INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES



Two-Voice Poems

This cross-curricular writing activity provides opportunities for students to write on a topic using two different perspectives.

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TWO-VOICE POEMS

Summary

Students identify similarities and differences between two people, concepts, or readings and then write a poem from the perspectives, contrasting their differences in the "verses" and showing their similarities in the "chorus."

Procedure

1. Students select writing topics or are assigned one by the teacher.
2. Once topics are selected, student pairs brainstorm similarities and differences found between the topics. One student researches one topic, and the other student researches the other one. Then together they compare and contrast the two to list similarities and differences.
3. Students complete the Two-Voice Poem by writing things specific to one topic on one side of the page and things specific to the other topic on the other side of the page. These list items become "verses." The best Two-Voice Poems allow each side to address the same topic one right after the other (meaning every two verses) so their differences will be obvious.
4. Those things that are common to both topics are written in the center every three or four verses or so. This is called a "chorus." These choruses can be repeated throughout the poem, if there are few similarities between the two, or they can change throughout if there are many similarities.
5. Pairs read their poems aloud, each student reading only those things specific to the topic they, personally, researched (each student reads every other line then both students read the chorus together).

Northern Nevada Writing Project. (2008). Going deep with comparison and contrast thinking guide. Retrieved from http://www.writingfix.com/