



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1979 Volume V: Strategies for Teaching Literature

Poems That Work!

Guide for Curriculum Unit 79.05.03
by Richard Guidone

Teaching poetry is a challenging proposition. This unit is designed to give teachers the confidence in themselves to try poetry in the middle school classroom. The poems suggested (and often included) in the narrative are not overbearing, or super-sophisticated, nor are they filled with classical allusions. Instead, they are straight-forward poems aimed at today's urban youth. The primary strategy is the collection of poems that would fit into a variety of activities, events, happenings that might occur at any moment in the classroom. The teacher then has a bottomless source of material that will keep reintroducing the power of poetry to students. The mechanics are taught inductively (however, a glossary of terms is included at the end of the narrative) and gradually in ways that lead students to their own writing experiences. The unit also stresses the importance of learning how to read a poem for both students and teachers. Fourteen activities are listed as suggestions to enhance the appreciation of poetry.

(Recommended for Middle School (5-8) students with limited reading abilities and/or vocabulary skills.)

Key Words

Reading Poetry Writing Instruction

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

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

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