



Seeking Poems, Sharing Connections (Midpoint in Unit)

Recommended Grade Range: High School

Learning Objective(s)

Students will be able to...

- ✓ Select and explain the reasoning behind their own favorite poem.
- ✓ Make connections to the poetry preferences of their peers.

Lesson Agenda

This lesson is meant to occur as a midterm check in/assessment in a larger poetry unit; for initiating lessons to begin a poetry unit, check out the FPP's "Seeking Poems, Sharing Connections: Initiating Activity" lessons.

Do Now

Begin by providing a model for sharing favorite poems, demonstrating poetry's place in various people's lives.

- ◆ At this point in the unit, you may choose to share your own favorite poem, explaining what makes it meaningful to you; you might also continue using FPP videos, depending on student interest; or, you may open this to the larger school community, asking a parent, staff member, or administrator to share about a favorite poem.
- ◆ **Ask students to take notes** on what they find interesting about the person's favorite poem and their reasoning for sharing it.

Share Out

Ask students to share out their noticings.

- ◆ If you or another member of the school community shared a poem, you may offer students the opportunity to ask follow-up questions about the poem and its meaning.

Mini Lesson

MINI LESSON: Recall, in the prior lessons, that students were asked to select and handwrite a favorite poem of their own. Ask students to take out this assignment. Then, give students ten minutes to write a reflection on the poem they brought, answering the question: *Why is this poem significant to me?*

- ◆ Some students may not know how to begin; you might provide sentence frames on the board, or direct them to start by selecting just one line in the poem and explain its significance.
- ◆ If a student did not complete the assignment, you might ask them to write about the poem shared in the Do Now--ask them to think of and write about personal connections they may have to the poem shared.



The next section of the lesson can be handled a few different ways:

- ◆ **Option 1:** Have pairs of students trade poems, without sharing their thoughts beforehand. Ask students to read a partner's poem and write a reflection, then discuss both poems with each other.
- ◆ **Option 2:** Students pair up. One student reads aloud his/her poem several times. The listener writes or discusses his/her reaction to the poem. Roles are reversed and the process is repeated.
- ◆ **Option 3:** In groups of four, students share and discuss poems. The group chooses one poem that they would like to work with in the future for further exploration.
- ◆ **Option 4:** Students share poems and reflections first with just a partner or small group. Then, all students read their poems to the class and share some thoughts (not reading from a written reflection, just talking to the class). Any student who didn't bring a poem should read aloud a partner's poem.

Homework

- ◆ Follow-up assignments vary; see the "Suggestions for Next Steps" section of this lesson plan.

Suggestions for Next Steps

- ◆ **Publishing:** either create an anthology of favorite class poems or post them on a bulletin board.
- ◆ **History:** research activities could connect poems to specific time periods.
- ◆ **Creative writing:** beginning the process of writing one's own poems.

Lesson Resources

For the DO NOW: [Favorite Poem Project](#) videos; we recommend the following as particularly well-suited for this lesson:

- "The Sloth" by Theodore Roethke
- from "Song of Myself" (50 & 52) by Walt Whitman
- "I'm Nobody! Who Are You?" (288) by Emily Dickinson
- "Hornworm: Autumn Lamentation" by Stanley Kunitz
- "A Psalm of Life" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- from "Gitanjali" by Rabindranath Tagore
- "Minstrel Man" by Langston Hughes
- "Ay Ay Ay de la Grifa Negra" by Julia de Burgos
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Prior lessons in the "Seeking Poems, Sharing Connections" Unit:

- Variation 1: ([Link](#))
- Variation 2: ([Link](#))

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 Tamara Dalton (Needham High School, Needham, MA), Rosemarie DeFelice (Chelsea High School, Chelsea, MA), Virginia Dent (Lansing High School, Lansing, NY), Frances Moyer (Newton South High School, Newton, MA), and Rachel M. Dillon (NYC Public Schools).

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