

5W Poems

Overview

A 5W poem draws from the conventions of a news story by asking who, what, where, when, and why. This format can produce short poems, as well as help students develop their comprehension and summarization skills.

Langston Hughes wrote the “Negro Speaks of Rivers” on a train to Mexico when he was 18 years old to celebrate the strength of the black community.

Lesson

1. Read different 5W poems and ask students to describe the characteristics. Record the observations on a chart.
2. Show the students the format of a 5W poem and explain that the 5Ws are used in journalism to highlight and summarize the key points of a news story. This format also can be used to generate non-rhyming poems.

Line 1: Who	
Line 2: What	
Line 3: Where	
Line 4: When	
Line 5: Why	

3. Using a website such as **biography.com**, **poetryfoundation.org**, or **poets.org**, write a shared poem about a famous writer. Record notes that answer the questions who, what, where, when, and why.
4. Once the shared poem is completed, ask students to pick topics and write their own 5W poems. Students can write about famous figures, but they may also look through newspaper stories and use the details to craft poems.
5. Ask the students to polish their poems and share them with the class.

Cinquain Poems

Overview

Cinquain poems are five-line poems with 22 syllables (2, 4, 6, 8, and 2):

Line 1: Two syllables

Line 2: Four syllables

Line 3: Six syllables

Line 4: Eight syllables

Line 5: Two syllables

Lesson

1. Use a mind map to create a scene. Write the scene in the middle and record impressions and details in the spokes.
2. Write a draft of a cinquain on a sheet of paper using the mind map for ideas.
3. Describe the central scene using the right number of syllables for each line.
4. Arrange and revise the poem using the rules for a cinquain poem and highlight the central image.
5. Underline your favorite words and phrases.
6. Publish a final draft according to the rules of this form.

Homework
takes much too long
it snatches your free time
and rattles your brain until you
give up!

Peanut
butter jelly
sandwiches for breakfast
make me hyperactive all day—
then CRASH!

Alternate Format Cinquain

Title (optional)

Line 1: One word

Line 2: Two words

Line 3: Three words

Line 4: Four words

Line 5: One word

Golden

First

sign of

daylight, yellow flower

parts lips for morning

kiss.



Color Poems

Overview

Playing with colors and the five senses offers students an easy entry into poetry and an exciting new world of figurative language such as metaphor, simile, and personification.








Resources

- “Color” by Christina Rossetti
- copies of *Color Poems Chart* (colorpoems.pdf)

Lesson

1. Read aloud “Color” by Christina Rossetti, and identify the way she describes different colors in her poem.
2. Ask students to each pick a color and describe it for someone else.
3. Ask students to expand their descriptions by adding details and images. For example, students might say *yellow is the sun*. Encourage them to build this comparison by adding details such as *yellow is the sound of splashing water* or *yellow is melting ice cream*.
4. Allow students time to identify different sounds, smells, tastes, and textures to describe a color and complete the chart.
5. When students have completed the chart, ask them to select the most interesting comparisons to draft color poems. Allow time for students to compose color poems that include similes, metaphors, and imagery.








APPENDIX B / POETRY FORM MINI-LESSONS / COLOR POEMS CHART

Sense	Description
 How does the color smell?	
 What does the color feel like?	
 What does the color look like?	
 What does the color sound like?	
 What does the color taste like?	
 What kind of feelings are this color?	
 What places and experiences are this color?	



Extension

Have students make collages that complement the messages in their poems.

Sense	Description
 <p>How does the color smell?</p>	
 <p>What does the color feel like?</p>	
 <p>What does the color look like?</p>	
 <p>What does the color sound like?</p>	
 <p>What does the color taste like?</p>	
 <p>What kind of feelings are this color?</p>	
 <p>What places and experiences are this color?</p>	

I Love Poems

Overview

Eloise Greenfield's book, *Honey, I Love*, is written through the eyes of a child about things they love, such as riding a train and skipping rope. In this lesson, students re-examine their conception of love poems by investigating different kinds of love and finding joy in the events of everyday life.

Resource

Greenfield, E. (2016). *Honey, I Love, And Other Love Poems*. HarperCollins.

Lesson

1. Read *Honey, I Love* by Eloise Greenfield, and ask students to contribute to a shared list of things and people they love. Discuss which items are unique or unexpected.
2. Have students each draw a large heart on a blank sheet of paper. Ask them to write things they love in the centers of their hearts. For example, they could answer these questions on their papers:
 - What are your favorite activities?
 - What is your favorite meal?
 - Who is someone you greatly admire?
3. Have each student choose one item from the list they would like to write about.
4. Students should brainstorm words and phrases that explain what they love about their topics in more detail. If they choose a sport, they should add rich details:
 - Are there any special smells or tastes that you associate with this sport?
 - What equipment do you need to play the sport?
 - What sounds do you hear when you play this sport?
 - When do you think the sport is most exciting?
5. Ask students to use the mentor poem, "Honey, I Love," to organize their thoughts into lines and stanzas.
6. When they have drafts, students should revise them by adding poetic techniques such as simile, metaphor, and imagery, as well as rhyme.

I LOVE THE NATIONAL PASTIME

I love baseball
 The crack of the bat
 The slap of the mitt
 And the umpire yelling,
 "Yer out!"

I Remember Poems

Overview

Poets often get ideas for writing by listening to stories, recalling experiences, and brainstorming topics. In this lesson, we examine different poems to consider how poets get ideas for their writing. In the poem “Bedtime,” Ralph Fletcher begins by remembering “the good old days.”

Resource

“Bedtime” by Ralph Fletcher

Lesson

1. Ralph Fletcher used his memories of a special time and place to get the idea for his poem. Can you think of other poems that recall stories about the past?
2. Ask students to begin by thinking about a place that has special memories for them.
3. Have students draw sketches that show important details of these special places. Include labels and captions if they help crystallize the images. The sketches should remind students of special moments. For example, “This is the hook where my mother hung her apron after she finished the dishes.”
4. Ask students to share their drawings and memories with partners and use these to begin lists of ideas for their poems.
5. Tell students to select the most interesting phrases and organize them into drafts.
6. Arrange the phrases to highlight central images. Have students consider adding some poetic techniques, such as onomatopoeia, simile, metaphor, and imagery, to add interest to the final versions.

BEDTIME

Sometimes I remember
the good old days

sitting on the kitchen floor
at night with my brother

each on our own squares
of cold linoleum.

I’m fresh from the bath,
wearing baseball pyjamas.

Outside the screen door
summer breezes stir.

Mom gives us each two cookies,
a cup of milk, a kiss good-night.

I still can’t imagine anything
better than that.

—*Ralph Fletcher*

If You Poems

Overview

These poems allow you to use the senses to paint a powerful image.

Resource

“Lemon Tree” by Jennifer Clement

Lesson

1. Read the poem, “Lemon Tree” by Jennifer Clement. Complete the sensory organizer using this poem. (See example chart below.)
2. Model for students how to pick an item and describe the item through the five senses: sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch.
3. Work with students to pick a situation to describe in your poem.

LEMON TREE

If you climb a lemon tree
feel the bark
under your knees and feet,
smell the white flowers,
carve the leaves
between your hands.

Remember,
the tree is older than you are
and you might find stories
in its branches.

—Jennifer Clement

Sense	Description
Sight	lemon tree, white flowers
Sound	
Smell	lemons, white flowers
Taste	lemons
Touch	feel the bark under your knees and feet, carve the leaves between your hands.

If You Poems (cont.)

- Select the most interesting phrases, and organize them into a draft, using a think aloud to model for students. Arrange the phrases to highlight a central image. Consider adding some poetic techniques, such as onomatopoeia, simile, metaphor, and imagery, to add interest to the final version.
- Have students write their own If You poems. Suggest they begin their poems with any of the following phrases:

If you find . . .

- a hockey stick
- a bird's nest
- a basketball
- a squished blueberry
- a cow bell
- an old ball
- a cupcake hat
- a duck in your pool
- a marker
- a frog in your pond
- a red wig
- a butterfly net

GRILLED CHEESE

If you find a grilled cheese sandwich
 Touch the warm bread with your
 fingers
 And feel the crispy crust
 Watch gooey cheese
 ooze
 out
 over
 the
 edges

Smell the buttery bread
 Taste it all come together

— *Dylan, Grade 4*

THE ROOT BEER

if you find root beer
 in your fridge
 stop and open it,
 watch and smell the fizz
 drink it like a river
 flowing through your mouth,
 into your stomach,
 then it's a lake
 with fish jumping
 up and down and
 boats sailing around.

— *Connor, Grade 4*