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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2009 Volume IV: The Sound of Words: An Introduction to Poetry

Embracing the Frumious Bandersnatch: Sound, Rhyme, and Nonsense in Poetry for Young Children

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I developed this unit, "Embracing the Frumious Bandersnatch: Sound, Rhyme, and Nonsense in Poetry for Young Children," for my first grade class as an adjunct to the language arts program. This introduction to poetry foregrounds the elements of sound, rhyme, and nonsense while appealing to the lively, spontaneous, and creative nature of children. It may be implemented as either enrichment to, or a component of, first grade language arts instruction.

The unit is intended to be cross-cultural and inclusive; having the potential to be used in virtually any socio-economic demographic. It is yearlong in its scope, with two pairs of lessons to be taught twice a month. The pairs of lessons are thematic, based on seasons, holidays, and special topics. Although the unit was conceived and designed for first grade, with a little creative differentiation, it could easily be adapted in full or in part for any grade level. I have included teacher resource books in the bibliography that would be useful for adapting concepts for middle and high school age students. With minor adjustments, many of the lessons could be successfully utilized in Kindergarten and Pre-K classes as well.

(Developed for Language Arts, grade 1; recommended for Language Arts, grades PreK-1, and adaptable to Language Arts, grades 2-5, and English, grades 6-12)

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