# Teaching with Poetry

Curriculum Materials Center  
David & Lorraine Cheng Library, William Paterson University

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Teaching with Poetry
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A selection of poetry resources that can be used for lesson planning in the PreK to Grade 12 classroom.

TEACHING RESOURCES


   Call Number: Curr.Mats. LB1576 .H846 2010


   Call Number: Curr.Mats. LB1575.5 .P68 1994

   Call Number: Curr.Mats. PN1101 .S58 2004

   Call Number: Curr.Mats. PS586.3 .P64 2013
The following selections are organized by curriculum areas, based upon their subject matter, visual imagery, and/or language. Some selections could be used in more than one curriculum area.

**ART & MUSIC:**

In the rhythm of a familiar folk song, a child cannot resist adding one more dab of paint in surprising places.
**Call Number:** PJ Bea

Poems that portray the essence of the season between summer and winter.
**Call Number:** j811.54 Flo

More than 50 poems with an accompanying CD introduce poetry with a beat.
**Call Number:** j811 Hip

A compilation of poems inspired by American art in the twentieth century.
**Call Number:** j811 Hea

In this version of a familiar song, baby animals ride to the children’s zoo on the zoo train.
**Call Number:** [Big Book] j782.42 Hil

Profiles twenty-six of the jazz greats using a different type of poem for each.
**Call Number:** j811.6 Mar
A rhyming tribute to a budding young artist.
**Call Number:** PJ McD

A look at the female jazz band that originated from Mississippi and found its way to the most famous ballrooms in the United States.
**Call Number:** j781.65 Nel

A recollection, in verse, of many famous African American artists and musicians.
**Call Number:** j811.54 Sha

A cumulative folk song with illustrations that reveal all that the old lady swallows.
**Call Number:** [Big Book] PJ Tab 2000

**LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERATURE:**

A picture book biography of William Carlos Williams that traces the childhood events that led him to become a doctor and poet.
**Call Number:** j811.52 Bry

Journey through the history and highlights of the world’s poetry. Covers epics and odes, nonsense verse and haiku. CD included.
**Call Number:** j811.008 Dri

A biography and introduction to the work of the Japanese haiku poet whose love for nature finds expression in the more than thirty poems included in this book.
**Call Number:** j895.6 Gol

The author interprets the people, events, influences and art that made up the brief life of Sylvia Plath.
Call Number: j811.6 Hem
After her ex-boyfriend shoots himself Emily is sent to a boarding school. There she expresses herself through poetry as she copes with her guilt.

Call Number: J Hub

Watercolor works of arts with rhyming text celebrate African American ancestors.

Call Number: j811.52 Hug

A collection of poetry by famous American poets from all geographic regions and different ethnicities in America.

Call Number: j811.3 Ove

Presents lively examples of twenty-nine poetic forms demonstrating the rules and spirit that brings these forms to life.

Call Number: j811.008 Kic

A collection of concrete poems that create playful images of its subject through the arrangement of letters, use of blank spaces and bold typefaces.

Call Number: j811.008 Pok

An illustrated collection of sixty-four traditional nursery rhymes.

Call Number: j398.8 Mav

Elinor usually does well in school until Poem in Your Pocket Day approaches and she struggles to write the perfect poem.

Call Number: PJ McN

Sepia tone stylized drawings enhance this familiar chanting rhyme about a radiant maiden and a terrifying black-beaked monster.

Call Number: j811.3 Poe
Jack, a railroad switchman, frantically tries to save an ant who is heading east on a westbound track, straight into the path of an oncoming freight train.
**Call Number:** PJ Pri

From undies to jammies to a much-loved hand-me-down sweatshirt, the talking clothes in these poems know just who they are and who’s wearing them.
**Call Number:** j811.54 Sch

More than one hundred and thirty never-before-seen poems and drawings completed by Shel Silverstein.
**Call Number:** j811.54 Sil

**MATHEMATICS:**

A collection of poems about chocolate which includes several math riddles.
**Call Number:** j811.54 Ado

A rhyming text demonstrates how to take one number away from another.
**Call Number:** j513.21 Cle

A rhyming countdown of the days of the week as a father and child find ways to spend time together while waiting for the weekend.
**Call Number:** PJ Lev

Numbers from one to one hundred climb to the top of an apple tree in this rhyming chant.
**Call Number:** PJ Mar
Text and pictures try to make possible the conceptualization of a million, a billion, and a trillion.
**Call Number:** j513.2 Sch

Illustrated riddles introduce strategies for solving a variety of math problems by using visual clues.
**Call Number:** j793.7 Tan

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION & HEALTH:**

A collection of poetry for teens, about the universal concerns of love and loneliness, acne and braces, and other realities like selling and taking drugs.
**Call Number:** j811.54 Ado

Illustrations and poetic text describe the movement and feel of the game of basketball.
**Call Number:** j811.54 Bur

Everett Anderson wonders how he can help his friend Greg, who appears to be a victim of child abuse.
**Call Number:** PJ Cli

Rhyming text describes the many ways to wiggle.
**Call Number:** PJ Cro

Bird expresses himself through drawing as he struggles to understand his older brother’s drug addiction and death.
**Call Number:** J Ell

Gabby daydreams to tune out her parent’s arguments but when they divorce daydreaming gets her into trouble at her new school.
Call Number: J Gri
A collection of poems celebrating the joy and anguish of baseball, basketball, football,
ice hockey, soccer, skating, swimming, and running races.

Call Number: j811.54 Spo

Lupita takes on more responsibilities for her house as her mother battles cancer. She finds
refuge in acting and writing poetry.

Call Number: J McC

Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press. (Grades 5-8).
A brief biography in verse of boxer, Muhammad Ali.

Call Number: jB Ali

(Grades 5-8).
An African American boy chronicles what happens to his family when his father returns
home and the family must deal with their feelings of anger, hope, abandonment, and fear.

Call Number: J Smi

(Grades 4-8).
A narrative poem about a celebrated baseball player who strikes out at the crucial
moment of a game.

Call Number: j811.52 Tha

(Grades PreK-2).
Rhyming text and illustrations explain how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
Includes instructions for accompanying hand and foot motions at the end of the book

Call Number: j793.4 Wes

SCIENCE:

(Grades K-3).
An illustrated poem about the cycle of life.

Call Number: PJ Fis

(Grades K-5).
Presents poems about insects such as the inchworm, termite, cricket, and ladybug.
Call Number: j811.54 Flo
Poet and anthologist, Lee Bennett Hopkins, takes readers from sunrise to sunset as he presents poems that pay tribute to the sun, moon and stars.

Call Number: j811.6 Sky

Follow a pumpkin patch as it grows and changes, from seeds to plants to pumpkins ready to harvest, to jack-o-lanterns and then to seeds again.

Call Number: PJ Lev

All sorts of animals flutter and hum, dance and stretch and slither and leap their way through this collection of poems.

Call Number: j811.54 Pas

A cumulative poem accompanied by prose that explains how the planting of mangrove trees helped an African village.

Call Number: j577.69 Rot

Musical verses describe different animals that illustrate the wonders of the wild world.

Call Number: PJ Sch

When the teacher tells his class that they can hear the poetry of science in everything, a student is struck with a curse and hears nothing but science verses.

Call Number: PJ Sci

A collection of poems that celebrates the wonder, mystery, and danger of the night. They describe the many things that may hide in the dark.

Call Number: j811.54 Sid

The names of colors are woven into unrhymed poems that celebrate the seasons.

Call Number: j811.54 Sid
Wenzel, B. (2016). They all saw a cat. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books. (Grades PreK-2). In simple rhythmic prose and stylized pictures a cat walks through the world and all the other creatures see and acknowledge the cat.

Call Number: PJ Wen

SOCIAL STUDIES:


Call Number: j811.54 Ber

Bryan, A. (2016). Freedom over me: Eleven slaves, their lives and dreams brought to life. New York, NY: Atheneum Books for Young Readers. (Grades 2-6). Using original slave auction and estate documents these poems contrast the monetary value of a slave with the priceless value of their life experiences and dreams.

Call Number: J Bry

Engle, M. (2010). The firefly letters: A suffragette’s journey to Cuba. New York, NY: Henry Holt. (Grades 6-12). Based on the diaries and letters of Fredrika Bremer, who spent three months in Cuba. This story focuses on oppressed women, the privileged as well as the enslaved.

Call Number: J Eng

Granfield, L, McCrae, J., & Wilson, J. (1995). In Flanders fields: The story of the poem by John McCrae. New York, NY: Doubleday Books for Young Readers. (Grades 3-7). This poem written during World War I, to commemorate the dead includes the history of “Poppy Day” remembrance traditions from 1919 to the present.

Call Number: j811.52 Gra


Call Number: j811.52 Hug


Call Number: j811.54 Nel
The author reflects on her childhood and development as an artist and young woman influenced by the Civil Rights Movement, the “Red Scare” era, and the feminist movement.
**Call Number:** j811.54 Nel

Poems inspired by the October night when 21-year-old Matthew Shepard, a gay college student, was lured out of a Wyoming bar, savagely beaten, and left to die.
**Call Number:** J New

A collection of poems, focusing on the Middle East, written by more than 100 poets and artists from 19 countries.
**Call Number:** j808.81 Spa

A passport and rhyming text discover differences and similarities for the variety of animals that populate the planet.
**Call Number:** j910 Sci

Presents a treasury of poems and spirituals inspired by the life and work of Civil Rights advocate Fannie Lou Hamer.
**Call Number:** jB Hamer

Jacqueline Woodson shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960’s and 1970’s in verse.
**Call Number:** J Woo

Collection of poems and nursery rhymes, in original languages, from around the world.
**Call Number:** j808.81 Wri
SPANISH:


Ten little puppies are lost one by one, for different reasons, until only one remains.

**Call Number:** j398.8 Ada


A bilingual collection of humorous and serious poems about family, nature, and celebrations by a renowned Mexican American poet.

**Call Number:** j811.54 Ala


A young boy and his sister gather the ingredients and grind them up in a molcajete just like their ancestors did in this cooking poem.

**Call Number:** j861.64 Arg


A wonderful assortment of poems, some presented bilingually, that express Latino culture and the concerns of growing up in the U.S.

**Call Number:** j811.54 Coo


These poems represent famous and lesser known Latinos from varied backgrounds who have faced life’s challenges in creative ways.

**Call Number:** j920 Eng


Bilingual (Spanish/English) book that presents us with a beautiful vision of a planet in which nature, words and the rising and setting of the sun exist in harmony.

**Call Number:** j861.7 Luj


Spanish and English lyrics and music with chord symbols.

**Call Number:** j796.1 Die