



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

Using Personal Poetic Expression to Enhance Reading and Writing

Guide for Curriculum Unit 01.03.04
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As a classroom educator, I know that reading and writing levels will vary from child to child and from class to class. Also, as a classroom educator, it is essential for me to allow my students to express themselves to the best of their ability. In this curriculum unit, students will be able to use poetry to express themselves. Learning through poetry will be fun, new and different for most students that I will be teaching. Poetic expression is a form of writing poetry as well as reading poetry. This curriculum unit is intended for students in grade 6. Many of my student's level of comprehension in reading and writing will be at least two years below the actual grade they are in. My students will be able to adapt quite easily to this unit. The instructional time for this unit is about 45 minutes, three days a week for six weeks. It goes without writing, but I'll write it anyway.... your instructional time will vary, which is A-O.K. I will use this unit as a writing component in Reading and Language Arts. I will use this curriculum unit in mid-spring, after April vacation. What I have discovered as a seasoned teacher, is that students need something new and fresh to focus on. This unit will be great for my students as we continue to do reading and writing and of course, look forward to the end of the school year.

Aside from guiding you through this curriculum unit, I will also include some samples of poems that I tried with my sixth grade students. They have all given me permission to have their work included in this unit. In fact, my students were overjoyed to know other educators will see their poems and possibly use with their students. I must mention that it is important to me that you and your students have fun with this unit. Why? Because students and educators should be enthusiastic when learning is taking place. No one knows your students and their capabilities better than you do. Each student is an individual and they each progress at his or her own pace. Each teacher has their own particular style of teaching and method in the way that they teach. The bottom line is, when preparing for instruction of this curriculum unit...go with what you know about your students and their level of accomplishments. This curriculum unit is not difficult to modify to meet the needs of your students. I feel confident that you and your students will enjoy the educationally and personally rewarding ways, of how using personal poetic expression enhances reading and writing. I intend to have my student's read, write and comprehend words in a way that is new, different and special to them. Their comprehension of how and what they write will be more retainable for them. They will write about themselves, their thoughts and feelings, their family, their environment and their ideas about the world in which they live.

(Recommended for Middle School Reading, grade 6.)

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