



Friday Fishbowl

Recommended Grade Range: Elementary School

Learning Objective(s)

Students will be able to...

- ✓ Build a routine in which they engage with poetry once a week.
- ✓ Celebrate and share poems they love through recitation.
- ✓ Build skills of memorization and analysis of sound in a poem.

Lesson Agenda

▶ *This lesson outlines a weekly classroom routine that involves preparation in advance:*

- *Before the "Friday Fishbowl," students should spend time discovering poems they enjoy by browsing a classroom library, local library, the internet, or books at home.*
- *Students should then spend time (in class or at home) memorizing a poem of their choice.*
- *Depending on your students' ages and abilities, you might prefer to make the memorization optional, and instead ask students to practice reading their poem aloud. Either way, the goal is for students to pay attention to the sounds and music of poetry*

Do Now

- ◆ Begin class with a turn and talk: ask students to turn to a partner and share some information about their poem (what it's about, who wrote it, why the student chose it).
- ◆ Students should NOT read their poems aloud just yet!
- ◆ Warn the pairs that they will be sharing each other's responses for the share out, so they should pay close attention to their partner's responses.

Share Out

- ◆ Ask students to share what their partner told them about their chosen poem.
- ◆ If you asked students to memorize their poems, you might forgo this Do Now turn and talk and instead give students time to review their poems or practice reading them to a partner.



Mini Lesson

Time to recite! Tell students that each Friday the class will have Poetry Fishbowl.

- ◆ Pass out slips of paper to each student (extra fun if the papers are fish-shaped!) and ask them to write down the title of their poem.
- ◆ Collect students' papers in a fishbowl.
- ◆ Gather students in a circle and pull the first "fish" from the fishbowl.
- ◆ Identify which student's fish was pulled, and give them time to stand and recite (or read aloud) their poem for the class.
- ◆ After the first student recites their poem, have a brief group discussion about anything student's notice about the poem. You may wish to guide the discussion with the following questions:
 - ◆ What was this poem about?
 - ◆ What are some lines or words that stood out to us?
 - ◆ How did the poem sound? Were there any phrases or rhymes that we can recall?
- ◆ After the first student has shared and the class has briefly discussed their poem, pull a new fish from the bowl and repeat the recitation and discussion process.
 - ◆ Depending on your class's structure, you might limit this process to a few students and save the bowl for next Friday, adding new poems to it every few weeks.

Wrap Up

Ask students to write down or share one poem they enjoyed hearing today and provide a sentence or two about why they liked it.

Suggestions for Next Steps

- ◆ Students could celebrate their recitation skills by reciting poems at a school assembly or open house.
- ◆ Students could find videos of poets or readers reciting a poem online. They could then discuss or complete a writing assignment about how the reader recited their poem.

Lesson Resources

Your local or school library, the web (poets.org, poetryfoundation.org, poems.com), or the Favorite Poem project website are all great places to find poems for this routine.

The Favorite Poem Project is a nonprofit organization dedicated to celebrating, documenting, and encouraging poetry's role in our lives.



This lesson was made possible by submissions from Ruth Nathan (a third-grade teacher at Rancho Romero, Alamo, CA) and Rachel M. Dillon (NYC Public Schools).

For more lesson plans, videos, and classroom resources
visit www.favoritepoem.org.



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