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Reflections Upon Reflections: Ekphrasis as Self-Exploration in Middle School ELA

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Introduction

Ekphrasis means “to explain,” literally from the Greek *ex*--out + *phrazein*-- declare, tell. In ancient times, it was considered a rhetorical technique, a test of a speaker’s ability to evoke not only the likeness of a person, place, or thing, but also the emotional aura of that subject.[1] Successful rhetoricians must have realized the value of figurative language and abstractions in capturing the essence of say, Mount Parnassus, or Aristotle’s cousin George. Nowadays, the term refers to “a literary description of or commentary on a visual work of art,” as defined in *Merriam Webster*, but the purpose is still the same, especially in that sense of evoking the emotional essence of the thing described for the listener or reader.

A key word here is “evoke.” Evoke means “to call forth” and “to bring to mind or recollection.” It is reminiscent of the phrase “call to me,” as in, “this painting calls to me.” A poem or a painting calls to me because it calls something forth in me--a memory or an emotion. In recording that memory/emotion, we participate in ekphrasis.

Ekphrasis inherently values the subjective response of the viewer, in this case, my student-poets. It is such a suitable genre for middle school students because it allows so much room for self-exploration. This ekphrastic poetry assignment asks students to interpret their moods in order to interpret the art.

Putting their subjective response front and center may be novel and interesting enough to engage even the most reluctant ELA students--if they have the right tools. So, my seventh graders will first develop toolkits of emotion words and color words (since colors are so connotative of emotion) to convey their feelings about a work of art. Happily, all of this results in what I will call a “secondary curriculum” of social emotional learning (SEL). The subtext of this unit is that our moods interpret the world for us.[2] We can develop emotional intelligence (EI) as we learn to accurately describe them and understand how they work.

This unit will have four main layers that support aesthetic experience and the production of ekphrastic poetry: 1.) social emotional learning through the development of a “personal lexicon of emotions,” 2.) aesthetic education through the study of art terms and color theory, as well as a guided tour of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 3.) small group work in close reading of ekphrastic poetry and detailed observation of each poem’s “muse” painting, and 4.) recursive creative writing in the form of poetry that responds to a student-selected

work of art viewed at the museum.

Background and Rationale

"...bringing cognizance to the realm of feeling has an effect something like the impact of an observer at the quantum level in physics, altering what is being observed." -- Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*

I work in a middle school in Richmond, VA that serves grades 6-8. The racial composition of our school is 79% black, 17% white, and 4% Hispanic, of more than one race, or Asian. Although our school is not yet accredited, incremental growth in state testing scores has created an atmosphere of hope. I teach seventh grade ELA to four classes of about 20 students. I will have a combination of honors, standard, and inclusive classes to teach. Honors classes typically have students whose SOL state standard test scores are >430. Standard and inclusive classes are the opposite, and contain many students who read below grade level.

About 70-80% of my students are disadvantaged, and research has shown that if all students entering middle school are at risk for disengagement and emotional distress, disadvantaged students are probably the most at risk. SEL is potentially a very efficacious strategy of intervention for at-risk students. Research into the most successful teaching in disadvantaged schools highlights curricula that incorporate students' background knowledge, create time and space for introspection and expression, and involve work that students feel is relevant to their identities and lived experiences. Research also shows that positive, trusting relationships with teachers plays perhaps the most important role in student success.[3]

Teaching students new ways to describe their moods and emotions, thus creating space to discuss and validate those feelings in class discussion and in their ekphrastic poetry, connects SEL to language arts, metacognition, *and* art appreciation. Firstly, such discussions allow my students and I to share our personal experiences, bonding and building trust. Next, the process of writing ekphrasis, indeed creating any art, involves "channeling emotions toward a productive end," a state of activity the psychologist Daniel Goleman encourages for building emotional intelligence.[4] Moreover, there is a good deal of research supporting the idea that the metacognitive process of naming an emotion can diffuse its (negative) power over behavior and self-concept.[5] My goal is not at all to minimize my students' emotional responses, but to help them utilize them as a way of seeing, a form of knowledge, and a source of creative expression. There could be direct benefits in their reading and writing and indirect benefits in their relationship to themselves.

More anecdotally, my desire to help students verbalize their emotional responses to art and poetry as a strategy for interpretation comes from my observation of students clearly having strong feelings about a poem or painting, but not knowing how to talk about it or write about it in a way that satisfied them. My students have come closest when relating any narrative elements in the work to occurences in their own lives, which I will continue to encourage, but it is my belief that just as often something less immediate draws them in. Students can use their newly acquired language of color and emotion to form increasingly articulate interpretations of the works they encounter. They can feel proud of the cognitive leaps they make, coming closer and closer to a more conceptual understanding of otherwise stale, prescriptive literary terminology like "mood."

I hope that my focus on and validation of student responses to art in the museum, as well as to the works I

present in class can live up to Louise Rosenblatt's assertion that "When the student feels the validity of his own experience, he will cease to think of literature as something that only a few gifted spirits can enjoy and understand in an original way."[6] As I work on the unit, a voice in my mind reminds me of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's implicit caution to teachers who belong to the dominant culture. My striving for a positive, non-hegemonic approach to literary, aesthetic, and emotional education may be yet imperfect. I am a white, middle-class teacher. While no expert, I have grown up appreciating the fine arts through some moderate exposure with my family and through a personal predilection toward creative writing and art making. So, while this unit is not explicitly about dismantling dominant power structures, it does seek to empower students to value their own interpretations of the world, to decide for themselves where meaning lies.

Objectives

"The reader seeks...to gain insights that will make his own life more comprehensible." Louise Rosenblatt, *Literature as Exploration*

There are five objectives for this unit. The first is for students increase their fluency in the language of emotion. By naming with newfound precision the emotions and moods they feel as a result of internal and external experiences, such as viewing art, I hope that students will develop their metacognitive skills. These include critical thinking, introspection, and self-regulation.

The next objective is for students to increase their fluency in art terminology, with an emphasis on the names of colors and color theory. In exploring color, I will also guide students to make connections between color and emotion.

The third objective is for students to develop their close reading skills, with an emphasis on the concepts of mood and theme, through the study of published ekphrastic poetry and the corresponding visual art.

My fourth objective is for students to utilize their new vocabulary in the interpretation of visual art through writing ekphrastic poetry. This will be a recursive process. Their new lexicons will help students confidently describe with detail and nuance the mood a work of art/poem creates for them. I plan to evaluate their responses in their first drafts, and then prompt them to make connections between their lives, the world they live in, and their affective responses in the second drafts. The final draft will have been revised for form and detail.

The last objective is the fuzziest, but it ties the previous four together. Ultimately, students' ekphrastic poems may be called successful if they satisfy *their* sense of the artwork's essence. In order to capture that essence, though, they must not only observe a painting or sculpture but also feel it. In short, they require an aesthetic experience at the art museum! This requires attention. It is my job to inspire them to combat indifference when at the museum and later when drafting and revising their poem. As Columbia Teachers College Professor Maxine Greene states in her talk "Notes on Aesthetic Education," "The action required is at the furthest remove from the passive gaze that is the hallmark of our time."[7] If successful, we will not only have learned new words and written poetry, but we will also have enriched our lives through developing the practice of mindfulness.

Content

The Vocabulary of Emotion

“I've never had the right words to describe my life, and now that I've entered my story, I need them more than ever.” -- Jeffrey Eugenides, *Middlesex*

English consists of three types of words: concrete, abstract, and emotion. There are said to be over 500 emotion words in English. Researchers have found that emotion words are “linked to a richer conceptual base than the other word types.”[8] Study participants were able to come up with a greater number of word-associations when presented with emotion words than with concrete or abstract words. Further, emotion words describe at least eight different categories of thought: purely affective states like happiness, affective-behavioral states like cheerfulness, affective-cognitive states like encouragement, cognitive states like certainty, cognitive-behavioral states like caution, bodily states like laziness, evaluations of character like attractive, and objective conditions like abandoned.[9] While I am not trained in interpreting such scientific studies, I can draw some implications for the importance of studying the language of emotion. I imagine various synapses firing when learning new emotion words--associations being made across the mind, a recognition of the power of language to help us make sense of ourselves.

As I wondered about this, I remembered how engaged students have been in discussions of synonyms. For example, when reading *The Scarlet Letter* one year, my high school students and I became engrossed in a discussion about the differences between types of “sad”: melancholy, wistful, poignant, and desolate. “Melancholy” carries with it the sense of pensiveness: it is gentle but heavy, lasting, and associated with disposition. “Wistful” is also gentle, but it is more about regret than pensiveness--the brow does not furrow; instead, the eyes gaze and water. What is “poignant” stings but is still a beautiful feeling, whereas “desolate” is not gentle or beautiful at all. It is heavy, empty, sort of existentially dreadful. The shades of sadness are explored by languages across the world. For example, the Portuguese word *saudade* is a poetic notion of “a vague, constant desire for something that does not and probably cannot exist, a nostalgic longing for someone or something loved and then lost.”[10] There is a word/feeling that has launched a thousand literary ships!

As we explore these shades of meaning, we can delve into etymology. An exploration of the Proto-Indo European (PIE) root “sa,” the base for *saudade* and sad, reveals how emotion words are often connected to bodily states. The root “sa” actually means “satisfied.” The sense of satiation and fullness seems to have given rise to connotations of uncomfortably full and tired--heavy. It was not until the fourteenth century that the word finally came to mean something like the “sad,” meaning unhappy, that we use today.[11] “Sad” has travelled through time as a bodily state (full of food), to a pure affective state (unhappy), and even to subjective evaluation of character (pathetic). Studying etymology lends to a better understanding of not only related words, but also connotation, polysemy, and even metaphor.

Lastly, literary moods as well as personal moods are complex and often hard to describe. In this unit, we will learn new and better words with which to do so. Students often confuse literary mood with tone, but in understanding better how our emotions work in response to the mix of stimulus (like art and literature), past experience, temperament, and so on, I hope they will begin to fully grasp how mood is an *experience* of a text,, not simply an aspect of a text (or another work of art). Mood cannot exist without their response.

Color

Like words, colors have connotations rooted in history. Like writing, combinations of colors evoke moods. An artist chooses her color palette the way a poet chooses her words. As emotion words may call up a memory of feeling that emotion (if we know what it means), subtle differences in shades of color have an effect on our thoughts and feelings.

Take the color blue, whose connotations are varied and well known. It is a special color: even the totally blind have a cone in their eye that senses blue light. Scientists theorize that this is because of its importance to our circadian rhythms. The morning has the highest concentration of blue light in our 24 hour day.[12] The connotations of blue through history can explain how we see it today. Ancient Romans wore it to funerals; Medieval artists and then religious thinkers associated it with divinity. The high price of natural blue pigments made its use in Middle Age and Renaissance painting precious. Navy blue became associated with honor and seriousness, as in military uniforms. It is also the color of the sky and bodies of water as we see them, so all the associations with the sky, night or day, and water are shared with blue. For one thing, both the sky and the ocean have depth--thus blue entails the feeling of being deep. Couple these myriad connotations from history with our personal connotations: Was blue the color of your bedroom growing up? The color of your grandmother's favorite dress? Your father's eyes?

Even reading the names of colors can be evocative of the color itself and the word's etymological meaning--ultramarine, cobalt, Prussian blue, indigo, sapphire. The sound and feel of the words can be beautiful on their own: cerulean, azure. Or they can be mysterious and ancient sounding: woad, perse.

Some colors are named objectively based on their mineral content or their place of origin, but some are named subjectively. Much like some words in the vocabulary of emotions (e.g. *saudade*), some languages' color words seem to tell a story. Consider the French word *feuillemort*, which means "having the color of a faded, dying leaf." The need for a name for that color must have arisen from the desire to capture that beauty of an autumn landscape and its effect on our emotions. In fact, *feuillemort* could, in a metaphor, describe an emotion that would otherwise be difficult to pin down. If you understand the word, and you have ever had the pleasure of a solitary walk down a tree-lined city street in New England on a late-October evening, you will understand what I mean. A related and equally beautiful concept-word is *komorebi*, the Japanese word for the color of leaves when the sunlight filters through them.[13]

And of course, as poets juxtapose emotions (such as awe and suffering in the following poem by Longfellow), painters use contrasting colors to make a point and generate emotional impact. A brief study of the color wheel with students will certainly be useful here.

Reading Ekphrastic Poetry

"Art is the antidote that can call us back from the edge of numbness, restoring the ability to feel for another." -- Barbara Kingsolver, *High Tide in Tucson*

I have chosen sixteen poems that I feel are accessible to 7th grade students, differentiation considered. Each poem speaks to a work of art that I also feel that students can access. The poems also have an emotive quality or seem to illustrate an emotion, hence I choose them for their applicability to the objectives of the unit around affective response.

I plan to teach the following three poems and to use the remaining poems for classroom activities. I chose

these poems strategically. The Longfellow poem comes with interesting biographical information that will help us to see how he came to ekphrasis. Therefore, the focus there is the poet's encounter and relationship with the image. I want my students to consider how the photograph of the mountain evokes, or even unlocks, emotion and memory for Longfellow. How did an explorer's photograph trigger such a deeply personal response for Longfellow, who had never been out West?

The focus for the Hirsch poem by contrast is my own affective response to both the painting and the poem. For the Hirsch poem, I will purposely focus my discussion on my affective response to the poem and what I think that is about. I want to model that process in all its subjectivity and weirdness so as to help my students do the same. It is important for me to share how the painting and poem evoke moods, memories, and associations for me as honestly as possible if I want my students to do the same. I have great enthusiasm for this ekphrastic pair. It serves my sense of seeing our "reflection" in art.

The last poem that I will teach is Robert Hayden's "Monet's Water Lilies." Conveniently, this poem is about going to a museum, among other things, something my students and I will do toward the end of this unit. Hayden's poem is also about the news of the world in 1965. I think it draws a lovely bridge from current events to the art museum. This poem will also take a brief close reading that will not be too taxing for my seventh graders.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "The Cross of Snow"

William Henry Jackson's photo of Mount of the Holy Cross from the top of Notch Mountain, 1873

The first poem that I will present to students is Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "The Cross of Snow." Longfellow was once a poet superstar in the United States and in Europe--a household name. Although he went out of fashion after his death (to the point of being ridiculed), I think his poetry is beautiful and no less so for being accessible. This poem will help illustrate the point I want to make that poetry and art--like the symbol of the cross--can help bring deep feelings to the surface, however painfully, and that there is great value in that for the writer as well as the reader. I hope that I will be forgiven for any forays into intentional fallacy here--the fact that we have access to the story around the poem will serve students well in their

understanding of how poets come to form their content.

We happen to have some biographical record of Longfellow's ekphrastic experience thanks to Henry's correspondance with his brother, William, who saved and commented on these letters in his own writing.[14] Longfellow's second wife, Frances Appleton, died from severe burns incurred from an accident lighting a match. (His first wife had died from complications from a miscarriage.) Longfellow incurred severe burns on his face in his attempt to save her, and the story goes that that is why he wore a beard. He was not able to attend Fanny's funeral and burial because he was in the hospital for his own burns. The tragedy was no doubt exacerbated by his sense of failure in not being able to save Fanny and the lack of closure as a result of not being able to attend the funeral--perhaps another failure in his mind. Longfellow was devastated by this. He became quite reclusive and wrote less of his own poetry, turning instead to writing translations of Dante.[15] With this information, it is interesting to imagine the writing of the "The Cross of Snow" as a turning point for Longfellow. Doing so with my students will certainly help me connect this poem to my unit's theme, even though I am touching on another critical fallacy.

The poem, an Italian sonnet, consists of an octave (the first eight lines) centered on Fanny, and a sestet (the last six lines) about the mountain. The octave tells of a ghostly presence in the poet's bedroom that keeps him awake. The tone toward the presence is reverent: "a soul more white / Never through martyrdom of fire was led / To its repose." It presents Fanny as a angel/ghost whom Longfellow feels blessed/haunted by. Correspondingly, the octave feels spooky and melancholy, but also celebratory of a "benedight," or blessed, life. In explaining how these different moods coexist, I want my students to begin to understand that mood need not be single-layered. As moods are in life, so in poetry.

The sestet may at first confuse students, who will not be familiar with sonnet structure. I will simply have them note where the poem's subject shifts. Once the location is identified, it will serve as a good illustration of the twists and turns of poetry, specifically sonnets, and how you must be patient in the process of making a whole of its parts.

The backstory to the sestet will happily help to connect those parts. Sometime in 1879, eighteen years after Fanny's death, we know that Longfellow came across a picture of a mountain with a "cross of snow" on it, aptly named the Mount of the Holy Cross, in a book about the landscape of the American West. The image was probably the first photograph taken of this fabled cross, by William Henry Jackson in 1873.[16] The cross is formed when snow fills the deep gullies in the mountainside. Why did this image, which I imagine Longfellow came across while resting in his chair by the fire one Cambridge winter's night, evoke such melancholy for Longfellow? I think it is the deep resonance of the religious symbolism. The cross that nature carved into a mountainside may have initially affected Longfellow as if it were a miracle *he* encountered during an arduous hike, an epiphany: I am that mountain; God is speaking to me. And yet, this is not exactly the tone of the poem toward the image. The tone is not awe-struck, but contemplative about suffering if not resigned to it. Note that Longfellow simply says "There is a mountain in the distant West;" there is no reference to an image in the poem; the image of the Mount of the Holy Cross is immediately an emblem--the bare rock face and the "sun-defying" ravines of snow are his life since Fanny's death, and the scars that will not heal.

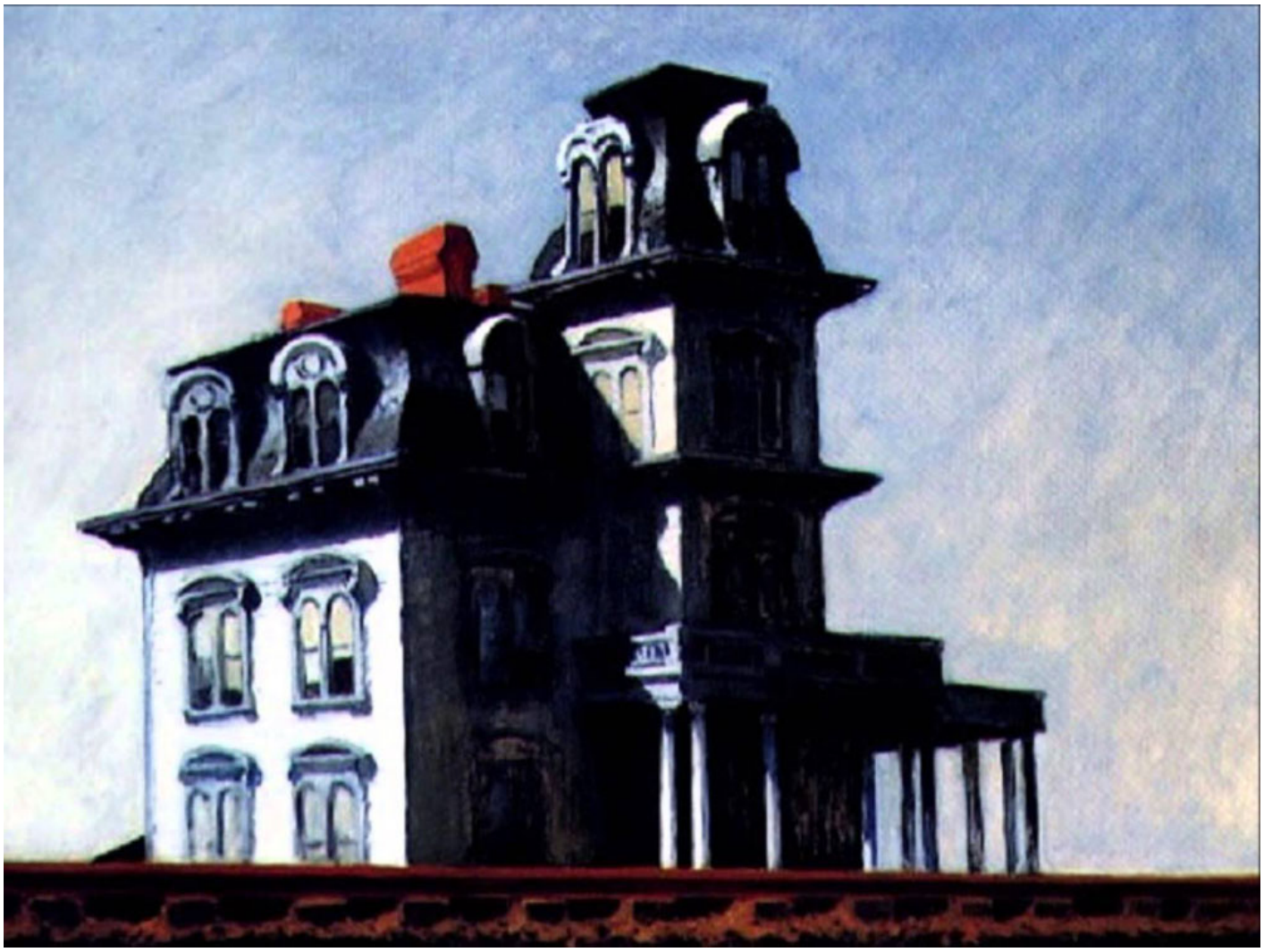
Symbols evoke emotions and memories on many levels, consciously and unconsciously. The symbol of the cross will be a familiar one to my Christian students. Even to a secular mind, it speaks eloquently of human suffering. However, suffering is not only a burden ("my cross to bear"), it is also what brings us together as humans, the reason why we need to connect to each other, and it is--theologically--the way to redemption. For Longfellow, it evokes the suffering of Fanny, his own suffering as a result of her death, and the suffering of

Christ on the cross. We are reminded that “The son of man will suffer many things” (Isaiah 53).[17] And yet believers look to the cross for comfort as well--it can symbolize both Christ’s suffering and his resurrection, and the glory of his goodness. In this last sense, we go back to the celebration of Fanny’s goodness.

In writing the poem, although it is a sad one to us, it is possible that Longfellow experienced some relief, if not catharsis. John Dewey theorizes that “expression is the clarification of turbid emotion.”[18] “Clarification” is a positive word--and this idea reminds me of the relief one feels when finally expressing, in a manner that is finally satisfactory, sorrows and worries to a loved one or a therapist. My words may not be happy ones, but it is a positive thing to say them nonetheless. It is a relief to verbally identify and confess the crosses we bear, even if they cannot be taken off of us. The cross connotes the truism that to live is to suffer, yet there is meaning, and perhaps redemption in that. In fact, if Longfellow considers his suffering his penance for Fanny’s death, maybe his “vision” of the cross represents his atonement, his coming back to his God and community (of readers).

(An extension for this poem will be an assignment to find a symbol that feels personally meaningful, connected to your experiences or identity. Students will be asked to draw the symbol and write three brief paragraphs about it. The first will describe the symbol, the next will describe the personal experience or aspect of identity it is related to, and the third will connect the two.)

Edward Hirsch, “Edward Hopper and the House by the Railroad”



Edward Hopper, *House by the Railroad*, 1925

Edward Hirsch, born in 1950 and still alive, is Hirsch's poem about Edward Hopper's *House by the Railroad* is, to me, so finely attuned to the mood of the painting that I cannot imagine one without the other. Here is an example of an ekphrastic poem that**--**I can confidently infer**--**was composed through the medium of mood.

The poem had the effect of making me appreciate the painting much more than I did on first viewing--and I think that is an interesting effect worth discussing with my students. In the following description of that process, you may note the significant shift in my tone toward Hopper's work. I want to "perform" this tone a bit for my students to help them to understand what happened for me--a very interesting aesthetic experience.

Before reading Hirsch: The colors of Hopper's sky remind me of times I am in an anxious, dysmorphic mood and a sunny day feels eerie in its disjointedness from my reality. The house itself, designed in the architectural style of high Victorian gothic, both annoys and depresses me because I see that the builders or architect put great effort into it but it is just really unattractive. I'd find more aesthetic pleasure in a split-level ranch painted maroon and mustard than in this house. Nobody wants to live here. So, there is this sense of futility.

Trying to be more analytical, I realize that Hopper's use of a relatively limited color palette in *House by the Railroad* creates the mood. The strongest colors are cool blues, and the most prominent is a truly dark navy. This combination of navy blue, hospital-johnny-blue, and fluorescent-light-white is just about the worst, and I feel concerned about the house painter's emotional state. Truthfully, I believe I have some unpleasant association with this color combination--and I don't know if it is a memory or a dream, but I am in some sort of building with these colors and the feeling is awful.

Orange is opposite blue on the color wheel, so its presence in about one-fifth of the canvas creates visual interest but not harmony. Thus, the terracotta and burnt umber of the foreground, the railroad, do little to uplift the scene, though I know they try. Kudos must be given to the chimney's lovely smooth scarlet, but really I have never seen a place more in need of emerald and *komorebi.* I imagine myself in the painting: even though I jump a train to seek out happier, greener vistas, I fear these dull blues will color my mood forever. I am surprised I am able to return to the painting without being committed.

After reading Hirsch: In his poem, Edward Hirsch does a wonderful thing in personifying Hopper's house--he evokes a heartbreaking sympathy in me for this image that I don't like looking at. This abstraction, this creative risk Hirsch takes, pays off because it captures the painting's essence in that rhetorical way I discussed in the introduction. I feel the physical ache of abandonment through the poem, and now the painting too, which at first I found too depressing to want to look very closely at. I feel so guilty and sad, as if someone just heard me making fun of them, and they walk away slowly to their lonely apartment without saying anything, and it's terrible because I know what it feels like to be made fun of too.

In one of her talks on aesthetic education, the teacher educator Maxine Green states that "coming into contact with a work of art is like coming into contact with another human being."[19] For me, that coming in to contact only happened through the support of Hirsch's poem. Yet, now I realize that if I had sat with the feeling I had originally, I could still make much of it. Does the aesthetic response need to be positive to be meaningful? I think it does not, but it is difficult because that negative response is couched in uncomfortable feelings.

In their entry on emotion in the *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetics and Poetry*, Lerner and Robinson discuss Stanley Fish's reader response theory as well as, apparently, their own valuation of emotion in the interpretation of poetry:

readers' emotional responses are often important in interpretation and evaluation not only for grasping what emotions the poem expresses but also more generally for bringing salient features of the poem to attention.... However, interpretation requires not just emoting, but reflecting on our emotional responses.[20]

I would like to extend this notion to our responses to visual art. My response to Hopper's painting was indeed interpretive. It would be silly to think that Hopper chose "hospital-johnnie blue" for his window frames because he thought it was cheery. But I would argue that it is also reflexive: The art I feel strongly about communicates back to me something about myself. Looking at a painting I more immediately love, I hear myself thinking "this is me, this is so me, if someone could understand this painting, they could understand me." It is interesting to interpret the feelings that surface. For example, why did I find it so hard to tolerate the loneliness of Hopper's house? However strange it sounds, the distaste I had for the house is connected to the distaste I can have for myself. Its shame-filled awkwardness, its self-consciousness in the face of onlookers reminds me of myself at different points in life. Its modest, self-effacing dress of colors that are not pretty, and seek to blend in with the sky, feels familiar somehow.

These feelings were and are an excellent foray into understanding the painting, as Hirsch's poem also attests. Hirsch takes it further, commenting on American culture and the darker side of progress and urbanization, but I am less interested in that. It can sit in the back of my mind; it does not at all detract from my personal experience. What I really care about is how Hirsch's poem helps me feel such tenderness toward the house, toward my awkward younger self, toward anyone who feels abandoned and out of style. And I am struck by how my experience with the painting becomes poignant, interesting, even moral.

(An extension for this poem will be an assignment to find a building or inanimate object to personify. Have conversation with and write it in dialogue form.)

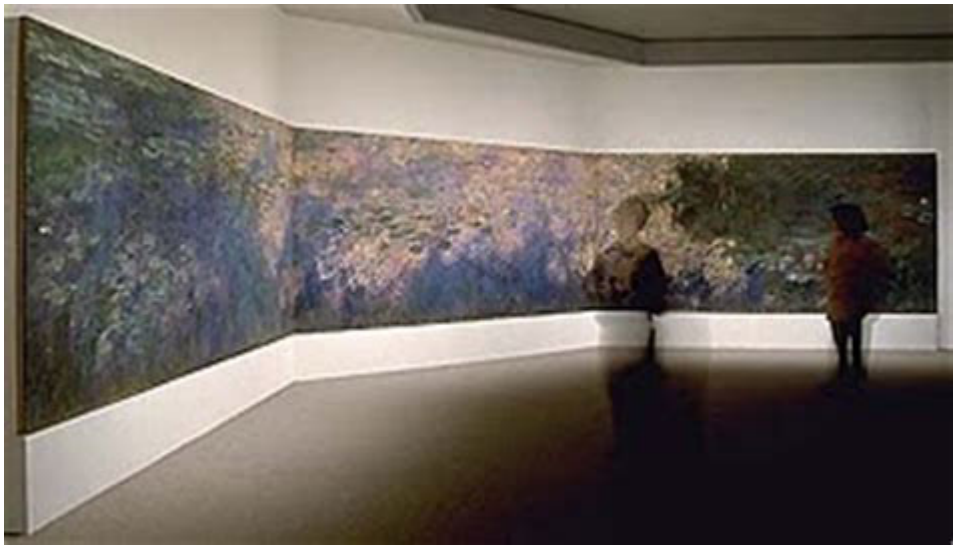
Robert Hayden, "Monet's Water Lilies"

Claude Monet, *Water Lilies,* 1914-1926, http://www.moma.org

Robert Hayden (1913-1980) did not want to be known as an African-American poet, but rather an American poet. This wish caused some controversy during his career. Some of Hayden's reasons had to do with curricular issues we still deal with today, such as the "ghettoization" of African American literature to February, Black History Month. However, the color of his skin has relevance for my students, as does his childhood. His family was poor and troubled, and he resided with an equally poor and troubled foster family most of the time. Still, he went on to work with W.H. Auden at the University of Michigan, teach at Fisk University, and serve as the first black poet in the position later to be known as Poet Laureate.[21] While none of this has to be lectured about to students, Hayden's extraordinary life circumstances are worth mentioning. It

is safe to say that Hirsch and Longfellow did not have such trials before their triumphs.

In his essay on Hayden's "Monet's Water Lilies," the poet Anthony Walton observes that "it's interesting that Hayden, a child of the inner city, thought this painting of a bygone French countryside carried him to some restorative past."[22] Yet the painting itself is not really localized, though of course we know about Monet's garden in Giverny. A huge triptych, over six feet high and spanning over forty feet in length, with no foreground or horizon, this is a painting of water and reflections. In the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art's guide to a 1978 Monet Exhibit, the authors explain that Monet "had begun to paint his experience of certain phenomena rather than the phenomena themselves." (It was around this time in Monet's life that he began to suffer from cataracts in one eye, so his new philosophy may have been influenced by necessity!)[23] Essentially, as Walton later points out, this is a painting of light, and not unrelatedly, it is also about seeing, and knowing, and believing. These are also the subjects of Hayden's poem.



Installation of *Water Lilies* at the MOMA, http://www.moma.org

In the first lines of the poem, Hayden alludes to the 1965 voting rights demonstrations in Selma and the bombing of the American embassy in Saigon, Vietnam. Here is a poem whose historical context is rather crucial to understanding the mood. Depending on our schedule, it might be worth having the students do the research on these allusions themselves. Such an activity would be illustrative of the point that allusions in literature are often sources of concentrated meaning integral to the work.

The events of March, 1965 in Selma and in Saigon were intense and deeply troubling. For over a month, under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., citizens congregated in Selma, Alabama to protest the illegal disenfranchisement of Alabama's African American population and eventually march to Montgomery. Despite the peaceful nature of the demonstration, violent reactions erupted within law enforcement and the white community. Jimmi Lee Jackson, a 26 year old black demonstrator, was shot and killed by police while he was trying to protect his mother from the police themselves. This was only the beginning. During what became known as "Bloody Sunday," civil rights demonstrators, led by Hosea Williams and John Lewis, were violently abused by police and harrassed by citizens as they attempted to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Later, in the ensuing discord, James Reeb, a white Unitarian minister, was beaten by a white mob and later died from his injuries. These atrocities led to federal protection for the marchers, and on March 21, Dr. King was finally able to successfully lead the march to Montgomery, Alabama. There must have been renewed hope for the movement. However, after the Montgomery demonstration, Viola Liuzzo, who was helping to

transport marchers back to Selma, was murdered by members of the Klu Klux Klan.[24]

Meanwhile, the United States was becoming more involved in the Vietnam War after Northern Vietnam's attacks on U.S. Destroyer Maddox, the Bien Hoa Air Base, Camp Holloway, the Pleiku Airfield, and the army barracks at Qui Nhon. Finally, the car bombing at the American Embassy in Saigon prompted President Johnson to order Operation Rolling Thunder, a three-year air bombing offensive on communist North Vietnam that began in March of 1965.[25] Soon after, the first American ground troops were committed to the conflict, which galvanized the reality and controversy of the war for the American public.

To top it all off, the U.S. government (among others) continued to test nuclear weapons after detonating two in WWII. The Cold War and the threat of nuclear annihilation were ongoing. For Hayden, a scholar of American history, the state of the nation was bleak indeed. For an African American, it was even bleaker. In his aptly titled book *Selma to Saigon*, writer Daniel S. Lucks explains the complex situation African Americans who opposed the war were in:

As a vulnerable minority, African American leftists and pacifists had been targeted and marginalized for their early opposition to the Cold War. The witch hunts of the late 1940s and early 1950w had severed the civil rights movement's long-standing engagement with pacifism and anticolonial movements in Africa and Asia (4).

That August, President Johnson pushed and passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, guaranteeing and protecting the voting rights of minorities. Such legislative successes in the civil rights movement would ironically further complicate African Americans' freedom to speak out against what was increasingly being seen as a tragically ill-conceived war. (For these reasons, Dr. King did not publicly criticize either the war or the Johnson administration until 1967.)[26]

Presumably with all of this in mind, Hayden compares the impact of knowing and feeling about the events of 1965 to nuclear "fallout." It is a rich metaphor. Literal nuclear fallout, which causes environmental and biological trauma, is compared to the aftermath of tragic events, which cause psychic and spiritual trauma. What we know affects how we see the world and the people in it. It can also "poison" our inner worlds, potentially rendering ridiculous our faith in God and in humankind.

Hayden goes on to describe his self-care routine, going to the Museum of Modern Art in New York to look at Monet's *Water Lilies*. It is as if seeing the painting washes his eyes and mind. "Here," in the museum, in the world of the painting, everything exists "in light." *Here*, looking at the painting, the poet can find harmony between what his actual eye sees and what his inner "eye of faith" sees. Here he can conflate what is seen with what is known--a temporary harmonic respite.

Hayden's appreciation of Monet makes sense. They both seem to be interested in light and all its connotative possibilities in art. Consider all of the poem's light- and sight- related words: see, light, eye, seen, iridescence, illusive, light, beheld, refracting, aura, shadow. Even "fallout" has a connection to light, as it is related to radiation and fiery debris from a nuclear explosion. The pigments in the paint "dissolve" in white, or "iridescence," which is the partial reflection of white light--or white paint. Note that Monet's palette is composed mainly of *tints*--primary colors mixed with white. The next metaphor, "flesh of light," in line nine, is especially interesting in that it seems to be referring to color, and more obliquely, paint. Supposing that *color* is the tenor of the metaphor, "flesh of light" is a brilliant vehicle. With its oblique reference to paint, and thus art, we can see how this "flesh" is illusive, but also true.

In the last stanza, Hayden uses apostrophe, directly addressing the light, and then he seems to immediately switch to addressing himself and his readers. “Here is the aura of that world / each of us has lost,” he states. Something happens here that is incredibly poignant. The despair about the wider world is transformed into gentle pathos. What have you lost? This simple question evokes memories of childhood, loved ones, unfulfilled aspirations, the literal or figurative fallout of what we have known. It is painful, but it compels a feeling of empathy for other humans just as humankind seems lost. It finally evokes a more archetypal loss of a more innocent world. We “know” this noumenal world existed because of the “shadow” is casts.

We can interpret this last metaphor thus, that the painting, and art itself, is the only evidence we have of the existence of a better world. I cannot help but see, as I look at Monet’s triptych again, distant nebulas out in space, perhaps the remnants of what was once a galaxy, perhaps the potential for a new one.

(An extension for this poem will be an assignment to describe one or two situations going on in the world today that are personally distressing, and then to describe a place where one might go to find some peace and mental balance when feeling that distress. This could be a journal entry or a poem.)

Strategies

Metacognitive Strategies

Poetry confuses people. Confusion is an “epistemic emotion,” meaning that it is categorized with other emotions connected to the learning process.[27] It will be a surprise to many of my young students of poetry to learn that being confused is not synonymous with being stupid or slow. If my students are confused during my poetry lesson, all that means is that they are paying attention and that the ideas are novel. Confusion will no longer have a negative connotation in my classroom.

While it has been made clear that this unit involves the teaching of emotion words, specifically teaching emotion words synonymous with frustration will be a special strategy to employ later when students study the ekphrastic poems. Whatever confidence and self-regulatory skills gained will be quite useful in the poetry classroom: Probably all English teachers will note that students suffer a bit of “disorientation” when reading poetry whose syntactical and connotative meanings seem strange and tricky.[28] And that disorientation can result in frustration and hopelessness.

The first step toward learning something new and simultaneously developing a growth mindset is actually acknowledging that you are confused. (I will definitely model this throughout the year.) The second step is determining what elements of the poem So, what are some words for confusion and intimidation? Can you point out the line that caused you such *chagrin*? I plan to use this method to help students realize what exactly it is that is confusing them: clearly explaining what is confusing (it’s this word being used in a new way; it’s this word I’ve never seen; it’s this weird line break in the middle of a thought) is often the first step to figuring things out yourself.

Arts Integration

This unit utilizes an arts integration model to help students access the curriculum and meet ELA standards but also simply to encourage creative thinking and aesthetic awareness. The arts inspire and energize children in

school and out of school.[29] Arts integration is inherently multimodal and thus supports different learning styles. For example, the concept of mood in literature can confuse students. However, considering it through a different angle, such as through music or painting, can open up new ways of understanding for auditory and visual learners. Well-designed arts integration strategies are typically more hands-on than traditional pedagogical methods, thus more engaging for kinesthetic learners. Bringing paint into the ELA classroom to explore the color wheel and color's effect on mood is one example of this.

A wonderfully functional philosophy of arts integration can be found through The Studio Thinking Project, a program affiliated with Project Zero and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. This project sought to find out how successful, productive art classrooms work. The researchers at Studio Thinking came to describe the eight habits of the art studio that can be adapted to nearly any classroom (these habits are not hierarchical). What follows the colon for each habit are my interpretations of these habits for this unit.

1. Develop Craft (technique and studio practice): Study how poets write ekphrastic poetry, and to some degree how painters use color; practice writing poems in the manner of the poems we study.
2. Engage and Persist (finding passion and sticking with it): Find a piece of art that moves you on the first museum trip; revisit it on the second museum trip; consider deeply why it is moving to you.
3. Envision (imagining and planning): Discuss your affective response to the art with your teacher; imagine what it is like to be an artist or a poet.
4. Express (finding and showing meaning): Express how you feel articulately; discuss poetry and art; write poetry.
5. Observe (looking closely): Closely read poetry and art.
6. Reflect (question, explain, and evaluate): Draft and revise your poem. Explain the effect the art had on you.
7. Stretch & Explore (play, use mistakes, and discover): Make up new emotion words; play with paint and "color" your emotion lexicon.
8. Understand Art Worlds (domain and communities): Visit the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts twice; listen to the museum educators.[30]

Using these habits in the ELA classroom can open up the atmosphere, making it feel more free and student-centered. The focus is on the students' work. I aim to make my method of instruction, especially in terms of the writing workshop, mirror the following description of a successful studio classroom:

…students talk among themselves quietly as they begin to work, and the teacher circles around, watching for teachable moments and zeroing in on individual students with a comment, suggestion, or critique. At a midpoint or the end of class there are often critiques in which students are gathered to share and discuss their work, sessions in which critical judgement and metacognition are nurtured.[31]

I am especially interested in trying a type of critique at the end of each writing workshop day. At these points, students could share with the class or with each other the work they had completed that day.

Choice Topics/ Menu Rubric

Students appreciate choice, and it is necessary for authenticity in a creative exercise. However, I do need to assess somehow. In this unit, students choose which visual art/poem pair they will work on in class and form groups as a result of shared interest. At the museum, students will choose which work of art they will write an ekphrastic poem about.

As they work on their poems, they may choose from a number of criteria on the rubric to work toward. There will of course be some required criteria, such as the ekphrastic nature of the poem, the successful completion of the drafting process including writing conferences with me, a minimum number of lines, the use of two well-chosen emotion words (or the explanation of their affective response in conversation using those words if they choose to let the poem speak for itself in terms of mood), the use of one or two color words, and correct spelling.

However they may choose from a group of other criteria to suit their experience with the art: taking on the perspective of the subject, comparing the art to themselves or something in their life, comparing the art to something going on in the world, having a dialogue with the art, focusing on symbolism in the art, describing the art directly, exploring their own conflicting emotional response to the art, or describing a memory the art evokes. Added will be some options for formal elements like the use of repetition, but also some options in terms of form (would they like to try a sonnet or ballad, etc…).

Activities

Introduction with Music

I am including this introductory activity, which is not explicitly mentioned in the content, because it will help students to understand how they might actually feel something in response to visual art. This activity serves as a scaffold. While the majority of adolescents probably have not had aesthetic experiences as a result of visual arts, I am going to hypothesize that they have had something close to it through music. So, students' favorite music will be used in our introduction to mood and aesthetic experiences. This activity will occur over one classroom period.

Students should be able to understand that not every work of art/piece of music/work of literature can evoke strong emotion for an individual. Because it of that, the pieces that *do* seem like inanimate friends that "just get me." My students will most readily be able to relate this feeling to their taste in music. I might ask, *"Have you ever felt so strongly about a song that you feel the need to tell others that this is my song?"* I will ask student to bring that song in for us to listen to and share in small groups. If students do not have a phone, I will download it for them on my own. In preparation for this activity, students will complete a questionnaire about their chosen song. It will ask about the first time they heard the song, if it made them think of their own life or someone else's, if it is a favorite that is shared with a friend, if any particular parts of the lyrics speak to them, if they shared the song on social media, etc.…

In class, students will divide into small groups and share their songs from their phones or computers, as well as whatever answers from the questionnaire they are comfortable sharing. Then, I will share a favorite song of my own, sharing my answers. But, I will go further to analyse the song's "formal" features: the key, the tempo, the register, the rhythm, the pitch of the singer's voice, and something called "enharmonic change."[32] I am going to invite the music teacher in, or if she is not available, a musician friend, to help me demonstrate all of this on a keyboard. Lastly, students will write in their journals a summary of three takeaways from the lesson, a reconsideration of why they love their favorite song by connecting one of the music theory points to it, and a prediction about how this will all relate to visual art and poetry.

Emotion Lexicons

This activity will take approximately one week. Students will first work with generative tables or lists that will help students to see how words and meaning are constructed. In small groups of 4-5, students will brainstorm emotion words (nouns and adjectives) using roots and affixes such as de-, un-, -y, mis-, path, -ment, -thymia, -ion, -re-, -iveness, -ment, and sent. These word parts will be on laminated slips of paper that each group will have and placed on tables around the room. then after about 10 minutes of brainstorming and jotting down words on another sheet of paper, groups will share out and post their work to the wall. The group with the most pertinently evocative emotion words will win a prize (school supply materials).

Students will then be given a list of 25 new emotion words and their definitions to read to themselves. They list will include tranquil, sanguine, elation, forlorn, bashful, sheepish, disconcerted, ennui, and other words that they are likely unfamiliar with. As they read, I will pass out stapled booklets of blank paper, 25-30 pages, front and back. After about 5 minutes of silent reading, we'll go over 12 of the new words one by one, discussing their meanings and associations wherever there is a desire to.

I will have students write "Emotion Lexicon" on the cover of their booklet. From the brainstormed words and the 12 words we went over, I will have students select however many words speak to them--from having experienced the emotion to wanting to experience it to liking the way the word sounds--and add them, one per page, to their new lexicons. (I can add new pages later if they run out.) They will be instructed to leave room on the page for adding a type of image later. Dictionaries will be provided for defining the brainstormed words or alternative definitions for the others.

We will continue to look at new emotion words, including the remaining words from the list, through the week, and students can add their favorites to their lexicons. Toward the end of the week, we will come back to the root words and suffixes. We will break apart some of the other words we've gathered. Students will be challenged to make a new word for an emotion they have experienced but that does not have a name. For inspiration, we will look at Ellen Frances Sanders' *Lost in Translation: An Illustrated Compendium of Untranslatable Words from Around the World*, and a few entries from writer Eden Sher and comic artist Julia Wertz's *The Emotionary: A Dictionary of Words that Don't Exist for Feelings that Do.*

Later, as I introduce color theory and vocabulary, we will add the next layer to the booklets. Students will be given acrylic paints to mix and experiment with, trying to find the color that, for them, fits each of their moods. They can then paint a swatch of those colors on the word's page.

Reading Ekphrastic Poetry

To introduce the thirteen poems after teaching Longfellow, Hirsch, and Hayden, I will have students do a "mood matching" exercise, wherein they try to interpret the mood of the poems and paintings, agreeing on one or two good descriptors using their lexicons. They will write the moods on sticky notes and flip over the paintings, putting the notes on the backs. One group will do the paintings and the other the poems. Then, they will match them up according to which moods seem synonymous. It would be fun to see which they were able to correctly match.

Students will work in pairs on a poem/painting. They will be given a close reading worksheet that asks questions about formal elements of the poem. There will be a section for defining unfamiliar words. Prompts will ask students to determine if the poem has a specific meter (or a regular number of syllables per line, as we may not have gone over meter yet), stanza form, and rhyme scheme. It will ask students to look for

metaphors and similes. It will ask if the poem is written in first person, third person, or second person**.** Does the poem describe the painting directly? What are the aspects of the painting or work of art that the poet seems to directly reference? Does the speaker seem to like the artwork (getting at tone)? What else does the poem bring up? What is the setting of the poem? What are the keywords in the poem? What is the mood of the poem? Does the mood ever shift and if so, where? From all of this, what do you think the theme is? What is the poem really about and what is it saying about that subject?

While I will teach close reading skills using poetic and literary terminology, I will also bring in the use of questions and prompts that require the use of those emotion lexicons, and art glossaries, which students can pull out and add to throughout the unit. As we examine the poems and their works of art together, some questions will be: *What is the mood of this poem for you? What mood do you think the poet felt when looking at the painting? What do you think is the poet's attitude toward the subject of the painting? What mood would your poem about this painting be? What would it focus on? What does the poet like or dislike about the painting? Which poems seem to be about something happening either in the poet's life or in the poet's world at the time?*

Pairs will present their findings to the class. I will model all of this first, including the presentation, in presenting those first three poems, so that students will understand the process.

Museum Trips

The education director and tour manager at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts have helped me to plan our field trips to the museum. We are lucky because this world-class museum is only a 15-minute walk away from our school. However, transportation will be provided for students with disabilities related to mobility. I will bring two classes at a time, twice. The first visit will involve students breaking into four groups of ten and following a docent and chaperone for a tour of the museum. After a break for lunch on the lawn of the museum's sculpture garden, students will be allowed independent time, about twenty minutes, to revisit favorite pieces and choose three artworks that they might write an ekphrastic poem about (in case an exhibit changes and their first choice is not there on the second visit).

The second visit will be a quiet one, with notebooks and a copy of the rubric for their ekphrastic poetry writing. With permission, we will photograph the art and I will print it for students to refer back to.

Chaperones for the trips will hopefully include art education students from Virginia Commonwealth University, who frequently visit my school, and art educators from the Visual Arts Center, a community art center in Richmond.

Resources

Materials for the Classroom

Ekphrastic Poems

I choose the sixteen ekphrastic poems for my classes, but there are of course many more ekphrastic poems to choose from. The first twelve poems are available online. The last four poems are from the book of ekphrastic

poems *World Make Way: New Poems Inspired by Art from the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins, which contains seventeen poems written for a young audience.

1. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “The Cross of Snow”
2. Edward Hirsch, “Edward Hopper and the House by the Railroad”
3. Robert Hayden, “Monet’s Waterlilies”
4. Mary Leader, “Girl at a Sewing Machine”
5. Yusef Komunyakaa, “Facing It”
6. Cathy Song, “Girl Powdering Her Neck”
7. Anne Carson, “Room in Brooklyn”
8. Kate Daniels, “War Photograph”
9. Lisa Mullenneaux, “Too Hot, Too Hot”
10. Natasha Tretheway, “Kitchen Maid”
11. Neil Ellman, “Botanical Laboratory”
12. Matthew Olzman, “Replica of the Thinker”
13. Cynthia Cotton, “Resistance”
14. Marilyn Nelson, “Studio”
15. Marilyn Singer, “Paint Me”
16. Alma Flor Ada, “Dancing”

Web Resources

Sources that I will use to help students develop their own lexicon of emotions will include the interactive website by Paul Ekman, *Atlas of Emotions*, which was commissioned by the Dalai Lama. Students will also visit *The Visual Thesaurus*, another interactive website that is fairly self-explanatory.

During the section on color and art terminology, I will have students visit the Cleveland Institute of Art’s online *Glossary of Art Terms*, a beautiful and free publication. The artist Jill Poyerd created a fantastic video titled *Emotion in Art* that will help me to tie the three subjects of my unit--art, emotion, and poetry--together.

Further Reading for Teachers

I highly recommend two books by the poet Kenneth Koch on teaching poetry to children: *Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?* and *Wishes, Lies, and Dreams*. Koch is my hero for teaching poetry, and his work helps me help my students unlock their capacity for abstraction and brilliance.

Notes

1. Welsh, “Ekphrasis.”
2. Felski and Fraiman, *New Literary History*, vii.
3. Becker and Luthar, “Social Emotional Factors,” 204.
4. Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 95.
5. Lieberman, “Searching, 1.”
6. Rosenblatt, *Literature as Exploration*, loc. 937.
7. Greene, *Variations*, 13.

8. Schrauf, “Emotion Words,” *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the Language Sciences.*
9. Schrauf, “Emotion Words,” *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the Language Sciences.*
10. Sanders, *Lost in Translation*, np.
11. *Etymology Online*, “Sad.”
12. St. Clair, *The Secret Lives of Color*, 179.
13. Sanders, *Lost in Translation*.
14. Cox, “Longfellow, 97”
15. Cox, “Longfellow, 97”
16. SummitPost.org, “Holy Cross, Mount of the.”
17. *Britannica Academic*, "Christianity."
18. Lerner and Robinson, “Emotion,” np.
19. Greene, *Variations*, 16.
20. Lerner and Robinson, “Emotion.”
21. Poets.org, “Robert Hayden.”
22. Walton, “The Eye of Faith,” 328.
23. Moffett and Wood, “Introduction,” *Monet’s Years at Giverny*, 12.
24. The Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute,“Selma to Montgomery March.”
25. Tucker and Tucker, “Overview of the Vietnam War,” *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War*.
26. Lucks, *Selma to Saigon,* 7.
27. Lodge and Kennedy, “Confused,” *The Conversation.*
28. Eva-Wood, “Do Feelings Come First,” 568.
29. Hetland and Winner, *Studio Thinking* 2, 8.
30. Hetland and Winner, *Studio Thinking* 2, 5.
31. Hetland and Winner, *Studio Thinking* 2, 13.
32. Shariatmadari, “Why Does Music Give Us Chills,” *The Guardian.*

Appendix

This unit covers the following Virginia Standards of Learning for seventh grade English Language Arts.

7.1 The student will participate in and contribute to conversations, group discussions, and oral presentations.

a) Communicate ideas and information orally in an organized and succinct manner.

7.4 The student will read to determine the meanings and pronunciations of unfamiliar words and phrases within authentic texts.

a) Identify word origins and derivations.

b) Use roots, cognates, affixes, synonyms, and antonyms to expand vocabulary.

c) Identify and analyze figurative language.

d) Identify connotations.

f) Extend general and specialized vocabulary through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

7.5 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of fictional texts, narrative nonfiction, and poetry.

c) Identify conventional elements and characteristics of a variety of genres.

d) Describe the impact of word choice, imagery, and literary devices including figurative language.

f) Use prior and background knowledge as a context for new learning.

g) Make inferences and draw conclusions based on the text.

7.8 The student will edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, and paragraphing.

b) Choose appropriate adjectives and adverbs to enhance writing.

e) Edit for verb tense consistency and point of view.

h) Use correct spelling for commonly used words.

Bibliography

Becker, Bronwyn E., and Suniya S. Luthar. 2002. “Social-Emotional Factors Affecting

Achievement Outcomes Among Disadvantaged Students: Closing the Achievement Gap.” *Educational Psychologist* 37 (4): 197–214.

A very compelling study surveying the most effective programs for SEL in high-poverty schools, highlighting the great necessity for positive student-teacher relationships and positive school-culture.

Britannica Academic, s.v. "Christianity," accessed July 16, 2018,

https://academic.eb.com/levels/collegiate/article/Christianity/105945.

My use of this article was focused on information about the cross and its symbolism and a section called “The Problem of Suffering.”

Cox, James M. "Longfellow and His Cross of Snow." *PMLA* 75, no. 1 (1960): 97-100.

doi:10.2307/460431.

A thorough biographical reading of Longfellow’s poem. This essay also explores the intertextual relationship between Dante’s Inferno and “The Cross of Snow,” comparing Dante’s Beatrice to Longfellow’s deceased wife.

Eva-Wood, Amy L. “Does Feeling Come First? How Poetry Can Help Readers Broaden Their Understanding of Metacognition.” *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy: A Journal from the International Reading Association* 51, no. 7 (2008): 564–76.

One of the most inspiring readings for this unit, a comprehensive examination of poetry and metacognitive thinking skills. Highly recommended for teachers interested in implementing this unit.

Felski, Rita, and Susan Fraiman. "Introduction." *New Literary History* 43, no. 3 (2012): V-Xii.

http://www.jstor.org/stable/23358871.

An exciting introduction to affect theory and its applications to literary studies, politics, and life in general, the writers seek to “recast ‘moodiness’” as the “the flavor of our days” (xii).

Goleman, Daniel. *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*. Random House Publishing Group, 2012.

Seminal work on social and emotional intelligence arguing urgently for more attention to its development and maintenance. Goleman writes urgently about the need for SEL in public schools.

Greene, Maxine. *Variations on a Blue Guitar: The Lincoln Center Institute Lectures on Aesthetic Education*. Teachers College Press, 2001.

A series of lectures, somewhat repetitive and rhapsodic in nature, that are nevertheless inspiring and informative regarding the deeper integration of the arts in public education.

Hetland, Lois, Ellen Winner, Shirley Veenema, and K. Sheridan. *Studio Thinking 2*. Teachers College Press, 2014.

A compelling blueprint for adopting the structures of successful art studio-classrooms to the non-art classroom.

Kennedy, Gregor, and Jason M. Lodge. “Confused? Don’t Worry Because That Can Be a Good Thing.” *The Conversation*, September 13, 2016. Accessed Aug. 1, 2018. http://theconversation.com/confused-dont-worry-because-that-can-be-a-good-thing-64421.

An informal yet well-researched look at the benefits of admitting you are confused, and the limits of those benefits.

Lerner, L. D, and J. Robinson. “Emotion.” In *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, edited by Roland Green, Stephen Cushman, and Clare Cavanaugh. 4th ed. Princeton University Press, 2012. https://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/prpoetry/emotion/0?institutionId=1032

This entry explains in depth how theorists and writers themselves have historically viewed the role of emotion in the production and valuation of literature. An interesting and useful read for teachers interested in beginning a study of affect theory.

Lieberman, Matthew D. “Searching for implicit emotion regulation.” In *The Nature of Emotion*, edited by R. Davidson, A. Shackman, A. Fox & R. Lapate. 2nd ed. Oxford University Press, in press. Accessed August 15, 2018.http://www.scn.ucla.edu/pdf/Lieberman(2015)NatofEmo.pdf

A very readable overview of affective labeling and its efficacy in emotional regulation.

Lucks, Daniel S. *Selma to Saigon: The Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War.* Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2014. Accessed August 10, 2018. https://muse.jhu.edu/

A fascinating and important volume detailing the often overlooked connections between the Cold War, the Civil Rights Movement, and the (protests of) the Vietnam War.

Rosenblatt, Louise Michelle. *Literature as Exploration*. Modern Language Association of America, 1995. Kindle.

This book is a classic that can truly be inspiring and reinvigorating for ELA teachers. It serves as a guide for teachers and readers to utilize literature not as a means to an end (correctly applying one's memorization of literary terms to the text), but as a means to re-humanizing ourselves.

"Selma to Montgomery March | The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute." n.d. Accessed August 10, 2018. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/selma-montgomery-march.

An excellent resource, part of a comprehensive encyclopedia, for learning about Dr. King and his times.

Shariatmadari, "Why Does Music Give Us Chills," *The Guardian*. September 2, 2015. Accessed July 30, 2018. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/sep/02/why-does-music-give-us-chills-google

An article worth sharing with students about what is happening in our brains when we get those pleasant chills listening to music, among other effects.

St. Clair, Kassia. *The Secret Lives of Color*. Penguin Books, 2016.

A very fun and useful book that provides interesting historical and cultural facts and stories about specific colors that can be shared with students.

Summit Post.org. "Mount of the Holy Cross." Accessed July 18, 2018. https://www.summitpost.org/mount-of-the-holy-cross-1873/786826

This website, run by mountaineers, details the story of the famous photograph of the Holy Cross, as well as information pertinent to actually hiking the mountain and its neighbors.

Tucker, Spencer C., and Tucker. "Overview of the Vietnam War." In *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War: A Political, Social, and Military History*, edited by Spencer C. Tucker. 2nd ed. ABC-CLIO, 2011. https://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/abcvw/overview_of_the_vietnam_war/0?institutionId=1032

An overview of events leading up to and then comprising the Vietnam War. Useful for teachers who are not well-read in the era.

Walton, Anthony. "The Eye of Faith ['Monet's 'Waterlilies'']." In *Robert Hayden: Essays on the Poetry*, 328–31, 2001.

A brief and eloquent essay describing Hayden's poem and its relation to his life, times, and his Bahá'í faith.

Welsh, Ryan. "Ekphrasis." *TheUniversityofChicago: TheoriesofMedia: KeywordsGlossary. Web* 1 (2007). Accessed July 18, 2018. http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/ekphrasis.htm.

I found this article to be a nice refresher on ekphrasis and its history.

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