

Creating Sound and Noise Poetry

Description:

This lesson will connect science principles to the arts. Students will read a poem about sound, learn how poetry uses sound to express meaning, and write sound poems of their own. Using the poem “Noise Day” by Shel Silverstein, students will write their own poems about sound.

Objectives:

- Connect science principles to the arts by integrating a poetry lesson while learning about sound and noise
- Introduce literary devices and how they are used
- Explore the difference between sound and noise

Vocabulary:

Alliteration, noise, onomatopoeia, rhyme, sound

Materials:

- “Noise Day” by Shel Silverstein
- “Noise Day” worksheet
- “Clicking and Clanging” worksheet

Background Information:

Science and art have traditionally been seen as two separate disciplines, but they can be integrated to create meaningful lessons for students. By combining poetry with a lesson on sound and noise students will be able to learn new information while also being creative. Poetry fits especially well with a lesson on sound and noise because poetry often uses sound in a way that is not typically found in prose.

Method:

- Introduce the terms sound and noise. Make students aware of the differences between the two terms. Sounds are vibrations that are sensed by our ears and noise is unwanted sound.
- As a class, read the poem *Noise Day* by Shel Silverstein aloud. Have students circle the sounds they like in the poem and underline the noises that they do not like.
- With a partner, have students share their notes. Not all students will like the same sounds and dislike the same noises. Discuss how perception makes what might be a good sound for one student, a bad sound to another.
- Introduce literary devices one at a time and reread the poem after each new one is introduced. Ask the students to raise their hands when they hear any of these literary devices being used in the poem:
 - Onomatopoeia: a word that imitates the sound it represents
 - Repeated sounds: using the same sound or word so it creates a pattern in the poem
 - Rhyme: a pattern of words that contains similar sounds at the end of the line
 - Alliteration: the repetition of the initial consonant sounds
- Provide students with the “Noise Day” worksheet and ask them to write a poem of their own about sound and noise using the literary devices they just learned. Students can write about a specific time or location when/where they encountered these sounds (i.e., in the classroom, at home, day, or night). Be sure students include a title to their poem.
- If time allows, follow up this activity by providing students with the “Clicking and Clanging Poems” worksheet. Introduce the cinquain poetry style and explain to

students that it's shorter than the "Noise Day" poems but employs the same and/or similar literary devices (onomatopoeia, rhymes, repeated sounds, etc.). Emphasize to students that they are going to be given the creative space with this poem to think about how specific sounds and noises affect them in their daily lives.

- Allow students an opportunity to share their poems aloud.

Discussion:

- What is the difference between sound and noise?
- What are some sounds we hear in our environment right now? What are some sounds you hear at home?
- How can we integrate sound science into poetry?

Extension:

- Have students read their peer's poems. While reading, have students annotate any literary devices (i.e., rhymes, alliterations, or onomatopoeias).
- Get creative! Create an illustration of their favorite sound from the poem.
- Research other sound related poems, such as sonnets or haikus. Try writing another poem that reflects one of these styles.
- Use DEP's [Sound and Noise Resources](#) document for some example poems.
- Use DEP's [Reading Listen to the Raindrops](#) lesson to explore how sound and noise can be integrated into prose.

NYC Department of Environmental Protection

educationoffice@dep.nyc.gov

For more information visit www.nyc.gov/dep

Noise Day Worksheet

Directions: Read the following poem by Shel Silverstein. Using Silverstein’s poem to help create your own poem about a noisy time or place that you experienced recently.

Noise Day by Shel Silverstein

Let’s have one day for girls and boyses
When you can make the grandest noises.
Screech, scream, holler, and yell - -
Buzz a buzzer, clang a bell,
Sneeze—hiccup—whistle—shout,
Laugh until your lungs wear out,
Toot a whistle, kick a can,
Bang a spoon against a pan,
Sing, yodel, bellow, hum,
Blow a horn, beat a drum,
Rattle a window, slam a door,
Scrape a rake across the floor,
Use a drill, drive a nail,
Turn the hose on the garbage pail,
Shout Yahoo—Hurrah—Hurray,
Turn up the music all the way
Try and bounce your bowling ball,
Ride a skateboard up the wall,
Chomp your food with a smack and a slurp,
Chew—chomp—hiccup—burp.
One day a year do all of these,
The rest of the days –be quiet please.

-Shel Silverstein

Name: _____

Date: _____

Clicking and Clanging Poems

A cinquain is a five-line poem about a person, place, or thing. Follow the directions below. Use the lines to write and organize your own cinquain about sound and noise. Use examples of onomatopoeia, words that are imitations of the sounds we hear, to describe your noise source.

Sample cinquains:

New York City
Loud, Busy
Beeping, Humming, Roaring
City that never sleeps
Noise

Apartment Stoop
Friendly, Lively
Giggling, Chatting, Greeting
Sounds of a summer Saturday
Familiar

Directions:

1. 1 word (noun) a title or name of the noise source.
2. 2 words (adjectives) describing the noise source.
3. 3 words (action verbs) describing an action related to the noise source.
4. 4 words (phrase) describing a feeling about the title.
5. 1 word (noun/synonym) referring back to the title of the noise source.

1. _____

2. _____, _____

3. _____, _____, _____

4. _____

5. _____