



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

Pictures, Poems, and Planets

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How can I incorporate reading, writing and drawing poetry in my elementary art classroom as a *fun* interdisciplinary approach for my fourth grade students? Students can be intimidated by interacting with art and with poems. Through strategies in observation, critical thinking, and collaboration students will recognize poetry and art are both accessible. I aim to build engagement in both poetic literacy and visual illustration in my elementary art classroom through humorous poetry.

I have always adored the wit of Shel Silverstein and still laugh when reading "Something Missing." This author-artist combines the art of poetry with the art of illustration as two symbiotic parts where the poem and drawing are interdependent. After an introduction of 'playing' with poetry and drawings by Shel Silverstein and creating original collaborative ones, students will use their prior knowledge of the planets from the fourth grade science curriculum to create a poem about an imaginary trip to a planet of their choice and draw an illustration of themselves during this extraordinary visit. "Something Missing" inspires me to fill in the gaps in my curriculum to best meet my students' needs. Their poems will use rhyme and figurative language inspired by elements in Silverstein's work.

(Developed for Visual Art, grade 4; recommended for Visual Art, Science, and English Language Arts, grade 4)

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