

STUDENTS AS EDITORS



LESSON PLANS | EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES | VIDEOS | POETRY

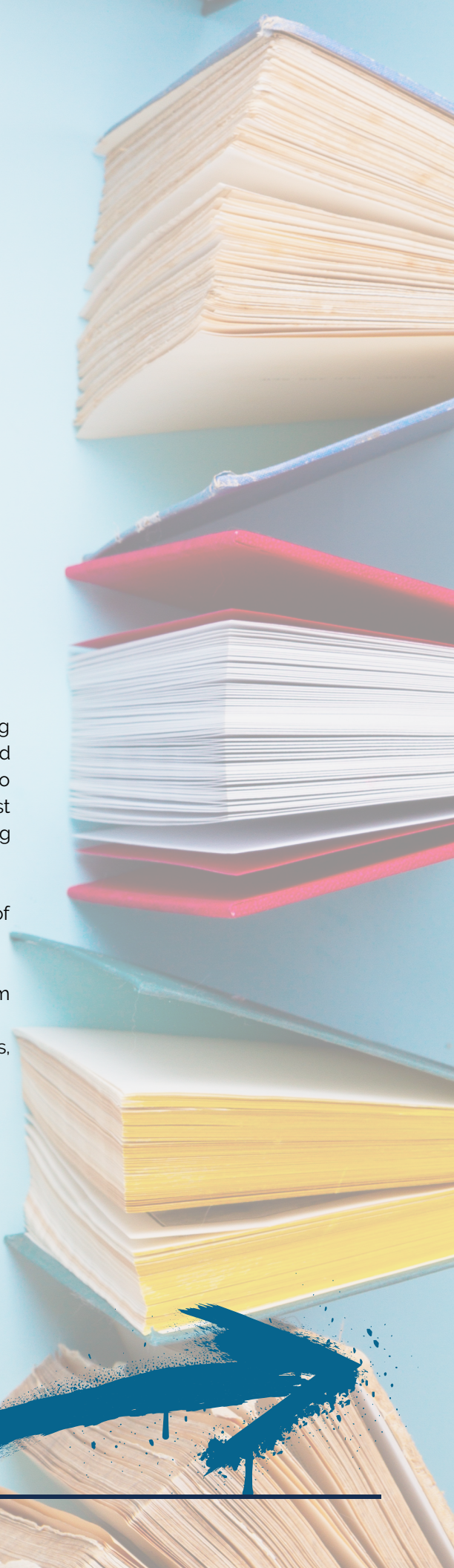
THE FAVORITE POEM PROJECT IS DEDICATED TO CELEBRATING, DOCUMENTING AND ENCOURAGING POETRY'S ROLE IN OUR LIVES. **FOR MORE LESSON PLANS AND RESOURCES VISIT** [FAVORITEPOEM.ORG](https://www.favoritepoem.org)

Outcomes

Beyond formal study in the classroom, students benefit from exploring poetry on their own. Since at this grade level they may not yet have read poems by a broad variety of poets, it is a good time for them to begin to explore poetry independently. This lesson may be the students' first experience in seeking poems that connect directly to them. Learning outcomes for this lesson are include:

1. Consideration of tone, rhyme scheme and poetic tools in a variety of poems.
2. Practicing effective research on the Internet and in the library.
3. Approaching poems personally — considering why one poet or poem appealed to the student editor more than others.
4. Developing editorial and organizational skills by creating biographies, cover page title page, dedication page, table of contents and glossary.
5. Exploring different kinds and forms of poems.
6. Fostering creativity: writing a poem or creating illustrations for the book

This lesson was made possible by submissions from Patricia Nangle, Evelyn Rauseo, Higgins Middle School Peabody, MA, with some ideas from their colleague Julia Wistran.





Ideas and Methodologies

- This is an ambitious assignment that would take several weeks to complete. In its current form, it requires giving the students a good deal of background on poetic form and the tools poets use before they begin work.
- A teacher may decide to reverse the order of the lesson by letting students independently find five or ten poems that speak to them; then, using some of the poems the students have selected, begin addressing the forms and devices that make the poems rich, revealing some of the reasons why, beyond intuition or taste, the students may have been drawn to them.
- The lesson could also be scaled back considerably, or approached in another way. One teacher suggests that students select and arrange poems according to a particular theme or themes. The lesson could culminate in a Favorite Poem reading, where students read or recite each one poem from their anthologies, speaking briefly to the class about why they like or chose the poem.
- To help students get started, teachers may wish to provide a list of poets, as a place to begin. Students should be encouraged to discover poets new to them, to look at books in the library, to ask your family and parents if they know any wonderful poems.
- The following text is a pre-written assignment. This text can be adjusted and modified at the teacher's discretion to suit and fulfill the needs of their classroom.



ASSIGNMENT

1. Your assignment is to create your own anthology of poetry. You are the editor of this anthology — the person who chooses the poems and puts the book together. The lesson involves looking closely at poems and learning about tools that poets use to help readers see images and to convey ideas in poems. You will also develop research skills and will create additional materials — commentary on poems, a table of contents, bibliography and glossary. All this is part of being a good editor. Your anthology will be illustrated. You may draw, select photos, or use images from greeting cards, calendars, magazines or other sources to decorate your books. Your anthology will be a personal collection that expresses your unique personality and taste. Work and planning can take place evenings and weekends. Remember, this is not a one-night or one-week assignment. It is a process of reading and choosing, of preparing to create a collection that reflects who you are. Have fun with it!

2. You will write short biographies for each of the five poets you choose, telling a little about their lives in your own words. Poets often write from their experiences. Knowing about the lives of poets can help you to understand their poems in a deeper way.

3. Your anthology must have page numbers in the lower right corner of each page (excluding the cover). Please use the numeral only — no parentheses, "page", "p." or "pg.," and no period (.) following the numeral.

4. Your anthology must include the following pages:

Cover

Design a cover using a drawing, photos or other images. Include on the cover the book's title, and the name of the author and illustrator.

Title Page

List the title, author, publisher (you can make up a publisher's name), place published (your town) and date of publication (date you turn the assignment in).

Dedication

The dedication is a line acknowledging to or for whom the book was created. Sometimes dedications offer a few words of thanks.

Table of Contents

List the book's chapters and the poems within them. Include page numbers to tell the reader where chapters begin and poems appear. Also list the special sections at the back of the book, like the glossary and bibliography (these are usually called "Appendices").

Poet Pages

You will choose at least 5 poets for your anthology. For each, you will write a brief biographical sketch of 5-7 sentences. Then, write 3-5 sentences about why you chose this particular poet to be part of your personal anthology. Give some examples of lines or words you like from the poems you've chosen. Include a picture of the poet, if you can find one — or draw one yourself, if you can find a photo to guide you.

Poetry Pages

Use each poet's page to begin a section of poems written by that poet. Include five poems by each poet, one per page. Beneath each poem, include the following:

Tone. Write a sentence or two about the tone of the poem. A simple definition of tone is "a way of saying"; the tone of a poem reflects the attitude of the poet toward what or whom the poem addresses. In considering this, you can ask yourself how the poem makes you feel. How do you think the poet felt when he or she wrote the poem? Try to find a few words or phrases that describe the tone of the poem. Consider whether the tone changes throughout the poem or remains the same.

Rhyme Scheme. If the poem has rhymes at the end of the lines, chart the rhyme scheme. (We have already learned to do this in class). If there is no rhyme scheme, write that the poem does not have end rhyme. Unrhymed poems are usually called "free verse" poems.

Poet's Tools. We've learned about various tools poets use to make poems rich and vivid, and to convey meaning and ideas. Find and record at least two places in the poem where a poet uses a special tool or "literary device," such as personification, hyperbole, alliteration, metaphor or simile. Think and write about the effect.

Various Poems

In the next section, you will collect poems of different kinds and poems written in different forms. Include one lyric poem written by a poet who doesn't appear in the previous sections; and one narrative poem. A lyric poem is usually a shorter poem that conveys intense feeling or powerful thought. In ancient Greece, lyrics were sung or recited to the accompaniment of a musical instrument called a lyre. A narrative poem tells a clear story. Narrative poems usually involve one or more characters, and something always happens in a narrative poem — a dramatic action or event. Write a sentence or two about why the poems would be classified as narrative or lyric. Both kinds of poems can rhyme, or be written in various forms.

Then, choose poems written in different forms. Include a haiku, a limerick, a ballad or folk song, and an ode or elegy.

Finally, include a poem you have written. Is it narrative or lyric? Did you use a particular form?

Glossary

Were there any words in the poems that you had never seen before or that you don't hear very often? Make a list of them here in alphabetical order and provide definitions. Find 10-20 words.

Bibliography

List the sources you used to write the book. Use your reference list for citations.

Web resources:

Academy of American Poets

Favorite Poem Project

The Poetry Foundation

Bartleby's - Search by verse, anthology or volume.

Bibliomania - Select "Poetry" from the "Choose a section" pull down menu and the poet from the "Choose" pull down menu.

CMU Poetry Index

Thirty Poets from Gale Group

Representative Poetry On-Line - Search by title, first line, keyword or poet's last name. Also features a timeline and glossary of poetic terms.



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**236 BAY STATE ROAD
BOSTON, MA 02215**



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