

# “Ode to Common Things”<sup>1</sup>

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## **Overview**

Children are born with a natural curiosity to explore their worlds. They perceive the world without thinking, and collect memories that they will use later on. It is imperative that the adults in their world provide a variety of experiences for them to develop these perceptions as they grow up, so that they learn how to “see” their world using all of their senses. These experiences will help lay the foundation for achieving their creative potential and will develop an awareness of beauty around them. Students will be able to use these experiences to become better writers, allowing others to enter their worlds through detail-rich experiences in their finished work.

I am interested in providing opportunities for students who may not be the typical student, to achieve success in writing. Through close examination of ordinary objects and events in their worlds, children in Grades 4, 5 and 6 will be guided to write meaningful poetry and will learn how to use the language of poetry and form.

Students will explore point-of-view poetry such as “**Point of View**” by Shel Silverstein; will have informal writing exercises of the qualities of everyday objects; will examine famous works such as “**Odes To Common Things**”<sup>1</sup> in the book of the same name by Peruvian poet Pablo Neruda; will explore shape/theme poems, sound poems/performance poetry by Tracie Morris and others; will note how writers paint pictures with words, especially William Carlos Williams; will examine how form can enhance a poem’s composition and meaning, and as a final project, will create visual poems using photography, sound and text, in iMovie.

Students will explore relationships with cherished objects through writing; for example, how would a well-loved teddy bear feel if it were retired to a shelf, and what would it say. They will read point-of-view poetry and will create their own, such as one narrated by a well-worn rocking chair or other object that has observed generations from one family. What stories would it tell?

Students will create found poems using text from the pages of books, newspapers and magazines and re-purposing it into interesting prose with a collage of found words, and will end with letters of apology written to people and pets, that are turned into poems.

This unit serves to explore non-conventional ways of creating poetry outside of the regular classroom setting using a variety of resources that the teacher of any subject might engage in to encourage his/her students to be creative beyond traditional poetry writing that we have seen before.

Students will be introduced to poetry that is experimental to learn how to push beyond traditional methods of writing. The emphasis will be on awakening student creativity, to inspire them to really see their world and to become aware of the beauty of the mundane.

This unit will examine resources at **Read/Write/Think**, which has a plethora of materials and lessons for students in all grades, as well as websites dealing with contemporary poetry.

### **Rationale**

Creativity provides glimpses into our hearts and minds, and often reveals more than our words or actions. For students who may lack verbal skills, writing often provides a means for self-expression.

Students, who are silent, introverted or perceived as being different, are often the ones who can dig deeper and make connections to the beauty in everyday objects in their immediate environment. While they silently appear to be off in another world, they may be deeply observing the tiniest details, making note of every imperfection, texture, and nuance they perceive. Attention to such detail is what allows the artistic individual to see the world differently, and to express their reactions through creative means.

This unit will introduce students in the younger grades to well known modern American poetry in the computer classroom. Students will explore how writers used language to paint vivid imagery and will create their own original works through written means and digital multimedia. Writing about everyday objects allows children to examine things that are familiar and important to them, and allows them to observe the details that poets use, as they paint pictures with words.

### **Objectives**

Students will make personal connections to the words they read, from texts and their own worlds.

Students will develop an understanding of and appreciation for poetry written for adults and children.

Students will engage with texts through role-play and illustration.

Students will compare and contrast poems with similar themes.

Students will make analyze the meaning of the poems through close reading.

Students will learn how to be better writers using descriptive language.  
Students will explore experimental and performance poetry.  
Students will create original poetry using sensory details.  
Students will create visual poetry using multimedia and presentation software in the computer lab- using digital photos, original text, original artwork created in graphics painting programs and music, iMovie.  
Students will share multimedia presentations with their peers and others, as a way to demonstrate mastery of objectives.

## **Strategies**

Although the purpose of this unit is to provide lessons for teaching American Modernist Poetry, one cannot rule out the relevance of the poems in “**Ode To Common Things**” by Peruvian writer, Pablo Neruda. His odes to foods will resonate with children who are known to turn up their noses at many things adults enjoy, and will ignite their passion for things often overlooked, by his imagery and use of figurative language.

Students will look at the collection “**Odes To Common Things**” specifically “**Ode To My Socks**” “**Ode To Apples**”, and “**Ode To French Fries**” to note how he observed the tiniest details in common objects, which will lend themselves to writing creatively about things in their everyday lives. Students will compare his odes to other poems about food, by American poets, “**Greens**” by James A. Emanuel and “**The Bean Eaters**” by Gwendolyn Brooks, and children’s poet Shel Silverstein’s “**Eighteen Flavors**”.

Students will explore some of the poems by imagist William Carlos Williams and will observe how he used vivid imagery and rich detail, specifically “**Red Wheelbarrow**”, “**This is Just to Say**” and “**The Great Figure**”, which they will incorporate into their own original poems.

Students will be able to make connections to famous works of art, such as Charles Demuth’s painting, “**I Saw The Figure Five in Gold**”, which was influenced by Williams’ poem, and will look at portraits of Picasso when reading an excerpt from Gertrude Stein’s poem, “**If I Told Him**.” Students will also write letters of apology for naughty deeds, while turning those into poems.

Students will complete a lesson at **Read/Write/Think** using letters as poems, specifically William Carlos Williams poem, “**This Is Just To Say**” which can be adapted to any grade level, and an equally amazing idea as described by Kenneth Koch in his book, **Rose, How Did You Get That Red** in which he recounts experiences he had teaching poetry to students in New York public schools while an artist-in-residence. Students will make connections between the subjects of these poems to similar experiences in their own environments.

Students will write original poems about ordinary objects in their home and school environments, and communicate their importance through written and visual means.

Students will learn how to take clear, narrative photographs of the objects they write about in visual poems, photographs that tell stories by varying camera angles and points of view of the camera to manipulate the tone (a photograph of a view of a room, as seen by a forgotten teddy bear up on a shelf, for example- bird's-eye-view).

#### Who The Target Students Are

This unit will be designed for students in Grades 4, 5 and 6. I am interested in forms of poetry that can be adapted for use in the elementary classroom in any subject area.

#### **Classroom Activities/Lesson Plans**

Young students are often exposed to poems that rhyme and are humorous, such as the poetry of Dr. Seuss, Judith Viorst, and Shel Silverstein. However, they are capable of understanding poetry written for adults if content is relevant to experiences they have had in their worlds, and if connections are made to help them understand. Children must be exposed to poetry in every medium. They must listen to poems recited by poets, their teachers and their peers. They should discuss what poems look like on a page, their form and how poems make them feel.

In order to write well, students need strong motivation and ways to recall moments in time- to remember people, places and things from their homes and families. Good writing will include details from those memories, and it is up to their teachers to motivate them to dig deeper, to include sensory experiences, to paint vivid images using language and to write about experiences that are meaningful.

In this unit, students will read and understand twentieth century poetry by doing close readings of poems written for adults, but also appropriate for students in grades 4, 5 and 6. Students will be introduced to works by well-known modern poets- "**The Red Wheelbarrow**", "**This Is Just To Say**" and "**The Great Figure**" by William Carlos Williams, odes to common things such as "**Ode To Apples**" and "**Ode To French Fries**" by Pablo Neruda, "**Chain Gang**" by Tracie Morris, "**Home Is So Sad**" by Phillip Larkin (an English poet) and other modern poems, which students will analyze.

Students will compare and contrast poems with similar subject matter and will examine how writers used these everyday themes in different ways. Students will analyze how some poets used form to construct meaning such as in Emily Dickinson's poem "**The Incident**", and will compare and contrast it to a poem by Countee Cullen, with the same title, but different theme.

The unit will consist of a series of 6 lessons to be completed over a period of 6-12 weeks, and may be used as stand alone lessons or as a whole unit.

#### Lesson 1: Introduction to Twentieth-Century Poetry

Students will begin to explore twentieth century works and how writers used unconventional means to create new forms of poetry. This would include imagist poems

that utilized vivid imagery, found poems that took the words from non-fiction texts and “improved upon them” to create collage poems, also known as Dadaist poems, and would end with sound poems, a form of poetry that is meant to be performed, or recorded. Students will relate well to this type of poetry instead of the “old school” forms, as many of our students enjoy a variety of spoken word and sound poetry through rap music and hip-hop culture.

## Lesson 2: Create a Found Poem

“One of the strongest ways to teach students about how poets and poetry works is to encourage them to write their own poetry. As Dunning and Stafford explain, the advantage of found poems is that *“you don't start from scratch. All you have to do is find some good language and ‘improve it’.* These two teachers note that *“poems hide in things you and others say and write. They lie buried in places where language isn't so self-conscious as ‘real poetry’ often is.* [Writing found poems] is about keeping your ears and eyes ***alert to the possibilities in ordinary language.***”

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/found-poems-parallel-poems-33.html>

In this lesson, students will use non-fiction texts from their current curriculum to search for words, sentences and phrases that they enjoy reading. Sometimes a word or a phrase rolls off your tongue in a special way or evokes a memory or image.

Students will look for text, either in phrases or whole sentences that is interesting to them, has descriptive words, powerful images, evokes strong feelings or includes details. This will allow children to see how writers use words to get the attention of their readers, and will allow them to use those words as a starting point for their own work. This is an excellent way for the reluctant writer to begin without having to stare at a blank page.

Students will choose interesting text and copy the words, phrases and sentences into a word document in the order that they occur, and will remove a word or words as they see necessary to create their own found poem.

Activities may also include cutting up newspapers, magazines, black and white copies or out of circulation books no longer used, to include in a collaged poem, or found poem with the actual text. Students will also use scanners to scan words they like as another method of getting text into their own documents.

## Lesson 3: Create a Poem From a Letter of Apology

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/letter-poems-deliver-experimenting-99.html>

Letter Poems Deliver on Read/Write/Think uses the poem written by William Carlos Williams, “This Is Just To Say” as an example of how students can write poems using

letters, and teaching about line breaks. Students will listen to the poem before writing their own letters.

Students will choose 2 of the following topics to write 2 letters of apology- one to an inanimate object such as a toy they grew out of, something they broke or something they have wronged in some way; one to a family member or other person for a misdeed such as a lie, defiance, or regret; or one to an animal or family pet for something they did or should have done for them.

Students will choose their favorite letter to turn into a poem and will re-read William Carlos Williams poem “**This Is Just To Say**” to explore how using line breaks accentuates or changes the meaning of certain lines of the poem.

In “**Rose, Where Did You Get That Red**” Kenneth Koch writes about how he used the same poem to teach students in the New York public schools. There are many variations on this theme, as well as fantastic ideas on many ways to teach poetry to students in lower grades.

#### Lesson 4: Create a Sound Poem

Create a sound poem, a poem that is meant to be heard, performed or recorded.

Students will listen to a selection by Tracie Morris, called “**Chain Gang**”, and will compare and contrast the poem to Sam Cooke’s rendition of the song, “**Working On A Chain Gang**”, as presented in the poetry seminar conducted by Dr. Al Filreis in the spring of 2013.

Students will discuss which form is more effective in conveying the message, and will provide arguments for or against to support their opinion. This is a genre that will appeal to students, who are already well versed in the culture of rap and hip-hop.

Students will create their own poems about sounds they hear everyday in their worlds by observing and listening silently, and making lists of exactly what they hear in different situations. Students will walk outside with notebooks at different times to record sounds, which they will then develop into sound poems. This would be an excellent lesson for students to work together cooperatively, using their individual learning styles, since some students will more readily be able to compose a rap, create a rhythm or soundtrack, work on text or on the performance of the piece. It is necessary to provide differentiated instruction to accommodate all types of learners in today’s classroom and this exercise will lend itself perfectly, as well as providing outlets for all students to achieve success.

Students will be encouraged to use onomatopoeia to further enhance the sounds of the poem.

Extension of Lesson: Exploring Forms of Poetry

Students may also explore shape poems, also known as concrete poems, where the poems take the shape of the subject of the poem. These provide a challenge for the elementary child who must consider the shape of the poem while also choosing words and descriptions of the objects they are describing. The end results are very pleasing to children in grades 4, 5 and 6.

Following are two examples of shape poems and their websites:

Broken Car

<http://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples/examples-of-shape-poems.html>

What can I do with  
a car that doesn't go  
Can I find some way to fix it  
How long will it be before I can go again  
Can the car even be fixed or is it hopeless  
I can't take a bus to work they aren't around  
Stranded                      No Money  
Damned                        Things

Rockets Red Glare

<http://www.shadowpoetry.com/resources/wip/shape.html>

I  
see  
above  
my head  
sparkling  
lights of  
bright colors  
Announcing  
Signaling  
Rejoicing  
Sounding  
dreaming  
calling  
to my  
being  
telling  
me that I  
am free of  
oppressions  
can you see  
what they  
Have Said

## Detailed Lesson Plans

Lesson 5: Create two original poems- one about a favorite food and one about a common object

Suggested Grades: 4, 5 and 6

### Overview

Not every student will identify with all forms of poetry, particularly those who have grown up with saccharinely sweet or nonsense rhymes aimed at kids, but all kids can identify with poems about food. Each has their favorite, and who wouldn't love to read about fried potatoes or French fries. Pablo Neruda has a short ode that elevates the lowly potato, using metaphor to compare its' fresh cuts to "the morning swan's snowy feathers".

### Objective

Students will read and understand the genre of poetry.

Students will analyze how stories are told by using sensory descriptions.

Students will analyze photographs to find ways that pictures tell stories without words.

**Time:** Three-four periods, 45 minutes each

**Materials/Resources:** Projector, computer, whiteboard or chart paper, poems by Shel Silverstein, Gwendolyn Brooks, James A. Emanuel and Pablo Neruda. Teacher photographs to share with students of personal favorite possessions/foods.

### Activity One

Students will look at photographs of everyday objects- a well-worn rocking chair, a tattered stuffed animal, a smudged doll, and a still life of art objects. Any photographs will do that show objects that are old, or have been a favorite possession by someone, or collections of things.

Through a series of teacher-lead questions, students will use critical thinking skills to discuss what significance they think these objects may have to the photographer or someone else.

Students will describe what they see in the photographs. They will identify who, what, when, where, why and how of these objects. Students will analyze the photographs by discussing to whom the objects belonged, what evidence led them to these conclusions, and what stories they would infer as a result.

As memories of our own are jogged to recall favorite things in our lives, students will be asked to recall how using their senses can enrich their recall of those moments- from the smell of a boxwood tree in a child personal memory of a favorite place, to the smell of melted crayons from elementary school during winter months. These types of experiences awaken our minds and provide richer, more authentic experiences when recalling details.

Students will recall one childhood memory and will write a rough draft of what they remember using as many as their senses as they can. Senses will be listed on the whiteboard for students to refer during their draft. This will then be crafted into a poem in the style of William Carlos Williams' poem "The Red Wheelbarrow".

Students will listen to him read the poem via a YouTube video clip, and will then write a short poem with no more than 20 words.

#### Evaluation

Students will share their poems with their classmates for feedback from their peers. Students will discuss the process of creating a poem with a limited number of words, and will be able to conclude that this process will help them remove any unnecessary words and lines, and to leave the words that paint the most vivid images. In some cases, the images may be of a memory or moment with very little recollection, in which case, the choice of words should also reflect the foggy memory or lack of detail.

#### Activity Two

Students will create original poems of common objects and everyday things.

In preparation for writing poetry and prose that has authentic meaning and feeling from their hearts and souls, it is necessary to take children on a journey that will allow them to recall memories and feelings that they may not even be aware they have experienced. Students need to learn how to take these journeys through guided imagery, through walking field trips to observe details in their world, to recall sights, sounds, smells and to ignite their peripheral vision into their minds.

In order to make these observations, students will be asked to survey their homes for one or two objects that have a special significance for them. They will be asked to observe it, write about it, take a photograph of it, draw it or use as many ways of recording these details as possible. It could be a family treasure, a piece of jewelry from a departed grandmother or relative, a well-loved toy or teddy bear, a chair, an article of clothing, an old family photograph etc. If possible, students will be asked to bring it in. Include sensory descriptions. If it is a photograph of someone gone, what does it make you remember about them- their perfume or smell, their skin, their voice, for example?

Students will bring these written accounts to technology class and will discuss how the process of discovery took place. Students will be asked to share what they learned, such as stories about those individuals that they learned by inquiring into their lives. Students will use a graphic organizer program on the computer called *Inspiration* to make a web of ways they connected the objects from their home to the senses, to who, what, when, where, why and how in preparation for writing the poem.

Students will use these relationships to compose an ode in the style of Pablo Neruda, picking 4 qualities to describe using sensory detail.

These poems will be edited and published using *Microsoft Word*, or other word processing software.

### Activity Three

Students will write a poem about a favorite food.

Students will brainstorm and record their favorite foods in a list. They will use descriptive words explaining why they like these foods, using the senses if possible, to jumpstart thought processes. They will keep these lists available on their desks.

Students will then listen to selections by Pablo Neruda, Gwendolyn Brooks and James A. Emanuel. They will read poetry by familiar poets about food from children's authors such as Shel Silverstein's "**Eighteen Flavors**" well as be introduced to poetry new to them, such as "**French Fries**" by Pablo Neruda, "**Green Beans**" by James A. Emanuel and "**The Bean Eaters**" by Gwendolyn Brooks.

Students will be asked to write down any words or descriptions that stand out, specifically noting how writers used adjectives and verbs to make their poems exciting.

Ask students for their responses to these poems. What do you like about them? Can you taste the sizzling French fries or hear the steam rising from the beans cooking? How can we use these same elements to make our poems come to life?

Students will review their own lists and adjectives and verbs. Students will be encouraged to use words that describe the experiences as though we are there, eating with them. Students will then create a poem to convey what they love about that food using their senses. Poems will be edited and published using *Microsoft Word* or other word processing programs.

### Assessment/Evaluation

Students will be required to keep all notes during the writing process of these poems to assess growth, and to evaluate whether student revised work to include editing suggestions of peers and teacher. Student rubric will include use of descriptive language economy of word choice, effectiveness of word choice, whether words created vivid images and whether the poem left was memorable.

The other rubric will be teacher generated to allow student to self-assess his/her growth during the process and whether they felt that they achieved success.

Student work will be shared using the whiteboard and a Smart document camera to highlight and display their original poems.

## Lesson 6: Create a visual poem using iMovie

Suggested Grades: 4, 5 and 6

### Overview

Children will discover that writing a poem can be as easy as noticing the world around them. They will learn how to write using their senses, how to find interesting words and phrases that have already been written in the stories and texts they read, and newspaper articles and headlines. They will observe everyday objects in their homes, and classrooms and will make lists of descriptions, uses and characteristics. They will brainstorm with peers and use free association to write as many connections as they can think of.

### Objective

Students will create an original visual poem with iMovie using photographs, original illustrations, music and/or text in a multimedia presentation to their peers.

Student will demonstrate mastery of use of multimedia to engage their peers and create a dramatic impact.

Time: Four to six periods, 45 minutes each

### Materials/Resources

Projector, computer, photographs from the internet preselected, whiteboard or chart paper, poems by William Carlos Williams **The Red Wheelbarrow**, **Southing Wind**, **Lines and Pastoral**, and other poems about everyday life- Maya Angelou-**“Mother Work”** and previous poems used in this unit, *Microsoft Word* or word processing computer software, GarageBand, iPhoto, digital cameras, iTunes, scanner

### Procedure

Teacher begins with a slideshow of photographs from the internet or personal collections, that are very powerful- a weathered rocking chair, an old house with overgrown grass and an abandoned child's toy, a close-up of a mother from the depression with her children, barely fed, well-worn clothes. Teacher does not make any commentary and asks students to describe what they see. Student responses will vary and upon closer examination, students will conclude that there are stories to tell just by observing the tiniest details of the photographs- the people, the place, how the photograph was shot, camera angle, color or black and white.

These observations build on prior examination of photographs of one object in previous activity.

### Activity One

Students will brainstorm and create a list of qualities that each of the photographs possess. What words come to mind, for example? If you could be there, what sensory details would you notice? What would you see? What would you hear? What might you taste or smell? What about sense of touch, such as the mother's clothing in the farm worker photo of a migrant mother with her children?

Students will then decide which words belong in a list of positive qualities and which may be negative. Do these lists reflect the mood of the photographs? If not, why? Students will conclude that because their reactions to the photographs are based on their individual experiences, there may not be a consensus about whether the photographs are happy or sad. However, the photographs should elicit some of the same descriptive words and imagery based on the facts, on those tiny details. Students who are more intuitive and often those who are artistically gifted will observe more detail than the average student, thus providing a different conclusion about the photographs. Also, students bring different experiences to the classroom, which will also affect their responses. This activity is an excellent way to understand how students perceive their worlds and is especially helpful in reaching different types of learners.

Students will review **The Red Wheelbarrow**, and will also listen to **Soughing Wind, Lines** and **Pastoral** to see how he described outdoor scenes with incredibly powerful and carefully chosen words. They will also listen to/read the following poems about everyday life and common things- **White T-Shirt** by Lewis Ellingham, **The Great Figure** by William Carlos Williams and **Home Is So Sad** by Phillip Larkin, to include subjects that are relevant to their everyday lives.

Students will then use their notes and experiences in this unit to create a new poem, ode or prose in the style of William Carlos Williams, using sensory detail and juxtaposition of subject to environment. This poem should reflect an emotion or attitudes they have about a strong feeling, or perhaps a topic, that inspires passion.

In a unit inspired by modern poetry this year, students were asked to reflect back on a personal situation, memory or social injustice that they have experienced or that was related to them. They listened to selections by the Def Poetry Series and other spoken word performances, and discussed the impact of the poets' words, delivery and message. Students analyzed how the poets inspired and connected with them and then wrote poems of their own that demonstrated a topic close to their lives. The results were surprising, with the most touching poems written by students who seldom produced quality work and who were often inattentive. The addition of this unit into my classroom has enabled me to reach students who may not learn in conventional ways but who need to be inspired to utilize their own learning styles.

Students will edit and publish these poems using *Microsoft Word* for word processing.

#### Activity Two

Students will create a final project using iMovie from what they have learned about creating original poems or prose. Students will choose one of their original poems to illustrate using photographs, illustration, sound effects, music and text.

## Assessment/Evaluation

Students will complete formative assessments to monitor their own learning such as *Fill In Your Thoughts*, where they will fill in the blanks to show understanding about stories they inferred from observing the details in photographs.

Students will also work collaboratively using *Think/Pair/Share* to write a response to a prompt about the photographs and will then meet with other students to share their ideas and leave with more information.

Students will be evaluated on their final multimedia project using a rubric designed by Kathy Schrock, a teacher whose website includes up-to-date rubrics for measuring students' digital literacy skills and proficiency in Web 2.0 tools for students. The rubric can be found here: <http://iweb.tntech.edu/jwendt/3010/docs/iMovieRubric.pdf>

Students will also assess their peers using a teacher generated rubric on their engagement in the presentations, and what they learned from each other, as a way to share their expertise in future multimedia planning.

## Annotated Bibliographies/Works Cited/Resources

### Student Bibliography

Alarcón, Francisco X. *From the Bellybutton of the Moon and Other Summer Poems*. illus. by Maya Christina Gonzales. Children's Book Press. 1998.

This delightful book is written in English and Spanish about simple things such as the color blue or mountain mist, with descriptive language. Ages 6–9

Kalli Dakos / Illustrated by G. Brian Karas  
*If You're Not Here, Please Raise Your Hand: Poems About School* Simon & Schuster, 1990 / Grades 1-8

Fleischman, Paul. *Joyful Noise*. illus. by Eric Beddows. HarperCollins. 1988.

This book of poems about insects, is meant to be read by two people. It has interesting and playful possibilities. Ages 9–12

Grandits, John. *Technically, It's Not My Fault*. Houghton. 2004.

Hysterical poems written by a teenage boy, and are written as concrete or shape poems, with words in hearts and spirals and other fun configurations. Although this is meant for a child, I loved this book. Ages 10–14

*Heart to Heart: New Poems Inspired by Twentieth Century American Art*  
Jan Greenberg

Modern poems inspired by great works of art make great companions for children to make connections. Ages-7-15

Janezko, Paul B., *A Poke in the I: A Collection of Concrete Poems*.

From many visual poets that is not meant to be read to a class without a document camera. Children need to see these poems for the humor and surprise.

Janezko, Paul B *A Foot in the Mouth: Poems to Speak, Sing and Shout*.

Sound poems, descriptive poems, funny poems, and poems that are meant to be recited by one or more people, are in this book. It makes you laugh about ironies we come across, and quietly agree at its perceptions. The illustrations are also wonderful.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Harlem*. Holiday House. 2004.

Varied, voices from Myers's beloved hometown. Ages 12–16

*Never Take a Pig to Lunch and Other Poems About the Fun of Eating*  
selected and illustrated by Nadine Bernard Westcott  
Orchard, 1994 / grades K-4

"Poetry for Young People: Emily Dickinson"  
Bolin, Frances Schoonmaker; Paperback

"Poetry for Young People: Langston Hughes"  
Roessel, David; Hardcover

Shel Silverstein, *A Light in the Attic* (HarperCollins, 1981) Ages 8-11

Shel Silverstein  
*Where the Sidewalk Ends* HarperCollins, 1974 / Grades K-8 / 166 pages

Singer, Marilyn. *Mirror, Mirror*. illus. by Josée Masse. Dutton. 2010.

A collection of “reversos”—poems that can be read from top to bottom or bottom to top. Each pair of poems portrays two differing viewpoints in a fairy tale. Ages 8–12

Judith Viorst  
*If I Were In Charge of the World and Other Worries*  
Atheneum, 1981 / Grade 3 and up / 56 pages - See more at:  
<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/17154#sthash.FrIfIOfZ.dpuf>  
Ages 8–12

Worth, Valerie. All the Small Poems and Fourteen More. illus. by author. Farrar. 2002.

A classic. These charming and simple poems about everyday objects, raise small things to their worthy positions in life. Perfect book for teaching children about the joy in things we take for granted. Ages 5-12

### Adult Bibliography

The Family Photography Project: "We Will Just Read What the Pictures Tell Us."  
(EJ626253) [Spielman, Jane](#)

Notes that the purpose of the project was to collect evidence about learning in the "life school" of families. Describes the second session in which people brought in artifacts to tell family stories about learning in their homes. Finds that families and teachers involved in this project become more aware of home experiences as part of literacy education.

[http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/recordDetails.jsp?searchtype=advanced&pageSize=10&ERICExtSearch\\_SearchCount=1&ERICExtSearch\\_SearchValue\\_0=photography+and+story+telling&eric\\_displayStartCount=21&ERICExtSearch\\_Operator\\_1=and&ERICExtSearch\\_SearchType\\_1=kw&ERICExtSearch\\_SearchType\\_0=kw&\\_pageLabel=RecordDetails&objectId=0900019b8014cb71&accno=EJ626253&\\_nfls=false](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/recordDetails.jsp?searchtype=advanced&pageSize=10&ERICExtSearch_SearchCount=1&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=photography+and+story+telling&eric_displayStartCount=21&ERICExtSearch_Operator_1=and&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_1=kw&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=kw&_pageLabel=RecordDetails&objectId=0900019b8014cb71&accno=EJ626253&_nfls=false)

Family Folklore Project,  
[Kotkin, Amy J.](#); [Baker, Holly C.](#), EJ155617

Discusses the Family Folklore Program of the Smithsonian Institution's annual Festival of American Folklife, in which the whole family can be involved in tracing family history through story telling, photographs, etc.

Koch, Kenneth, Wishes, lies and dreams, teaching children to write poetry / by Kenneth Koch and the students, New York, Chelsea House Publishers, [1970]

Koch, Kenneth, Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?: Teaching Great Poetry to Children

"Odes to Common Things, Bilingual Edition"  
Neruda, Pablo; Hardcover

### Works Cited/Resources/Websites

1. **Read/Write/Think**, resources for teachers and students,  
<http://www.readwritethink.org>
2. **The Red Wheelbarrow** by William Carlos Williams  
<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15537#sthash.by8JVpJ4.dpuf>

3. **This Is Just To Say** by William Carlos Williams  
<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15535>
4. **The Great Figure** by William Carlos Williams  
<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/19475>
5. **Poetry Out Loud**  
<http://poetryoutloud.org/poems-and-performance/listen-to-poetry>
6. **Poetry. Org**  
<http://poetry.org>
7. **Home Is So Sad** by Phillip Larkin  
<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/16659>
8. **He Foretells His Passing** by F.D. Reeve  
<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/19126#sthash.LJQqqILe.dpuf>
9. **Daily** by Naomi Shihab Nye  
<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/23308>
10. **9773 Comanche Boulevard** by David Trinidad  
<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/21892>
11. **White T-Shirt** by Lewis Ellingham  
<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/23392#sthash.Oi6BPe6m.dpuf>
12. **Greens** by James A. Emanuel  
<http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/greens/>
13. **The Bean Eaters** by Gwendolyn Brooks  
<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15913#sthash.If3qE2jE.dpuf>
14. **Mother Doesn't Want A Dog** by Judith Viorst
15. **Eighteen Flavors** by Shel Silverstein
16. **Point of View** by Shel Silverstein  
[http://allpoetry.com/poem/8538959-Point\\_Of\\_View-by-Shel\\_Silverstein](http://allpoetry.com/poem/8538959-Point_Of_View-by-Shel_Silverstein)
17. **Read/Write/Think-** <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/letter-poems-deliver-experimenting-99.html>

## **Content Standards**

### Literacy Standards:

1.9.6.A: Use media and technology resources for self-directed learning, group collaboration, and learning throughout the curriculum.

1.9.6.B: Use relevant graphics (maps, charts, graphs, tables, illustrations and photographs)

### Technology Standards

1.6-8: Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology.

2.6-8: Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.

3.6-8: Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.

### PA Common Core Standards

#### Grade 4 (Reading Literature and Reading Informational Text)

RL.4.10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

#### Grade 5 (Reading Literature and Reading Informational Text)

RL.5.10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

1.2.3.D: Explain the point of view of the author.

1.2.3.F: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in grade level text, distinguishing literal from non-literal meaning as well as shades of meaning among related words.

1.2.3.K: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on grade level reading and content; choosing flexibly from a range of strategies and tools.

E03.A-C.2.1: Demonstrate understanding of craft and structure in literature.

E03.A-C.2.1.1: Explain the point of view from which a story is narrated, including the difference between first and third person narrations.

E03.A-K.1.1.2: Recount poems, dramas, or stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures- determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

E03.A-V.4.1: Demonstrate understanding of vocabulary and figurative language in literature.

E03.A-V.4.1.2: Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings. a. Distinguish the literal and nonliteral meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g., take steps). b. Distinguish shades of meaning among related words (e.g., knew, believed, suspected, heard, wondered)

1.3.3.A: Ask and answer questions about the text and make inferences from text; refer to text to support responses.

1.3.3.C: Determine the central message, lesson, or moral in literary text; explain how it is conveyed in text.

1.3.3.K: Read and comprehend literary fiction on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.

1.4.3.Q: Choose words and phrases for effect.

1.4.3.S: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, applying grade level reading standards for literature and informational texts.

1.4.3.U: With guidance and support, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

## ELA Standards

1.3.4.E: Explain major differences between poems, drama and prose and refer to the structural elements of each when writing or speaking about a text.

1.3.4.F: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in grade level text, including figurative language.

1.3.4.J: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being and that are basic to a particular topic.

1.3.4.I: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies and tools.

1.4.4.T: With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

1.4.4.U: With some guidance and support, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single sitting.