



The Sound of...Poetry!
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Elementary School Writers-In-Residence

Grade Level: 3rd – 4th

Time Frame: 1 hour

Learning Objectives: Students observe and listen to the sounds around them, students write descriptively about an event or place, using the theme of sounds, students use poetic imagery, students use nouns, verbs, adjectives and ‘sound words,’ discussion of onomatopoeia

Required Resources: “Weather” by Eve Merriam. Poem can be found online at <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15415>; “Slide-Swim-Fly” by Sue Cochrane. Poem can be found at <http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/songspoems27.html>

Materials: Paper, pencils, whiteboard, scribe, assorted items to make sounds (such as: bottles or glasses, xylophone, typewriter, sheet of corrugated metal, rattles, whistles)

Arizona Language Arts State Standards Addressed (Writing):

Strand 1: Writing Process

Concept 1, PO 1, 2, 3, 5, 6

Concept 3, PO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Concept 5, PO 2

Prewriting: Students will generate ideas through listening to sounds, class discussion and collaboration, and reading poems as examples (Concept 1, PO 1). Students are tasked with writing a sound poem (Concept 1, PO 2), which will be shared aloud with their peers (Concept 1, PO 3). Student ideas generated through brainstorm will be recorded and used for later writing of a poem (Concept 1, PO 5). Students are given a set amount of time in which they must create a poem (Concept 1, PO 6).

Revising: Students are tasked to write at least ten lines, and to include specific parts of speech per line (noun, verb, sound word), which will require students to evaluate their drafts for use of ideas and content, organization, voice, word choice, and sentence fluency (Concept 3, PO 1). If students are lacking the required language, they may have to add more words, modify words, and vary sentence structure to follow the assignment (Concept 3, PO 2-5).

Publishing: Students will write share their work with the class (Concept 5, PO 2).

Strand 2: Writing Elements

Concept 1, PO 1, 2

Concept 2, PO 1, 2

Concept 3, PO 2

Concept 4, PO 1, 4

Ideas and Content: Students are tasked with creating sound poems. The writing assignment is structured so that each line of a student's poem will contain a sound, expressing the main idea behind the poem and suiting the purpose of the assignment (Concept 1, PO 1-2).

Organization: Students will be organizing their content into ten lines of poetry (Concept 2, PO 1). By creating a sensory experience for the audience through sound, students will create a beginning that catches the reader's interest (Concept 2, PO 2).

Voice: Students will convey a sense of originality, sincerity, liveliness, and/or humor appropriate to this type of sound poem (Concept 3, PO 2).

Word Choice: Students will use a variety of specific words that will carry their sound poems clearly to their audience (Concept 4, PO 1). They will be creating new words by imitating sounds they have heard, playing with rhyme and using other poetic tactics to create their sound poem (Concept 4, PO 4).

Strand 3: Writing Applications

Concept 1, PO 2

Expressive: Students will write a poem that may include figurative language, rhythm, characterization, etc. and will be in appropriate (poem) form (Concept 1, PO 2).

Sequence of Activities:

I. Introduction (10 min)

Have your materials ready, but not immediately visible, when the students come in—covered with a cloth, etc. Ask the students to sit quietly and close their eyes. When everybody is ready, take one of your noise making items and use it to make noise. Ask the students what the sounds could be. Write down the students' suggestions.

After you have used two or three items to make noises, let the students open their eyes and see what items you used to make the noises. Talk about how with their eyes closed, they were able to use their imaginations and think of many different things that could have been making the noise.

Talk about the word “onomatopoeia”. Students may or may not already know what the word means, if they don’t know, then define it for them. Ask the students to give examples of onomatopoeia, and write them on the board. Some examples you may want to be sure to add if no one suggests them are words like ‘whisper,’ ‘rustle,’ ‘mutter,’ ‘grumble,’ ‘growl,’ ‘purr,’ ‘giggle,’ ‘clink,’ ‘chirp,’ ‘peep,’ and ‘tweet’.

II. Literary Model: (10 min)

Have the students read the two poems aloud. Ask the students to look for words that are onomatopoeic. After the students have read the poems, discuss the poems and ask them what the poems make them think of. The first poem will probably get a lot of responses about “rainstorms,” “playing in the mud,” “running in the rain,” etc. The second poem may get responses like “a day at the beach”. Discuss how the authors use the onomatopoeic words to make the reader feel like s/he is in a rainstorm or at the beach.

Activity Break (5 min)

Give the students five minutes to move and stretch.

III. Collaborative activity (15 min)

Tell the students you are going to write a collaborative sound poem. Draw a chart on the board, marking off three columns with: ‘nouns,’ ‘verbs,’ and ‘sound words’. All students to suggest a theme for the poem. The theme should be a place, time or event, such as ‘winter,’ ‘basketball game,’ ‘haunted house,’ ‘midnight,’ ‘summer,’ etc.

Take suggestions from students for nouns, verbs, and sound words that fit the theme. For example, for the theme of ‘midnight,’ students might choose words like: dark, black, velvety, silence, stars, ticking, crickets chirping, moonshine, whispering, sneaking out, dreams, sleepwalking, snoring, etc.

Then, have the students use this collective word bank to write sound poems on the theme. Give the students five minutes to write a sound poem using the word bank. Encourage poetic juxtaposition by stressing that the noun/verb pairs don’t have to be realistic. For example, a line of a poem could be “Slinking cats whisper” or “Marshmallow pillows snore”. The students’ poems should be at least five lines long, and each line should incorporate a noun, a verb and a sound word from the word bank. Choose three or four student volunteers to share their work.

IV. Individual Writing (10 min)

Have students write their own sound poems. Allow students to choose their own themes. Each poem should be at least 10 lines long, and each line should contain a noun, verb, and sound word.

V. Sharing (10 min)

Allow student volunteers to share their poems, being sure that students who are more shy or are reluctant to read also are getting an opportunity to practice reading their work in front of a group.