

Title: Holiday Shape Poems

By: Kristen E. Nelson

Grade level: 2nd-3rd Grade

Time frame: 1 hour

Objective: Students will explore writing shape poems with language gathered around an upcoming holiday or set of holidays. A shape poem uses a shape or design to convey the subject or idea of the poem. This lesson plan can be adapted to be used for any set of holidays depending on the time of the year. I used this lesson plan in October, so students wrote shape poems about Fall Holidays (Halloween, Dia de los Muertos, and Samhain).

Prior knowledge and skills: None

Required materials: Paper, pencils, and worksheets with holiday shapes

Literary model: Here I Go Down Circle Road by Shel Silverstein

Sequence of activities:

Discuss Holidays ~ 20 Minutes

Ask students to raise their hands and talk about their Halloween Costumes, their traditions around Dia de los Muertos, and their traditions around Samhain. Students tend to get very excited talking about their family traditions and Halloween costumes. However, if some students are hesitant to talk you can ask them these specific questions such as:

- What kind of food do you eat?
- Who will be there with you?
- What do you do to celebrate?
- What do you like best about the holiday?

Gather Language ~ 10 Minutes

Distribute blank paper and pencils. Ask students to write down at least 5 words describing the holiday they just talked about.

Example Shape Poem ~ 15 Minutes

Write a collaborative shape poem on the board. I drew a heart, and we wrote a poem about love. Students raised their hand and when called on, offered one word to add to our poem. I wrote each word around the edges of the heart shape until the shape was complete.

Individual Shape Poems ~ 20 Minutes

Distribute worksheets with shapes on them that students can write their poems around. I chose a jack-o-lantern, a skull, and a bonfire. Students chose one shape each. Direct students to use their 5 words in a shape poem and to write their poem around their shape. If there is time, students really enjoy coloring/decorating the shape with crayons or markers.



HERE I GO DOWN CIRCLE ROAD

Here I go down Circle Road
Strong and hopeful hearted
Through the dust
And wind up just
Exactly where I started

By Shel Silverstein





