



Yale-New Haven  
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2001 Volume III: Reading and Writing Poetry

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## **African American Poetry: Family and Traditions**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 01.03.02  
by Stephanie Zogby

Children enjoy words, this making them natural poets. They sense the importance of their words and delight in using them to create, whether it is a story, a rhyme, or a poem. In this unit, “African American Poetry: Family and Traditions” will focus on poetry that relates to the family and traditions. Lessons of this unit will be taught to one class first, and later to other second grade classes. Poems from books such as *Families* by Eloise Greenfield, *Daddy Poems* by John Micklos, Jr., *Poetry from A to Z* by Paul B. Janeczko are a few that will be used in the unit. The unit will contain activities that will assist the students in developing their skills in using the medium of poetry that will be read. This will be done to increase the students’ awareness of different styles of poetry and authors. The students will create their own poetry using these formats, which will allow them ownership. They will share the poems with other students, staff, and their families. As the children get more proficient in writing poetry they will publish their poems in book for and also on the web. In addition to reading and writing poetry, this unit will focus on activities that include subject areas such as Social Studies, Art, and Music.

This unit includes poetry and activities suitable for children first through third grades with an emphasis on literacy for the second grade child.

(Recommended for Reading/Language Arts, grade 2.)

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