

STUDENT VIDEOS: IN THEIR OWN  
VOICES



LESSON PLANS | EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES | VIDEOS | POETRY

THE FAVORITE POEM PROJECT IS DEDICATED TO CELEBRATING, DOCUMENTING  
AND ENCOURAGING POETRY'S ROLE IN OUR LIVES. **FOR MORE LESSON PLANS  
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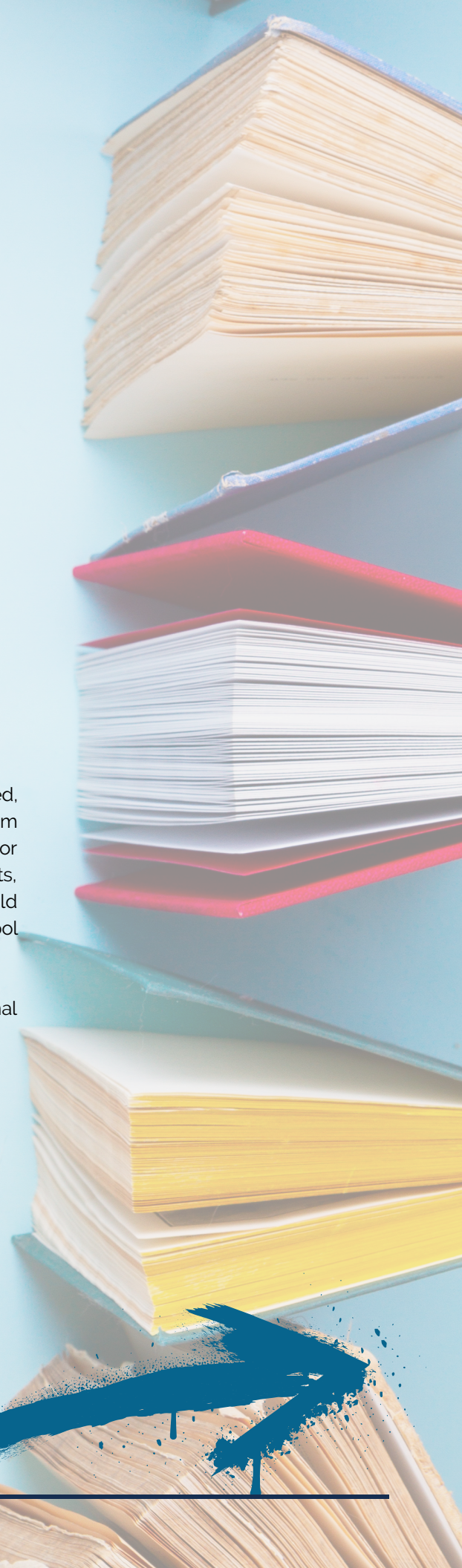


# Outcomes

The remarkable power of people's connections to poetry can be captured, preserved, and shared on video, as demonstrated by the Favorite Poem Project videos. While some of those videos feature poems or circumstances that may not be accessible to elementary school students, they provide an excellent model for a modified video project that would involve taping students reading poems and creating a lasting school poetry archive.

This lesson offers a guide for elementary classrooms to integrate personal favorite poem videos into their curriculum.

*This lesson was made possible by submissions from Amy Bruns and Kevin Crowley of Johnson Elementary School in Natick, MA*







# Ideas and Methodologies

- **Note: This project involves filming and recording audio from students. Please gain the permissions and follow the necessary procedures for doing so in your area.**
  - Student videos should be guided by two key tenets of the Favorite Poem Project videos:
    - 1. The poem is to be the center of the presentation.
    - 2. Reaction to the poem is to be at a personal level. Illustration and illumination of the poem comes through the reader's comments about his or her reaction to the poem itself.
  - First, introduce students to a wide variety of poetry and poets in the classroom. A key to the success of this activity is to have many anthologies and age-appropriate resources available.
  - Later, ask students to begin thinking about a favorite poem. Students might bookmark possible favorites, respond to various poems in writing, and tell friends about some of their favorites.
  - Plan a session to show the students appropriate Favorite Poem Project video clips, which will serve as a model. (See the selected references for elementary students in the lesson plan: Annotated Reference of Education Videos by Subject.) Then have the children begin to talk and share with each other, in small groups or as a class, about why their favorite poem is important to them.
  - Plan an artistic integration to prepare students for the taping and to encourage vivid responses on tape. (In keeping with the philosophy of the Favorite Poem Project, illustrating the poem is not the foundation of this idea. Rather, the richness comes from personal reaction).
  - Students could make a collage to represent their connection to the poem, or could create a drawing, painting or clay sculpture. They could select and display family photographs or pictures from magazines. A student might include a collection of personal artifacts, such as treasured mementos like sea shells and souvenirs, nature collections, a toy from their preschool years, or a gift from a friend or relative. A student might include a poem that he or she wrote that was inspired by this poem or the poet.
  - Integral to this collage or collection will be the ability to talk about the personal connection of the reader to the poem. The number of items matters less than the quality of the personal nature of the student's sharing. For it is through the quality of the collection that the student will reveal himself or herself to the viewer, and which will ultimately reveal his or her personal connection to the poem.
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## (Continued)

Finally, videotape each student reading and sharing his or her favorite poem. As a way to introduce their segment, students may each design a "title card" which would include the poem's title, the author of the poem, and the student's name.


The segments will be as varied as the students. One student might first read the poem, talk about it in his own words, talk about the collage, and conclude by re-reading the poem. Another student might introduce herself and share first, and end with a reading of the poem.

Videotapes could be edited using free softwares such as Microsoft's Windows Movie Maker or Apple's Imovie. Students' videos can be rendered individually or edited together into a single class video.

When the videos are finished, a class premiere can be held! Depending on scope and amenities, this can be held inside the classroom or at a larger school facility such as a auditorium or cafeteria. This should be used as an opportunity to celebrate the students' hard work and creativity.

Finally, disseminate the videos to your school and home community. This can be done by uploading the videos to a school website or a faculty-run Youtube channel. As an alternative to uploading, the videos can be distributed to students and their parents via thumb drives or file sharing websites such as Dropbox and Google Drive.

As an optional followup, students may be asked to reflect on their experiences through discussion or writing.







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