



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2011 Volume III: The Sound of Words: An Introduction to Poetry

Silence, Songs, and Sounds: Developing Second Language Literacy through Poetry

Guide for Curriculum Unit 11.03.02

by Jaclyn Maler Ryan

This unit is based on the trajectory of early language and second language development, and uses poetry as a medium through which to build early language and literacy skills in the elementary grades. Through reading, analyzing, and performing poetry, young students will learn about sound devices that make poetry fun to read, and in turn these sound devices will help teach the students skills they need to be successful speakers and readers.

Study of rhyme, repetition, alliteration, onomatopoeia, and tone, among other poetic techniques, will open the doors to language and literacy while creating fun, engaging, and meaningful experiences with quality poems to which young learners can relate. Recommended poets referred to in this unit include Eloise Greenfield, Joyce Sidman, and Jack Prelutsky.

(Recommended for Literacy – Oral Language and Reading, grades 1 and 2)

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