



Reading Literature

Poetry: Creating an Animal Anthology Unit Plan

Grades K-2

Rationale

- ✚ The Common Core standards expect that students will be able to recognize and interact with common types of texts and genres. Interaction includes the ability to form and express a literary response to a text, as well as the ability to produce an original piece of writing that has the specific characteristics and structure of a text. By interacting with a variety of texts through reading, writing, and speaking, students will begin to develop a familiarity with literary genres in the early grades.

Goal

- ✚ To read and respond to published works of poetry and produce an original poem of one's own

Standards

- ✚ **RL.K.5** Recognize common types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems).
- ✚ **RL.1.4** Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.
- ✚ **RL.2.4** Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.
- ✚ **W.K.6** With guidance and support from adults, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.
- ✚ **W.1.6** With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.
- ✚ **W.2.6** With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.

Objectives

- ✚ Students will identify the characteristics of a poem.
- ✚ Students will read a published poem and write a response to it.
- ✚ Students will collaborate with peers in order to read and write about poetry.
- ✚ Students will write and illustrate an original poem and produce a final “published” copy of their work.
- ✚ Students will discuss how poems and stories are the same and how they are different.

Materials

- + Several grade-level books of poetry (See **Teacher Tips** for suggestions)
- + ***Student Activity: Animal Words, Color Words, and Feeling Words***
- + ***Student Activity: Poetry of Many Colors***
- + ***Student Activity: My Colorful Animal Poem***
- + Crayons/markers
- + Pencils

Procedures (NOTE: This is a multi-day lesson.)

Part I: 1-2 days

- + Ask students what they already know about poems. There will probably be a range of familiarity in your classroom. Brainstorm ideas and gauge prior knowledge.
 - For younger students, talk about how songs can sometimes be poems. Sing a familiar song, like “The Itsy, Bitsy Spider.”
 - For older students, talk about poems that they have read before. Ask students what they liked about these poems. If they have not read poems, share one or more of your favorites.
 - Talk about what makes a poem a poem. Good examples of responses include
 - **Structure or form** – poems don’t always include full sentences and have short lines that don’t end in periods.
 - **Ideas** – poems are often images or moments that center around one thing. Some may say that poems look at ordinary things in a new way.
 - **Language** – poems sometimes compare one thing to another and use highly sensory language.
 - **Sound** – poems often rhyme and have internal rhythm.
- + Say, “**Since most poems are shorter than stories, books of poems usually have more than one poem in them.**” Flip through one of the collections of poems and show students several poems and illustrations. Say, “**Today. I’m going to read a few poems about animals. Listen to these poems and tell me what else you notice about these poems.**” Read 3-4 poems to students.
 - For older students, talk about elements in addition to pattern and rhyme, such as alliteration and/or the beat of a poem.
- + Distribute the ***Student Activity: Animal Words, Color Words, and Feeling Words***.
 - Tell students that these words can help them to think and write about poetry. They can also use other animal, color, and feeling words that they know. Talk about how poems can make people think about colors. For example, a poem about a whale might make students think of the color blue since whales swim in water, and water is blue. Then talk about how poems can make people feel when they read them. If a student likes to read funny things, he or she would probably be happy to read a funny poem about a whale. If another student is afraid of whales because they are so big, that student might be afraid to read the same poem.
- + Distribute the ***Student Activity: Poetry of Many Colors***.
 - Say, “**Now it’s your turn to read a poem about an animal. When you have finished reading, draw a picture of what happens in the poem. Then, use a color word and a feeling word to write sentences about the poem that you read.**”

- Place students in pairs or groups. Give them time to select and flip through the provided titles. Tell students to read at least 2 poems before they choose a poem to complete the activity. For younger students, consider placing them in groups and calling each group to you and/or a classroom volunteer to assist them with the activity. Students can then be sent to work independently once the adult is certain that they can complete the remainder of the activity. Then call the next group of students.
- To wrap up the lesson, discuss how students felt while they read the poems. Ask them what they noticed about the:
 - **Form:** “What did you notice about the lines? Do you see a shape? Is there anything interesting about the way the lines stop and which words are on the lines?”
 - **Ideas:** “What ideas does the writer have about this animal? Is it a nice animal or a mean animal? Is it beautiful or ugly? Is it funny or serious?”
 - **Language:** “Were there any words you don’t know? Is the animal compared to anything? Were there any strong or surprising words?”
 - **Sound:** “Does the poem rhyme? Does the poem sound like sounds the animals make? How do the poem’s sounds make you feel?”

Part II: 2-5 days

- ✚ In your next session, revisit the discussion about poems. Say, “Last time, we wrote how we felt about an animal poem that we read. Today, we are going to write our own animal poems and make them into a book, just like some of the books that we read last time.”
- ✚ Distribute the *Student Activity: My Colorful Animal Poem*.
 - Have students also get out *Student Activity: Animal Words, Color Words, and Feeling Words* from the previous session and place it in front of them
 - Write the following example poem (or one you make up) on the board or on chart paper so that students can see it.

Chester the Sick Snake

**Chester is a green snake,
Who lives by a large lake.
He likes to eat cookies and drink milkshakes,
So now he’s sick with a tummy ache!**

- Say, “This poem has an animal, a color word, and a feeling word in it. The poem has a rhyming pattern, too. What else do you notice about this poem?” Discuss what other elements they see in the poem.
- **Think about the poems that you have read. Write a poem about an animal that you like. Describe how it looks, feels, or acts. Then, draw a color picture that shows what the animal is doing in your poem.”**

- Encourage older students to use more complex elements and more than one animal, color word, or feeling word in their poems.
- Place students in pairs or groups. They can be the same pairs or groups from the last session, or they can be new pairings and groupings. Remind students to use ***Student Activity: Animal Words, Color Words, and Feeling Words*** and the provided titles as resources to help them write their poems. You may wish to group younger students as they were in the last session. Another option could be for younger students to write their poems with the help of a “buddy” class of older students.
- Circulate and be available to help students compose their poems.
- ✚ **Closing:** In conclusion, say, “**Poems are different from stories. There are some things that are the same.**” Ask students to name some similarities and differences.
- ✚ **Extension: Create the Anthology:** Work with students to compile anthology books. Have them include some of the poems they wrote and some that they read with you in class. Students may want to add a table of contents, index, glossary, or other text features that would help readers navigate the book. Be sure to hold a book publishing celebration when you unveil the compiled anthology to the class and read a few selections. Invite parents to join in the celebration or, if your budget allows, print a copy for each family. Keep the original on your bookshelf because it is authentic literature.

Teacher Tips

- ✚ Here are some titles and collections of children’s poetry and rhyme that include poems about animals and colors:
 - *Animal Tracks: Wild Poems to Read Aloud*, by Charles Ghigna, illustrated by John Speirs
 - *Ladybug, Ladybug and Other Favorite Poems*, by Carol A. Grund
 - *All the Colors of the Earth*, by Sheila Hamanaka
 - *Side by Side: Poems to Read Together*, by Lee Bennett Hopkins, illustrated by Hilary Knight
 - *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* by Bill Martin Jr, illustrated by Eric Carle
 - *Hailstones and Halibut Bones: Adventures in Color*, by Mary O'Neill, illustrated by John Wallner
 - *Read-Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young*, by Jack Prelutsky, illustrated by Marc Brown
 - *Animal Lullabies*, by Mandy Ross, illustrated by Kristina Kallai Nagy
 - *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish*, by Dr. Seuss
 - *From the Doghouse: Poems to Chew On*, by Amy E. Sklansky, illustrated by Karla Firehammer, Karen Dismukes, Cathy McQuitty, and Sandy Koeser
 - *Sing a Song of Popcorn*, by Mary Michaels White, Eva Moore, Beatrice Schenk De Regniers and Jan Carr, illustrated by various artists
- ✚ For more advanced readers, consider collections such as:
 - *Dinosaurs*, by Lee Bennett Hopkins, illustrated by Murray Tinkelman
 - *The Bill Martin Jr. Big Book of Poetry*, by Bill Martin Jr. and Michael Sampson, illustrated by various artists

- *The Tightly Whitey Spider and More Wacky Animal Poems I Totally Made Up*, by Kenn Nesbitt, illustrated by Ethan Long
- *It's Raining Pigs and Noodles*, by Jack Prelutsky, illustrated by James Stevenson
- ✚ Have students use PowerPoint or other publishing software to write and illustrate their poems. Create a webpage or similar online presentation to showcase students' writing and literary responses to published poems.
- ✚ If students struggle identifying form, ideas, language, or sounds in the poem, make sure to conduct another lesson focused on that element of poetry. You may want to group students strategically based on these needs.
- ✚ For struggling readers or writers, provide a frame to support their ideas. For example, have students replace words from "Chester the Sick Snake" with their own words. Encourage students to think about rhyming words. A suggested format is:

(Name) the (Feeling) (Animal)

**(Name) is a (color) (animal),
Who lives by a (describing word) (place).
(He/She) likes to (action) (thing) and (action) (thing),
So now (he/she)'s (feeling) with a (thing)!**

- ✚ Add the completed collection of poetry and responses to poetry to the classroom bookshelf for students to read. The following year, the next group of students can choose a different topic for their class poetry collection, such as family, home, friends, insects, food, toys, sports, places, etc.
- ✚ Use academic language:
 - For younger students, introduce the academic terms. Each "picture" is an **illustration**. For older students, use academic terms throughout the lesson.

Extension Activities

- ✚ Hold a class poetry reading for parents and families. Each student can choose to either read the animal poem that they wrote or share their response to the published poem that they read.
- ✚ Consider each student poem to be a stanza in one long class animal poem. Read the entire poem to students to see what kinds of adventures that their animals had. Affix each stanza to long sheets of colored butcher paper and display "Our Amazingly Long Animal Poem" outside the classroom.
- ✚ Use a Venn diagram to help students write about how poems and stories are the same and how they are different.
- ✚ Start a classroom Word Wall category for rhyming words.
- ✚ Have students listen to children's poetry being read on CD or other audio format. Encourage students to pay attention to the elements of rhyme that they hear in each reading.
- ✚ Play songs that rhyme and have students move to the music. Talk about how music and rhyming fit together in many songs.

- ✚ Have students select and write a specific type of poem to complete the activity. Consider titles such as:
- *Lots of Limericks*, by Myra Cohn Livingston, illustrated by Rebecca Perry (limericks)
 - *The Hound Dog's Haiku and Other Poems for Dog Lovers*, by Michael J. Rosen, illustrated by Mary Azarian, *The Cuckoo's Haiku and Other Birding Poems*, by Michael J. Rosen, illustrated by Stan Fellows (haiku)
 - *Twosomes*, by Marilyn Singer, illustrated by Lee Wildish (couplets)

Animal Words, Color Words, and Feeling Words

Here are some words to help you write about poetry.

Animals

alligator	bear	beaver	bird	cat
cheetah	chicken	dinosaur	dog	dolphin
donkey	dragon	duck	elephant	fish
fox	giraffe	horse	lion	monkey
moose	mouse	panda	penguin	pig
rabbit	raccoon	snail	snake	tiger
turkey	turtle	unicorn	whale	wolf

Colors

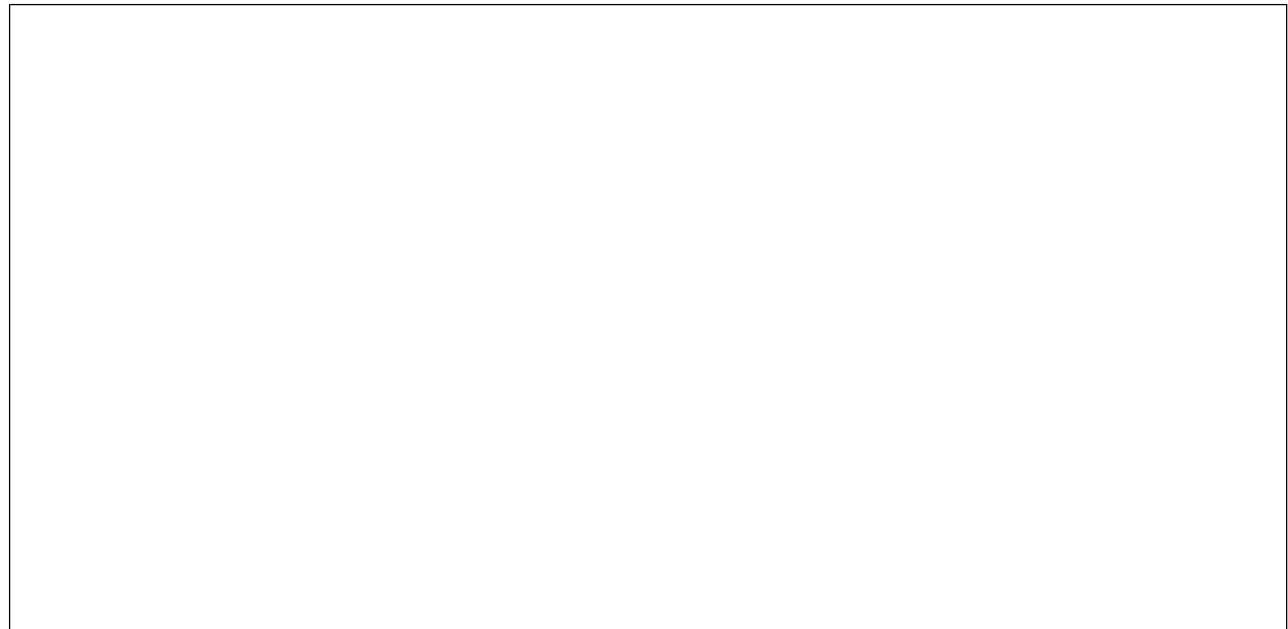
Feelings

black	Pink	afraid	proud
blue	Purple	brave	sad
brown	Red	curious	shy
gold	Silver	happy	sick
green	Tan	hungry	silly
grey	White	lazy	surprised
orange	Yellow	nervous	worried

Poetry of Many Colors

Draw a picture of the poem that you read. Write words to finish the sentences about the poem.

Title of Poem _____ **by** _____



This poem makes me think of the color _____

because

_____.

The poem makes me feel_____ **because**

_____.

My Colorful Animal Poem

Write a poem about an animal. Use one color word and one feeling word in your poem.
Draw a picture to go with your poem.

My Colorful Animal Poem

by _____