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Introduction

Guiding Young Authors to Write Poetry provides a vehicle for the exploration of words and their use to create visual and auditory images. Not only does poetry cause the reader/listener to "see" a mental picture, but also, it is pleasing to the ear.

For students to become poets they must develop an awareness of the world around them. Practice in observation and in describing what is observed encourages creative expression.

Guiding Young Authors to Write Poetry provides a step-by-step approach to teaching poetic forms and related vocabulary skills. As poetic form is introduced, related background activities, motivational activities, and skills pages are provided for student use. In each section of the manual poetic forms are introduced from simplest to more complex. This plan will allow students to build on the strategies and become more sophisticated in their writing as they are able. It should be noted that this technique of organizing strategies also helps you as the teacher to individualize. Some students may not be ready to handle complex poetic forms. Still, they can be successful poets by continuing to use shorter or simpler patterns.

Guiding Young Authors to Write Poetry is organized in three major sections. These sections include Short Verse Patterns, Traditional Verse Patterns, and experimental patterns in a section called Non-Traditional Verse Forms. Each of these sections may be taught alone or in any sequence.

Guiding Young Authors to Write Poetry is organized to give Teacher Notes needed to introduce and practice each poetry type. Student idea sheets are provided to reinforce the necessary skills and practice for each poetic form. Students may wish to bind a cover to their idea sheets to form their own poetry anthology. The completed anthology might then earn for the student a Certificate of Merit for poetic accomplishments.

Remember that Guiding Young Authors to Write Poetry not only introduces poetry forms, but also helps students develop vocabulary. Practice in the use of language also enables students to become more skillful in other areas of language development including speaking, writing, listening, and reading.

General Teaching Suggestions

Most students enjoy poetry after they begin working with it. You may want to build some excitement for the unit by planning several motivational activities. Here are some suggestions for getting started.

1. Bulletin boards displaying various poems may be used to entice young readers and writers.

2. Create a classroom poetry corner. Include various types of reading. These selections should be varied as the study progresses. Include student writing as it becomes available.
3. Create a Poet of the Week Award. Help students determine criteria for winning. Display winning poet's work for others to see.

Using the Manual

In each section, suggestions are given for warm up exercises or activities and for skills development. These activities are important as the information will be applied in actual writing. Don't leave these out. For some students you may wish to add or modify the skills development activities.

Young Authors Idea Sheets are included for each topic. You may wish to use these selectively because of time, interest, and student ability. Bind finished Young Authors Idea Sheets with title page to create a personal anthology for each child.

Always discuss the finished products. Students should learn to appreciate the work of others.

Note:

For easy reference, the teacher background notes are marked with numbered arrows to indicate what Idea Sheet that particular section pertains to.



Refers to
Idea Sheet No. 14

Part I: Short Verse Patterns

Poetry patterns developed in this section are familiar, but, some less frequently seen. Forms from the Orient are introduced first. These forms require students to examine the world around them and react to that world by creating patterns of words stimulating visual images for the reader. Each poetry pattern will be described for your convenience.

Warm-Up

- A. Develop a bulletin board to display various poetic forms introduced in this section. Some examples are given in the handbook. Others might be taken from the bibliography given. Perhaps students could be asked to read and illustrate the examples chosen.
- B. Select poems representative of each type. Plan a few minutes each day to read examples to the students.

Background Building

- A. Many poetic forms in this section will rely on the students' ability to syllabicate words. Because of the wide variance in level and ability, you as the teacher may make the best determination for practice. Using spelling and reading vocabulary, have students count syllables. Some variations might include:
 1. Classify words in a given list by number of syllables, i.e. all one-syllable words in column one, two-syllable words in column two, and so on.
 2. Clap out the number of syllables. Have students say words and clap together or individually.
 3. Students who have difficulty with syllabication might put their fingers lightly on their chin as words are pronounced. Number of syllables may usually be counted by the number of times the chin drops.
- B. Being able to make careful observations is another skill useful in preparing students to react to these poetic styles. Skill in observation may be developed by providing practice in using the senses. Plan exercises to develop awareness of the senses. You may wish to try these or develop some of your own.
 1. Use the classroom or some other safe area. Ask students to close their eyes and listen for two or three minutes. Then record all sounds heard.

2. Select a particular thing or area. Ask students to use visual and auditory senses to record as many observations as possible.
3. Activities focusing on taste and smell may be designed as above.

Skills Development

Students will need to refine verbal skills and increase awareness of vocabulary. Skills pages in this section will focus on verbal imagery and awareness.

- 1 A. Young Authors Idea Sheet #1 will focus on writing similes. A simile is a comparison of two unlike objects using a connector such as "like" or "as" between the two. An example would be, "The clouds looked like marshmallows in the blue sky."
- 2 B. Young Authors Idea Sheet #2 helps students practice identifying and using metaphors. Metaphors are a more complex comparison. Here two unlike things are compared without the use of a connector. An example is, "The clouds are white marshmallows in the blue sky."
- 3 C. Young Authors Idea Sheet #3 asks students to practice the use of imagery in observing and writing.

Oriental Short Verse Patterns

- 4 **Haiku** (high coo) This is a Japanese form consisting of three lines containing 17 syllables. Line one is five syllables, line two has seven syllables and line three returns for five syllables. Haiku always has nature as its focus. One element of nature is described and a mood is created. It is sometimes said to be a scene from nature painted in words. Example:

*A stairway of light
The sun's bright flaming footsteps
Halting my journey.*

-Ann Atwood

- A. Cut out a variety of magazine pictures showing scenes in nature. Ask students to brainstorm words that describe pictures. This may be used with partners or in small groups as a team learning activity.
 - B. Use Young Authors Idea Sheet #4.
- 5 **Senryu** This form is exactly like that of Haiku; the difference is the subject matter. Here the topic is not restricted to nature or seasons. Any subject is suitable. Some students will find that an easier type to write, still demonstrating the poetic style required. Example:

*A traffic pattern
Of winding metal creatures
On poured concrete paths.*

(Continued on next page.)