Patterns in Poetry -- Images

Student/Class Goal
To prepare for the Language Arts section of the GED test, students will want to listen, read, and understand a variety of poems by recognized poets and to be familiar with the terms used in the specific questions on poetry. Students will want to practice their comprehension skills through listening, reading, and speaking.

Outcome *(lesson objective)*
Students will recognize the use of images, metaphors, and symbols in poetry and how they contribute to understanding the poem.

Time Frame
Approximately 1 hour

Standard *Read with Understanding*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Benchmarks</th>
<th>Word Knowledge</th>
<th>Benchmarks</th>
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<td>Making connections</td>
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<td>Fluency</td>
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Materials
- List of Poems for handouts
- Poetry Thematic Collection
- Objects to demonstrate symbols: egg, plant, spice, pen or book, ring, flag, etc.
- Teacher Information Sheet

Learner Prior Knowledge
This is the third lesson plan in a three-part sequence on Patterns in Poetry. This lesson concentrates on images and their uses. Rhythms dealt with meter and Sounds focused on rhymes, alliteration, and assonance. Images are an inescapable part of our very visual culture—TV, movies, computers, print ads, etc.

Instructional Activities
Step 1 - Poets want the reader to experience or feel the poem. They use words to help us recreate sensory memories—sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch—that we have stored in our brains. In poems every word counts. Almost every word contributes to the patterns of rhythm, sound, and image. Poets use these patterns to guide the reader in understanding what they wanted to communicate. Patterns in Poetry Parts 1 and 2 focused on rhythm and sound repetitions. Briefly review types of patterns from the previous lessons if they have been completed—*meter, feet, rhyme, alliteration* and *assonance*. The last pattern we will look at is *image*. An image refers to a real object in the world that is recreated as a picture or sensation through concrete details in the poem.

Choose 2-4 poems marked “Image” from the list to read aloud to the class. You may decide to read only the first parts of longer poems. One by one, read the poems aloud together. After each poem, discuss the image or picture that the poet has created. Find as many specific details of the poem as possible. For example, *The Term* by William Carlos Williams describes a brown, wind-blown bag that is run over by a car. In Richard Wilbur’s *Love Calls Us to Things of This World*, laundry is flapping on a clothesline high above the ground. In William Jay Smith’s *Winter Morning*, the speaker describes a snowstorm at night followed by a morning snowscape. In Ezra Pound’s *In a Station of the Metro*, the faces of the crowd are reflected in the train window.

Step 2 - Images are often the basis for a comparison with another object. In poetry, these comparisons are called *metaphors* (or *similes* if the comparison uses the words “like” or “as” or *personification* if an inanimate object is given life-like characteristics) in which two things that are not usually thought of as being similar are found to be alike in a few interesting ways. Our everyday language is full of metaphors. Brainstorm a list together to practice recognizing metaphors. Many use parts of the body. Here are some to get the list started: head of a pin, foot of a ladder, eye of a needle, table leg, bat-wing sleeve, face of a cliff, neck of a bottle.
Return to the poems that you read aloud in Step 1 and look for comparisons that use the image as the basis for a comparison. In the Williams poem, the paper bag is compared to a human body. Wilber compares the laundry flapping on the clothesline to angels/souls. The snowstorm described by Smith produces a valley that in the morning looks like a giant’s mouth complete with teeth and tongue. And Pound sees the reflected faces in the train windows as petals on a bough.

Step 3 - Sometimes the image becomes an extended metaphor that builds throughout the poem, becoming a symbol of some larger, more general, more abstract idea. To practice recognizing symbols, use the objects collected to discuss how the objects becomes associated with ideas: egg=life; plant=life cycle; spice=special pleasure; ring on 4th finger, left hand=marriage; flag=nationalism, patriotism; door=passage to new experience or part of life; lemon=sun (color yellow, vitamin D); and pen=knowledge. The Library of Congress and Google Images web sites provide lots of photographs that you could use in place of the objects to generate a list of symbols such as sunset=late in life; sunrise=starting over, new life; river=path through life; dove=peace; night=death etc.

At this point if time permits, teachers might like to do a mini-lesson on symbols in advertising by cutting out ads of cars, clothes, food and cosmetics and discuss what the object symbolizes in the ad. See the Teacher Information Sheet for web sites.

To see how a symbol is developed in a poem, read aloud In Spring and All by William Carlos Williams. Read it aloud together noting how he describes a windy late winter day using details of “waste,” “muddy fields,” “brown with dried weeds,” “dead, brown leaves,” “leafless vines,” telling us that the scene is “lifeless in appearance” although “dazed spring approaches” and “the stiff curl of wild carrot leaf” will appear. So far we have two images, one of bleak winter day and a spring day that will come soon. “Contagious hospital” suggests a tubercular sanitarium or at least a place where diseased people stay and “quicken,” which is the word pregnant women use to describe the first movements of the baby in utero, makes us think of birth and new life. The lifeless images give way to images of spring and birth. The earth is compared metaphorically to a women giving birth. The metaphor of coming life becomes a symbol of hope for “tomorrow.” (It may help to know that Williams was a practicing doctor who delivered lots of babies.)

Step 4 - Ask individuals or pairs of students to choose a poem from the list, or download another poem by a poet that they like, or select from a text set from the Poetry Matrix. Use the following questions, to mark the handout and makes notes about the imagery and how it contributes to understanding of the poem: Find the images and underline concrete details of description. Is the image compared to something else, and if so, what characteristics are selected? What does the metaphor contribute to the poem? Does the image/metaphor represent some abstract idea or symbol? If you have already done Patterns in Poetry, Part I, Rhythm and Patterns in Poetry, Part 2, Sounds, ask students to write about how the rhythm and sounds work with the imagery to help the reader understand the poem.

Assessment/Evidence (based on outcome)
Students should place their marked handout, any notes and writing about the poem in their portfolio.

Teacher Reflection/Lesson Evaluation
Not yet completed.

Next Steps
Teachers may want to integrate a media literacy lesson on images and symbols in advertising. Also, students might enjoy a follow-up lesson in writing poetry.

Technology Integration
Google Images http://images.google.com/

Purposeful & Transparent
Listening, reading, and discussion of the images in poetry will help them understand how the components of poetry contribute to a comprehension the poem as a whole. Since image, metaphor, and symbol will be tested in the Language arts Section of the GED, students will be better prepared by being familiar with a variety of poems.

Contextual
Since we live in a world of images, students can apply what they learn about images in poetry to literature generally and to the images on TV, magazines, and computers.

Building Expertise
The progression of listening first, then reading before discussing encourages repeated attention to the material. Listening and reading aloud reinforces comprehension skills. Working in pairs or small groups maximizes the pleasure and minimizes the anxiety that poetry can evoke.
The following resources supplement the three sequential lesson plans on Patterns in Poetry which also can be used individually: Part 1—Rhythm explores patterns in general and the meter in poetry in particular; Part 2—Sound builds on the first by introducing rhyme, alliteration, and assonance; and Part 3 focuses the use of images, metaphors, and symbols. Lesson plan materials include a list of poems with web addresses (be sure to include some of your favorites), a copy of the Eureka Poetry Collection for selecting text sets of poetry, and this sheet of additional resources.

**Images**

http://images.google.com/
http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/catalog.html

**Poetry**

www.cranberrydesigns.com/poetry/intro.htm
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/print/general/gl_patvar.html
www.42explore2.com/patterns.htm
http://web.csustan.edu/english/reuben/pal/append/AXF.html
http://brainstorm-services.com/wcu-lit/craft-of-poetry.html
www.infoplease.com/spot/pmglossary1.html
http://shoga.wwa.com/%7ergs/glossary.html
http://literacy.kent.edu/Oasis/Pubs/0300-26.pdf

**Poetry Archives**

www.poets.org/academy
www.bartelby.com/verse/
www.infoplease.com/spot/pmsites1.html
http://dir.yahoo.com/Arts/Humanities/Literature/Poetry/Anthologies
www.etext.lib.virginia.edu/britpro.html
www.americanpoems.com
www.classic-romantic-love-poems.com

**Math**

www.learner.org/teacherslab/math/patterns
www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00000622.shtml
www.archtech.org/java/patterns/patterns_j.shtml
www.col-ed.org/cur/math/math06.txt

**Media and Advertising**

www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson97/advert.pdf
www.pbs.org/teachersource/media_lit/gettingstarted.shtml

**Print Resources**

*Enriching Our Lives: Poetry Lessons for Adult Literacy Teachers and Tutors*, Francis E. Kazemak & Pat Rigg
*Finding What You Didn’t Lose*, John Fox
*Making Your Own Days: The Pleasures in Reading and Writing Poetry*, Kenneth Koch
*Sound and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry*, Laurence Perrine
*Wishes, Lies, and Dreams: Teaching Children to Write Poetry*, Kenneth Koch
LOVE CALLS US TO THINGS OF THIS WORLD

The eyes open to a cry of pulleys
And spirited from sleep, the astounded soul
Hangs for a moment bodiless and simple
As false dawn.
Outside the open window
The morning air is all awash with angels.

Some are in bed-sheet, some are in blouses,
Some are in smocks: but truly there they are.
Now they are rising in calm swells
Of halcyon feeling, filling whatever they wear
With deep joy of their personal feeling.

Now they are flying in place, convey in
The terrible speed of their omnipresence, moving
And staying like white water: and now of a sudden
They swoon down to so rapt a quiet
That nobody seems to be there.
The soul shrinks

From all that it is about to remember,
From the punctual rape of every blessed day,
And cries, "Oh, let there be nothing on earth but laundry,
Nothing but rosey hands in the rising steam
And clear dances done in the sight of heaven.

Yet, as the sun acknowledges
With a warm look at the world’s hunks and colors,
The soul descends once more in bitter love
To accept the waking body, saying how
In a changed voice as the man yawns and rises,

"Bring them down from their ruddy gallows.
Let there be clean linen for the backs of thieves;
Let lovers go fresh and sweet to be undone,
And the heaviest nuns walk in a pure floating
Of dark habits, keeping their difficult balance.

Richard Wilbur
WINTER MORNING

All night the wind swept over the house
And through our dream
Swirling snow up through the pines,
Ruffling the white, ice-capped clapboards,
Rattling the windows,
Rustling around and below our bed
So that we rode
Over wild water
In a white ship breasting the waves.
We rode through the night
On green, marbled
Water, and, half-waking, watched
The white, eroded peaks of icebergs
Sail past our window;
Rode out the night in the north country,
And awake, the house buried in snow,
Perched on a
Chill promontory, a
Giant’s tooth
In the mouth of the cold valley
Its white tongue looped frozen around us,
The trunks of tall birches
Revealing the rib cage of a whale
Stranded by a still stream;
And saw through the motionless baleen of their branches,
As if through time
A light that shone
On a landscape of ivory
A harbor of stone.

William Jay Smith
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<th>WEB SITE/BOOK</th>
<th>EMPHASIS</th>
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<td>A Narrow Fellow in the Grass</td>
<td>Dickinson, Emily</td>
<td><a href="http://www.online-literature.com/dickinson/824/">www.online-literature.com/dickinson/824/</a></td>
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<td>Annabel Lee</td>
<td>Poe, Edgar Allan</td>
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<td>In a Station of the Metro</td>
<td>Pound, Ezra</td>
<td><a href="http://www.bartleby.com/104/106.html">www.bartleby.com/104/106.html</a></td>
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<td>In Just</td>
<td>cummings, e.e.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.web-books.com/classics/Poetry/anthology/cummings/InJust.htm">www.web-books.com/classics/Poetry/anthology/cummings/InJust.htm</a></td>
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<td>Remember</td>
<td>Rossetti, Christina</td>
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<td>Skipper Sailing</td>
<td>Rudder, Carol</td>
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<td>Sonnet LXXI (71)</td>
<td>Shakespeare, William</td>
<td><a href="http://www.everypoet.com/Archive/Poetry/William_Shakespeare/william_shakespeare_sonnet_71.htm">www.everypoet.com/Archive/Poetry/William_Shakespeare/william_shakespeare_sonnet_71.htm</a></td>
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<td>Sonnet LXXIII (73)</td>
<td>Shakespeare, William</td>
<td><a href="http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Troy/4081/73.html">www.geocities.com/Athens/Troy/4081/73.html</a></td>
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<td>Spring and All</td>
<td>Williams, William Carlos</td>
<td><a href="http://www.poets.org/viewmedia/php/prmMID/15536">www.poets.org/viewmedia/php/prmMID/15536</a></td>
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<td>The Charge of the Light Brigade</td>
<td>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nationalcenter.org/ChargeoftheLightBrigade.html">www.nationalcenter.org/ChargeoftheLightBrigade.html</a></td>
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<td>The Term</td>
<td>Williams, William Carlos</td>
<td><a href="http://www.americanpoems.com/poets/williams/7788">www.americanpoems.com/poets/williams/7788</a></td>
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<td>Yeats, William Butler</td>
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<td>When I Heard the Learn’d Astronomer</td>
<td>Whitman, Walt</td>
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<td>Winter Morning</td>
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