



POETRY CONNECTION

DESCRIPTION

In this activity, inspired by Burke's *The English Teacher's Companion* (1998), students will bring in a poem that relates to issues or ideas in the unit of study. Students will work in groups to compare and contrast their poems. The purpose of this activity is to push students to examine content in greater detail. When students compare and contrast information they are able to draw conclusions and identify distinctions that will help them develop a deeper understanding and stronger retention of the information. This activity is appropriate for all content areas.

LEARNING STRATEGIES Connecting, Inferring

LESSON PLAN STAGE Reflection, Synthesis

SKILLS Analyzing Poetry, Comparing and Contrasting, Text-Self/Text-Text/Text-World Connections

PREPARATION

- Have students bring in a poem related to the unit of study.
- Group students into pairs or small groups (3-4).
- Select two poems for modeling.

ACTIVITY STEPS

TEACHING TIPS

1	Introduce Poetry Connection.	Share the purpose of the activity with students.
2	Conduct whole-class read-aloud.	The class reads the two model poems.
3	Model compare-and-contrast.	Think aloud as you model compare-and-contrast using the two sample poems. Model any new learning that emerged from the compare-and-contrast.
4	Share poems within groups.	Each student will share their poem with their group. This can be through a read-aloud or copies can be made for each group member.



ACTIVITY STEPS

TEACHING TIPS

5 Compare poems.

Using a graphic organizer, students compare all of the poems in their group.

- What similarities do you see?
- Why might those similarities be important?

It is essential here that the comparison ties to the unit of study. Poems may have similarities that do not relate to the unit

6 Contrast poems.

Using a graphic organizer, students contrast all of the poems in their group.

- What differences or contradictions do you see?
- Why might those be important?

Again, it is essential here that the work ties to the unit of study.

7 Identify new learning.

After completing the compare-and-contrast exercise, students step back and identify any new learning.

Did the compare-and-contrast reinforce your thinking about this unit or did you learn something new?

8 Conduct group share-out.

Each group will share one or two examples for each compare-and-contrast and any new learning.

9 Reflect

Students reflect on their learning individually or as a group, in writing or orally.

- How did this activity help you have a deeper understanding of the concept under study?
- How could you apply the use of compare-and-contrast to your life inside or outside of school?
- When could this skill be useful? Why?