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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1991 Volume IV: Recent American Poetry: Expanding the Canon

Seeing with the Heart: Poetry in the Classroom

Guide for Curriculum Unit 91.04.07
by Lorna Dils

This poetry unit is divided into two parts. The first part describes many strategies for introducing students to the reading and, especially, the writing of poetry. It is written to be used by seventh-grade students in the Talented and Gifted Program but many of the activities in the first section can be used for younger students.

The activities in the second section continue the students' exposure to reading and writing poetry rather than highlighting some of the strategies described in the first part. In these lessons, students use their previous experiences in reading and writing poetry, and are presented poems written by Native American, African-American and Hispanic poets. These lessons contain biographical information about the poets, ideas for group discussions centering around themes in the poems, and ideas for student writing.

This unit also includes an extensive bibliography of "how-to" books for teachers and descriptions of many anthologies of poetry for both teachers and students.

(Recommended for English, grades 7 and 8)

Key Words

Poetry American Literature General Reading Writing Instruction

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