

The Power of Poetry

Perspectives in Poetry

Shelby Blackwood
Published by *K20 Center*

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0 License

Grade Level	9th – 10th Grade	**Time Frame**	120-180 minutes
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	2-3 class periods
Course	American Literature		

Essential Question

How can poetry be a vehicle for change?

Summary

In this lesson, students compare and contrast the poem, "The Hill We Climb," with an excerpt from the speech, "I Have a Dream," and analyze how the authors' messages are made clear through their word choices and rhetorical strategies. Students compose a poem, evaluate how poetry can be used to send a message, and consider how different perspectives bring different meanings to our writing. This is a multimodality lesson, which means it includes face-to-face, online, and hybrid versions of the lesson. The attachments also include a downloadable Common Cartridge file, which can be imported into a Learning Management System (LMS) such as Canvas or eKadence. The cartridge includes interactive student activities and teacher's notes.

Snapshot

Engage

Students watch and respond to a video of the poem "In This Place: An American Lyric."

Explore

Students read and compare "The Hill We Climb" with an excerpt from the "I Have a Dream" speech using Categorical Highlighting. Then, students answer the question "What makes a piece of writing poetry?"

Explain

Students watch and reflect on the Ted Talk, "Using your voice is a political choice."

Extend

Students create a Blackout Poem using an excerpt from a speech by Abraham Lincoln.

Evaluate

Students participate in a Gallery Walk and respond to classmates' poems.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

WME401: Analyze how the choice of a specific word or phrase shapes meaning or tone in somewhat challenging passages

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 9)

9.3.R.2: Evaluate authors' perspectives and explain how those perspectives contribute to the meanings of texts.
9.3.R.7: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics, using textual evidence to support their claims and inferences.

Attachments

- Abraham Lincoln Speech Excerpt—The Power of Poetry - Spanish.docx
- Abraham Lincoln Speech Excerpt—The Power of Poetry - Spanish.pdf
- Abraham Lincoln Speech Excerpt—The Power of Poetry.docx
- Abraham Lincoln Speech Excerpt—The Power of Poetry.pdf
- Common Cartridge—The Power of Poetry.zip
- Discussion Post Rubric—The Power of Poetry - Spanish.docx
- Discussion Post Rubric—The Power of Poetry - Spanish.pdf
- Discussion Post Rubric—The Power of Poetry.docx
- Discussion Post Rubric—The Power of Poetry.pdf
- I Have a Dream—The Power of Poetry - Spanish.docx
- I Have a Dream—The Power of Poetry - Spanish.pdf
- I Have a Dream—The Power of Poetry.docx
- I Have a Dream—The Power of Poetry.pdf
- Lesson Slides—The Power of Poetry.pptx
- The Hill We Climb—The Power of Poetry - Spanish.docx
- The Hill We Climb—The Power of Poetry - Spanish.pdf
- The Hill We Climb—The Power of Poetry.docx
- The Hill We Climb—The Power of Poetry.pdf

Materials

- Common Cartridge (attached)
- "The Hill We Climb" handout (attached; one for each student)
- "I Have a Dream" handout (attached; one for each student)
- Abraham Lincoln Speech Excerpt handout (attached; one for each student)
- Highlighters (multiple colors)
- Pencils
- Black p
  ermanent markers
- Sticky notes

20 minutes

Engage (Virtual)

In this activity, assign students to watch the video, "In This Place: An American Lyric." When they have completed the video, ask them to respond to two open-ended questions. You could use their answers as a formative assessment to establish what students know about author's purpose.

Communicate the following to students:

Overview: "In this section, you will first watch a video of "In This Place: An American Lyric." This is a poem written by Amanda Gorman, the first person named to be the National Youth Poet Laureate of the United States. While watching the video, think about the words she chose, her purpose for writing the poem, and who her target audience is. After watching the video, you will answer a couple of questions about the author's purpose and intended audience."

Next, share the following procedure along with the link for the video. This information may be embedded in an LMS or may be shared in a virtual classroom such as Google Classroom.

Procedure:

1. First, watch the video In This Place: An American Lyric.
2. Answer these questions in response to the poem:
    - What is the poet's/poem's purpose?
    - Who is the poet's audience?

60 minutes

Explore (face to face)

Display **slide 6 and 7** (viewing the first video). Explain to students that the video they just watched was a group of poets reciting from a poem written by Amanda Gorman. Discuss briefly what the students thought about the video and their responses to the questions they were asked. Tell students they will now watch two more videos. One is of Amanda Gorman reading "The Hill We Climb" at President Joe Biden's inauguration on January 20, 2021. The second video is an excerpt from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech.

Teacher's note:

Start the I Have a Dream speech at 11:10.

Ask students to think about how these two "speeches" are similar and how they are different. Ask them to consider how the authors use words and rhetorical strategies to give the text meaning and help it flow. Ask students to also consider who the authors' audience is and the purpose of the two pieces of writing.

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=Wz4YuEvJ3y4

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=c_nvqRqTiKk

Display **slide 8.** Pass out a copy of **"The Hill We Climb"** and the **"I Have a Dream"** excerpt to each student. After viewing the videos, review, if necessary, the Categorical Highlighting strategy. Explain to students that they will now analyze these two pieces of writing by looking for rhetorical strategies used by the authors. As they are analyzing the two pieces, invite students to consider why the author chose the rhetorical strategies in their writing.

Teacher's note:

You may choose which rhetorical strategies to highlight depending on students' knowledge level.

When students have finished highlighting, ask them to discuss in small groups any parts of the texts that jumped out at them. Ask them the following questions:

- Were there any rhetorical strategies that both pieces used?
- Why do you think the authors chose those strategies?

Display **slide 9**. Ask students to consider this question: "What makes a piece of writing poetry?" Then, ask them to discuss in small groups. Ask for volunteers to share out with the class.

20 minutes

Explain (Virtual)

In this activity, have students watch a video of a Ted Talk by Amanda Gorman. When they have completed the video, ask them to consider the question: "Is art/poetry political?"

If you meet face to face with students, whether in person or through video conferencing, you could easily lead a live discussion with the students rather than using a discussion board or quiz feature. You may wish to use this activity as a formative assessment to determine what the students are thinking about what they've learned so far. You could also address any misconceptions students may have at this time.

Communicate the following to students:

Overview: "Now that you have read and analyzed "The Hill We Climb" and the "I Have a Dream" excerpt, watch this Ted Talk. In this Ted Talk, Amanda Gorman discusses how poetry can be a powerful force. Listen carefully to her reasons behind her claim. Then, answer the question that follows."

Next, share the following procedure along with the following link: Using your voice is a political choice

Procedure:

1. Watch "Using your voice is a political choice" by Amanda Gorman.
2. After viewing the Ted Talk, answer this question: **Is poetry/art political? Explain.**

45 minutes

Extend (face to face)

Display **slide 12**. Pass out a copy of **Abraham Lincoln's speech excerpt** to each student. Explain to students that in 1864 Abraham Lincoln gave a speech at the Baltimore Sanitary Fair. In this speech, President Lincoln made the claim that words do not necessarily have the same meaning for everybody. Amanda Gorman referenced this speech in an interview. Here is a quote from that interview: *"Abraham Lincoln where he basically says, 'By freedom, we do not all mean the same thing. By feminism, we do not all mean the same thing. By intersectionality, we do not all mean the same thing'."* Keeping this in mind, read through the excerpt of President Lincoln's speech.

Once the students have read through the Lincoln speech, assign them to create a Blackout Poem using the excerpt. Have them take their pencil and lightly circle the most significant words in the speech or the words they believe convey the most meaning. Invite them to write the words in the order they appear as they read from top to bottom and left to right. Explain to them that if they are satisfied with those words as a poem, they should then make a box around the words they chose with a black permanent marker. Ask them to then black out the rest of the page, leaving only the words they chose untouched.

30 minutes

Evaluate (face to face)

Display **slide 13**. Review the Gallery Walk strategy with students. Ask students to post their Blackout poems along the walls or leave them at their desks. Then, ask students to walk around the room reading their classmates' poems. Invite students to leave sticky notes with comments on the poems. Ask students to look for for similarities and differences in the individual poems.

Guided Inquiry

Guide students with leading questions, such as "What do you notice about the poems? Are they similar or very different? Did most people choose the same words in their poems? Why do you think people chose the words they did?" These questions should lead the students to realize that although they used the same piece of text to construct their poem, there are many different ways a piece can be interpreted.

Optional

Depending on the number of poems, students could be placed in smaller groups to complete the Gallery Walk.

Resources

- ABC News. (2021, January 20). Poet Amanda Gorman reads 'The Hill We Climb' [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wz4YuEvJ3y4
- Hazelwood, Suzy. (2020, March 13). *Black and Yellow Camera Lens on Wooden Surface* [Photograph]. Pexels. https://www.pexels.com/photo/wood-industry-typing-writing-3928917/
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Categorical highlighting. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/192
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Gallery walk/carousel. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/118
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Google classroom. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/628
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Google drawings. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/629
- Knowledge World. (2019, October 8). I Have a Dream by Martin Luther King, Jr's famous speech on Jobs and Freedom (Full Speech Video) [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/c_nvqRqTiKk
- Liu, J. (2021, January 20). Read the full text of Amanda Gorman's inaugural poem 'The Hill We Climb'. CNBC. https://www.cnbc.com/2021/01/20/amanda-gormans-inaugural-poem-the-hill-we-climb-full-text.html
- Mass Poetry. (2020, April 14). Mass Poets read "In this Place (An American Lyric)" by Amanda Gorman [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9UmyBSMn3A&feature=emb_logo
- Montgomery County Public Schools. (n.d.). “I have a dream” by Martin Luther King, Jr; August 28, 1963 [Speech transcript]. https://www2.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/siteassets/Schools/Middle-Schools/A-F/leems/uploadedFiles/news/Full-text-I-Have-a-Dream-.pdf
- Spiske, Markus. (2019, September 26). [Photograph]. Pexels. https://www.pexels.com/photo/climate-sign-outside-blur-2990644/
- TED. (2021, January 20).
  Using your voice is a political choice. | Amanda Gorman [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zaZBgqfEa1E
- Volokh, E. (2015, December 30). "We all declare for liberty, but we do not all mean the Same Thing": Eugene Volokh. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokh-conspiracy/wp/2015/12/28/we-all-declare-for-liberty-but-in-using-the-same-word-we-do-not-all-mean-the-same-thing/
- Volquardsen, Matthis. (2019, April 15). *Low Angle Photo of American Flag* [Photograph]. Pexels. https://www.pexels.com/photo/low-angle-photo-of-american-flag-2174720/