (Who, What, Where, When, Where)
- e) Have students now vote on a specific color to use as the class poem

### E. Color Poetry II

- a) Describing your favorite color.
- b) Go over colors that feel
- c) Learning more about the use of adjectives, nouns, and poetry writing
  - 1) Adjectives are words that describe or modify another person or thing in a sentence.
  - 2) Let students point out the adjectives from the poem on the transparency

Students will write a color poem which contains comparisons to at least five objects

## 3.) November

### A. Similes ~Comparison Poetry

- a) Students will be able to compare, freely, different things in Nature using Similes (Comparison Poetry).
- b) **Simile** literally means like or the same as.
- c) Review the word adjective compile a list on a chart for students to use.
- d) Group practice
- e) Descriptive language poems are stepping-stones to different types of poems containing similes.

### B. The Important Poem

- a) Students will develop a poem relating the most important thing they know about themselves.
- b) Teacher will share examples of poems having a strong voice in poetry

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- c) Learning the words unique, attribute, and important
  - 1) **Unique** means the only one of its kind
  - 2) **Attributes** are a quality or characteristic that belongs to or describes a person or thing.
  - 3) **Important** is something that is worth taking seriously and can have a great impact

The book you read shows the uniqueness of one another.

- d) Class brainstorms ways in which children in the book are different and the same.
  - e) Discuss having 'voice' when writing
- C. Thanksgiving Thank You Poem
- a) Students will brainstorm as a class about anything and everything they know about Thanksgiving.
    - 1) Use a K-W-L chart for general knowledge of Thanksgiving
  - b) Read the poem on Thanksgiving from a website.
    - 1) [http://tooter4kids.com/Thanksgiving/thanksgiving\\_poem.htm](http://tooter4kids.com/Thanksgiving/thanksgiving_poem.htm)
    - 2) Discuss how the rhyme helps the poem
  - c) Students write their own poem following a pattern
- D. Thanksgiving Poem
- a) Appreciation of our environment through poetry.
  - b) Students will write a poem using a form outlined in their workbook
  - c) Discuss the changes that have happened in the world in the 100 years since the words of Chief Seattle were spoken.
    - 1) Brother Eagle, Sister Sky by Susan Jeffers
  - d) Have students then write their own plan to help the earth.
  - e) Have the students write a poem to Mother Earth thanking her

## 4.) December

- A. Alliterations
- a) Students are introduced to the term alliteration and asked to create their own examples of alliteration.
  - b) Students will write a poem using alliteration.
  - c) Alliteration is the repeated use of the same sound at the beginning of a group of words. They are often used to write tongue twisters.
    - 1) Introduce alliteration using the picture book *Animalia*
    - 2) Give students a letter and have them come up with alliterations

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- B. Poems Set to Music
  - a) Use music to write poetry
  - b) Appreciation of instrumental music.
  - c) Language expression
  - d) Play music
  - e) Concentrate and visualize the sounds, colors, and feelings of the piece.
  - f) Students begin to draw what they think the music is about
  - g) Change the music
  - h) Ask the students to now write whatever the music made them think of
- C. Couplets
  - a) Couplets are very simple to write and young writers will feel successful.
  - b) Couplets are two-lined poems with a fun and simple rhyming pattern. Each line has the same meter and their endings rhyme with one another. Humor is often used when writing.
  - c) Select a theme or topic for the students that interest them.
  - d) Brainstorm and create a list of words that rhyme with the last word in the sentence
- D. Couplets II
  - a) Writing couplets to go along with a poem
  - b) Read the poem "Sick" by Shel Silverstein
    - 1) Discuss reasons why Peggy Ann McKay didn't want to go to school
    - 2) Do choral reading of the poem
  - c) Read Sick Day by Susan R. Stein
    - 1) Do a Venn diagram to compare the poems from the two authors
    - 2) Let the students also know that they will be writing a poem using Sick Day as a guideline.
  - d) Gather ideas from the class about faking illnesses, and put these onto chart paper
  - e) Make a list of health problems
  - f) Have students come up with excuses about not being able to attend school
  - g) Write a couplet poem using helpful hints on charts

## **5.) January**

- A. Haiku
  - a) Students learn the syllable structure and mood of haiku poems by comparing the serenity of nature with the peaceful rhythms of haiku poetry.
  - b) Defining Haiku
    - 1. Haiku is a poem that consists of 17 unrhymed syllables organized into three lines. Most poems refer to nature in some way.
  - c) Go over several examples of haiku
  - d) Brainstorm and create a list of words or phrases that describe how the object looks, feels, etc.

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- e) Discuss with students the sounds and sights of nature
  - f) • Then write a class collaboration haiku using one of the word lists
- B. Friend Poetry Unit
- a) This mini unit will reinforce skills on making friends, being a friend, and keeping a friend. It will help students learn to resolve conflicts with friends.
  - b) In this activity students will also to compile a list of the things they look for in a friend and use that information to create a simple poem.
  - c) Have students define the word Friendship
  - d) Read Rosie and Michael
  - e) Discuss the book from each characters point of view
  - f) This is really a unit and before you get to poetry writing lots of things should be done first.
  - g) You may do this activity over the course of several weeks
  - h) Involve parents from the workbook section.
  - i) Write a friends poem.
- C. If I Were...
- a) The weather, seasons, objects, are very dramatic and a great way to stimulate a student's imagination. Students will write this type of poetry by feeling how it would feel to be the...
  - b) Listening to poems
  - c) Brainstorming ideas
  - d) Writing the actual poem
  - e) It can be used in many different themes that you study in your classroom.
  - f) The list of possibilities for writing this type of poem is endless. (Butterflies, animals, snow, spring, wind, a planet, the flag, President, If I won the lottery, Famous people, etc.)
- D. Limericks
- a) Students will learn to recognize and write limericks
  - b) A **limerick** is a funny little poem containing five lines. The last words of the first, second, and fifth lines rhyme with each other (A) and the last words of the third and fourth lines rhyme with each other so the pattern is AABBA. It should also have a rhythm pattern.
  - c) Students should be able to hear the beat pattern and clap it out
  - d) As a class, brainstorm words that rhyme with each sentence

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### **6. February**

#### A. Valentine's Day Poetry

- a) Students will write Red poems based on a pattern of questions
- b) Brainstorm everything you can possibly think of that is red and add to chart
- c) Read the "Red" color from the book, Hailstones and Halibut Bones
- d) Show the students the charts that you will be discussing. (8 of them)
- e) Hang up the charts as you complete them
- f) Guide students through the students page, one line at a time, telling them to choose words or phrases from the list, or they may use their own. (The list is a guide for students who need some reinforcement.)
- g) Have them rewrite the poem on heart-shaped composition paper. (Just fold it length-wise and cut into a heart. I always did it.)
- h) Then cut larger red hearts out of construction paper.
- i) Younger students need to have red construction paper hearts already cut. (They need to be bigger than the white composition paper.)

#### B. Quatrain

- a) A very simple form of poetry that needs rhyme.
- b) Guiding students through all the steps necessary to write this form of poetry
- c) Quatrain- Pronunciation: (kwo'trAn) - A stanza or poem of four lines, usually with alternate rhymes.
- d) Use the overhead to show a variety of quatrains from students.
- e) Guide students as they study the poem's rhyme scheme, from Shel Silverstein, the choice of topic, the choice of adjectives and verbs---anything that makes the poem special.

#### C. Biography Poetry/ Famous People

- a) Students describe aspects of famous people in poetry format by completing statements after they do Biography Reports.
- b) This activity should take place over one month's time.
- c) The student will describe important facts and contributions of an early American leader or one that has passed on.
- d) Students will write, edit, and rewrite a poem about their famous person from a given form.
- e) A Bio poem can be used to teach students to focus on the characteristics of a person or an animal, anything or anyone really.

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### D. Alone Poems

- a) Being alone - What does that mean?
- b) Good time to introduce a unit on bullying for Character Education.
- c) Learn how to articulate feelings
- d) Questions are asked for students to consider.
- e) Define the word bully.
- f) Use of KWL chart
- g) Refer back to the Friendship Unit
- h) Often the most memorable lessons are learned from books with inspirational characters and situations that lend us to want to be like those characters.
- i) See unit, very extensive

## **7. March**

### A. Free Verse

- a) In this activity, students write poems of their own without having to create an all-new structure or rhyme scheme.
- b) For this lesson, students will analyze poetry based on structure and meaning.
- c) Compare this simple poem to a Haiku
- d) Interpret the poem with full discussion
- e) Easy definition of free verse would be prose written rich in imagery
- f) View examples of poems written by students
- g) William Carlos Williams author
  - 1) Background info
  - 2) Info on a wheelbarrow

### B Spring Poetry

- a) Students will write their own style of poetry for this unit.
- b) Discussion will focus around spring.
  - 1) Discussion on spring
  - 2) What do the students know about spring?
  - 3) What are the signs of spring?
- c) Have a discussion on the term, "Spring Fever"
- d) Read some spring poems to get into the mood
- e) Write a poem

### C. Fractured Fairy Tales/My Third Eye

- a) The student will read and then rewrite a familiar fairy tale from a different point of view.
- b) Write an introduction and conclusion to a fairy tale.
- c) Identify the components necessary for a complete story
- d) Students will learn how to become more imaginative in their writing when doing this type of assignment.

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- e) Reading of some well known fairy tales and other versions of the same tale
  - f) Study of plot and main characters
  - g) Rewriting of a fairy tale and then writing poetry
  - h) Read some traditional fairy tales and follow up with Fractured Fairy Tales listed in the Materials list.
  - i) Students will write their own.
  - j) Poems will be written, 'My Third Eye' after reading poem in the workbook by Mara Lynn Barbee.
- D. Prose Poetry
- a) Students will learn the term prose and be able to apply it to poetry that they write.
  - b) It's all about having 'voice' for an audience.
  - c) Learn to recognize description in prose writing.
  - d) To introduce and reinforce students' understanding of description
  - e) Learning how writing this type of poetry is similar to a story.
  - f) Prose is ordinary written or spoken language, as opposed to verse or poetry.
  - g) Introduce Moment Poetry
- E. Emotion Poetry
- a) Students will become more familiar with word usage; synonyms, the degree of emotion contained in words and the treatment of language to impact meaning.
  - b) Getting to know students and getting them to know themselves through writing.
  - c) Discussion and brainstorming on feelings of emotions
  - d) Writing a poem using format in workbook
  - e) Students write down a word which describes how he or she feels today.
  - f) This exercise can be used for analysis of any literature characters, history events, animals, plants, etc.
    - 1) Just change the lines to suit the subject.

## 8. April

- A. Noun/Adjective Poetry
- a) Students will think and write creatively using nouns and adjectives.
  - b) Students will be able to use Encyclopedia's for nouns along with general knowledge
  - c) Follow a rhythmic pattern of a poem and create their own
  - d) Demonstrate a well-developed knowledge of adjectives and nouns.
  - e) Listing with commas
  - f) Poem "Beans, Beans, Beans," by Lucia and James Hymes in Hooray for Chocolate is read orally to the students



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- g) The outlined pattern for writing the poem should be done with whole class participation.
- B. Family Comparisons
  - a) Comparing each member of your family to an object or animal.
  - b) Comparison Poetry (Similes) is the simplest and also the most effective poetic device.
  - c) Discussion on families
  - d) Model a poem
  - e) List some words describing people in general and have students relate that to members of their families
  - f) Write Family Comparisons
  - g) *Share poem*
- C. Now and Then Poem
  - A. A poem where students will be able to tell what they couldn't do when they were younger, and now, being older they can.
  - B. Discussion on what you could do at different ages until now.
  - C. Remembering past and present memories of things that occurred in their lives
  - D. Modeling some poems, and writing their own
- D. Candyland Poetry
  - a. Students can really enjoy using their imagination along with descriptive language, onomatopoeia, and similes.
  - b. Imagine having a dream where everything in the world is made of candy.
  - c. Students write for a period of time in class on a topic of candy dreams.
  - d. Oral expression and listening skills are developed through class discussions
  - e. Hear and follow oral instructions and focus on details of the poem
  - f. Learn how to use onomatopoeia
    - 1) Onomatopoeia (on·o·mato·poe·ia) uses words whose sounds give suggestions to your senses.
  - g. Should be able to identify this as Prose Poetry
  - h. Tallying and graphing of favorite candy
  - i. Discussion of My World, poem

## 9. May

- a) Turn Around Poetry
  - a. Taking an animal's name and writing it backwards to describe an entirely different animal through art and poetry.
  - b. Part of this lesson the students can do alone while you are completing work to end your year.

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- c. The students, working in cooperative groups, will use art as the basis for a creative writing assignment in poetry and will represent an original poem along with the drawing.
  - i. Students will draw and have a discussion on their favorite animal.
  - ii. Then the class will brainstorm a list of animals for the project.
  - iii. Followed by students going into a cooperative learning group, with rules, and drawing a backwards named animal.
  - iv. Write a rhyming poem to go with the art drawing.
- b) Snap Shot Poetry
  - This is a great way to reinforce the use of imagery helping students move effortlessly from simile to metaphor.
  - Review the term attributes
  - Introduce the poetic term metaphor
    1. A Metaphor is a way to describe something by calling it something else.
    2. It is an implied comparison without using the words like and as.
  - To reinforce the use of imagery, similes and metaphors
- c) I Don't Understand Poetry
  - a) Students should be able to complete this lesson on their own, after you give them a mini lesson.
  - b) Don't look for assessments just allow the students to enjoy the next few weeks left for writing poetry.
  - c) We do want them to continue to write and take pleasure in writing poetry over the summer months and their school years to follow.
- d) Power Point Presentation
  - You can use Microsoft PowerPoint to create interactive presentations containing text, art, and animation. It is probably the best-known presentation graphics program available.
  - It is a great way to bring parents into the classroom at the end of the year to view all the hard work the students have done in poetry.
  - Serve some ice tea and cookies after the presentation.
  - This is great for public relations.

## 10. June

- ① My Year in \_\_\_Grade
  - ② What you remember about this past school year.
  - ② Students should be able to do this in their workbook after giving a short mini lesson.
  - ② Think of short phrases describing special events that you have enjoyed.

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- ② Write a "phrase poem" about your experiences.
- ① Next Class Poetry
  - Poems left for the next group of students entering this classroom.
    1. Give a mini lesson for leaving poems for next year's class
    2. Make up a list on chart paper and then write poem
  - Make ice cream in a bag to top it off.
- ① Poetry Booklet
  - At the end of the year my students produce a writing project, a culmination of their year's worth of poetry.
  - You should have been saving their good-illustrated poems all year in a safe place, as described in the Introduction Part of this book..
  - Illustrate the cover.
  - Students add an "About the Author" section.
  - They dedicate their book to someone, adding an explanation of why they chose that particular person to dedicate their book to.