



Lesson 2: Optimistic Poetry

Objective: The objective of this lesson is to have each student create a poem that conveys the emotions that are associated with optimism.

Materials :

Dictionaries, thesaurus, pens, pencils, paper, examples of various types of poems

Procedure :

1. Review various forms of poetry with your students. Make certain that students understand that poetry does not need to rhyme. It may be easiest to begin with a structure type of poem like Haiku. A Haiku is a poem that has 3 lines. The first line has 5 syllables, the second line has 7 syllables, and line 3 has 5 syllables. It also uses a nature metaphor (although you may wish to drop this requirement).

Optimism Haiku

A face with a smile,
A full heart, overflowing
Imperfection shines.

An acrostic may also be a great place to start with children that are a little reluctant to write.

O is for the optimism I felt when I learned to ride my bike.

P is for the patience it took to know that things would be alright.

T is for the time it takes to take pride in what I do well... and so forth until the word OPTIMISM is completed.

2. When students are working on their drafts, encourage them to use a thesaurus to use more interesting words for emotions. Happy could be replaced with gleeful and so forth. Entice students to discover some interesting words and make a point of adding the new words to a creative writing word wall. Consider making a list of words that can not be used (everyday boring words like happy) and as a class look up alternative words using the thesaurus.
3. Encourage peer review and peer editing. Ensure that the class environment is safe for student sharing.
4. Students will complete their poems in good copy. Consider posting them on a class web page, or in a classroom newsletter. Do your part to feed the optimism of others in your community!

Extension Activities:

- Compile the students' poems and make a classroom booklet on optimism. The book could also include student illustrations.
- Encourage students to make a collage to illustrate their creative writing piece and post them throughout the school to raise everyone's awareness of optimism.
- Have students write poems on pessimism and then invite peers (preferably from another class) to analyze the mood of the students' poems. Encourage your students to receive the comments and take the opportunity to teach others (the reviewers) about optimism and pessimism. Your students can be the optimism experts.
- Submit your students' poems to www.feedyouoptimism.com for possible publication!