



Poetry Circle

Recommended Grade Range: Elementary School

Learning Objective(s)

Students will be able to...

- ✓ build a comfortable, community-oriented learning environment through a routine of sharing poetry.

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

- *Before the weekly Poetry Circle, students should select their own favorite poems.*
- *They will need access to a diverse collection of poetry from which to choose. Ideally, the classroom library would contain a variety of poetry. Students could also choose poems from the internet, the school library, community libraries, or books at home.*

Lesson Agenda

Set Up

- ◆ Begin your Poetry Circle by moving into a circle, whether that be on the floor or with their desks.
 - ◆ This practice of starting with a circle will help establish Poetry Circles as a routine in your classroom, and foster camaraderie and dialogue.

Share Out

- ◆ Two students will share the title and author of their favorite poem, then read it aloud for the class.
 - ◆ Depending on age and ability, each student may memorize and recite the poem or read it from the text.
- ◆ After each student shares their poem, they should briefly explain what the poem means for them, what they like about it, or why they chose it.
 - ◆ Time permitting, you might also offer some time for other students to respond to their peers' poems.
- *This Poetry Circle should last for approximately ten to fifteen minutes, depending on the age-level of the students and how many readers there are for that day. It would be good to keep the routine short and sweet.*
- *It may also work well to schedule the circle at the end of the week to give each week's readers time to choose a poem and practice reading it (perhaps during a quiet reading time). Having a Friday circle will also build anticipation among the students so it's something to look forward to.*



Suggestions for Next Steps

- ◆ In addition to having two students read every week, the teacher could also recruit guest readers from the school community. These guests could be other teachers, older students, the principal, the superintendent, a custodian, a food service worker, a firefighter, etc.
- ◆ If necessary, the teacher should assist the guest reader in choosing a favorite poem that would be age appropriate. The guest reader should follow the same procedure and talk about what the poem means to them in order to model for the students.

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 Brad Bennett and Alex Popp (Thoreau Elementary School, Concord, MA), Linda Eddy Rings, Morse School, Cambridge, MA) and Rachel M. Dillon (NYC Public Schools).

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



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