



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2014 Volume II: Playing with Poems: Rules, Tools, and Games

Using Poetry Songs to Teach Fluency Using Literature about Navajo Culture in an ELL Classroom

Guide for Curriculum Unit 14.02.08, published September 2014
by Irene Jones

The approach in this unit is help the students realize that poetry has always existed in our culture, and still exists in writings of our Native American poets. Although the most common form of poetry for Navajo poets is in prose, they still create rhythm in the language they use. Students will also identify words that the author selects in a poem to create a rich auditory experience in a literary selection. The rhythms itself create heightened imagery or emotional effect. ¹ Poetry about things they are familiar with like poems and nursery rhymes about animals, people and culture give students an opportunity to be exposed to other types of poetry. In addition, students will use knowledge of phonemic awareness by segmenting syllables in multi-syllabic words, especially with poems that rely on meters and stress to create a moment and create a feeling. Students will comprehend text by identifying structural elements of poetry. Nursery Rhymes that the students used to recite in Kindergarten and first grade can help them develop rhythm and recognize rhyming words. In addition, students will compose a narrative daily by writing simple poetry, using rhymes or any other poetry form to create rhythm. Students will write a poetry using any form to find a voice and to become confidence writers. Listening and speaking confidently is also a major component of this unit. To help establish speaking and listening skills, students will memorize and recite simple poems, part of a prose, or a verse.

1. http://www.poetrysoup.com/dictionary/prose_poetry

(Developed for Language Arts - English Language Learners, grade 4; recommended for Language Arts, grades 3-4)

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