



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2003 Volume III: Teaching Poetry in the Primary and Secondary Schools

Post-War Poetry in the AP Classroom

Guide for Curriculum Unit 03.03.09
by Dina Secchiaroli

This unit is written for the AP English Literature and Composition class, but it can be modified for any English class. There is an explanation of the New Critical Method of literary analysis and examples of explication and close readings. The main text I use in class with the students is Perrine's *Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense*, *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* and information about poetry from *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, a good source of definitions for poetry terms as well as criticism. This unit will be my introduction to poetry, to be taught within the first two months of school. Most poems for this unit will be from the post-World War II era, but I'm including some poetry from past writers who have influenced current writers. I will organize the poems into the following thematic sections: Confessional Poems by Elizabeth Bishop, W.D. Snodgrass, Robert Lowell, Anne Sexton, John Berry, and Sylvia Plath; and Socio-Political poems by William Blake, Gwendolyn Brooks, Adrienne Rich, Philip Larkin. The following formal types are also explored: Free Verse by Walt Whitman, Gwendolyn Brooks, Seamus Heaney, and William Carlos Williams; Villanelles by Elizabeth Bishop, Dylan Thomas; Sonnets by Shakespeare, Jonson, Gwendolyn Brooks, Richard Wilbur; and Dramatic Monologues by Tennyson, Browning, Hollander. Of course, I will help the students acknowledge that many of the poets and poems overlap within these categories. It is important that students recognize this, since poetry does not exist within a vacuum.

(Recommended for English and English AP Literature & Composition, grades 11-12.)

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2019 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University

For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>