

Lisa Stringfellow

12/1/11

Module 6 Primary Post

Poetry has always scared me a bit. As a high school student, I often dreaded poetry assignments in school because I found poems confusing and the meanings subjective at times. When called on in class to explain what the poet meant by a particular line, my answers were often tentative and had a question mark hanging off of them.

Now as a teacher, I still feel I bring a bit of that hesitancy in the my classroom when I teach poetry. What I have found that I do enjoy is helping students craft images using words, sounds devices, and figurative language. The Apol and Harris article was fascinating to me because I never thought about the elements of poetry they describe. The three elements of "muscle pleasure, mouth pleasure, and the pleasure of match-unmatch" were new concepts. I also learned a lot about how poems in two (or more) voices could be constructed. I had heard of the book [A Joyful Noise](#), and even have a copy on my shelf I think, but I never understood the opportunities it presented for students to see poems in a different and more interactive way.

Students in our school take a speech class and reciting a poem is one of the standard assignments. The teachers work with students on traditional points, such as eye contact, articulation, and voice. They also work on dramatizing the poems or adding gestures. I think this is something that should also be incorporated more into our studies of poetry in Language Arts. Students should see that poems are meant to be performed and heard. Bringing those skills into our discussion and modelling of poetry would be fun and also add a new layer to the discussion that can be had about a poem.

I am going to take a second look at it and consider whether some collaborative poetry could work. I also love the idea of students reading poetry to each other aloud. I think the method shared in the article is similar to the ideas shared in our readings on genre pedagogy. The starting point in learning any form is to read and discuss many, many examples of the work, in this case poetry. I think that is one thing I don't do enough of currently. My students write poetry, but we don't read a lot of examples first. I think if I did that, I would see a change in the quality of their writing and perhaps more excitement about their work.

In my teaching, poetry has general been about the writing and committing the words to paper. The idea of poetry also being about movement and speech is not something I have explored in my class to this point. Our fifth grade has a poetry unit based on Poetry 1-2-3 curriculum, which has lessons based on sound devices, figurative language, and forms and includes activities and models that students use to create their own poems. We have students write final versions of their poems in a bound journal that they can give to a their mothers on Mother's Day.

The Jocson article was interesting to me because I have thought about students creating a digital presentation of a poem in the past. One year, I allowed students to create a Hyperstudio stack as an extra credit assignment. They typed in one of the poems from their journal and could include images in sound that related to the poem. That was MANY years ago. I LOVE the idea of creating a poem as a digital story though. I have worked with students on book trailers and the way a poem could be deconstructed to match images to words is something I think our digital native students would really enjoy. I also did a poetry activity with my 6th graders last year using PicLits.com, which is a site that

allow users to choose an image from a gallery and write a visual poem based on it. The use of photographs encouraged a lot of creativity and students wrote about topics I don't think they would have otherwise.