



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2024 Volume III: Poetry as Sound and Object

Empowering Student Voice through Poetry and Multimedia

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This unit is designed for 8th-grade students receiving gifted services in Delaware’s P.S. duPont Middle School. Over the course of the school year, students select a cause they feel passionately about and conduct research into it, with the aim of pursuing an independent project to make a difference in that cause. This unit weaves instruction on videopoetry into that project. By exposing students to a variety of types of poetry and the techniques video poets use to convey their messages to their audiences, this unit empowers students to use videopoetry as a tool to raise awareness for their chosen causes. Over the course of the unit, students will learn the academic vocabulary associated with the analysis of poetry and film. They will closely read both traditional and multimedia “texts” representing canonical poems like Walt Whitman’s *Song of Myself* and Gwendolyn Brooks’s “We Real Cool,” as well as more contemporary selections such as Walidah Imarisha’s “Wade in the Water”, Claudia Rankine’s “Situation 7”, and “Choices” by Tess Gallagher. They will analyze one of the video poems in writing. The unit culminates with students working in collaborative groups to create their own videopoems to express a message about their chosen causes.

(Developed for Gifted English/Language Arts, grade 8; recommended for English, grades 8-9)

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