



## Students as Editors

Recommended Grade Range: Middle School

### Learning Objective(s)

#### Students will be able to...

(on a large, unit-based scale)...

- ✓ Explore poems independently and seek poems to which they can make meaningful personal connections.

(on a smaller, class-by-class scale)...

- ✓ Consider how poets utilize tone, rhyme scheme, and other tools.
- ✓ Practice effective research skills in a library and online.
- ✓ Approach poems personally and consider why some poets/poems appeal more than others.
- ✓ Develop their editorial skills.

▶ *This document provides a culminating project in a poetry unit. You could ramp up to this project in the following ways:*

## Lesson Agenda

### Do Now

This document provides a culminating project in a poetry unit. You could ramp up to this project in the following ways:

- ◆ Students should first have a good deal of **background on poetic form** and the tools poets use.
- ◆ Students should then **find a series of poems that they'd like to include in their own anthology**.
  - ◆ If students feel overwhelmed by this task, teachers could guide students towards a particular theme that their anthology will focus on, narrowing the options for what kinds of poems to include.
  - ◆ Students who are new to poetry might also benefit from a teacher-provided list of poets as a place to begin. Students should also be encouraged to discover new poets at the library, from friends' or relatives' recommendations, or from the websites listed in the "Lesson Resources" section of this lesson plan.
  - ◆ An advanced group of students might begin by independently finding five-ten poems that speak to them; then, using some of the poems the students have selected, the class could address the forms and devices that make the poems rich, revealing some of the reasons why, beyond intuition or taste, the students may have been drawn to them.

*The following pages are a pre-written assignment that can be adjusted to fit the needs of your classroom.*

# Create Your Own Anthology



For your final project, your task is to create your own anthology of poems. You will be the editor of this anthology, which means you're in charge of selecting poems to include and putting the book together. This anthology should be a collection of poems that you love, and that somehow reflect who you are.

## Your anthology should include...

- **A COVER:** Design a cover by drawing, or using photos/other images. Include a title for your anthology, and the name of the editor (you!).
- **A TITLE PAGE:** List the anthology's title, editor, publisher (you can choose a real publisher or invent one), place of publication (your town), and publication date (the due date for the assignment).
- **A DEDICATION:** The dedication is a line acknowledging for whom the book was created (example: "for my mother").
- **A TABLE OF CONTENTS:** List the titles of the poems in the order they appear in your anthology.

■ **POET PAGES:** Your anthology should feature at least five poets. For each poet featured in your anthology, write a short biography about their life and explain why you chose them to be part of your anthology. Include a picture of the poet, or draw one yourself.

■ **POETRY PAGES:** Use each poet's page to begin a section of poems they wrote. Include 1-2 poems by each poet. Beneath each poem, include the following:

■ **■ TONE:** 1-2 sentences about the poem's tone. A simple definition of tone is "a way of saying"; the tone of a poem reflects the attitude of the poet toward what or whom the poem addresses. In considering this, you can ask yourself how the poem makes you feel. How do you think the poet felt when they wrote the poem? Consider whether the tone changes throughout the poem or remains the same.

■ **■ RHYME SCHEME:** If the poem rhymes, chart the rhyme scheme. If the poem does not rhyme, write that the poem does not have end rhyme. Unrhymed poems are usually called "free verse" poems.

■ **■ POET'S TOOLS:** Find and record at least two places in the poem where a poet uses a special tool or "literary device" such as personification, hyperbole, alliteration, metaphor, or simile.

■ **GLOSSARY:** Were there any words in your poems that you'd never seen before or don't hear very often? Make a list of 10+ words in alphabetical order and provide definitions.

■ **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** List the sources you used to create your anthology.



## Suggestions for Next Steps

- ◆ Once students have finished their anthologies, the class could host a Favorite Poem reading, where students read or recite poems from their anthologies and explain why they chose those particular poems.
- ◆ Students could also write a poem of their own to include in their anthology. That poem could be inspired by one of the poems they included, or could utilize some of the tools the student identified in their anthology.

## Lesson Resources

The following websites could help students find poems for their anthologies:

- Favorite Poem Project
- Academy of American Poets ([poets.org](http://poets.org))
- The Poetry Foundation ([poetryfoundation.org](http://poetryfoundation.org))
- Bartleby's ([bartleby.com/lit-hub/verse/](http://bartleby.com/lit-hub/verse/))
- Gale Literature ([gale.com/databases/literature](http://gale.com/databases/literature))

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 Patricia Nangle and Evelyn Rauseo (Higgins Middle School, Peabody, MA), with some ideas from their colleague Julia Wistran; and Rachel M. Dillon (NYC Public Schools).

For more lesson plans, videos, and classroom resources  
visit [www.favoritepoem.org](http://www.favoritepoem.org).



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