Dear Educator,

I am a Reading and ESL teacher from Omaha, Nebraska and I am sharing this curriculum with you to offer several simple ways to make poetry instruction engaging as part of the “Read A Poem To A Child” literacy initiative.

The following pages offer some curriculum ideas that include Five Senses Poem, Taking On A Different View, Visualized Poems, the Half Poem, Poetry Books, and Poetry Day, followed by sample poetry book that I have found useful in bringing content together in a fun and useful way.

Of course, feel free to improvise curriculum in any way you think is best based on the interests of your classroom and the age group you are working with. I have also included some easy links to websites where you can explore more options to help you design and modify your own poetry teaching ideas.

I hope this curriculum is useful and wish you the very best in this great adventure of poetry.

Sandi Mathews-Thrasher
Simple Ways to Make Poetry Instruction Engaging

Teaching poetry to Elementary students has always been an inspiring experience for me as well as my students. I love reading the poems that my students write, but sharing them with the class is so much more powerful. I would like to share some simple but effective ways to make your experience with poetry more exciting, more interactive, and more creative.

Writing a descriptive poem that relates to the five senses gives students the opportunity to experience a keen awareness of the world. You can start by choosing an object or topic – something special or something mundane, and have the students describe every little detail of it. The following template is used to describe their object or topic.

My Five Senses Poem
Title (The Name of the Object or Topic) Fall
Line 1: Looks like: Bright orange and red leaves
Line 2: Sounds like: Crunching of leaves underfoot
Line 3: Smells like: Rich aromas of pumpkin pie and cinnamon
Line 4: Tastes like: Warm apple cider and sweet maple syrup
Line 5: Feels like: Bumpy pinecones, smooth pumpkins, and soft sweaters

Taking on a Different View consists of writing poems from the perspective of a person, animal, or object other than yourself. Encourage students to think like something else. This could be as funny or serious as they want to be. What is it like to be a squirrel in a
tree? What is it like to be a prince in a castle? What is it like to be a chair – do they long to be sat on? Or are you smushing them each time you thump down on their laps?

One of my most memorable experiences was when the students visualized the poems read to them by creating works of art. The students can sketch with pencils, chalk, use paint or crayons to express the emotion of the poem to illustrate the imagery. When they are finished, I hang their pictures on a bulletin board to create a gallery of poetry inspired works!

Turn poetry into play by having the students write a **Half Poem**. Then distribute the poems randomly to be finished by a fellow classmate. Return the poem to the students who started them and ask them to share the finished poem, and have them guess who wrote the closing lines.

A meaningful idea for my students is to give them the opportunity to shine the spotlight on their own imaginative talents and potential by creating their own **Poetry books**. The types that are included in the book are acrostic, shape, Haiku, personification, and Diamante. Each poem has an example, a practice prompt, and blank page for each type for the students to create. It is both teacher and student friendly and exemplifies the gradual release of instruction: modeled, shared, guided, and independent learning.

I am including at the end of this lesson plan, “The Poetry Book for Beginner’s” show above. Feel free to use and share as you like!
My students and I hosted a “Read A Poem To A Child” Poet’s Day as part of the global initiative which calls upon poets and poetry lovers to pick a day in the last week of September to read poetry to children. I had my students dress up as their favorite poet. They researched their poet in order to be able to answer simple questions, such as, “Where did you live?” “When did you start writing poetry?” or “What was your favorite poem?”

Also, during “Read A Poem To A Child” Poet’s Day, local poets were invited to the school and asked to share their poetry with the students. These poets did not have to be children’s poets; however, they were asked to read a poem that creates images that students will understand. If their own poetry was too adult in nature, we asked them to read their favorite children’s poem, maybe one that was read to them as a child.

These ideas that are shared here are meant to encourage students to think more creatively, and to help them discover the joys of poetry. I hope they make the teaching of poetry a relaxed, playful, and fun experience as well.

Sandi Mathews-Thrasher, Reading/ESL Teacher
LINKS TO ADDITIONAL POETRY TEACHING CURRICULUM RESOURCES:

BLACK OUT POETRY
https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/blog-posts/john-depasquale/blackout-poetry/?fbclid=IwAR2aYWhZc0Awld-h5Z_HDHHiwApRi5q8iFGUANTMfqPi-wW0vRChmuAnaQA

EDUTOPIA
https://www.edutopia.org/blog/16-resources-national-poetry-month-marc-anderson?fbclid=IwAR0u1yEiKvwVdjNWx-R4xwvh8BWUb4wurCvVA1p6BP68tBmZd-OS542Gyc

NEA
http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/bringing-poetry-to-the-classroom-grades-K-5.html?fbclid=IwAR0pdxFalw2mEg-8O6dR2snfQs0q_fzGYJ_SW-RKxeBNaIXRD-z1TrmXW8#.XKv9CLP0G1A.facebook
Poetry Book for Beginners

Acrostic
Shape
Haiku
Personification
Diamante

Example, practice prompt, and blank page for each type!
My poetry Book

By ____________________

______________________
My poetry Book

By ___________________
My poetry Book

By ________________

__________________
I can write... ACROSTIC poems!

Example

S - Students work hard
C - Cool science experiments
H - Happy to see friends
O - Outstanding work
U - Our class is fun
L - Learning every day

Try It!

R - 
E - 
C - 
E - 
S - 
S - 
I can write... **ACROSTIC** poems!

**Write Your Own**

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**Illustrate**

K Payne 2015
I can write... **SHAPE** poems!

**Example**

Rain is falling quickly from the sky, Drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip.

Rain, rain, please go away.

**Try It!**

Clouds...
I can write... SHAPE poems!

Write Your Own
I can write... **HAIKU** poems!

**Example**

Reading is easy.
5 syllables

Letters, words, and sentences
7 syllables

I like to read books!
5 syllables

**Try It!**

Math is so much fun!
5 syllables

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7 syllables

---

5 syllables
I can write... **HAIKU** poems!

**Write Your Own**

__________
5 syllables

__________
7 syllables

__________
5 syllables

**Illustrate**
I can write... PERSONIFICATION poems!

Example

The School Building

Keeping children safe every day.
Protecting, listening, learning.
Filled with knowledge and joy,
Sad to see the children leaving.

Try It!

Raindrops

Jumping from the sky to the ground,
landing on houses, heads, and trees.

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........................................

K Payne 2015
I can write... **DIAMANTE** poems!

**Example**

**Synonym Diamante Poem**

- **Noun – Topic**: ice cream
- **Adjective**: cold
- **Adjective**: creamy
- **Verb**: scooping
- **Verb**: swirling
- **Verb**: dripping
- **Noun**: sprinkles
- **Noun**: syrup
- **Noun**: chocolate
- **Noun**: cone
- **Verb**: stirring
- **Verb**: sprinkling
- **Verb**: licking
- **Adjective**: frozen
- **Adjective**: fruity
- **Topic Synonym (noun)**: sherbet
I can write... DIAMANTE poems!

Try It!

Synonym Diamante Poem

Noun – Topic
dog

Adjective
furry

Verb
barking

Noun
tail

Noun
bone

Verb
running

Adjective
playful

Topic Synonym (noun)
puppy
I can write... **DIAMANTE** poems!

**Write Your Own**

**Synonym Diamante Poem**

- Noun - Topic
- Adjective
- Adjective
- Verb
- Verb
- Verb
- Noun
- Noun
- Noun
- Noun
- Noun
- Verb
- Verb
- Verb
- Adjective
- Adjective
- Topic Synonym (noun)
I can write... DIAMANTE poems!

Example

Antonym Diamante Poem

Topic 1 (noun)
summer

Adjective
warm

Adjective
bright

Verb
swimming

Verb
playing

Verb
traveling

Noun
beach

Noun
pool

Noun
snowman

Noun
ice

Noun
snowing

Verb
sledding

Verb
freezing

Adjective
cold

Adjective
white

Topic 2 - Noun (Antonym)
winter

K Payne 2015
I can write... DIAMANTE poems!

Try It!

Antonym Diamante Poem

Topic 1 (noun)
- day
  - Adjective
  - bright
  - Verb
  - working
  - Noun
  - sun
  - Noun
  - moon
  - Verb
  - sleeping
  - Adjective
  - dark
  - Topic 2 - Noun (Antonym)
  - night
I can write... DIAMANTE poems!

Write Your Own

Antonym Diamante Poem

1. **Topic 1 (noun)**
   - Adjective
   - Adjective
   - Verb
   - Verb
   - Verb
   - Noun
   - Noun
   - Noun
   - Noun
   - Verb
   - Verb
   - Noun

2. **Topic 2 – Noun (Antonym)**
THANK YOU!