



The Power of Poetry

Perspectives in Poetry



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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," and 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

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)
- Discussion Post Rubric (attached)

15 minutes

Engage

In this activity, have students watch the video, "In This Place: An American Lyric."

After they've watched the video, have them respond to two open-ended questions. You may wish to use these 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." Recited by sixteen Massachusetts poets, 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 has chosen, 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](#). Embed this information into an LMS or share in a virtual classroom such as [Google Classroom](#).

Procedure:

1. First, have students watch the video [In This Place: An American Lyric](#).
2. After video is complete, have them answer the following questions in response to the poem:
 - What is the poet's/poem's purpose?
 - Who is the poet's audience?

60 minutes

Explore

This activity has two parts. The procedure is outlined below.

Have students watch two videos: Amanda Gorman reading her inaugural poem, "The Hill We Climb," and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. reading "I Have a Dream."

After they've watched the videos, ask them to highlight specific rhetorical strategies in those two selections using the [Categorical Highlighting](#) strategy. The written texts are included in attachments.

When they finish highlighting, have them respond to the question, "What makes a piece of writing poetry?"

Teacher's Note

You may wish to choose which rhetorical strategies students highlight depending on their level of knowledge.

Communicate the following to students:

Overview:

"The video you just watched was of Amanda Gorman reading a poem she has written. You may have noticed some rhetorical strategies, such as alliteration, repetition, allusion, etc., used in the poem. Writers use rhetorical strategies to convey meaning and evoke a response from the reader. How do these rhetorical strategies help the flow of the poem and give it meaning? How does the poet draw you into her thoughts and emotions? To help you answer these questions, use a strategy called [Categorical Highlighting](#) to analyze two pieces of writing. Below, you will find instructions about what to highlight in the two selections."

Next, share the following procedure along with the following links:

- [The Hill We Climb](#)
- [I Have a Dream](#)
- https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JYftYDHJeYn6qH86_BwdM_ONR9EX3NgG/copy
- https://docs.google.com/document/d/1n_1Ds5QvSON5bpr8URa7EPIDMTm_8brS/copy
- [Online Discourse Etiquette](#)
- <https://docs.google.com/document/d/19ppq-8cAxdqbrH5uFm30LUcD6YnzccnU/copy>

This information may be embedded in an LMS or may be shared in a virtual classroom such as Google Classroom.

Procedure:

1. This activity has two parts.
2. First, have students watch these two speeches:
 - The first [video](#) is of Amanda Gorman reading a poem she wrote and delivered at President Joe Biden's Inauguration on January 20, 2021.
 - The second [video](#) is of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as he delivers his "I Have a Dream" speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963. Start at 11:10. Instruct students to watch the videos and think about who the audience is and what the purposes are of these two pieces.
3. Next, have students use the Categorical Highlighting strategy to analyze some of the rhetorical strategies used in each piece. Have them think about why the author may have chosen those rhetorical strategies and what effects the strategies may have on the audience.

4. Instruct them to highlight the following rhetorical strategies with the designated colors:
 - **[Pink]** Alliteration is a device frequently used in poetry or rhetoric (speechmaking) where words starting with the same consonant are used in close proximity.
 - **[Blue]** Allusion is an indirect reference to a work of literature (not explicit) that assumes the reader is familiar with the work alluded to.
 - **[Green]** Internal rhyme, also known as middle rhyme, is rhyme that occurs within a single line of verse, or between internal phrases across multiple lines. By contrast, rhyme between line endings is known as end rhyme.
 - **[Yellow]** Repetition is repeating words, phrases, lines, or stanzas. Repetition is used to emphasize a feeling or idea, create rhythm, and/or develop a sense of urgency.
5. Instruct students to complete the Categorical Highlighting using Google Docs. They can access both texts with these links: "[The Hill We Climb](#)" and "[I Have a Dream](#)."
6. If students need help using Google Docs for highlighting, have them watch this [video](#).
7. When students have finished highlighting, have them submit both documents.
8. Once they have submitted their documents, have them sign onto the Discussion Board and answer the following question: **What makes a piece of writing poetry?**
9. Have them make an original, constructive comment on one or two of their classmates' posts. Remind them that "This is cool," or "Awesome!" are not good examples of constructive comments. Invite them to consider what they like about a particular post—or perhaps whether it made them consider a new angle. Ask them to start off their comment with something like, "I really like how you..." or "I agree with what you said about (blank) because..."
 - Have students watch the [Online Discourse Etiquette video](#) to help guide their comments.
 - Have them use the attached [Discussion Post Rubric](#) to help develop comments.

20 minutes

Explain

In this activity, assign students to watch a video of a Ted Talk by Amanda Gorman. When they have completed the Ted Talk, ask them to share their responses are about poetry as a powerful force.

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 the Discussion Board or quiz feature. Use this a formative assessment to determine what 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" speech, 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."

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

In this activity, have students read an excerpt from a speech given by Abraham Lincoln. Assign them to use Google Slides to create a Blackout Poem using the text from the speech. If they need assistance, assign the video link instructing them how to use Slides to create the poem. Tell them that they will respond to their classmates' poems in the next activity.

Teacher's Note

Students could create the blackout poem using Google Slides or optionally print out the excerpt and use black permanent marker. Students could take a picture of the completed poem and submit the file digitally. Give students a deadline to submit their poems because they will need those for the last activity.

Tech Integration

There are a variety of applications that may be used to facilitate blackout poetry. This [video](#) provides an example of how to create a blackout poem using Google Slides. The benefit to using Google Slides, [Drawings](#), or Microsoft Powerpoint, is that images may easily be added to the poems.

Communicate the following to students:

Overview: "In an interview, Amanda Gorman referenced a speech by Abraham Lincoln, delivered three years into the United States Civil War. She said, "*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'.*" In other words, a person's unique perspective can change the meaning of something."

Have students read an excerpt from the speech to which Ms. Gorman refers. Ask them to consider the following questions:

- What is most significant in his speech?
- Which words would convey what you understand this text to say?

Ask them to consider how perspective can change a person's point of view. Instruct them to find the most important words in the excerpt to create a blackout poem that expresses their thoughts.

Next, share the following procedure along with the following links:

Procedure:

1. Have them open [President Lincoln's speech](#) and read through it at least twice. Ask them to highlight all the words they think are most significant and convey the message of the excerpt.
2. Have them open the [Google Slides version](#) of the speech excerpt.
 - Optional: Give students the choice to print out the excerpt from the speech and create their Blackout Poem using a black marker. Have them take a photo of it and submit that file.
3. If students need more guidance, have them watch a [video](#) that explains how to create a Blackout Poem using Google Slides.

4. Instruct them to read through the speech finding the words they want to use in their poem. Remind them to look for words that are significant, words that hold meaning to them, and words that will convey their message. Have them create their Blackout Poem using the instructions from the video in step 3.
5. Tell them they will submit this in the next activity.

30 minutes

Evaluate

In this activity, have students will first submit their poem to the Discussion Board. Assign them to respond to their classmates' poems using a [Gallery Walk](#) on the Discussion Board.

Teacher's Note

If students do not have access to a discussion board for the Gallery Walk, have them submit their blackout poem as a Google Slide. You can then create one presentation and share (use commenter share setting) with students. Have students then comment on the poems through the shared presentation.

Communicate the following to students:

Overview: "Now that you have completed your Blackout Poem, you will participate in a Gallery Walk. In the presentation, you will find your classmates' poems. Read through each poem and think about how they are the same or different from your poem or your other classmates' poems. Why do you think certain words were chosen and others were not? Do most of the poems look similar or are they all very different?"

Next, share the following procedure to assist students with submitting their Blackout Poems to the Discussion Board and reviewing their classmates' work.

Procedure:

1. First, open your Blackout Poem file.
2. Next, either take a screenshot of the poem, or go to File and select Download as jpeg image. (If you chose to create your poem by hand, you will need to take a picture of it then upload that picture to the discussion board.)
3. Submit your screenshot or jpeg image file to the Discussion board.
4. Read through each of your classmates' poems. Take notes on how they are different or similar to the others.
5. Comment on two or three different poems. What do you like about them? How are they different? Are there any words in those poems that you also used? Are there some words you didn't think about using? Remember to be respectful of each other's creations. You can comment without being critical.

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. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/192>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Gallery Walk/Carousel. Strategies. <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
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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/>