

Poetry: A Portal to the
Dimensions of Thinking

Presented by:

Joanne Arellanes
arellanesr@csus.edu
Veronica Schwalbach
veronicaschwalbach@yahoo.com

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CRA
638 Camino De Los Mares Suite H130/476
San Clemente, CA 92673

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Outcomes

How to build success by tapping into each
student's fount of knowledge through poetry

to foster:

- Critical Thinking: "Read Like a Writer"
- Vocabulary Development
- More Thoughtful Writing

Bananas and Cream

Bananas and cream,
Bananas and cream,
All we could say was
Bananas and cream.

We couldn't say fruit,
We wouldn't say cow,
We didn't say sugar---
We don't say it now.

Bananas and cream,
Bananas and cream,
All we could shout was
BANANAS AND CREAM!



Prompts for Visualizing

To share responses to poems, use 3 X 5 cards with the following suggested prompts:

I wish.....

Something I liked (a word, the rhythm, the mood, a rhyme, a description, etc.)

A question I have or something that puzzled me

Something that surprised or delighted me...

By using these prompts, students learn to give specific comments and feedback on their experience.

Embracing Vocabulary

- Read a poem every day to your students to stimulate visualization and make connections to personal and academic experiences
- Save oral/aural connections
- Provide a plethora of exposure, not occasional forays (Kate Kinsella)
- Collect personally meaningful vocabulary
- Ultimately, hold kids accountable for using "sparkle" vocabulary

Thinking Takes Time!



Give extra time for students to “digest, “ think about , and analyze their evidence in order to revise or refine. R. Marzano *The Art and Science of Teaching* ASCD 2007

Do not rush the process. Plan a series of periods to work through each project. Allow ample time for ideas to percolate.

SAT Reading, Writing Scores Hit Low

“In many schools, especially those most impoverished, reading programs are not about building cognitive abilities or a love of reading. They are built around rote learning of language, and I think we are seeing the results of that.”

Kent Williamson, executive director NCTE
Wall Street Journal/ Sept. 15, 2011

“We need to nurture a spirit of wonder and questioning so essential for critical thinking. Creation always starts with some form of sensory input.”

Betty K. Garner President Aesthetic of Lifelong Learning
bettygarner@yahoo.com



POET' S CHECKLIST

- Always start with ideas that sing in your heart.
- Choose sharp, juicy, whistling words.
- Rhyme is fine, but it must shine.
- Over and over and over—write, read, revise.
- See, touch, taste, smell, listen to your poem.
- Too sloppy? Recopy.
- Ideas dance on the polished page.
- Celebrate—you are a poet. Share, speak, sing.

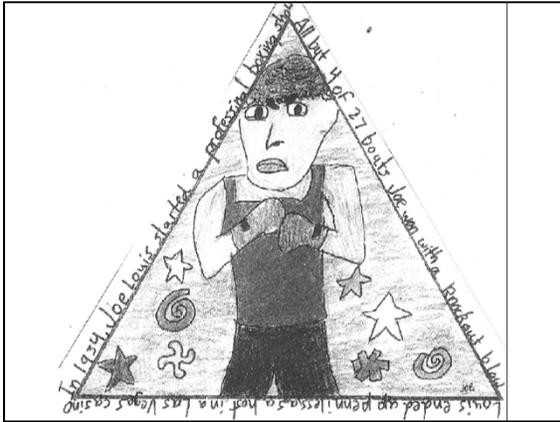
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Checklists

- First think: What do you want them to know and be able to do?
- Rubrics that show only the highest criteria for each trait to model critical analysis
- Help students break tasks into pieces
- Start with the most essential elements (learning targets) for population
- Allow anyone to give clear feedback and next steps

Triangle Poem Checklist

- The last word in each line rhymes
- My poem tells something interesting or important about my topic
- My topic is named in at least one line of the poem
- My poem has three complete sentences that make sense no matter which line is read first
- Each line is written along one side of the triangle
- The picture fills the entire space inside the triangle and is completely colored
- The lines of the poem have been traced over with black pen
- My poem has correct:
 - spelling
 - periods
 - capital letters



Targets in "Bananas and Cream"

- Develop rhythm and sensitivity to words in poetry (vocabulary)
- Use sorting and classifying skills to recognize and collect ideas that go together appropriately (analytical thinking)
- Allows personal choice within format (leads to goal setting)

Format

_____ and _____
 _____ and _____
 All we could say was
 _____ and _____
 We couldn't say _____
 We wouldn't say _____
 We didn't say _____
 We don't say it now.
 _____ and _____
 _____ and _____
 All we could shout was
 _____ and _____

** Consider substituting a sparkle word for "shout" such as "whisper," "sigh," "whine" to practice prosody

Acrostic Name Poems

Targets:

- 1) Brainstorm list of personal talents and interests (background knowledge)
- 2) Use precise descriptive verbs and adjectives (word choice)
- 3) Apply correct format and spelling (conventions)
- 4) Presentation enhances the poem (comprehension: highlights key ideas)

ABC LIST SCAFFOLD

- Separate handout to salt the mine/ mind
- Moving down the continuum of accessibility
- Allows students to begin the process more easily

Scaffolding Example

- **A** always, art, artistic, a, an
- **B** believes, baseball, bakes, bats, better, bicycle, brilliant
- **C** creates, chocolate, camps, camping, candy, champion
- **D** dreams, dances, dancing, desires, determined, diving, draws, drawing
- **E** eats, excited about, eager to, earns, exciting, experiments with
- **F** football, feels, fantastic, fair, fast, father, first-rate, first-class, fishing, focused on, friendly
- **G** great, good, gathers, gentle, generally, gets, got, gives, goes, grateful
- **H** has, Halloween, happy, hikes, hiked, hiking, hopes, hot dog, hamburger
- **I** ice cream, I, imagines, incredible, interested in, involved in
- **J** jeans, joyful, jumps, just about
- **K** keeps, kind, knows
- **L** loves, loving, likes, last (year, summer, etc.), lately, learning, library, likable, lived looks, listens
- **M** makes, mother, math, macaroni, mainly, marvelous meet, met, might, musical
- **N** needs, nibbles, next, not, notices, normal
- **O** oh, one, operates, opens, outside
- **P** plays, partial to, passionate, patient, peaceful, people, plans, possibly, practices, puts, prefers
- **Q** quickly, quick, queen
- **R** reading, raises, ready, reliable, respectful, responsible, rose, runs, ran
- **S** shares, soccer, swimming, swims, scores, sings, satisfied, sea, self-confident, shops, superior

Abigail

An adept artist I will become.

Babysitting a lovable pleasant baby is fun.

I am always caring and helpful to my friends.

Give money to the painted turtle for chronically ill children.

Always writing songs for the piano and recorder.

I will make a cookbook with delectable simple recipes for children to try.

Lovable and favorable for the world around me.

Acrostic Checklist

- Each line begins with a letter in my first name
- Each line of the poem tells something specific about me
- I have used precise verbs and adjectives to describe my interests and talents vividly
- All the words in my poem are spelled correctly
- The words in my poem are easy to read
- My poem is attractive
- One thing I want you to notice about my poem is _____
- One way I plan to improve my poem is _____

Ronald McNair

Ronald McNair born on October 1, 1950

Only second African-American astronaut

Never wanted to do anything but fly

An astrophysicist with a PhD from MIT

Loved science when he was in school

Died on January 28, 1986 in the Challenger accident

Apple Hill

Apples ripening in the sun
Pie puffing up in the oven
Playing in the fall leaves
Lots of hot chocolate
Eating hot, crispy, fresh out of the oven pie

Hot soup warming me up
Indoor dinners with my whole family
Lunch on top of Apple Hill
Lovely Thanksgiving dinner

By: Lochlan

WETLAND

Wet most of the year
Endangered species live here
Trees are scarce
Limited to fall, winter, and spring
Aquatic animals thrive
Next year it will be back again
Determined to provide habitat

5/6 Nature Bowl Team Finals 2013

Content Area Process

- Provide resources for information (picture books, animal books or pictures, list of states)
- Model whole process as class before working independently or in pairs
- Students list important ideas that emerge
- Select best ideas
- Collect possible alliterative words to convey critical attributes of topic and illustration

Important Poem Targets

- Summarize key ideas/concepts for any content area topic
- Analyze facts to prioritize them
- Use comparisons to highlight essential points
- Apply specific, vivid vocabulary

Portola
The important thing about Gaspar Portola is that he explored California.

He traveled to California by foot and helped found two missions and two presidios.

And he helped lead the first extensive expedition from San Diego to San Francisco.

Portola never gave up while he searched for Monterey.

But the important thing about Portola is that he explored California.

Important Poem Checklist

- The first line states the most important attribute, idea, or fact
- A description is included (physical or functional)
- Comparisons are used
- Ideas are organized to paint a clear picture for the reader
- Specific, vivid vocabulary is accurately used
- There is a smooth flow from beginning to end
- Correct format and spelling are evident
- Final copy is attractive and easy to read

COLOR POETRY

- Develop sensory images

- Discover and choose strong verbs and adjectives

- Identify analogous colors to broaden vocabulary

Color Poetry Checklist

CONTENT:

- The poem includes two examples of each of the five senses.
- The poem shows vivid, detailed sensory images.
- The poem includes strong verbs and adjectives, not generic words.
- Every word counts; words are not repeated unless they are part of a plan.
- If the poem rhymes, it is natural and not forced.

FORM:

- The poem is written in correct form (see samples).
- Words are spelled correctly.
- Capitalization is correct.
- There is sensible punctuation to guide the reader.

ARTWORK:

- Attractively reflects the ideas of the poem
- Uses colors from the same family (analogous colors)

Green

Green is the quiet of a secret garden
 The smell of mint,
 A cricket' s chirp
 Pickles,
 And a leprechaun.

Green is the mountains and algae-filled ponds,
 Happiness and mold
 It' s the feeling you get when you have the flu.

Green is sour
 It' s broccoli and lizards, celery
 And loneliness.
 Cold is green
 And frostbite

Green is lime
 And crunchy salads.

Brown

Look at brown
 Hundreds of freckles sprinkled on a little girl's face,
 An old, dying, leafless tree in a forest full of evergreens in Winter.

Listen to brown...

A child jumping up and down in a large puddle of mud going
 "squish, squash, squish, squash!" just after a rain storm,
 The chopping of wood getting ready to go in the fireplace.

Touch brown...

The feel of the teddy bear you curl up with at night,
 The feel of sandpaper in my dad's workshop while building a birdhouse.

Taste brown...

Hot brownies that just came out of the oven and a glass of cold milk,
 The crunchy bacon with scrambled eggs at breakfast time

Smell the brown...

The smell of a forest fire in the Summer,
 The inviting aroma of chocolate chip cookies baking in the oven.

Brown - All the colors blended together

Conclusion

Poetry is an effective vehicle to help students to improve their thinking and writing while playing with language!

It allows us to put some of the joy back into teaching and learning

Students will quickly embrace the possibilities of poetry with a little practice because it offers them the freedom of choice.

Writing Poetry

provides opportunities for differentiation,

develops the critical thinking skills of main idea and details, compare and contrast, and summarization

affords a way to develop research skills on a specific topic in a variety of content areas

creates opportunities for students to use checklists to set their own writing goals

offers a meaningful opportunities for using precise, concise language, allowing students to engage in more thoughtful reading and writing.

As Eudora Welty says,
“Poetry is the school I went to
in order to learn to write prose.”

- Eudora Welty
- 1983

So...

- Surround students with the sounds of poetry in all parts of the school day.
- Expose them to the soaring possibilities of language.
- And start them writing poetry!
