

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It has been an exciting year. Your children have grown as learners and have made great progress towards the kindergarten standards. As the year comes to a close, students will use the reading and writing skills they have learned throughout the year to explore the genre of poetry. You have seen your child progress from copying a journal prompt and creating a matching illustration, to sounding out words and progressing toward forming sentences. Currently, most are able to write a paragraph, with or without a prompt, and write a whole page. The exploration of poetry will allow your child to develop their creativity and expression through a different literary form.

Poetry is "a concise and memorable case of language, with intense feeling, imagery, and qualities of sound that bounce pleasingly off the tongue, tickle the ear, and leave the mind something to ponder" (Gill, 2007). And poetry can be so much more; it can be a "distillation of experience that captures the essence of an object, feeling, or thought above all else, children need to know that people write poems to share their experiences." (Gill, 2007) The area of poetry is often overlooked

in kindergarten. However, in order for your child to be a well-rounded writer, they need to dip their toe into the unknown genre and begin to explore. Growing up, I thought that poetry wasn't for me and only for poets and "creative types." Research show that "poetry is the most neglected component in the language arts curriculum and that there is a sharp decrease in the amount of time teachers spend reading and sharing poetry with their classes as students advance from the primary to the intermediate levels in elementary school." (Minguez, 2005) Since we currently don't focus on poetry at our school, I feel that this is an important initiative.

Through this week-long unit, the students will be exposed to poetry, examining the differences between poetry and other forms of writing. They will explore figurative language, how to use details in their writing and will learn about literary devices, such as similes, metaphors and acrostics. The PowerPoint for this unit, available through our class website, will provide the students with an overview of the information that will be covered and show examples of what poetry looks like. The students will explore the different formats, structures and looks of poetry.

They will continue to explore poetry through their daily morning journal, adding more genres in their repertoire. My goal is to be able to expand their writing abilities and learn about a new genre of writing.

Why focus on the area of poetry within the kindergarten classroom? The benefits of poetry will be visible in your child's reading and writing skills. Exposing children to various literary forms expands their writing and reading abilities. The students improve their reading and writing abilities through sheer exposure. Your child will make their own meaning when reading the word of other writers which shapes the meaning of what they write.

Throughout the year, your child has grown as a reader and I've have seen this progress mirrored within their writing. They are more fluently reading sight words and utilizing them with ease in their writing. Poetry can help with fluency, sight word recognition, blending and comprehension. "The use of poetry in the classroom can help build student confidence and improve their reading skills and attitudes." (Wilfong, 2008) During this unit, I will be sending home poetry for you to read with your child, as well their own writing. "When we share poetry with

children, we find that some of our most rewarding experiences occur when they are able to make some connection between their own experiences and the images being evoked by the poet.” (McClure, 1999) This sharing process will allow you and your child to interact and connect. The students will also be exposed to poetry from classic poets, as well as and children’s poetry. “When children read high-quality literature, they not only appreciate it but also ‘mine’ the print for ideas for their own writing. An added benefit of using great poetry is that students are exposed at an early age to the language of the past and to classic literature.” (Certo, 2004) Certo asserts that by providing quality models such as classic poetry, a form of mentorship can occur between children and the published writers.

As we begin this journey, I want to provide you with resources to explore this genre with your child. I want to encourage you to use the resources that are included in the homework packet and on our class website. Some poems included are from “Here’s a Little Poem,” by Jane Yolen and “Please Bury Me in the Library,” by J. Patrick Lewis. In addition your child’s fluency folder will have poems for your at-home fluency check. Let your child read poems to you, as well as read

poems to them. I encourage you to share poems that you enjoyed as a child with your child. Thank you for taking an active role in your child's education.

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Kindergarten Teacher

Poinciana Elementary

References:

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Tool 1:

Teacher: Mrs. Lockwood
Grade Level: K
Dates: 4/8/13-4/15/13
Subject: Language Arts
Unit: Poetry
Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.5

Lesson 1: Comparison Poetry and Writing

Objective: The student will be able to identify the characteristics of poetry.

The introduction of the unit we will read *Insectopedia* by Douglas Florian. This will introduce students to the idea that poems look different and sound different from our normal narrative writing. We will compare books we normally listen to, to poems: *The Arrow and The Song* by Henry W. Longfellow, *Little Things* by Ebenezer Cobham Brewer, *Sweet and Low* by Alfred Tennyson *My Shadow* by Robert Louis Stevenson, *True Royalty* by Rudyard Kipling, Then we will create a "Poetree" will be where we place our ideas and characteristics of poetry

Lesson 2: Details and Figurative Language

Objective: The student will be able to describe an object in detail.

Materials: Website www.brainpopjr.com segment writing with your senses
Worksheet with four boxes

Activities: The students will learn about describing objects in detail by picking four items around the room describing them without using the word and seeing if their team can guess what object they picked. They will work in cooperative groups that will allow them to learn from each other and work together. The ending activity will have the students create clouds and use rainbow strips to describe themselves.

Anchor chart describing: spring

Figurative Language Continued

Objective: Student will be able to create a simile.

Materials: Crazy like A Fox by Loreen Leedy

Simile worksheet ____like a _____

Activities:

We will pick an object together. We will use “the like a chart” to describe that object. I will encourage my students to write about one of the four objects they selected on their described chart. They will describe that object using some of those descriptive words.

Lesson 5: Metaphors

Objective: Students will be able to write a metaphor.,

Materials: ____ is _____ worksheet

Activities: Describe feelings through an anchor chart happy is _____. Mad is _____. etc. I will use myself to show the students how to describe feeling using metaphors. Then I will show them how they are used in poetry and writing.

Lesson 6: Rhyme

Objective: The student will be able to identify rhymes in poetry.

Materials: In the swim by Douglas Florian

The students will listen to and identify rhymes within poetry. The student will be able to review rhyming words through this activity.

Lesson 7: Acrostics

Objective: The student will be able to use the letters of their name to describe themselves.

Materials: Rainbow Namebows

Activities: I would start with a letter and have the students name a word that begins with that sound. We would practice through different letters. Then I would have my students help me with my name and words that I could use. The students will explore the idea of acrostics by using our names as a starting point to describe themselves.

Closure and Evaluation

The students will be given a topic they will work on it for the week creating an

illustration and polishing their work to share with the class. After they share their work aloud with the class their poetry will be published on the bulletin board and then placed in the school library for future classes to read.

Additional Resources:

www.brainpopjr.com

www.readthinkwrite.org

<http://www.ncte.org/poetry>

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/national-poetry-month-teacher-resources-matt-davis>

Some of the poems that will be shared during the unit:

<http://storyit.com/Classics/JustPoems/>

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/national-poetry-month-teacher-resources-matt-davis>

Tool 2:

Lesson 1 Detailed Lesson Plan Format

Focus: Writing

Topic: Figurative Language and Details

Objective: Students will be able to describe an object in detail.

The lesson will begin with me reading a story about a person that I wrote. It will be about a staff member from school that the students know. I will write the story in detail at the end of the story I would ask for guesses about who it is. Then I will ask for suggestions about how I described that person that gave them a clue as to who I was writing about. Then we will watch the brainpopjr video clip. The segment will describe how to use your senses to describe what you are writing. We will then use an anchor chart to describe spring using our senses. After completing the anchor chart the students will be split into heterogeneous cooperative groups. They will each have a role in the group: leader, recorder, checker, and speaker. They will work together to pick 4 items, they will then work on describing the objects. Then they will come back to the carpet and have their speakers share their work. When they are done the class will try to guess what object they are describing. Finally the evaluation

will have the students write their names on a cloud, pick pieces of colored paper and describe themselves usually descriptive language. This will be done independently they will be graded based on a rubric checklist based on completing the activity, have at least 3 colors in their rainbow, and whether the words are descriptive.

Tool 3:

Sent as an attachment Powerpoint meant to be used at the beginning of the unit. The intended audience is a kindergarten class.