

TEACHING POETRY AND LESSON PLANNING

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Poetry is a literary work in verse. It is a writing of graceful expression, great beauty, a piece of art with emotional sincerity or intensity. It is a way to understand how language and symbol system work. It is worthy of expression of emotions deep feelings and aesthetics or a sense of what is beautiful about the world.

Poetry is a medium through which the poets express their emotion and thought with a musical tone of words. According to Wordsworth, poetry is, "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquility". Poetry has two kinds of subject matter – that which is supplied by the external objects, such as deeds, events and the things we see around us and that which is supplied by the poet's own thoughts and feelings. The former gives rise to objective poetry, the latter to subjective. In the first, it is about what he has seen or heard; in the latter, he brings to bear his own reflections upon what he has seen or heard.

Sub-Genres of Poetry

- ❖ **Ode:** It is usually a lyric poem of moderate length, with a serious subject, an elevated style, and an elaborate stanza pattern.
- ❖ **Sonnet:** It is a short rhyming poem with fourteen lines. It uses iambic meter in each line and has rhyme.
- ❖ **Elegy:** It is a lyric poem that mourns the dead.
- ❖ **Ballad:** It is a narrative poem that has a musical rhythm and can be sung.
- ❖ **Limerick:** A five-line witty poem with a distinctive rhythm. The first, second and fifth lines, the longer lines, rhyme. The third and fourth shorter lines rhyme. (a-a-b-b-a).
- ❖ **Haiku:** This ancient form of poem writing is renowned for its small size as well as the precise punctuation and syllables needed on its three lines.
- ❖ **Epic:** A lengthy narrative poem in grand language celebrating the adventures and

accomplishments of a legendary or conventional hero.

- ❖ **Narrative:** A narrative poem tells the story of an event in the form of a poem. There is a strong sense of narration, characters, and plot.
- ❖ **Free verse:** A Free Verse Poem does not follow any rules. Their creation is completely in the hands of the author. The poet is free to experiment with rhyme meter, number of lines, number of stanzas, and line formation in order to convey the idea. There is no right or wrong way to create a Free Verse poem.
- ❖ **Couplet:** Two lines of verse which rhyme and form a unit alone or as part of a poem.

Teaching Poetry. In teaching poetry, much depends on the selection of the poem. The teacher should choose any easy poem suiting the age of the pupil. The teacher should select the known poem of known poet and known background. The subject matter should appeal to the children. The rhythm and words should cater to the child's taste. Young children love rhymes and rhythms so the teacher should resort to nursery rhymes and story type poems. In higher classes, the poems should be narrative but some descriptive and reflective poems can also be included.

Selection of poems.

1. Only those poems should be selected which are up to the mental level of the learners.
2. The short poems should be given preference over long ones.
3. The nursery rhymes are the most suitable for the young children.
4. The poems which are philosophical and contain deep ideas should be kept for the senior students.
5. The rhythmic poems appeal more to the children because they can be memorised easily by them.
6. Only poem of that type should be selected which have a universal appeal.

Principles of teaching poem.

The following principles should be kept in mind while teaching a poem.

1. Model recitation by the teacher is very essential because it helps in attracting the students towards the poem. They are able to grasp the meaning contained in the poem.
2. Detailed explanation of lines or ideas should be avoided.
3. The verbal peculiarities of the language should not be described.
4. Paraphrase of the poem should be avoided. It should be put in the form of prose.
5. The teacher should try to bring enthusiasm and zeal into the teaching of the poem.
6. As far as possible, the poem should be taught as a whole.

How to Teach a Poem.

Introduction of the poem must be brief and to the point. There is no need to introduce the life of the poet in the very beginning. After finishing the poem, a brief idea of the poet can be given.

The teacher should recite the poem with the pupils' books closed. If they keep their books open, they concentrate more on seeing words than on listening but we know 'poetry is an art of the eye'. In other words 'poetry is sound not sight'.

The teacher should spend more time in reading. The teacher reads the poem often but this time with pupils keeping their books open. After this the teacher should explain the difficult words, tone etc, very clearly precisely. Too lengthy language explanations, combinations, structures etc should be avoided as it mars the beauty of poetry. After this silent reading by the students starts. This is to prepare them for answering the queries to test their comprehension. The testing should be done by asking them about particular words, lines and thought of some stanza.

Then, both the teacher and the students together recite the poem with rhyme and rhythm in order to catch the music of the poem.

Lesson Planning of Teaching a Poem.

The lesson plan includes the following steps as written below:

A. General aims.

B. Specific aims and then usual procedure including

1. Motivation.

- a. Use of aids/ situations/ models/ charts etc
- b. Previous knowledge assumed.
- c. Introduction.

2. Presentation.

- a. Model recitation by the teacher with books closed by students.
- b. Model recitation by the teacher with books open by students.
- c. Explanation of certain lines, difficult words etc.
- d. Recitation by students.

3. Recapitulation.

Removing difficulties, if any.

4. Appreciation questions.

These questions aim to make clear the beauty feeling and main idea of the poem.