Learning Objective(s)

**Students will be able to...**

✅ Consider and articulate the ways that poetry can uniquely remember and pay tribute to the dead.

Lesson Agenda

**Do Now**

Begin class by showing the FPP videos listed in the "Lesson Resources" section of this lesson plan.

- Depending on time/group constraints, you may choose to show just one or two videos; or, you may begin class with small groups, and ask each group to watch a different video.
- As students watch the video(s), ask them to consider what makes the poem(s) a memorial.
- and hear.

**Share Out**

Students can share out the memorial elements of their poem, either in small groups, as a whole class, or in small groups first and then a whole class.

**Mini Lesson**

Guide the students in a whole class discussion around the following questions/topics:

- What is the difference between memorializing someone and grieving them?
- How could the act of writing poetry help someone process grief? How could the act of reading poetry help someone process grief?
- For whom do we create memorials?
- What are the elements of an elegy, memorial, and obituary?
  - What is the purpose of each form?
  - What does each form contain that distinguishes it from other forms?
Closing

You may wish to add a creative, culminating project to this lesson, and assign any of the following options in the “Suggestions for Next Steps” section of this lesson plan; in closing, describe the culminating project and prepare students to work on it in a later class meeting.

Suggestions for Next Steps

- Write an obituary for a character in "Out, Out — " We Real Cool" or "Facing It."  
- Write an elegiac poem based on an actual obituary that a student selects; this could be the obituary of a public figure they admire, or one they find for someone they did not know.  
- Write an elegiac poem for a loved one who has passed away.  
- Write a "pre-elegy:" a poem for a loved one who is still alive, but imagines a world in which the loved one has passed away.

Lesson Resources

Favorite Poem Project Videos:

- "Out, Out — " by Robert Frost, read by Elizabeth Wojtusik, Teaching Artist, Humarock, Massachusetts  
- "The Holy Longing" by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (tr. Robert Bly), read by Olivia Milward, Retired Teacher, San Francisco, California  
- "We Real Cool" by Gwendolyn Brooks, read by John Ulrich, Student, South Boston, Massachusetts  
- "Facing It" read by Mike Lythgoe, Foundation Director, Washington, DC
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 Frances Ashe and Kate Oneschuk (Holliston High School, Holliston, MA), Monica Hiller (Watertown High School, Watertown, MA), Allyson Sklover (Boston Latin Academy, Dorchester, MA), and Rachel M. Dillon (NYC Public Schools).

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

Stay up to date with news and events by following @FAVEPOEM