



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

Igniting the Imagination: Playing with Poems in the Classroom

Guide for Curriculum Unit 11.03.05
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In an attempt to inspire and motivate my students to become better readers and writers, I have developed a unit that focuses on voice, tone, expression, art and writing for students entering third grade. This unit begins with introducing poetry to the student by filling the classroom library with books of poetry. At this time, the students will have the opportunity to sit and enjoy this style of writing without any form of written work. Soon the students will begin to see poems written on chart paper up in the room. The teacher will then bring fun poems into the morning meeting circle, where poetry will be used as comic relief to start the day. The goal is to get the students hooked into poetry and excited to learn more about it. At this point in the unit, the poems can be used to develop shared reading lesson plans that will allow the class to focus on fluency through the development of voice and tone. Students will then use expression cards to animate poems. As the unit progresses, students will use art to inspire writing of their own skits from a favorite poem of their choice. To conclude the unit, students will use their new knowledge and inspiration to help them develop well-elaborated stories.

(Recommended for English Language Arts, grades 2-5)

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