

Poetry Presentation Group Project

"Her voice slid and curved down through and over the words. She was nearly singing. I wanted to look at the pages. Were they the same that I had read? Or were there notes, music, lined on the pages, as in a hymn book? . . . The sweet vanilla flavor was still on my tongue and her reading was a wonder to my ears. (Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*)

1. Sit with your group in a circle. Learn the names of everyone in your group.
2. Choose one person to read the poem aloud while your group listens. Then read the poem silently.
3. As a group, please discuss the following questions:
 - A. Why did you choose this particular poem? What do you like about it?
 - B. Describe the content of the poem. What is it about?
 - C. Are there any lines or words that you don't understand? Discuss.
 - D. Describe the tone or mood of the poem. What words or lines help to create the tone/mood?
 - E. What do you notice about the language in the poem? Which words or phrases stand out? How do they relate to the poem's meaning or mood?
 - F. What does the speaker of the poem want the audience to know? Is there a message or big idea in the poem? Explain.
4. With your group, please create a dramatic reading of the poem which expresses your understanding of its meaning. Be creative in the use of your **voices** to set the tone of the presentation. (For example, if your speaker is proud, your voices should sound confident! If your speaker is sassy, you know what to do. . .)
5. Decide if you want to speak in unison or divide the poem into different "voices." Each person in your group must say at least one line. You may use drums, music, or other sounds to support your interpretation of the poem. Be sure your voices are loud and clear.

6. You do not need to memorize the poem, but be sure you can look up and make some eye contact with the audience.
7. Represent your poem visually. Choreograph movements to go with the poem and/or create a tableau or skit to represent the meaning of your poem. Try to go beyond the literal here—represent *your interpretation* of the author's purpose and tone. No computers. Use your whole body to create interesting and well-planned stage pictures.
8. REHEARSE your presentation many times and be ready to perform your reading and explain your artistic choices to the group.

Have fun!

Poetry Presentation Expectations:

___ Group members treat one another with respect.

___ Each group member considers the assigned questions thoughtfully and thoroughly.

___ The group's presentation of the poem is dramatic, loud, and clear, setting the tone and mood of the poem.

___ The group's movements clearly and creatively represent their interpretation of the poem.

___ Group stays on task, works together, and uses time effectively.

The Road Not Taken
by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as far that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way lead onto way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Choices
By Nikki Giovanni

if i can't do
what i want to do
then my job is to not
do what i don't want
to do

it's not the same thing
but it's the best i can
do

if i can't have
what i want then
my job is to want
what i've got
and be satisfied
that at least there
is something more
to want

since i can't go
where i need
to go then i must go
where the signs point
though always understanding
parallel movement
isn't lateral

when i can't express
what i really feel
i practice feeling
what i can express
and none of it is equal
i know
but that's why mankind
alone among the animals
learns to cry

Life Doesn't Frighten Me
by Maya Angelou

Shadows on the wall
Noises down the hall
Life doesn't frighten me at all

Bad dogs barking loud
Big ghosts in a cloud
Life doesn't frighten me at all

Mean old Mother Goose
Lions on the loose
They don't frighten me at all

Dragons breathing flame
On my counterpane
That doesn't frighten me at all.

I go boo
Make them shoo
I make fun
Way they run
I won't cry
So they fly
I just smile
They go wild

Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Tough guys fight

All alone at night
Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Panthers in the park
Strangers in the dark
No, they don't frighten me at all.

That new classroom where
Boys all pull my hair
(Kissy little girls
With their hair in curls)
They don't frighten me at all.

Don't show me frogs and snakes
And listen for my scream,
If I'm afraid at all
It's only in my dreams.

I've got a magic charm
That I keep up my sleeve
I can walk the ocean floor
And never have to breathe.

Life doesn't frighten me at all
Not at all
Not at all.

Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Hope is the thing with feathers

By Emily Dickinson

"Hope" is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -
And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm -

I've heard it in the chillest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb - of me.

We Wear the Mask

By Paul Laurence Dunbar

WE wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,—
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.
Why should the world be over-wise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
We wear the mask.
We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries
To thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world dream otherwise,
We wear the mask!

I, Too, Sing America
by Langston Hughes

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

A Dream Deferred
by Langston Hughes

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore--
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over--
like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.
Or does it explode?

Ballad of Birmingham
By Dudley Randall

"Mother dear, may I go downtown
Instead of out to play,
And march the streets of Birmingham
In a Freedom March today?"

"No, baby, no, you may not go,
For the dogs are fierce and wild,
And clubs and hoses, guns and jails
Aren't good for a little child."

"But, mother, I won't be alone.
Other children will go with me,
And march the streets of Birmingham
To make our country free."

"No, baby, no, you may not go,
For I fear those guns will fire.
But you may go to church instead
And sing in the children's choir."

She has combed and brushed her night-dark hair,
And bathed rose petal sweet,
And drawn white gloves on her small brown hands,
And white shoes on her feet.

The mother smiled to know her child
Was in the sacred place,
But that smile was the last smile
To come upon her face.

For when she heard the explosion,
Her eyes grew wet and wild.
She raced through the streets of Birmingham
Calling for her child.

She clawed through bits of glass and brick,
Then lifted out a shoe.
"O, here's the shoe my baby wore,
But, baby, where are you?"

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She clawed through bits of glass and brick,
Then lifted out a shoe.
"O, here's the shoe my baby wore,
But, baby, where are you?"

Wednesday, December 18

9:15-9:30—All sixth graders meet in theater. (Maret sixth graders stay after Convocation.) Sit by houses with WMSG. Welcome. Overview of the day.

9:30—10:30--Teams: Adams, L'Enfant, Dupont, Douglas—meet in MS classrooms.

Team-building games and poetry projects

Adams (Klinge)—Furey, Schutte, Raneses

L'Enfant (Garfield)—Gayer, Hall, Kitchen

Douglas—(Cleveland)--Eser, Lenane, Nieto, WMSG

Dupont (Woodley)—Walker, Breystraak, Jones

Games: Telephone, who started motion, movement and name, woosh bang pow, pass motion/sound

Poetry Assignment: See assignment sheet. Talk through work styles: what do you see as your strengths and weaknesses when working on a group performance project? Work time. If time, partner with another group for rough draft performances.

10:30-10:40—SNACK in Team rooms (or MS snack area?) Explain who is going where next!

10:45-11:15—Workshop 1. In MS classrooms.

11:20-12—Pizza Lunch in Team Rooms. Start with “thankfuls” in trio groups (1 WMSG, 2 Maret per group). Then go outside for free time.

12:05-12:35—Workshop 2. In MS classrooms.

12:40-1:30—Poetry Rehearsal. Back to poetry groups in Team rooms. Rehearsal and rough draft performances.

1:40-2:15—Poetry performances. Two teams meet together in middle school classrooms. (Class meeting seating.) Decide order. Perform!

2:20-3pm—Kickball! (or another indoor game.) Two games running.

3:00—3:10—Circle in teams (in gym). Wish for New Year/Wish for Service. Goodbye.

