



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

The Unknown Voice of My Students

Curriculum Unit 09.04.06, published September 2009
by Martha Margarita Tamez

Overview

From the time that I was an 8-year-old girl, I felt an attraction to popular rhymes. I memorized and recited at every moment. I learned, with great joy, almost 200 popular sayings until my grandmother approached me with two poetry books. One of the poets was Juan de Dios Peza and the other was Manuel Acuña. These books locked me into the world of writing and thinking about the life of these two poets, the sound of their words, and what they produce in me.

I started writing verses, whistling, and looking at my surroundings. If I saw a couple fighting, I wrote about heartbreak. If I saw an unjust circumstance, I wrote a poem on fairness. I can say that poetry saved me from dying in the solitude that was my heritage following my parents' divorce. My students do not live an easy life. Like I, they can find an escape through poetry, through writing the sound of their soul.

I am working in a middle school that was created in the 1960s for African Americans. Now Hispanic students are the majority. Ninety- nine percent of the students receive free lunch. The school area has been identified by the police as a place where multiple gangs that rob, vandalize, and fight congregate.

Everyone has been exposed to poetry in different ways, sometimes without knowing it. One student may have read a poem to him/herself or heard it read aloud; memorizes a popular stanza or a whole poem for an assignment in school; recognized lyrics of a favorite song; or may have been caught singing a funny commercial jingle over and over. All of these are poetry. My love of poetry came from my grandmother giving me those two books of poetry at an early age. I learned to be alone with a poem, read it aloud to another person, undress the poem during a study time, and get happily insane when I create a poem, or explain a poem in class. I need to be that medium for my students; I am going to become in these daily routines a combination of the teenager I was and the professional I am today. Every lesson is going to be related to Literary Terms to observe how writers make us feel what we feel.

Poetry! The salvation in my life! It was difficult for me to understand that the process of writing poetry was not only to write what I felt, but to feel as I was writing or reading. It is important for the reader to become absorbed what poet wishes to express. If the reader identifies with the poem or with the reflection that calms people from torturous or happy moments, then the poem is successful. I know that ink has a powerful force of expression that corresponds to an outside/inside sound. This force has to be taught to the students and added

to their imagination. They have to be taught a poetic way to live life instead of the violent life that they live. It has obscured their visualization of a better world. I am not asking them to be poets but understand the understandable, to read poetry with the love discovering the dreams in our souls:

Time Somebody Told Me

Time somebody told me that I am lovely, good and real. That I am beautiful inside if they only knew how that would make me feel.

This is a poem found in "*Son of Realty*." Age 12. The site is named by Betsy Franco in Young Adult "You Hear Me? Poems and Writing by Teenage Boys. <http://www.teenreads.com>

My intent is to help my students to have a better comprehension of the language so that they can express themselves better. They need to learn to discern meanings and intent so they are not easily fooled by the way things are said; and most of all to appreciate poetry and its splendor. It is also important for them to distinguish the differences between narrative and poetry. My plans then, are to teach poetic resources to a group of impoverished English as a Second Language middle school students living in South Houston. They have a curfew and restrictions by the police - all this civic effort to keep the multiple gangs from further developing, and to discourage the vandalizing of private and public property. These are my students! "The Unknown Voice of My Students" is intended as an opportunity to help them to succeed as I did in society, perhaps even to do better.

With this curriculum, I will modify the students' behavior by motivating them to like school, life, their family; enhance their enjoyment of English words; help them to comprehend what they read and to discover the meaning behind the poem. This has been my focus for several years at the middle school level. The students already know that I am a teacher with a great love for poetry and humanity. They know I believe in creativity in the fine arts, and that that is found in many cultures all over the world. The classroom can exhibit much of this through the study of their words and through teaching poetry at grade level.

Poetry invented my life when I hear my inner voice. That is me, now, turning my middle school population to writing their expressions and feelings. Writing! Reading! using in-depth expressions are foreign to my students, largely because they have little exposure from home and living experiences but also because of so many gadgets and electronics at their fingertips. In this age of instant messaging, electronic gaming on small handheld devices, iPhones, IPODS, MP3s, instant 'friendships' on My Space, Facebook, Twitter, etc., middle school student tries to ignore basic, sensitive in-depth feeling and expressions that can be gained from writing, editing and proofing their work. They want to move faster and faster without stopping to think. At least this poetry unit will increase their awareness to their inner self and inner feelings and these students will have concrete examples in words and poetic phrases to show specific techniques in writing.

I am working at Dowling Middle School in Houston, Texas. Dowling was created in the sixties in response to the growing need for schools for African Americans following the Civil Rights Movement. Presently, Hispanic students are the majority by 56%. Ninety-nine percent of the students receive free lunches. The school area has been designated by the police as an area where multiple gangs thrive that rob, vandalize, and fight.

I will share books and knowledge without discrimination or suppositions. The students need to learn about writing, not necessarily to make them writers, but to discover the sound of words and what can be done with those sounds. They may not memorize all of this information but they will know that those literary terms are there and used by writers.

Background Knowledge

Poetry is the infinite sea of images that we see in the sky. A scream can be a poem, a sweet voice, a chant. Poetry can at any moment bloom from the heart of Robert Frost, Walt Whitman, Langston Hughes, Elizabeth Bishop, Ezra Pound and all the poets that have sung to the universe. We are able to listen diverse tones in crumbs of sounds conveyed in rhythm, rhyme; in tear drops on a petal: I say, believe and feel that "Poetry is the dew of imagination on an excited Heart" Yet, there are sad hearts with the syncopated sound of pain in them that make us feel sorrow. We should look for happy poems enlightening the hearts of humanity in order to dissipate the clouds from our senses.

Literary Theory explains all of these terms and teaches us the effects of literary terms in poetry. It uses words that become familiar to language arts teachers. Literary theory speaks of symbols that poets use. It also speaks of tone and voice as well of expression to form poetic genres with beautiful styles.

A song, a stanza, a popular saying, multiple sounds or jazz are not the same. Each one of these genres emphasizes literary resources like repetition, alliteration, rhyme or personification. Personification injects life into an item. It inserts wings to things, and makes them say absurdities or words of the wisest quality. Poetry has the faculty of being eternal; and even though there are wars, it continues. Poetry describes war, bleeds, explodes or releases the atomic bomb.

Repetition is one of the oldest literary resources. It is found in biblical prayers or in the poems of Netzahualcoyotl. Through repetition poets reflect tiredness, ask for mercy or for pardon. Behind repetition we can find secret codes of a trodden road like in the songs of the slaves of the United States' Civil War, "Following the Drinking Gourd". in which we find the constellation Big Dipper with a star pointing to the North, guide for fugitive slaves to that direction. I like this example because I own a dipper, and I show my class the utensil.

Repetition is more than once. It is made of a rhythmical pattern: the repetition of a sentence, a word, a sound. A good example of repetition is in the following poem "St. Louis Blues" by W.C. Handy.

I hate to see the evening sun go down, I hate to see the evening sun go down,
â€ˆCause my lovin' baby done left this town.

Here we see that the repetition is used to reinforce the lament for the lovin' baby that has abandoned the town and the singer. Another example is â€ˆMy Lady' by Jesus Papoleto Melendez:

The handsome Lady Rides a handsome man In a handsome cab Drawn by a handsome hair
In the handsome air Blessed by handsome stars In a handsome night

and continues repeating the word "handsome" until the end in each of its verses:

Who rides a handsome man In her handsome cab Who doffs his handsome hat Quite
handsomely!

Alliteration is when you hear consecutive or neighboring words with similar beginning sound. An example can be observed and heard with the verses in the poem "A Montage on Mystery" by Jesus Papoleto Melendez:

Chasing the colors of their own broken masterpieces to pieces in the pitiful pain of a perpetually parading before the blood & veins of their eyes,

In the poem "Bond and Free" by Robert Frost we hear the rhymes in our voice when we say "see'-'free' or 'trace' 'embrace.' Rhyme is a similar sound in two words. Rhymes are usually easy to hear and make poetry easy to memorize the similar sound in two or more phrases that appear close to each other in a poem.

On snow and sand and turf, I see Where Love has left a printed trace With the straining in the world's embrace. And such is Love and glad to be. But Thought has shaken his ankles free.

Personification is a kind of metaphor that gives inanimate objects or abstract ideas human characteristics. We can find an example at the end of the poem "Root Cellar" by Theodore Roethke: "Even the dirt kept breathing a small breath."

difficulty of writing a sonnet and distinguish it from free verse form. The poet writes for catharsis, to play, for knowledge, out of creativity, and as a vocation. Do not let young hearts die. Make them feel the shock of Emily Dickinson or Sylvia Plath or make them feel the nursery rhymes. I imagine myself with this curriculum unit like the muse that inserts her toes into the lake of poetry. I do not intend to try more than a few writing and listening activities.

The majority of my students are Hispanic, and it is important for them to learn about the history of poetry in Spanish. I will ask "When Spanish appear in written poetry?" The students will start guessing and after few minutes of discussion I will explain how Alvaro Cardona-Hine offers a journey through time of Spanish poetry. He translated Jewish, Arabic and early Spanish poems into a book which he called *cancioneros*. What Jewish, and Arabic languages have to be with this section? The poems written between 1511 and 1605 mixed these two languages because Spain became their new country as you must consider the USA as your new country - I'll add. Those poems reflect the common written expressions of troubadours: minstrel choruses, chants, lullabies, and oral tradition passed from mouth to memory, until the musicians and poets took interest and began to use it for their own inspiration.

Investigators theorized that the roots of *Zejel* were Andalusian/Moorish. This is a form of refrain that contains only two rhymed lines. They also discovered older verses named Jarchas which are a little bit longer than *zejels*. In the 19th century Muccddam Ben Mufa, used the poetic form named *Mugasajas* written in classical Arabic. These forms open our understanding of the intense conviviality of the Christian, Moorish, and Jewish groups in Spain before the 13th century. With this introduction to the history of language, I can point to a literary term named macaronic poetry where languages are melting. I will cite a poem by the reverend Pedro Pietri named "Tata:"

Mi abuela has been in this dept store called America for past twenty-five years she is eighty-five years old and does not speak a word of English

That is intelligence

Spanish is the inherited language of Latinos and, of course, Mexicans. It is important for them to know the background and periods in which the first poems were written. I want them to know that the long history of literature in Spanish can be found in any poetic anthology by Jose Ortega y Gasset, or Alvaro Cardona-Hine. As a joke I will let the students know that not only those troubadours sang mixing languages. In the

magnificent repertory of the children's composer Francisco Gabilondo Soler, "Cri Cri," we find his song "Ratón Vaquero" which also mixes English and Spanish. Here are some of its stanzas:

en la ratonera ha caído un ratón con sus dos pistolas y su traje de cowboy. Ha de ser gringuito porque siempre habla inglés a mas de ser guerito y tener grandes los pies. El ratón vaquero sacó sus pistolas, y se inclinó el sombrero, y me dijo a solas: What the heck is this house for a manly Cowboy Mouse? Hello you! Let me out! and don't catch me like a trout. Conque sí, ya se ve, que no está a gusto ahí, y aunque hables inglés no te dejare salir.

If the name of this literary term is called "macaronic poetry," between the Hispanic population in the South of Houston we speak "macaronicly," meaning the way we talk, mixing Spanish and English; that's exactly what happened in Spain when the Jewish and Arabic settled in the Iberian Peninsula. The ESL students will enlist common phrases mixing Spanish and English like: "Te quiero so much!" -better known as "Spanglish" among ESL students and Hispanic population.

Other forms of literary expressions that prevail are songs. My students like popular music, and this is a great excuse for me to let them know the metric structure of their ranchero (ranch) songs. The syncopated *tun ta ta, tun ta ta* that we hear with the Mexican guitar facilitates the continuing of syllables. Most of this ranchero songs or "corridos" have a count of 8 syllables in each of its verses. An exception is "Juan Charrasqueado" unique for the 13 syllables in each of its verses:

¿ndale Juan que ya por ahí te andan buscando son muchos hombres no te vayan a matar, ando borracho les decía y soy buen gallo cuando una bala atravesó su corazón.

After proving what is metric and the way we sing our passions, I will introduce poets and composers who count syllables, tune their rhythm, rhyme or try to rhyme in their tunes, poems, or songs to make them better, nice, beautiful and catchy.

A list of suggested literary terms can be found on Appendix 1.

ESL Classes in Houston, Texas

The ESL students will learn, through literary terms, about the sound of Words in poetry. Students will comprehend that we are attracted to the sounds of nursery rhymes for two simple reasons. The first is that rhymes are pleasing to the ear. They sound nice because they imitate the palpitating heart; even before Children can understand the words, they like the sounds. The second reason is that rhymes are easy to remember. As teachers we have to use this opportunity and provide the students with positive rhymes like in the love poem by Emanuel Sifuentes: "You're perfect and so is this love that we share."

The Texas Education Agency indicates that in order for ESL students to be successful, they must acquire both social and academic language proficiency in English. Social language proficiency in English. Social language proficiency in English consists of the English needed for daily social interactions. Academic language proficiency consists of the English needed to think critically, understand and learn new concepts, process

complex academic material, and interact and communicate in English academic settings. I am not satisfied with the social language that they use to communicate, which is limited in expression and content.

Through poetry we can think critically, and understand the literary terms as new concepts, process complex academic material to learn genres, and interact and communicate in English, following the guidance of the Texas standards for Language Arts.

Classroom instruction will effectively integrate second language acquisition with quality content area described in this unit, assuring that ESLs acquire social and academic language proficiency in English and reach their full academic potential through the exposure of lectures, poems, and literary terms.

Effective instruction in second language acquisition involves giving ESLs opportunities to listen to poems, speak or express their thoughts and feeling, read concepts and effects, and write at their current levels of English development while gradually increasing the linguistic complexity of the English they read and hear, and are expected to speak and write.

The objective of this unit is to facilitate the students' comprehension of poetry, to show that poetry involves play, pleasure and pain, but most of all, involves us in the beautiful experience of discovering creative light and imagination. Lofty expectations! However, bringing awareness and exposure to a new way of thinking, feeling and writing can "turn on" students' imagination and creativity that may never be tapped unless I develop this poetry unit *The Unknown Voice of My Students*.

The Unknown Voice of My Students will be accessible to middle school students, parents, and everyone interested in poetry. Through the use of this curriculum unit the students will be enabled to hear and discover their voices and develop new voices through different activities like distinguishing verse from prose, tone from voice, rhythm from rhyme, accent from stress, etc.

All writers cultivate knowledge of words; they are aware of the sounds of words and become conscious of the poetic elements used for an intended effect. That is the reason why we need to learn about the basic *tricks*, figures of speech, poetic devices and literary terms; variations for the use of words, their synonyms and antonyms, for the creation of poetic expression.

Students have to realize that professional writers proofread, and correct their writing. We all have to become the first readers of our writing, learn how to hear our own voice, and work until we obtain the essence of the relationship between words-circumstance-feeling. Middle school students need to continue to work, edit and understand the basic purpose of their writing, especially poetry. Not for just a grade or not because the teacher said "Do this writing" but to be honest on paper as they create their own poetic expressions about the subject they are writing.

For poetry to have a potent effect on people it must relate to their personal lives. We have to bring poetry to the people. There are a variety of ways to do this. We can now introduce video, CDs, DVDs, and other media representations of poetry. Students can actually see poets of all ages performing their works. So, with research, it is easy to find relevant poetry that connects with your audience. From a Latino point of reference, I would look toward sites such as www.Nuyoricanpoets.org, and www.Virtualboricua.net for materials relevant to Latino students. The Institute of Puerto Rican Students at Hunter College in New York City provides archival materials on the history of Puerto Ricans in the United States, and their contributions to American society, including the world of literature. The Chicano, as other ethnic experience in the United States contains a rich field. Searches can therefore be made regionally according to students' needs.

Research indicated by Mary A. Wolfe at Cornell University shows that the fast electronic world only uses the decoding part of the brain but does not go to the frontal lobe of the brain where inference and connecting thoughts and experiences takes place. As an educator trying to develop further inference in a poetry unit with this age group, motivates me further to develop this poetry unit into the curriculum using incremental, accumulative knowledge. With short, introductory lessons each class period to "turn on" the inference as part of the students' brains! At the least, this unit will expose the students to words and literary devices that help express their feelings and thoughts or connect some of their life experiences and bring the thoughts forward as positive expressions when they write or record poetry in their own notebooks or electronic devices.

Rationale

We need to help the students find a channel for their personal self-expression, and poetry is a vehicle that can traverse that channel. Whereas, in painting it is easier for the art-creator to "hide" within his expression through the use of color, it becomes more difficult to do this through literature. Poetry is a safe environment of expression. But this condemns you to be truthful with yourself, to reflect the truth when you write. What makes a good writer is his or her ability to be truthful.

Big Job! Yes, but just as in life, once words express desires and those words come from a teeming brain, and then what is put on paper becomes no longer invisible. Once visible, anything is possible. Wishes do come true when words make sense. For example, today in lunch, after opening my fortune cookie I laugh because the paper read:

"Good writing is clear thinking made visible," what a coincidence!

Further, the creative process is critical thinking in action. The problems encountered in self expression force the participant to question a myriad of variables in his quest to be truthful with himself. This is problem-solving, and problem solving always involves creativity. It does not matter if it is not appreciated by others. Creativity requires freshness or originality as a characteristic of what is created, I ask my students: "Haven't you thought, when watching a movie, why is it that you laugh aloud, or why you cry or feel sad?" You can make the people feel what you want, react how you want and, more importantly, they will learn that, during this stage of life: one's writing echoes one's emotions and thought, through the written piece resonating, feeling with the heart.

We need writers in our society. Companies hire writers in order to get across their purpose - such as a program on television, or a politician's campaign in the public psyche. Therefore, I conclude by saying that writing has the potential to become an occupation. Writers get paid well; they can persuade people, make them laugh, cry, get angry, and capture what happens in society.

This curriculum unit will be my roadmap to accelerate the vocabulary, knowledge and culture around poetry that has tremendous importance in Language Arts.

Strategies

Teenagers in my middle school students like jokes, rhymes, songs, codes. I will teach them poems that make them laugh and think. We will read "Summer's Bounty" by May Swenson (for example, "Puppies of Hush" and "Rooms of Mush")." If they like songs and rhymes I will present "Microphone Fiend" by Eric B and Rakim where the music is hip-hop. Some of their rhymes are: "teen-cream," "originated-complicated," "y'all!-small." If the students want to invent codes, we will talk about the meaning of the word "coyotes" who charge people to come as illegal's to the United States and compare them with the meaning of the word "Conductors," who helped African Americans to reach their journey to freedom without charge. This is with the purpose of preparing the students to understand discrimination, slavery, segregation, which Hispanic and Latinos suffered when Spaniards arrived America in the fifteenth century and were sometimes slaved along with African Americans.

I want them to look around and find examples of poetry in their experiences. I know that they experience things intensely. They must be trained to look at words and see their hearts reflected on Pablo Neruda's love poems, the splendor moment of identification. This is poetry! Many examples exist like this, that we can use in class to stimulate their creative expressions in the 45 minute part of the block period dedicated to literary Terms.

I will teach a literary term every day as part of my routine for 20 minutes or more if necessary. It will make students to visualize the difference between verse and prose, I have to draw two pages with this distinction. If I am going to teach about *imagery* I will take the students outside the classroom and close their eyes and imagine the sounds they hear, or smell the air. They do not have to memorize the terminology but have a notion of those literary terms for the communicative life.

From a selection of poems copied on transparencies, the students will extract all possible connections, relations with history, main idea, and most of all, literary terms carefully registered in what will become a portfolio, where students can look up literary information needed in the future. They will read classical American poets and poems suggested by the students; poems in which students identify what they have been taught.

The poetry unit I develop will fit into the literary terms' period during the first 45 minutes of the 90 minute block of ESL. Every day I will give an example, and background information, followed with a discussion: Then the students will be assigned two more examples as homework. Also, in the part of the routine for reading, while they read they are encouraged to identify the literary terms learned in class.

During the past school year, I discovered the students' examples are dark, pessimistic, and dreary overall. Their work mirrors unhappiness. They seldom come with positive, lyrical or melodious words to express themselves in written or oral work.

"The Unknown Voice of my Students" unit develops by finding 45 positive, optimistic, gracious, hilarious poems that will offer students 45 literary/poetic terms illustrated with examples of acclaimed, actual or classical poems as part of the daily resource instruction. One by one the literary/poetic terms, with examples, will be taught as a method in order to extend the students' ability to express funny feelings, big smiles, positive explanations, show illusions and emotions. Hopefully this will help to inspire the writing of their poems!

Instruction will be comprised of some techniques developed by Writers in the Schools (WITS) to pull creative thoughts and expressions from school age youngsters. (Fortunately, Houston has a local WITS group active and available to schools through United Way with offices at the University of Houston). Some of the WITS developed creative techniques can provide me with quick guided practice in writing to express emotions, truths, purity, dimensions, quality of life, assurances of nature and the natural setting, color, music, home life, childhood, stages of life, generations in families, especially including the elderly and many other recognized stages and experiences of life such as births, deaths, weddings, baptisms, birthdays, graduations and reunions with love ones. We will constantly listen to and read from three websites <http://www.afropoets.net/nikkigiovanni.html>, <http://www.math.buffalo.edu>, or <http://browseinside.harpercollins.com> where you find the beautiful title "Paint Me Like I Am: Teen Poems" from Writers Corps by Richard Newirth and Bill Aguado, and Nikki Giovanni's poems, point of study in class.

We will research and select suitable poems to use as examples showing use of specific literary terms. This, in effect, will elevate the phonics study and word usage in the ESL classes. The students will perform better every day with accumulative knowledge of literary terms paired with poems, word roots, and cognates, stimulating better word usage and selection of words.

Though I am not responsible for students' state of happiness, I do want to give them the opportunity to experience some light-hearted, happy, rhythmical and uplifting age-appropriate poetry. This is a purpose-filled effort because my ESL students are monetarily poor. I want to enrich their lives and spark an inner light of excitement with words, with the sound of words - to show students a positive side of their lives offered through "The Unknown Voice of my Students."

As their teacher, I am going to listen to and enjoy everything they say as interpretations of the literary selection. I will encourage students to collect poems they found, they know, they create, or heard in their journals; perhaps poems that were told around open fires in their native countries, in their childhood, as games on the playground, or in their homes. This will help them to transform experiences into poetry, or poetry into experiences. It will be interesting because poetry might be the optimistic way for them to appreciate the opportunity to study, to read, and to write in their new language.

I will encourage the students to open a section of their notebooks as their opinion place — to relate their feelings, surprises, and personal questions inspired by the poems. Also, they can talk to me about experiences behind the poem, or the poem that opened the door to a new experience..

Before closing this section, I want to remark the importance of hearing the inner-voice. Sometimes students have it but, they never interact or do not know that they possess it. The math problem that I will dictate hoping that everyone pays attention is a simple way to separate body as medium and thought as inner-voice. Your body, your hand writes but your inner-voice guides you and tells you when to carry a number to the other digit. I am sure that drawing is another way to see what's inside their imagination but, inner-voice is not a literary term but it is important for the purpose of this curriculum to expose various ways to say the same thing through the use of literary devices.

Lesson Plan I

The purpose of this lesson is to distinguish verse from prose and poetry from narrative.

When the students arrive into class I will have them look at the following narrative excerpt and song that will be projected on the screen. I will ask them to focus on the screen while they listen to an audio CD of a person reading "The Underground Rail Road "excerpt of the narrative "The Train to Freedom." Then the students will listen to the song "Follow the Drinking Gourd." Both related to the American Civil War. After hearing the audio CD, onto a page of their notebooks, the students will draw two pages like the ones on the board writing on one Narrative and on the other Verse. They will identify three characteristics for each of the styles. This will help the students reinforce their knowledge of the forms in which we travel through the scholar year.

After they have finished we will discuss the two forms and determine when one form is used and when another is preferable. We will dissect the readings further by pointing out the use of codes as "passengers" instead of saying "slaves," "stations" or "depots" instead of churches, homes, businesses slaves used to hide; "Conductors" instead of courageous people who went with slaves on their journeys like Levi Coffin, or Harriet Tubman. After the students learn of the codes and their purpose, I will have them read both forms again, and follow it with further discussion: What are the codes of the song "Follow the Drinking Gourd."

If the discussion is successful, we can compare the verses with hip-hop or rap. This will be the basis for the evaluation in which the students will write a paragraph about the codes used by slaves during the Civil War and similarity to codes used today by people who comes from other countries. Also, create a poem or song dedicated to a character in the reading.

The activity will be divide in two routine periods, or take 45 minutes.

Lesson Plan II

Stress in "Mending Wall" poem by Robert Frost

Classroom Activity III

We Spoke Verse!

The purpose of "We Spoke Verse" is to inform the students that at certain time we used to speak in verse form, as now we speak in prose. This will be good time to introduce the concept of prose. The students will learn that prose is the name of our speaking style and there is a simple anecdotal about it.

I will relay the following anecdote to my students. "There was a student who asked her teacher "What is Prose?" And the teacher answered: "You speak prose!." Following this comment, I will give them some examples of prose that are used every day: journalism, expository, narratives, stories, fiction, tales, biographies, etc. adding that genres are the classification of these written practices. Once the students have understood prose, I will tell them about language use during the Mexican Colonial period in which the members of the royal court spoke in verse. To this effect, I will show the students a piece from a video where

Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz a Mexican poet, is talking in verse with her visitors. The students will realize that as fashion in clothes change, so does the way we talk and will continue changing through our days.

This is a micro lesson in a macro scenario. Human kind possesses the ability to capture the simple details. If you sing you sing verse, if you speak you emit sentences. Language has an age and the students will learn that the non common, unusual words are named archaisms, and its inverse is neologism. As teachers we can use this exercise to familiarize with their favorite words that we ignore, that we never thought that would be use in that context, sense or direction.

I will give the students some minutes to plan a short dialog in verse which they will then come to the front of the class in pairs to carry out their dialogs. This activity is usually very amusing and fruitful, so I will give them credit for participating.

This activity takes 25 minutes.

Lesson Plan III

Exploring Irony

To begin teaching this literary term named *irony* teachers should start with the familiar irony; the one that occurs in our houses, with our family members, friends:

Anecdote: My daughter was denied to bake a cake while I was gone. She disobeyed, and in my return smelled, and exclaimed: "That's what I need?" pulling with a special glove a melting hot pot, full of what's no more - jewelry. She has baked the most

expensive cake in the world.-"That's great!," would become an *irony*. I will ask the students if they have lived and ironical situation.

Here is where irony is introduced as literary term.

The teacher has to request the students to feel the atmosphere of the circumstance. "That's what I need" is the opposite of what the mother really thinks. It is hilarious when the teacher uses tone to offer them double scenario.

Verbal, situational and dramatically are the three status of *irony* I will ask the students to concentrate in their thoughts while I read the poem "Today is Very Boring" .

<http://heatheranne.freeservers.com/childrens/todayisboring.htm>

Here is the first paragraph from the poem:

Today is very boring, it's a very boring day, there is nothing much to look at, there is nothing much to say, there's a peacock on my sneakers, there's a penguin on my head, there's a dormouse on my doorstep, I am going back to bed.

We will be creating new verses, with a maximum of five and a minimum of 2. The first blank is going to have a verb and the next whatever the imagination can reach:

"Today is a very boring day it's a very boring day there is nothing to _____
there is a _____ I am going back to bed."

the students will create an ironical piece that might have not sense. Every one of the students will read or say the stanza to record the non sense of *irony* created by the specific group of students.

We will end the *irony* lesson by listening to our creation.

This activity takes 40 minutes or two Literary Terms periods. There is always flexibility in the way of teaching Literary Terms.

Lesson Plan IV

Imagery

The teacher will write on the board the word "imagery," and explain students that the term refers to words that create images in the mind. These images make us remember sensations and/or feelings. Then, exhort the students to point the five senses.

The teacher will pass out copies of one of my favorite poems: "The Desert is My Mother" clarifying unfamiliar terms or concepts.

Two activities are assigning for this lesson. One is the classification of the images under the correspondent sense. Examples are: Sound-thunder, touch/feel-raindrops. The second activity is where the students write their own images and make a poster to illustrate the poem with the help of the classification chart of senses. The students will brainstorm in small groups and present the poem to the class. This activity requires the use of personal experience to add meaning to the written work. Students must use vivid and expressive imagery in writing.

This lesson takes 45 minutes or more if necessary.

Lesson Plan V

Simile and metaphor

As students enter the classroom, they will see different cards from the *Loteria*, a Mexican game like Bingo but, instead of numbers they will find typical figures or characters. The teacher will explain the definition of Simile and metaphor. The first is the comparison between two similar things using the word "as" or "like." Metaphor is a comparison between two different things, but saying that one thing is the other.

The teacher will give the students different examples of similes and metaphors. The students will pass out the cards. Every student obtains one card and come up with and original simile and an original metaphor. The students will only have one minute before to tell their examples to the class and will pass the card to another student. The process will end when every student has had all the "Loteria" cards.

To conclude the introduction to these figures of speech, the teacher will request the students to identify the metaphors and similes Found in High School Essays by writing an S in front of the sentence if it is a simile, or M if it is a metaphor. The list is found in: <http://www.tc.umn.edu/~tran0397/lists/metaphors.html>

It is recommended to use as example of metaphor the poem Dreams by Langston Hughes:

Hold fast to dreams for if dreams die life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly.
Hold fast to dreams for when dreams go life is a barren field frozen with snow.

The calculated time for this lesson is 1 hour approximately.

Lesson Plan VI

Personification

The teacher can start the class by saying incoherent things like "the board attacked me this morning," or "the ruler refuses to measure the paper." The students will laugh and comprehend that given life or human characteristics to items, animals, or plants is what we call personification. "I will cry but not the rose."

The teacher will read aloud the poem "Two Flowers Move in the Yellow Room" by William Blake, and ask the students to identify the use of personification. After the students had identified the use of this literary term, the students will receive a copy of the poem "The Train" by Emily Dickenson and high light the use of personification.

This is a short lesson that can take 11-15 minutes.

Lesson Plan VII

The teacher will explain students that if a poem appears talking about a work of art it is not allusion but ecphrasis. Some professors named allusion for the reference to a work of art. Literary allusion is a direct or indirect reference to another literary text that can be understood or recognized by the reader. Allusion refers to something outside the poem. Allusion can refer almost to anything.

It is recommended to teachers to introduce T. S. Elliot or James Joyce as allusive poets for the frequency of places, images or names that requires previous knowledge, sense. Here the opportunity to encourage the students to read and acquire information, so they can identify the moment when the writer makes a

reference.

he teacher will project on the screen:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xqkNem9xb0> The students will enjoy the animation of John Keats reading "Ode to a Nightingale" written in May 1819 and first published in the *Annals of the Fine Arts* in July. John Keats alludes the Inferno di Dante. It is not easy exercise to listen to poetry and identify the allusion without readings or knowing Dante Alighieri. "I have been half in love with easeful Death," Keats read.

"Sopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" poem by Robert Frost can be other example of allusion of Dante's Inferno for it lure of the death and isolation:

The woods are lovely, dark, and deep, but I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep, and miles to go before I sleep.

Allusion is also used in lyrics. There are thousands of examples, but one that comes to my mind is Bob Dylan biblical allusion in his song "Love is Just a Four Letter Word." The manuscript of this song is found at: <http://www.bobdylan.com/#/songs/love-just-four-letter-word>

After waking enough times to think I see the holy Kiss that's supposed to last eternity blow up in smoke, its destiny Falls on strangers, travels free.

Romans 16:16: "Salute one another with a holy kiss." You can activate the song in <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUvU7VJMuE8>

This activity takes 30 minutes.

Annotated Bibliography

Attridge, Derek. *Poetic Rhythm: An Introduction*. Cambridge: CUP, 1996.

Gross, Harvey and Robert McDowell. *Sound and Form in Modern Poetry*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1968.

Hollander, John. *Rhyme's Reason*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1981.

Berry, Francis. *Poetry and the Physical Voice*. London: Routledge, 1962.

Elbow, Peter, ed. *Landmark Essays on Voice and Writing*. Mahwah, NJ: Hermagoras Press, 1994.

Eliot, T. S. *The Three Voices of Poetry*. New York: Cambridge UP, 1954.

Pinsky, Robert. *Democracy, Culture and the Voice of Poetry*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2002

Hartman, Charles O. *Introduction to Jazz Text: Voice and Improvisation in Poetry, Jazz and Song*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991.

Hollander, John. *The Untuning of the Sky: Ideas of Music in English Poetry 1500-1700*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1961.

Pinsky, Robert. *The Sounds of Poetry: A Brief Guide*. New York: FSG, 1998.

Stravinsky, Igor. *The Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl, trans. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1970.

Annotated Student Resources

The AP Vertical Teams Guide for English. USA: College Entrance Examination Board, 2002

Murfin, Ross C., and Supryia M Ray. *Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009

Cuddon, J. A. . *Diccionary of Literary Terms & Literary Theory*. London, England: Penguin Reference, 1999.

Chamot, Hartman and Huizenga. *Shining Star C*. United States, 2004

Appendix A

List of Literary Terms besides poems' suggestions for class

1. Alliteration (by William Blake "The Tyger")
2. Allusion (Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening")
3. Antithesis ("The Hind and the Panther" by John Dryden)
4. Apostrophe ("The Dash" by Linda Ellis)
5. Assonance ("El Dorado" by Edgar Allan Poe)
6. Consonance (Wes Magee's "The Boneyard Rap")
7. Details
8. Diction
9. ecphrasis
10. Free Verse ("Song of Myself" by Walt Whitman)
11. Figures of speech

12. Flashback
13. Foreshadowing
14. Hyperbole
15. Imagery
16. Irony
17. Macaronic poetry
18. Metaphor
19. Mood
20. Motivation
21. Narration
22. Onomatopoeia
23. Oxymoron
24. Paradox
25. Personification (by Ax-Helves "Junk")
26. Plot
27. Point of View
28. Prosody
29. Protagonist
30. Pun
31. Repetition
32. Rhyme (Nursery rhymes by Elizabeth Bishop)
33. Sarcasm
34. Setting
35. shift or turn
36. Simile
37. Sound devices

38. Structure

39. Style

40. Suspense

41. Symbol

42. Synecdoche

43. Syntax

44. Theme

45. Tone

<https://teachers.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University, All Rights Reserved. Yale National Initiative®, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute®, On Common Ground®, and League of Teachers Institutes® are registered trademarks of Yale University.

For terms of use visit https://teachers.yale.edu/terms_of_use