



Passing Poetry On: Part II

Recommended Grade Range: High School

Learning Objective(s)

Students will be able to...

- ✓ Understand that poetry originally handed down from one person to another, whether linearly (within a family or tribe) or laterally (by visiting bards).
- ✓ Preserve poetry by passing on, and receiving, a poem to a person of another generation.

Lesson Agenda

Do Now

This multi-day lesson will involve some coordination with local community organizations.

BEFORE:

- ◆ Make arrangements with some retirement communities and nursing homes, so that students will be able to conduct interviews at these places (a parent volunteer may help with coordinating this).
- ◆ You may ask an administrator to identify particular residents who enjoy reading and/or poetry, and help set up visits with the students.

DAY 1:

- ◆ The students will make appointments to visit someone in a retirement community or nursing home, asking if the person has a poem he or she holds dear. They may read the poem and discuss it together.
- ◆ Does the person associate the poem with a particular memory? If the interviewee does not have a copy of the poem, but knows the title, it's the student's responsibility to track down a copy in print.

DAY 1 HOMEWORK:

- ◆ Before a second visit, the student acquires a copy of their partner's poem, reads it, and writes a paragraph or two about his or her response thoughts about the poem.



DAY 2:

- ◆ The student visits the elderly resident a second time and shares his or her response to the poem.
 - ◆ On this visit, the student will also bring a favorite poem that he or she has chosen to read to the elderly resident, sharing reflections on the poem's personal significance.
 - ◆ The student will also bring a copy of the poem, written out by hand, for the resident to keep, and should invite him or her into a discussion of the poem.

Suggestions for Next Steps

- ◆ In a subsequent class, each student will do a short presentation on the experience — reading both the poem chosen by the interviewee and the student's own selection.
 - ◆ These presentations could also be video or audio recordings of the readings, if the student has the resources to create those records.

Lesson Resources

Your students may need assistance in finding their partner's poems, or choosing their own to bring to their partner. The FPP site has many examples of poems that could speak to your students for this assignment.

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 Sean Cusick (Shepherd Hill Regional School, Dudley, MA), Kate Oneschuk (Holliston High School, Holliston, MA), and Rachel M. Dillon (NYC Public Schools).

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