



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2005 Volume I: The Uses of Poetry in the Classroom

A Curriculum Unit in Poetry for Vocational Students

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This is a curriculum unit whose objectives are to instruct eleventh and twelfth grade vocational students in the analysis and writing of poetry. The poems used to teach the elements of poetry are chosen largely from the canon of traditional poets of American and British origin, and from several anthologies of poems about working.

Complementing the teacher-centered classes on analysis is a workshop format, which capitalizes on concepts and skills taught. In this workshop setting, students are provided with contemporary models of poems, both amateur and professional, whose themes are based on specific careers: carpentry, culinary arts, cosmetology, computer networking, dental and nursing assisting, engine technology, technical drafting, financial services (insurance and accounting), public service and technical services. Additionally, poems on labor and the workforce in general are referenced.

This unit spans a fifteen-week period in a block schedule, is implemented in two thirty to forty-minute periods per week—one at the beginning of a week, and one at the end. It is fully adaptable to a school year structured in two semesters.

(Developed for English, grade 12; recommended for English, grades 11-12)

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