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

The Sound of Poetry

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by Melissa Dailey

The Sound of Poetry explores songs of the sea, sounds of poetry and sounds of the sea. Through sea shanties and sea poetry, students study the elements of poetry with sound as the guiding force. In twelfth grade AP Literature, poetry constitutes a significant portion of the curriculum. The challenge of the unit is to guide students in prosodic analysis as well as evaluating the meaning, diction and syntax of the poetry. In addition to a variety of engaging exercises, students write a final essay analyzing a poem of their choice. As an aquaculture vocational magnet school, the Sound School is a prime choice for such a unit. Nevertheless, the unit is accessible to anyone with a love for the sea.

(Developed for AP English Literature, grade 12; recommended for AP English Literature, grade 12)

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