

MTVs POETRY

Student/Class Goal

Past experiences with interpreting poetry haven't always been positive for students and they know that poems will be part of the GED test.

Outcome *(lesson objective)*

Students will use several strategies to analyze mood, tone, speaker, and voice as they relate to poetry.

Time Frame

2-3 hours

Standard *Read with Understanding*

NRS EFL 4-5

| Purpose | Benchmarks | Word Knowledge | Benchmarks | Comprehension | Benchmarks |
|---------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Purpose for reading | 4.1, 5.1 | Decoding skills | | Strategy use | 4.11, 5.11 |
| Select text | | Word parts | | Text structural elements | |
| | | Context clues | 4.5, 5.5 | Genres | 4.13 |
| | | Reference materials | | Literary analysis | |
| | | Word relationships | | Drawing conclusions | 4.15, 5.15 |
| | | Content vocabulary | | Making connections | 4.16, 5.16 |
| | | Figurative language | | | |
| | | Fluency | 4.10 | | |

Materials

Selected Poems - *Richard Corey*
Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening,
 Robert Frost Poetry Collection, Caedmon Audio
My Papa's Waltz Evidence Chart
 Take Back Questions

Learner Prior Knowledge

Basic knowledge of some reading strategies covered in class previously would be helpful, but strategies specific to poetry will be reviewed during the activity.

Instructional Activities

Step 1 - Instructor will introduce the words **mood**, **tone**, **voice**, and **speaker** to the class. The students will break into four groups and each group will work with one of the words. Groups may look up the meaning in the dictionary or in GED reading texts to agree on a definition. They will summarize various definitions of the words with a specific emphasis as they relate to poetry, write the definition on chart paper, and report to the class. Provide poetry anthologies and ask students to find a couple of poems that show contrasting views of each group's concept.

Step 2 - Instructor will read *Richard Corey* aloud while learners follow along on their own text of the poem. Pose the question, *How did this poem make you feel?* Learners will put their responses on post-it notes and place on the board. Learners will explain their answers. Items for discussion: *Were there many different reactions? How different were they? What were some of the reasons for the responses? What was the mood of the poem? Did it change? What was the attitude of the "we" in the poem?*

Step 3 - Class listens to and reads along with a taped version of Robert Frost's, *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*. Using the [Bleich's Heuristic](#). Students will respond orally or in writing to four questions:

1. How did this poem affect you?
2. Why did the poem have this effect?
3. What are the most important words in this poem? Why?
4. Have you ever been in a similar situation or setting?

TEACHER NOTE Audio version on cassette, *Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening*, Robert Frost Poetry Collection, Caedmon Audio.

Step 4 - Class will read *My Papa's Waltz* aloud. Learners may volunteer to read the poem. Learners will complete a chart in response to statements about the poem. Learners will highlight words, lines, or phrases on the text as evidence and fill in the chart. These responses will be discussed as a class.

Step 5- The class will read *Take Back* aloud. The following questions will be discussed:

What do you learn about the speaker in this poem? She has legally changed her name at one time, probably got married.

Why does the speaker address the poem to "all you Romeos"? She's addressing future suitors to let them know she is in charge.

What kind of language, or voice, does the speaker use? Informal, slangy

How does the speaker feel in this poem? Proud, independent

Assessment/Evidence *(based on outcome)*

Charts and notes may be collected. Instructor will observe and make notes.

Chart and question sheet may be included in student's portfolio.

Teacher Reflection/Lesson Evaluation

Not yet completed.

Next Steps

Technology Integration

Bleich's Heuristic Teaching Strategy http://literacy.kent.edu/eureka/strategies/bleichs_heuristic.pdf

Purposeful/Transparent

Students understand the purpose because of the poetry content on the GED, but for the most part, have preconceived ideas that poetry is hard to understand. One purpose of this activity was to demonstrate that poetry is very diverse and most students can relate to at least some of it. They will understand that the tone and mood of poetry is meant to evoke some sort of response from the reader and opinions may vary. The classroom discussions allow students to self-assess their understanding.

Contextual

Students will see some samples of the GED poetry questions and can see the importance of becoming familiar with this type of material. They will understand that poetry can deal with everyday activities and emotions and may be written in different voices. Completing a chart gives them practice in a form used frequently in GED material. Having poetry on tape models to the students how to read poetry.

Building Expertise

Students gain self-confidence from this activity, not only in understanding poetry, but also in expressing their ideas and opinions and having them validated. This lesson is part of a poetry series that builds on previous knowledge.

Richard Cory

By Edwin Arlington Robinson, 1897

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him;
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favored, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,
And he was always human when he talked;
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
"Good-morning," and he glittered when he walked.
And he was rich-yes, richer than a king-
And admirably schooled in every grace:

In fine, we thought that he was everything
To make us wish that we were in his place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;

And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
Went home and put a bullet through his head.

Stopping By Woods on A Snowy Evening

By Robert Lee Frost (1874-1963)

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village, though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it's queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep

My Papa's Waltz

By Theodore Roethke

The whiskey on your breath
Could make a small boy dizzy;
But I hung on like death;
Such waltzing was not easy.

We romped until the pans
Slid from the kitchen shelf;
My mother's countenance
could not unfrown itself.

The hand that held my wrist
Was battered on one knuckle;
At every step you missed
My right ear scraped a buckle.

You beat time on my head
With a palm caked hard by dirt,
Then waltzed me off to bed
Still clinging to your shirt.

Take Back

Hey, all you Romeos,
I took back my name today.
Marched up to a white-haired judge,
Said, "Now I know, I screwed up
ten years ago. I gave it away.
I want it back." He banged
his gavel and said, "Okay."
What's in a name?
Everything - mine again.

Write your responses to these questions about the poem.

1. What do you learn about the speaker in this poem?
2. Why does the speaker address the poem to "all you Romeos"?
3. What kind of language, or voice, does the speaker use?
4. How does the speaker feel in this poem?

***Papa's Waltz* Evidence Chart**

Use the chart to evaluate the statements about the poem.

| Statements | Directly Supported by Poem (copy evidence) | Indirectly Supported by Poem (copy evidence) | Not Supported by Poem |
|--|---|---|------------------------------|
| The tone of the poem is at times both negative and positive. | | | |
| The speaker loves his father. | | | |
| The mother disapproves of the father's actions. | | | |
| The father is abusive towards the son. | | | |