Focused on the topic of poetry-writing instruction, this annotated bibliography contains 29 references of articles and papers in the ERIC database. The citations include articles discussing poetic forms, teaching strategies for elementary and secondary levels, and computer-assisted poetry-writing instruction. (MM)
The ERIC database provides a wealth of suggestions for teaching poetry-writing to students at the elementary and secondary level. The information in these articles concentrates not only on the formal aspects of poetry-writing, but also discusses how poetry-writing instruction can encourage personal expression and creativity. An overview section focuses on how poetry writing can stimulate both students and teachers, and act as a catalyst for personal growth. The next section provides articles discussing a variety of poetic forms, including free verse, cinquain, haiku, concrete, and found poetry. The renga—a Japanese chain poem—is presented as a collaborative writing activity; other creative approaches are suggested to help students conceptualize and practice contemporary poetic forms.

The core of this FAST Bib is devoted to practical teaching strategies—strategies suitable for all levels, as well as those specifically suited to elementary, junior high, and senior high school students. Articles in these sections provide suggestions for poetry assignments, address the problem of assessing students’ poetry, and present ideas for activities which create enthusiasm for writing poetry. Finally, a section on computer-assisted instruction tells of computer programs designed to help students write poetry.

Abstracts for some of the articles cited here have been abbreviated to conform to the FAST Bib format. The ED numbers for sources included in Resources in Education have been included to enable the user to go directly to microfiche collections, order from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS), or go to RIE for the full abstract on those sources not available through EDRS. The citations to journals are from the Current Index to Journals in Education, and these articles can be acquired most economically from library collections or through interlibrary loans. Reprint services are also available from University Microfilms International (UMI) and from the Original Article Teatsheet Service (OATS) of the Institute for Scientific Information.

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Overview

Hollingsworth, Craig R. "ERIC/ERSES Report: Poetry and Drama: Alternatives in the Composition Course," English Journal, v74 n5 p60-62 Sep 1985. Discusses how incorporating a short poetry or drama unit in a composition course can stimulate both students and teachers. Notes that benefits include more creative thinking, better attitudes toward written and oral assignments, and sharpened revision skills.

Focus on Form

Burgess, Carol A. "Five Lines for Sixth Grade. (A Lesson Model for Teaching the Writing of the Cinquain Poem to Sixth Grade Students.)," 1987. 9 p. [ED 286179] Describes how sixth grade students can use cinquain poems to explore language, learn grammar, and write creatively.

Correll, Nancy, "Let Found Poetry Help Your Students Find Poetry," English Journal, v78 n2 p50-54 Feb 1989. Presents a series of lessons based on found poems. Includes a discussion on what poetry is; developing a theme; using poetry with others through peer analysis and small group discussion of each student’s found poem.

Pino, Cynthia L. "Rx for Formula Poetry in the Content Area: An Activities Book," Volusia County Schools, Daytona Beach, Fla., 1983. 35 p. [ED 272 880] Provides activities for teaching formula poetry (poetry written according to a defined format) in all subject areas. Outlines instructions for teaching students to write bio-poems, cinquains, concrete poems, definition poems, diamante poems, five-sense poems, found poetry, haiku, inside/outside poems, parallel poems, and vertical name poems. Gives examples of poems that have been written in science, social studies, and English classes.

Teaching Strategies: All Levels


Suggests activities which generate excitement for poetry writing. Activities include: 1) improvising ways in which poetry can be written in alternative media; 2) studying and listening to ballads, followed by writing, practice, and performance; 3) starting a column of poetry in the school or town newspaper; 4) bringing a poet into the classroom; 5) publishing a journal in which students contribute poetry and prose as well as editorial and production time; and 6) producing and directing in annual poetry festival, featuring dramatic performances of "Spoon River" poems, epics, ballads, and favorite poems.


This teacher’s guide is intended to stimulate students’ writing and reading of poetry. Contains activities for K-12, divided into primary, intermediate, and secondary levels, each with objectives, strategies, activities, and models. Includes suggestions for evaluating poetry, a bibliography, and a list of other suggested resources.

Tsujimoto, Joseph L. Teaching Poetry Writing to Adolescents. ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Urbana, IL; National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana, IL, 1988. 120 p. [ED 295 214]

Intended as a general model for poetry-writing instruction, this guide, although originally written for teachers of seventh and eighth graders, is adaptable to all levels. Includes chapters on the teacher and his/her students, and the theoretical model upon which poetry assignments are designed. Presents 18 poetry assignments for the classroom.

Teaching Strategies: Grades 1-8


Discusses the use of models for teaching children to write, suggesting that successive drafts rather than a finished poem are more effective models of the revision process. Includes three drafts of a poem by the author, discussing observations for teaching illustrated by the poem’s revision process.


Describes a two-day residency by poet Arnold Adoff in a fifth- and sixth-grade classroom. Presents his interaction with five students as they struggle with their poetry writing.


Contains suggestions and exercises for creative writing and provides a message to teachers about the writers-in-the-school program. Outlines detailed exercises in four categories: memory, imagery, metaphor, and music. Presents 20 easy recipes or instructional suggestions, answers to questions teachers often ask, and a brief list of resources.


Discusses a teacher’s experience writing poems with eighth and fifth graders pulled from their regular classrooms. Provides transcripts of the two poems written with the students.


Notes that poetry writing can be a natural and interesting part of the language arts curriculum. Offers an approach to teaching poetry to intermediate-grade students that leads them to accept and like poetry.


Describes a poetry writing exercise that used photographs as a stimulus. Presents some poems produced by this exercise.


Describes a program which makes beginning reading an activity in which children use their cognitive and affective abilities to experience images and ideas within a piece. Includes suggestions for the initial physical arrangement of the classroom and poetry accessibility. Details a model classroom schedule, incorporating reading and writing poetry, that provides four times throughout the day when four different poetry activities could be used. Sample poems and suggestions for student activities for each of those areas are provided.

Teaching Strategies: Grades 9-12

"Poetry Instruction. Motivator of the Month." compiled from columns in three issues of Notes Plus, v1 n3 Jan 1984; v2 n2 Nov 1984; and v3 n1 Sep 1985. 5 p. [ED 264 561]

Presents teaching activities from four journal columns focusing on understanding and writing poetry at the high school level.


Designed to demonstrate a variety of ways in which listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities can be built around the study of poetry, this collection of materials, lessons, and activities covers some of the most frequently taught poems in New York City ninth-grade classrooms. Provides specific suggestions for teaching the poetry to ninth-grade students. A list of poems appearing in the guide is included.


Discusses how to assess student poetry, focusing on the qualities of internal logic, tone, music, words, figurative language, stanzas and line length, sase, detail, voice, and "life."


Presents a series of exercises aimed at helping students generate lines and ideas for their poetry.


Provides a step-by-step approach to teaching students the elements of poetry, such as similes, acrostics, metaphors, and odes. Copies of handouts are included.

Explains how one teacher developed a method for teaching poetry successfully in an all-male remedial high school class. Discusses the literary theory underlying this pedagogical approach, derived from psychology and Adrienne Rich's views of writing as re-vision. Appendixes include: poetry workshop guidelines; instructions for student samples of different types of poetry; and a list of seven useful references for poetry teachers.


Describes several ways that teachers can help students learn the art of good poetry writing. Suggestions include: 1) providing students with a list of words not to use—overused nouns, overused or opinionated adjectives and adverbs, and assorted cliches; 2) offering advice from famous writers, editors, and publishers; 3) focusing on one skill at a time while presenting models of good poetry; and 4) encouraging students to enter contests or submit poems for publication.

Computer-Assisted Poetry-Writing Instruction


Describes "Compupoem," a program that helps students write poems, emphasizes process/product, and encourages divergent problem-solving. A sample student session and a completed poem are provided. Also describes the Computers and Poetry Project, which produces elementary/secondary-level, interactive poetry-writing activities.


Presents ideas based on an example and precept method of teaching instead of an analysis and explication method. Explains how students can produce a poetry portfolio of different types of poems. Discusses the advantages of having students write and illustrate their poetry using microcomputers and word-processing software. Appendices provide sample assignments for 12 kinds of poetry, with a full explanation of each type, and examples of students' poetry.


Describes computer programs designed to assist in teaching composition. These include an elementary school writing program, poetry writing programs, and four writing/editing programs (dealing with text already written and needing revision or for helping students develop a higher level of sophistication with specific skills already demonstrated in their writing).