

Playing with Poetry

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Overview

This curriculum unit uses short, high-interest poems to teach reading skills and to engage students in reading. Young readers need to develop technical skills for reading, such as phonemic awareness, phonics, a high frequency word vocabulary, and fluency. These technical skills are all addressed in the curriculum. However, without a strong interest in reading and a basis for understanding what they read, students have little chance of growing into strong life-long readers. I hope to engage students in the humor and sensitivity of high-interest texts so that they can be utilized to teach reading skills. In addition, I hope that by exposing students to writing they will find humorous and that they can relate to will spark an interest in reading so that they read more than they are required to in school.

This unit was written for English language learners in grades 1 and 2 who generally need more time and support to learn how to read and, especially, to comprehend what they read. It also addresses the vocabulary needs of young students learning English.

Rationale

Teaching young English language learners to read presents several challenges. The goal is for students to be able to read for general comprehension, which “requires very rapid and automatic processing of words, strong skills in forming a general meaning representation of main ideas, and efficient coordination of many processes under very limited time constraints” (Grabe and Stoller 14). Students who have not learned to read in their first language face the difficulty of having to make sense of a sound-symbol system as they simultaneously struggle for proficiency in English. These students do not

possess resources for reading in their first language to transfer to their second language. In addition, unlike native speakers of English who have been acquiring and using English orally for 4 or 5 years before they begin to read, English language learners must begin reading as they simultaneously start learning English orally (Grabe and Stoller, 42-43, 56). Increased pressure on schools to conform to prescribed reading level benchmarks and to achieve high scores on standardized tests leads to an emphasis on technical skills to the detriment of a deeper understanding of texts and an enjoyment of reading. In such an environment, well-rounded teaching of reading, including higher-level comprehension skills and fostering a love of reading, suffer although teachers know that these aspects are vital to encouraging English language learners to be competent and confident readers who enjoy reading in their second language. This unit will propose integrating technical skills with comprehension skills that are difficult for English language learners, using high-interest texts that will make reading more enjoyable for students.

Reading Comprehension

When teachers focus on lower-level technical skills and test-prep to help students pass standardized tests, even young students can become disillusioned and bored. The first few years of school are the time when students form opinions about themselves as learners. Helping students develop an identity as a person who enjoys reading and who understands what he/she reads on a deeper level will provide them with a foundation for liking school and achieving well in school for years to come. Grabe and Stoller write that “the most fundamental requirement for fluent reading comprehension is rapid and automatic word recognition” which is developed through “thousands of hours of practice in reading” (20-21). It is imperative that students desire to read in order to achieve this many hours of practice, so teachers must help students feel that reading is fun and something they can do on their own. Particularly for English language learners, who are most likely immigrants or the children of immigrants, it is important for students to feel like they belong in school and can do well in school. Ultimately, this identity can help them go on to higher education. In order to achieve a positive school identity, students need to be proficient in reading, both technically and in comprehension, and to enjoy reading.

The higher-level comprehension skills this curriculum will focus on encompass the top three levels of Bloom's revised taxonomy: analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Too often, these higher-level skills are neglected for English language learners because of the presumption that they would be too difficult. Not only does the fact that they can be difficult mean they must be taught more often, it is important not to water down content for English language learners. The disconnect between what language learners can do in their first language and what they are asked to do in their second language can contribute to negative feelings about school or lower expectations within the learner if tasks are not sufficiently challenging. With vocabulary and grammatical scaffolding as needed, English language learners can engage in discussions centered on higher-level thinking

skills. Providing these opportunities are vital so that students' comprehension skills do not lag.

High-Interest Texts

High-interest texts are important for engaging students so they do not lose interest as they learn to read. Grenby asserts that education was a major influence on the development of children's literature. As early as 1484 with the publication of Caxton's *Book of Curtesye*, books for children were designed to instruct. Moving forward into the seventeenth and eighteenth century, adults seemed to view the primary purpose of childhood, a new concept in and of itself, as a time for children to learn how to become adults (Grenby 4-7). Grenby writes that in this period "the attempt to systematise education...resulted in the publication of more, and more carefully crafted, children's books" (8).

Although we teachers would of course agree that education is a noble and necessary goal, it leaves one wondering about the role of enjoyment. Many adults read solely for pleasure. That we are able to read and can comprehend what we read is often taken for granted as we seek out books that interest us, not books that teach a skill we think we should learn or books that contain vocabulary words we wish to look up. Why, then, is so much literature for children intended first to teach and second to be enjoyed? The majority of books that many children are exposed to in school have been designed around a set of high-frequency, vocabulary words, or phonics rules and are intended to be used pedagogically. Jonathan Bate implies that something more than didacticism makes books intended for children true literature. Using the example of Peter Rabbit and the Fierce and Bad Rabbit, a cautionary tale, he writes "Because of Peter Rabbit's greater complexity, and his naughtiness in particular, his story is more *literary* than that of the Fierce and Bad Rabbit...the best literature is more playful than earnest" (Bate 10). Can we wonder, then, that children quickly lose interest in reading and school, especially when they are not able to pick up reading right away?

Conversely, this unit focuses on selections that were intended for children to enjoy and makes pedagogy fit them. The texts used are various poems by Shel Silverstein and Eloise Greenfield, authors that are well-loved by children. These poems also provide substantial opportunities to lead students in deeper analysis to improve their critical thinking skills. For example, "The Little Boy and the Old Man" begins with a humorous list of the trials a young boy and an old man have in common, clumsiness and incontinence, but ends with the sentiment that the real problem with being very old or very young is not being taken seriously. Trouble with adults is a sentiment many students will be able to relate to. As they make text-to-self connections with the poem, they also have an opportunity to develop empathy with the old man, a person seemingly opposite of themselves. "Anteater" contains an opportunity to explore homonyms and to make an inference about why the uncle is mad about the speaker bringing home an "aunt eater." While "Boa Constrictor" contains many rhymes to strengthen phonemic awareness, it

also has a somewhat open-ending which can allow for students to use their imagination about what has happened to the speaker.

The poetry of Eloise Greenfield also contains numerous teaching moments, while still being of high-interest to children. “Things” is written with a natural cadence that would allow students to practice fluency in reading. It also allows students to explore the difference between material and non-material “things.” Students should be invited to think about how the poems make them feel. If students enjoy them – why? What is it about reading that can make us feel strong feelings – happiness, sadness, longing? Through these questions, students will come to appreciate the impact good literature has on us.

Objectives

This unit is intended for English language learners in grades 1 and 2. They are taught by a regular education teacher and an ESOL (English to speakers of other languages), who provides mostly small group push-in instruction and some pull-out instruction. This unit will be especially geared toward the students who are below grade-level in reading and who are making very slow progress. These are students who require intervention above the standard reading instruction. In addition, this unit is intended for the students who experience frustration and discouragement in reading to help motivate them.

The objectives of the unit include the following:

- ^ Participate in repeated choral readings of texts and improve reading fluency with each reading
- ^ Remember high-frequency words and vocabulary words in the texts
- ^ Read and manipulate words in word families that appear in texts
- ^ Engage with texts through dramatic readings, making up hand gestures or mini-dances to act poems out, and by illustrating poems collaboratively
- ^ Make personal connections with texts
- ^ Express feelings about the texts
- ^ Make inferences about and analyze texts
- ^ Create their own poem based on one of the texts we studied
- ^ Have fun and begin to read more on their own

Strategies

This unit will use short, engaging poetry selections as texts. In particular, poems that use humor will be utilized. Students will participate in choral reading to improve their reading fluency and they will be encouraged to analyze technical aspects of the texts, such as lists of sight words they know, word families they find, and vocabulary words they are learning. Students will create references for themselves to use during every-day reading with sections for sight words, word families, and a personal dictionary.

Students will also be encouraged to enjoy the poems through dramatic readings, making up hand gestures or mini-dances to act poems out, and by illustrating poems collaboratively. In addition, students will be encouraged to explore their feelings about the poems to make personal connections to their reading.

Finally, the poems will serve as a basis for developing comprehension skills as students learn to analyze the deeper meaning. Bloom's taxonomy (updated version) and Owocki's "Successful Reader Strategies/Strategies for Kids" (12-13) will be referred to in order to ensure that higher-level skills are being addressed and to help the teacher address these skills in a kid-friendly manner.

Each poem will be introduced to the students and the students will have a chance to listen to the teacher model reading it with fluency and expression a few times before they are encouraged to read with the teacher. Students will be asked to identify any high-frequency words or words from word families they know. The teacher will help students write pre-identified high-frequency words in to a personal word wall, along with a sentence or picture to help students remember the word. The teacher will provide ample opportunity to practice reading and writing these words so that students memorize them.

The teacher will also help students read and words from pre-identified word families. Students will also record these in personal word family houses. Students will also have time to practice manipulating word families with manipulatives (reading rods – cubes that have letters on them that students can stick together and pull apart to add/delete phonemes).

The teacher will encourage students to talk about hard words in the text. These words, and other pre-identified vocabulary words, will be added to students' personal dictionaries. Students will also practice using these words in their own sentences and illustrations. In addition, the teacher will use the poems to introduce academic vocabulary words that students need to know in order to progress in school.

With subsequent readings, students will be encouraged to think of ways to remember various sections of the texts, such as with hand-gestures and illustrations. Students will design and carry out these tricks as they read the poem. Students will be encouraged to read more fluently – with appropriate pace (the way we talk) and intonation (making our voices sound interesting; not like a robot). The teacher will time herself reading the poem fluently and will then time students' readings. Students will be challenged to read the poem in the same amount of time it took the teacher.

The teacher will model making personal connections with the text and exploring how she feels about the text. Students will then be asked to make personal connections and to share how they feel about the text. These skills will be developed in an on-going manner to help students develop their own ideas about what they like about reading.

Finally, the teacher will model and help students analyze the texts and make inferences. Owocki's comprehension strategy questions will be useful here, such as “Why do you think the author wrote this text?” “Who do you think should read this text” and “How do you feel about the author's use of language?” At the end of the unit, students will either pick a poem to teach to their classmates, including a visual representation and teaching a higher-level thinking skill, or they will write their own poem. Students' final project will be assessed with a teacher-made rubric, attached in the appendix.

Classroom Activities

The lessons should be broken up according to the time constraints the teacher works with. It may make sense to do each piece on a different day for the span of a week.

Lesson 1: “Things” by Eloise Greenfield

Objectives:

- ▲ Participate in repeated choral readings of texts and improve reading fluency with each reading
- ▲ Remember high-frequency words and vocabulary words in the texts
- ▲ Read and manipulate words in word families that appear in texts
- ▲ Engage with texts through dramatic readings, making up hand gestures or mini-dances to act poems out, and by illustrating poems collaboratively
- ▲ Make personal connections with texts
- ▲ Express feelings about the texts
- ▲ Make inferences about and analyze texts

Materials:

- A large version of the poem written on chart paper so all students can see it at once
- A folder for each child containing sections for a small copy of the poem, a personal word wall, word family houses, and a personal dictionary
- Colorful, transparent sticky notes/highlighters
- Reading Rods

Procedures:

Teacher begins lesson by asking students to listen to her reading “Things” two times. Teacher then invites students to join her for a third reading. Teacher asks if students notice any words or word parts they know. Students can come point to words in the poem. If the words correlate with the pre-identified words to teach, the teacher will help students place a transparent sticky over the words to highlight them. These will also be used to highlight the following:

High-frequency words

Pre-identified words: thing(s), went, walk(ed), play(ed), bought, down

If words have not been identified by students, teacher will point these words out. Teacher will ask students to write the words in their personal word wall. As students write, teacher will assist students in thinking of a picture or in writing a sentence to help them remember the word. The teacher will then quiz students in identifying and reading these words. Students will also highlight these words in their personal copy of the poem (kept in their folders).

Word Families

If students have not identified words in the -ore word family, the teacher will introduce it. Students can then identify the words “store,” “shore,” and “more” in the poem. Students will write these words in their “ore” word family house and generate a list of other “ore” words (sore, tore, snore, wore, before, explore, ignore). The teacher will write the list on chart paper and students will record them in their word family house. The teacher will then give students reading rods with the appropriate letters and students will practice changing the initial phoneme(s) to make new -ore words. Students will then highlight these words on their poem in their folders.

Vocabulary

If students have not yet identified these words, the teacher will highlight “shore” and “sandhouse.” Students will have the opportunity to tell what they think these words mean. With pictures of the shore and a sandhouse, the teacher will then explain the words. The teacher will also explain how “sandhouse,” is a compound word made from “sand” and “house” so that students could use those clues to discover the meaning. Small picture representations will be placed above the words on the poem for students to refer to. Students will add these words to their personal dictionaries.

Academic Vocabulary

Students will also add “compound word” to their personal dictionaries and an explanation that it is a word made from two words put together. “Sandhouse” can be the example.

Memorization and Fluency

Students will then be asked to think of ways to remember the first line of the poem “Went to the corner.” They may choose to simulate walking with their fingers. The same process will be used on each line of the poem. At times they may choose a picture, such as a right angle for “corner” or a picture of candy for “candy.” These will be placed on the poem. Students will also illustrate their personal versions of the poem with tricks to remember the words. Students will again practice reading the poem and the teacher will introduce timed readings. The teacher will challenge the students to read the poem in the same time it took her to read it and students will read until this time is achieved. Students will also practice using appropriate intonation (not reading like robots).

Analysis:

The teacher will ask students: Does this poem remind you of anything in your life? Students will probably share times they went to the store or to the beach. The teacher will need to bring the conversation back to the final stanza to help students make deeper connections. She will ask: Why doesn't the speaker have the candy or the sandhouse anymore? Why does the speaker still have the poem? and encourage students to discuss. The teacher can then ask students: What things have lasted you a long time or will last you forever? The teacher will then present several examples of "things" (paper, a toy, a car, a hug, a smile) and ask the students to determine if they belong with the candy and the sandhouse or with the poem. On the back of their copy of the poem, students will then draw and write about something they have that will last them forever, like Eloise Greenfield's poem.

Lesson 2: "Boa Constrictor" by Shel Silverstein

Objectives:

- ▲ Participate in repeated choral readings of texts and improve reading fluency with each reading
- ▲ Remember high-frequency words and vocabulary words in the texts
- ▲ Read and manipulate words in word families that appear in texts
- ▲ Engage with texts through dramatic readings, making up hand gestures or mini-dances to act poems out, and by illustrating poems collaboratively
- ▲ Make personal connections with texts
- ▲ Express feelings about the texts
- ▲ Make inferences about and analyze texts

Materials:

- A large version of the poem written on chart paper so all students can see it at once
- A folder for each child containing sections for a small copy of the poem, a personal word wall, word family houses, and a personal dictionary
- Colorful, transparent sticky notes/highlighters
- Reading Rods

Procedures:

Teacher begins lesson by asking students to listen to her reading "Boa Constrictor" two times. Teacher then invites students to join her for a third reading. Teacher asks if students notice any words or word parts they know. Students can come point to words in the poem. If the words correlate with the pre-identified words to teach, the teacher will help students place a transparent sticky over the words to highlight them. These will also be used to highlight the following:

High-frequency Words

Pre-identified words: eat(en), being, don't, like, what, know

If words have not been identified by students, teacher will point these words out. Teacher will ask students to write the words in their personal word wall. As students write, teacher will assist students in thinking of a picture or in writing a sentence to help them remember the word. The teacher will then quiz students in identifying and reading these words. Students will also highlight these words in their personal copy of the poem (kept in their folders).

Word Families

If students have not identified words in the -igh word family, the teacher will introduce it. Students can then identify the word “thigh” in the poem. Students will write “thigh” in their “igh” word family house and generate a list of other “igh” words (high, sigh). The teacher will write the list on chart paper and students will record them in their word family house. The teacher will then give students reading rods with the appropriate letters and students will practice changing the initial phoneme(s) to make new -igh words. Students will then highlight these words on their poem in their folders.

Vocabulary

If students have not yet identified these words, the teacher will highlight “boa constrictor,” “nibblin’,” and “dread.” Students will have the opportunity to tell what they think these words mean. The teacher will explain boa constrictor with a picture. She will explain nibbling by acting out small bites. She will explain dread by paralleling it with fear. The teacher will also explain how Shel Silverstein wrote “nibblin’” instead of “nibbling” because that is how it sounds when people say it and to make people laugh. Small picture representations will be placed above the words on the poem for students to refer to. Students will add these words to their personal dictionaries.

Academic Vocabulary

Students will also add “sequence” to their personal dictionaries and note that sequence means things happening in order. The example can be the order in which the boa constrictor eats the person in the poem.

Memorization and Fluency

Students will then be asked to think of ways to remember the first lines of the poem “Oh, I’m being eaten / By a boa constrictor.” They may choose to simulate eating or a snake slithering with their fingers and hands. The same process will be used on each line of the poem. At times they may choose a picture, such as an arrow pointing to body parts for the knee, thigh, middle, and neck. Students should also point to these as they read so they associate their own body parts with the words. These pictures will be placed on the poem. Students will also illustrate their personal versions of the poem with tricks to remember the words. Students will again practice reading the poem and the teacher will introduce timed readings. The teacher will challenge the students to read the poem in the

same time it took her to read it and students will read until this time is achieved. Students will also practice using appropriate intonation (not reading like robots).

Dramatic Reading

Students will work together to draw, color, and cut out a large “boa constrictor.” They will then take turns holding the boa constrictor and “eating” another student as he/she recites the poem, using appropriate intonation. Students will all take turns performing.

Analysis:

The teacher will ask students: Why do you think the poem ends the way it does? If students are unsure, the teacher will direct them to imagine the boa constrictor eating *their* toes, knees, thighs, middle, and neck, acting it out if necessary. The teacher will then ask: What comes after the neck? Students should then articulate that the boa constrictor has swallowed the speaker including the head and the ending is the muffled sound the speaker makes from inside. The teacher will then invite students to share their personal feelings about this poem. Is it funny? Gross? Scary? Students will share how they feel about it and why. Students should then discuss why they think the author wrote this poem and who they think should read this poem. The teacher will ask the students to imagine: What if the boa constrictor spits the speaker out? What body parts will come out first? In what order? On the back of their copy of the poem, students will write and draw how this could happen.

Lesson 3: “The Little Boy and the Old Man” by Shel Silverstein

Objectives:

- ⤴ Participate in repeated choral readings of texts and improve reading fluency with each reading
- ⤴ Remember high-frequency words and vocabulary words in the texts
- ⤴ Read and manipulate words in word families that appear in texts
- ⤴ Engage with texts through dramatic readings, making up hand gestures or mini-dances to act poems out, and by illustrating poems collaboratively
- ⤴ Make personal connections with texts
- ⤴ Express feelings about the texts
- ⤴ Make inferences about and analyze texts

Materials:

- A large version of the poem written on chart paper so all students can see it at once
- A folder for each child containing sections for a small copy of the poem, a personal word wall, word family houses, and a personal dictionary
- Colorful, transparent sticky notes/highlighters
- Reading Rods

Procedures:

Teacher begins lesson by asking students to listen to her reading “The Little Boy and the Old Man” two times. Teacher then invites students to join her for a third reading.

Teacher asks if students notice any words or word parts they know. Students can come point to words in the poem. If the words correlate with the pre-identified words to teach, the teacher will help students place a transparent sticky over the words to highlight them. These will also be used to highlight the following:

High-frequency Words

Pre-identified words: said, little, laugh(ed), cry, don't, sometimes

If words have not been identified by students, teacher will point these words out. Teacher will ask students to write the words in their personal word wall. As students write, teacher will assist students in thinking of a picture or in writing a sentence to help them remember the word. The teacher will then quiz students in identifying and reading these words. Students will also highlight these words in their personal copy of the poem (kept in their folders).

Word Families

If students have not identified words in the -and word family, the teacher will introduce it. Students can then identify the word “hand” in the poem. Students will write “hand” in their “-and” word family house and generate a list of other “-and” words (sand, land).

The teacher will write the list on chart paper and students will record them in their word family house. The teacher will then give students reading rods with the appropriate letters and students will practice changing the initial phoneme(s) to make new -and words. Students will then highlight these words on their poem in their folders.

Vocabulary

If students have not yet identified these words, the teacher will highlight “often” and “worst.” Students will have the opportunity to tell what they think these words mean. The teacher will explain “often” and “worst” through synonyms and antonyms. She will use the words in sentences and have the students make up their own sentences. She will also explain “worst” as a comparative and give examples with sentences. Students will add these words to their personal dictionaries.

Academic Vocabulary

Students will also add “compare” and “contrast” to their personal dictionary and write that compare means tell how things are the same and contrast means tell how things are different. They can use the examples of the boy and the old man. They are similar in dropping spoons, wetting pants, crying, feeling ignored. They are different in age.

Memorization and Fluency

Students will then be asked to think of ways to remember the first lines of the poem “Said the little boy, ‘Sometimes I drop my spoon.’” They may choose to simulate dropping

something. The same process will be used on each line of the poem. Students will also illustrate their personal versions of the poem with tricks to remember the words. Students will again practice reading the poem and the teacher will introduce timed readings. The teacher will challenge the students to read the poem in the same time it took her to read it and students will read until this time is achieved. Students will also practice using appropriate intonation (not reading like robots).

Dramatic Reading

Students will take turns being the little boy, the old man, and the narrator. They will read each part like a play and act it out with appropriate intonation.

Analysis:

The teacher will ask the students if they find the poem funny and why. They may discuss the pants-wetting. The teacher and students can compare and contrast the little boy and the old man with a Venn diagram. The teacher should then steer the conversation towards the less funny parts and ask how it makes the students feel when the boy and the old man say they cry? How does it make them feel when they say grown-ups don't pay attention? And how does it make them feel when the old man says he knows what the boy means? The teacher should have the students make a personal connection with the boy and the old man: Have you ever felt like adults don't take you seriously? When? Students should discuss and then write their answers. The teacher should then ask students why they think adults wouldn't pay attention to kids and to old people, and have students discuss.

Additional Lessons

A less detailed synopsis of other poems and key points to address in these poems are outlined below.

Lesson 3: "Love Is" by Eloise Greenfield

High-frequency words: love, don't, mean(s)

Word family: -all

Vocabulary words: (keep) company

Academic vocabulary: empathy

Analysis: What does love mean for the speaker? (taking care of family, doing something nice for family, making sure family is not alone) Personal connection: what does love mean for your family? How do you show you love your family?

Lesson 4: "Anteater" by Shel Silverstein

High-frequency words: told, out, now

Word family: -ant (rant, pant)

Vocabulary words: genuine, ant/aunt (homonyms)

Academic vocabulary: homonym

Analysis:

- What did the “aunt eater” do? Why is the uncle mad?
- creating humor by using homonyms
- explore more homonyms- what humorous stories can we make up with them?

Lesson 5: “Batty” by Shel Silverstein

High-frequency words: baby, turn, I'm

Word family: -ight (fright, light, might, sight)

Vocabulary words: scream, fright

Academic vocabulary: opposite

Analysis:

- Why is this poem funny?
- Why did Shel Silverstein write it?
- Who should read it?
- opposites: we are used to light and afraid of the dark, bats are used to the dark
- what other opposites can we imagine between ourselves and animals?

Bibliography

Bate, Jonathan. "Once Upon a Time." *English Literature: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. 1-22. Print.

The first chapter locates children's literature in the history of English literature and explores its origins and purposes.

Grabe, William, and Fredricka L. Stoller. *Teaching and Researching Reading*. Harlow, England: Pearson Education, 2002.

This book presents methods of researching how to teach reading effectively. It also discusses the problems and solutions of learning to read in a second language, so it is relevant to teachers working with English language learners.

Grenby, M.O. "The Origins of Children's Literature." *The Cambridge Companion to Children's Literature*. Ed. M.O. Grenby and Andrea Immel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 3-17. Print.

This chapter discusses the development of children's literature as a genre and how it relates to society's ideas about childhood.

Teacher Resources

Birch, B. *English L2 Reading: Getting to the Bottom*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2002.

This book explains strategies for teaching reading to learners of a second language, such as English language learners.

Collins, K. *Reading for Real: Teach Students to Read with Power, Intention, and Joy in K-3 Classrooms*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers, 2008.

This book provides strategies and rationale for teaching reading with attention to comprehension.

Crawford, James. *Educating English Language Learners: Language Diversity in the Classroom*. 5th ed. Los Angeles: Bilingual Educational Services, Inc., 2004.

This book provides a discussion of the social and psychological side of learning to read in English as an English language learner.

Owocki, Gretchen. *Comprehension: Strategic Instruction for K-3 Students*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003.

This book discusses methods and strategies for teaching reading comprehension to children.

Student Texts

Greenfield, Eloise. *Honey I Love*. New York: HarperCollins, 1978.

This book of poetry contains many poems with interesting rhythm and sentiments children identify with.

Silverstein, Shel. *Falling Up*. New York: HarperCollins, 1996.

This book of poetry contains many high-interest, humorous poems.

Silverstein, Shel. *A Light in the Attic*. New York: HarperCollins, 1981.

This book of poetry contains many high-interest, humorous poems.

Silverstein, Shel. *Where the Sidewalk Ends*. New York: HarperCollins, 1974.

This book of poetry contains many high-interest, humorous poems.

Appendix/Content Standards

Rubric for Final Project: Poem Written by Student

A	B	C	D (rewrite)
Poem has strong rhythm and/or rhyme	Poem has a sense of rhythm and/or rhyme	Poem has little rhythm and/or rhyme	Poem has no rhythm or rhyme
Poem expresses a deeper feeling on the part of the writer	Poem expresses some feeling on the part of the writer	Poem expresses some feeling, but may be mostly superficial	Poem does not express a feeling on the part of the author
Poem allows the reader to analyze author's purpose or make an inference about meaning	Poem allows reader to think about author's purpose or infer some meaning (inference may be basic)	Poem has vague author's purpose. Superficial or no inference available	Poem cannot be analyzed for author's purpose or inference
Poem meets all English spelling and punctuation conventions	Poem meets most English spelling and punctuation conventions	Poem meets some English spelling and punctuation conventions – contains mistakes	Poem contains many spelling and punctuation mistakes including sight words and word families

Rubric for Final Project: Student Teaches a Poem

A	B	C	D (re-do)
Student's visual representation of poem is sensitive and encompasses deeper meaning	Student's visual representation of poem begins to address deeper meaning	Student's visual representation of poem shows literal meaning	Student's visual representation of poem does not correlate with poem
Student reads poem with fluency and feeling	Student reads poem with some fluency and feeling	Student reads poem with fluency at times	Student does not read poem fluently
Student explains why he/she thinks the author wrote the poem with attention to deeper meaning	Student explains why he/she thinks the author wrote the poem with little attention to deeper meaning	Student explains why he/she thinks the author wrote the poem with attention to surface meaning	Student cannot explain why the author wrote the poem
Student explains how to make an inference about the poem (or demonstrates other higher-level thinking skill appropriate to poem)	Student explains something about inferences (or other higher-level thinking skill) but has trouble relating it to poem	Student makes mistakes when explaining how to make inferences (or other higher-level thinking skill)	Student does not address inferences (or higher-level thinking skill)

Content Standards

The Pennsylvania State Standards for reading encompass technical skills and comprehension skills. Students are expected to learn the technical aspects of reading (sight words, vocabulary, decoding) as well as understand what they read (make inferences, draw conclusions). The first grade standards that apply to this unit are:

1.1.1.E: Acquire a reading vocabulary consisting of sight words, high-frequency words and word families. Use a picture dictionary when appropriate.

1.1.1.H.6: Demonstrate connections with information while reading.

R3.A.1.3: Make inferences and draw conclusions based on text.

R3.A.1.4.1: Identify and/or explain stated or implied main ideas and relevant supporting details from text.

R3.A.1.6.1: Identify the author's intended purpose of text.

The second grade standards that apply are:

1.1.2.E: Acquire a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using words (e.g. high-frequency words, synonyms, antonyms, categories of words). Use a dictionary when appropriate.

1.1.2.H.6 Apply information and connections from reading.

R3.A.1.3 Make inferences and draw conclusions based on text.

R3.A.1.4.1 Identify and/or explain stated or implied main ideas and relevant supporting details from text.

R3.A.1.6.1: Identify the author's intended purpose of text