

INTRODUCING POETRY				Student/Class Goal Since poetry is part of the reading and language arts section of the GED test, students will want to practice reading and understanding various types of poetry.	
Outcome <i>(lesson objective)</i> Students will recognize that poetry is all around them, will gain a better understanding of poetry, and will begin to read and write a variety of poetry.				Time Frame 1-2 hours	
Standard <i>Convey Ideas in Writing</i>				NRS EFL 1-6	
Prewriting	Benchmarks	Drafting	Benchmarks	Editing and Revising	Benchmarks
Topic, purpose, & audience	1.1, 2.1, 3.1	Organize writing		Reread & revise	1.18, 2.18, 3.18, 4.19, 5.17, 6.14
Writing for purpose	1.2, 2.2, 3.2, 4.2	Sentences/paragraphs		Proofread	1.19, 2.19, 3.19, 4.20, 5.18, 6.15
Writing for various tasks	3.3	Descriptive language	1.12, 2.12, 3.12, 4.13, 5.13, 6.11	Feedback from others	1.20, 2.20, 3.20, 4.21, 5.19, 6.16
Generate ideas	2.4, 3.4	Sentence structure		Checklists & rubrics	
Main idea/thesis	1.5, 2.5, 3.5	Spelling	1.14, 2.14, 3.14, 4.15, 5.15, 6.13	Publishing	Benchmarks
Research	2.6	Punctuation	1.15, 2.15, 3.15, 4.16	Technology	
Plagiarism		Capitalization	1.16, 2.16, 3.16	Publication	
Sources		Parts of speech	1.17, 2.17, 3.17, 4.18, 5.16		
Organize ideas					
Organizational pattern					
Materials Songs and Song Lyrics, Poems					
Learner Prior Knowledge Most students have heard poems in one form or another, most frequently as song lyrics. Discussing students' familiarity with different kinds of poetry might be a good way to start this lesson.					
Instructional Activities Step 1 - Play some songs that are familiar and unfamiliar to students drawing attention to the lyrics. Teacher can give students handouts of the printed lyrics or have students write them from the songs. Teacher could read some of the lyrics aloud and then ask for student volunteers to read others. Discuss some of the elements of the lyric, for example: rhyming words, repeated words or phrases, feelings or images the lyric evokes, and rhythm. Ask students if there are differences between the lyrics with the music and the lyrics without the music. Students can work in pairs or small groups if they want to work with the same lyric and can be given time to write their responses before sharing them with the class. Step 2 - Read poems aloud to the class. Read each poem twice, once so the students can just listen, the second time so the students can think about, discuss, and write about the elements they discussed with the lyrics. Choose a variety of poems: humorous, serious, romantic, rhyming, and non-rhyming. Step 3 - Demonstrate the Copy-Change teaching strategy to students by leading the class through the strategy to rewrite a lyric or poem. A good poem for this is "If I Were in Charge of the World" (Judith Viorst, <i>If I Were in Charge of the World and Other Worries</i> . 1981. New York: Atheneum) Students can then work alone, in pairs, or in triads with lyrics or poems of their own choosing. Students should approach this writing task as they do all others, keeping in mind the components of the writing standard. Students at levels 1 and 2 may need the help of a more experienced writer to record their poems. After students finish writing, ask for volunteers to read the lyrics or poems aloud.					

Step 4 - A culminating activity for poetry writing is to make a class poetry book after students have revised and edited their poetry. The class could produce a series of these poetry books.

TEACHER NOTE The OLRC [Trade Books](#) collection contains many books of poetry. For more ideas on teaching poetry, see the OLRC publication [Poetry in the Adult Literacy Classroom](#). Another resource is Kazemec's & Rigg's book *Enriching Our Lives: Poetry Lessons for Adult Literacy Teachers and Tutors*. Original student poetry can be found in the [Beginnings](#) series. Poems that work well with Copy-Change can be found in Alan Katz. (2001). *Take Me Out of the Bathtub and Other Silly Dilly Songs*. New York: Margaret K. Elderry.

Assessment/Evidence *(based on outcome)*

Poems from the copy change activity

Teacher Reflection/Lesson Evaluation

Not yet completed.

Next Steps

Reading and writing more poetry.

Technology Integration

Copy Change Teaching Strategy http://literacy.kent.edu/eureka/strategies/copy_change.pdf

Poetry 180 <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/>

A Poem a Day <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/>

Poetry Slam lesson plan <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/jan-june00/poetryboxlessonplanone.html>

Purposeful/Transparent

Since poetry is part of the reading and language arts section of the GED test, students will need to practice reading and understanding various types of poetry.

Contextual

Students will listen to familiar songs and discuss their lyrics.

Building Expertise

Students will use the Copy Change strategy to begin the process of writing original poetry.

Introduction to Poetry

Billy Collins

I ask them to take a poem
and hold it up to the light
like a color slide

or press an ear against its hive.

I say drop a mouse into a poem
and watch him probe his way out,

or walk inside the poem's room
and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want them to water-ski
across the surface of a poem
waving at the author's name on the shore.

But all they want to do
is tie the poem to a chair with rope
and torture a confession out of it.

They begin beating it with a hose
to find out what it really means.

Driving to Town Late to Mail a Letter

Robert Bly

It is a cold and snowy night. The main street is deserted.
The only things moving are swirls of snow.
As I lift the mailbox door, I feel its cold iron.
There is a privacy I love in this snowy night.
Driving around, I will waste more time.

Sentimental Moment or Why Did the Baguette Cross the Road?

Robert Hershon

Don't fill up on bread
I say absent-mindedly
The servings here are huge

My son, whose hair may be
receding a bit, says
Did you really just
say that to me?

What he doesn't know
is that when we're walking
together, when we get
to the curb
I sometimes start to reach
for his hand

Alley Cat Love Song

Dana Gioia

Come into the garden, Fred,
For the neighborhood tabby is gone.
Come into the garden, Fred.
I have nothing but my flea collar on,
And the scent of catnip has gone to my head.
I'll wait by the screen door till dawn.

The fireflies court in the sweet gum tree.
The nightjar calls from the pine,
And she seems to say in her rhapsody,
"Oh, mustard-brown Fred, be mine!"
The full moon lights my whiskers afire,
And the fur goes erect on my spine.

I hear the frogs in the muddy lake
Croaking from shore to shore.
They've one swift season to soothe their ache.
In autumn they sing no more.
So ignore me now, and you'll hear my meow
As I scratch all night at the door.