

Emily Dickinson Round Robin Poetry Interpretation

Two 45-minute class periods for Steps 1-3
45 minutes for Step 4 (Optional Follow-up)

This lesson is designed as a follow-up for students who have completed “Emily Dickinson Close Reading.”

BEFORE ACTIVITY:

Advance preparation:

- Teacher assigns students to small groups (no more than 4 per group).
- Stations are set up around the room (1 station per group) with chart paper, dictionary and markers.
- Each station has one Emily Dickinson poem enlarged so everyone can see, or multiple copies.
- Selection of poems: 359, 1286, 202, 1096, 314, 236, 455. From *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, Variorum Edition, ed. R. W. Franklin (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998).

ACTIVITY:

Step 1. Teacher gives directions about what to do at each station. *5 minutes.*

Directions may also be printed and copied at each station, or written on board.

Directions are to consider and write down the following about each poem:

- A. Read it aloud.
- B. Look up words you don't know in the dictionary.
- C. Notice and consider punctuation, capitalization, diction, placement of words.
- D. Discuss what you think the author is trying to convey.

Step 2. Students spend 15 minutes at a station. Groups circle through 3-4 stations. *45-60 minutes.*

- Teacher gives a signal when it is time for groups to move to a new station.
- The entire group moves to a different station and a different poem each time.
- Students record ideas on chart paper.
- Subsequent groups add onto the same paper.

Step 3. Students choose one poem to do more close reading of the text. *20 minutes.*

- Students move to the table with the poem they choose to work on.
- *Teacher's note: Choose a poem you feel connected to.*

FOLLOW-UP/CONCLUSION TO ACTIVITY

Step 4. Students choose a creative way to show their understanding of the poem and work together as a group to present this to the class. *20 minutes to prepare. Time for sharing depends upon number of groups (2-3 minutes per group).*

Choices for creative interpretation include:

- Rewrite the poem in our own words.
- Act it out.
- Draw a picture.
- Make a timeline.
- Compare this to another poem.
- Chant “key words” or ideas underneath the poem.
- Use Call and Response to way or repeat a part of a poem.
- Use sound effects and motions.
- Add movement to illustrate meaning.
- “Artistic” interpretation involving any of the arts.

EXTENSIONS

Making a Lesson Plan to Teach an Emily Dickinson Poem to 4th Graders