

English
Grade 8AB



Lesson Plans

"Illuminated Poetry"

Subject:
English: 8AB

Level:
Grade 8

Abstract:

During this lesson, students will analyze the figurative language in a poem of their choosing and deliver an oral explication of the poem, using PowerPoint to illustrate the use of figurative language by the poet. Students should be familiar with figurative language terms such as metaphor, simile, personification, alliteration, and others at the teacher's discretion.

Invitation:

One meaning of the word "illuminate" is "to make understandable or clarify." Another meaning is "to enlighten intellectually." Poetry is a form of literature that often seems full of mystery or confusion. During this lesson, we will explore ways to make poetry more "illuminated," that is, to make it more understandable and to allow others to become enlightened to the tools poets use.

Situations:

Where: This lesson of instruction could be done in a classroom computer lab setting in "round-robin" fashion by allowing students to work on computers in small groups, or all at once in a computer lab.

When: This lesson would be a wonderful final project for a poetry or creative writing lesson in which figurative language terms are studied.

How Long: Depending upon the familiarity of the students with the terms being studied, this could be a 5- to 10-period lesson (assuming 45-minute class periods).

Tasks:

Task 1:

Students will be guided through a presentation of the sample Illuminated Poetry Presentation for "Nothing Gold Can Stay." Alternatively, the teacher could create his/her own presentation as a demonstration. See the speaker notes in the Notes View of the sample PowerPoint presentation for a guide.

Task 2:

The teacher will distribute the "Rubric for Illuminated Poetry" attachment. The teacher will discuss with students the goal of the project: to present a poetry explication in oral format, using PowerPoint as a tool, to illustrate the poet's use of literary device in communicating a theme. Students will rate the sample presentation and will be guided through a discussion of how the presentation could be improved (that is, add graphics, sound, or split lines of poem over several slides.)

Task 3:

Students will select poems for explication, or the teacher will assign poems to students. At this time, if cooperative learning methods are to be used, students will be paired or grouped and copies of the poem will be distributed. Poems will be of a suitable length for oral presentation (lengthy ballads are probably out for this exercise!).

Task 4:

After poems have been selected, the teacher will guide students through completion of the "Worksheet: Poetry Explication" attachment. It may be necessary for the teacher to offer suggestions to students as to what literary devices to highlight in their presentation.

Task 5:

Before they start working on the computer, students will show the teacher that they have done the necessary preparation for the task at hand. They should have a definite plan in mind of how they are going to go about explicating the poem, what colors and/or images they will use, and in particular, they should have a clear understanding of their interpretation of the poem.

Task 6:

Students will design their presentations. They will use a maximum of six slides to explicate their poem (more slides may be used, at teacher's discretion.) Encourage the use of sound, color, and animation but also remind students that the focus of their presentation is still the EXPLICATION. Direct them to the "Rubric for Illuminated Poetry" attachment for guidance.

Task 7:

Students will practice delivering their presentations to a partner or partner group. Students will use the "Rubric for Illuminated Poetry" attachment to offer feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Task 8:

Finally, students will deliver their presentations. Encourage a cycle of discussion after each presentation. Collect Poetry Explication worksheets. Evaluate presentations against the "Rubric for Illuminated Poetry" attachment.

Interactions:

Full Class: This unit could be completed by an entire class individually, or done as a partner or small group activity.

Partners: Partners should work together to either complete the unit or provide feedback during the development phase of the PowerPoint presentation.

Standards:

Language Arts

Reading

1.0 Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

1.1 Analyze idioms, analogies, metaphors, and similes to infer the literal and figurative meanings of phrases.

3.0 Literary Response and Analysis

3.4 Analyze the relevance of the setting (e.g., place, time, customs) to the mood, tone, and meaning of the text.

3.6 Identify significant literary devices (e.g., metaphor, symbolism, dialect, irony) that define a writer's style and use those elements to interpret the work.

Writing

2.0 Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

2.2 Write responses to literature:

a. Exhibit careful reading and insight in their interpretations.

b. Connect the student's own responses to the writer's techniques and to specific textual references.

d. Support judgments through references to the text, other works, other authors, or to personal knowledge.

Listening and Speaking Strategies

Comprehension

1.1 Analyze oral interpretations of literature, including language choice and delivery, and the effect of the interpretations on the listener.

2.0 Speaking Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

2.2 Deliver oral responses to literature:

a. Interpret a reading and provide insight.

- b. Connect the students' own responses to the writer's techniques and to specific textual references.
- c. Draw supported inferences about the effects of a literary work on its audience.
- d. Support judgments through references to the text, other works, other authors, or personal knowledge.

Assessment:

- "Rubric for Illuminated Poetry"

Tools:

- Microsoft PowerPoint
- Computer
- Projection device for PowerPoint presentations
- Copies of poems or access to online poetry libraries
(<http://www.poets.org/> - A wonderful archive of poetry can be found at the Academy of American Poets' website. This site is particularly delightful because it has an archive of poets *reading* their own poetry (see "Listening Booth").

Project Tips and Alternatives:

Tip #1:

This lesson works best as a small group project with teams of three or four students. If groups are used, the poem should be divided among the group members and each person should be responsible for "illuminating" and explicating a portion of the poem.

Tip #2:

The lesson can be focused by limiting the poems students are explicating (that is, focusing on one poet or theme) or by focusing on one type of literary device. Allusion is a particularly fun device to explore, as students can use the Internet to search for art that borrows from the same allusion and add these to their presentation.

Tip #3:

This lesson could be extended into a mini-research project by requiring students to research the poet and/or events mentioned in a poem. For example, students could study poetry that was written during the Civil War or during the Vietnam Era and then research the events and people mentioned in the poems.

Tip #4:

This lesson can be adapted to study any type of terminology being studied, for example, students could use the “illumination” method to highlight an author’s use of symbol in a passage, or a writer’s use of figurative language in a journalistic piece.

Tip #5:

As an extension to this activity, students could prepare a written explication of their poem or a poem that was presented by another student.

Attachments:

- “Worksheet: Poetry Explication”
- “Sample: Illuminated Poetry Presentation
- “Rubric for Illuminated Poetry”
- “Step Sheet: Creating a PowerPoint Presentation”
- “Step Sheet: Putting the Slide Show Together”
- “Step Sheet: Inserting Text and Clip Art or Graphics”

Web Resources – Content:

A list of [linked web resources](#) related to the content of this lesson can be found on the Lesson Page.

Web Resources – PowerPoint:

A list of [linked web resources for PowerPoint](#) can be found on the PowerPoint Resources page.

Assistive Technology:

Please refer to the [Assistive Technology section](#) for information on methods and devices to help ensure that all students have access to the curricula in the least restrictive environment.