

Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site



On-Site Lesson: *Sandburg Alive!* Grades 6-8

Lesson Length

30 minutes

Common Core State Standards

Reading Standards for Literature

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.4
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse of stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.4
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.4



Speaking and Listening Standards

- Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.4., CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.4., & CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.4.

Learning Targets

- I can use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation as I present a Carl Sandburg poem.
- I can determine the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.
- I can determine both figurative meaning and connotative meaning of words or phrases used in a text.

Theme

Mr. Sandburg's style of writing poetry was very controversial at times. He dared go where no other poet had gone. The methods Mr. Sandburg used to express his ideas, the words he chose, the tone and structure he employed, and the images he created opened up new avenues for future poets.

Program Description

“Sandburg Alive!” is DRAMA. The introduction mentions Mr. Sandburg’s fascinating “career” as an entertainer of sorts. The focus of this program will be on poetic expression as Mr. Sandburg was in true form when presenting his own literary works.

In this program students will participate in small groups to interpret, choreograph and act out a pre-selected Sandburg poem. Each group will have 20 minutes to formulate their presentation and 3 minutes to be on stage. It will be a race against the clock, so students will benefit from a cooperative effort.

Materials Needed

- Poem parts for each group of students

Procedure

Activating Strategy

Think, Pair, Share, after the teacher or ranger reads Sandburg’s poem, SLIPPERY (see poem provided) aloud to the students ask students, “Why do you think Sandburg used the word *fish* in the following line?” This is our fish child. Allow for some students to share their responses with the whole group.

Teaching Strategy

1. Review the following vocabulary with students: tone, meaning, figurative and connotative. Also, review expectations of presentations by modeling appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
2. Share the various poems that students can choose from for the presentation.
3. Allow students to choose the poem that they prefer to present. If too many students want to do the same poem then the teacher will have to assist in creating groups.
4. Students will be given 20 minutes to create their presentation.
5. Each group will perform their presentation for the entire group.

Summarizing Strategy

Give One–Get One - Each group must give one compliment to one other group regarding their presentation. The compliment must be given on one of the learning targets’ focus: tone, meaning, eye contact, volume, pronunciation, or portrayal of word meaning.

8th Grade Enhancement :

Offer the option to take the poems in a different direction. In small groups, students can opt to rewrite and/or perform the poem in various styles, including slam poetry, hip hop/rap, rhyming poetry, etc.

JAZZ FANTASIA

5 Performers

Options:

- **One person narrates and the others dramatize the words**
- **Each person takes a line to both narrate and dramatize.**

Drum on your drums, batter on your banjos,
sob on the long cool winding saxophones.
Go to it, O jazzmen.

Sling your knuckles on the bottoms of the happy
tin pans, let your trombones ooze, and go husha-
husha-hush with the slippery sand-paper.

Moan like an autumn wind high in the lonesome treetops, moan soft
like you wanted somebody terrible, cry like a racing car slipping away
from a motorcycle cop, bang-bang! you jazzmen, bang altogether
drums, traps, banjos, horns, tin cans—make two people fight on the
top of a stairway and scratch each other's eyes in a clinch tumbling
down the stairs.

Can the rough stuff... now a Mississippi steamboat pushes up the
night river with a hoo-hoo-hoo... and the green lanterns calling
to the high soft stars... a red moon rides on the humps of the low
river hills... go to it, O jazzmen.

All: Jazz Fantasia by Carl Sandburg

1: Drum on your drums, batter on your banjos,
Sob on the long cool winding saxophones.

All: Go to it, O jazzmen.

2: Sling your knuckles on the bottoms of the happy
tin pans, let your trombones ooze, and go hush-
husha-hush with the slippery sand-paper.

3: Moan like an autumn wind high in the lonesome
treetops, moan soft like you wanted somebody
terrible, cry like a racing car slipping away from
a motorcycle cop, bang-bang! you jazzmen,

4: bang altogether drums, traps, banjos, horns, tin
cans—make two people fight on the top of a
stairway and scratch each other's eyes in a clinch
tumbling down the stairs.

5: Can the rough stuff... now a Mississippi steamboat pushes up the night river with a hoo-hoo-hoo... and the green lanterns calling to the high soft stars... a red moon rides on the humps of the low river hills...

All: go to it, O jazzmen.

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SOUP

3 Performers

I saw a famous man eating soup.
I say he was lifting a fat broth into his mouth with a spoon.
His name was in the newspapers that day spelled out in tall black headlines
And thousands of people were talking about him.
When I saw him, he sat bending his head over a plate putting soup in his mouth
with a spoon.

All: Soup by Carl Sandburg

All: I saw a famous man eating soup.

1: I say he was lifting a fat broth into his mouth with a spoon.

2: His name was in the newspapers that day spelled out in tall black headlines and thousands of people were talking about him.

3: When I saw him, he sat bending his head over a plate putting soup in his mouth with a spoon.

MANNERS

4 Performers

Manners is how to behave

Manners is when you know how to eat without being bashful

Manners is not afraid of what you are wearing

Manners is like a man tips his hat when he meets a lady

Manners is "EXUSE ME" OR "I BEG YOUR PARDON" instead
of...

"HOW DO YOU GET THERE?" OR "I'LL KNOCK YOUR
BLOCK OFF."

All: Manners by Carl Sandburg

- 1:** Manners is how to behave
- 2:** Manners is when you know how to eat without being bashful
- 3:** Manners is not afraid of what you are wearing
- 4:** Manners is like a man tips his hat when he meets a lady

2: Manners is

1: "EXUSE ME" OR "I BEG YOUR PARDON"

3: instead of...

4: "HOW DO YOU GET THERE?" OR
"I'LL KNOCK YOUR BLOCK OFF."

STUMBLING

5 performers

Options:

- **One person narrates and the others dramatize the words**
- **Each person takes a line to both narrate and dramatize.**

Stumbling is where you walk and find you are not walking

Stumbling is where you find yourself spread on the ground, instead of standing on your feet

Stumbling is where your feet try to make a fool of you

Stumbling is to go where you are not looking when you mean to go where you are looking

Stumbling is to get your feet mixed so you go down

Stumblers are two kinds, those who come up quick and those who say, "Where am I?"

If you never want to stumble, be a fish or a bird.

All: Stumbling by Carl Sandburg

1: Stumbling is where you walk and find you are not walking

2: Stumbling is where you find yourself spread on the ground, instead of standing on your feet

3: Stumbling is where your feet try to make a fool of you

4: Stumbling is to go where you are not looking when you mean to go where you are looking

5: Stumbling is to get your feet mixed so you go down

1: Stumblers are two kinds, those who come up quick and those who say, "Where am I?"

3: If you never want to stumble, be a fish or a bird.

JOY

4 Performers

Let a joy keep you
Reach out your hands and take it when it runs by
As the Apache dancer clutches his woman
I have seen them live long and laugh loud
Sent on singing, singing
Smashed to the heart under the ribs with a terrible love
Joy always

Joy everywhere-
Let joy kill you!

Keep away from the little deaths

All: Joy by Carl Sandburg

1: Let a joy keep you

2: Reach out your hands and take it when it runs by

3: As the Apache dancer clutches his woman

4: I have seen them live long and laugh loud

1: Sent on singing, singing

2: Smashed to the heart under the ribs with a terrible
love

3: Joy always

4: Joy everywhere-

ALL: Let joy kill you!

1: Keep away from the little deaths

PRIMER LESSON

3 Performers

Look out how you use proud words.
When you let proud words go, it is
 Not easy to call them back.
They wear long boots, hard boots; they
 walk off proud; they can't hear you
 calling—
Look out how you use proud words.

All: Primer Lesson by Carl Sandburg

1: LOOK OUT HOW YOU USE PROUD WORDS.

2: WHEN YOU LET PROUD WORDS GO, IT IS NOT EASY TO CALL THEM BACK.

3: THEY WEAR LONG BOOTS, HARD BOOTS;

1: THEY WALK OFF PROUD;

2: THEY CAN'T HEAR YOU CALLING

3: LOOK OUT HOW YOU USE PROUD WORDS.

BRAINWASHING

4 Performers

Repeat and repeat till they say what you are saying.

Repeat and repeat till they are helpless before your repetitions.

Say it over and over till their brains can hold only what you are saying.

Speak it soft, yell it and yell it, change to a whisper, always in repeats.

Come back to it day on day, hour after hour, till they say what you tell them to say.

To wash A B C out of a brain and replace it with X Y Z—this is it.

All: Brainwashing by Carl Sandburg

1: REPEAT AND REPEAT TILL THEY SAY WHAT YOU ARE SAYING.

REPEAT AND REPEAT TILL THEY ARE HELPLESS BEFORE YOUR REPETITIONS.

2: SAY IT OVER AND OVER TILL THEIR BRAINS CAN HOLD ONLY WHAT YOU ARE SAYING.

3: SPEAK IT SOFT, YELL IT AND YELL IT, CHANGE TO A WHISPER, ALWAYS IT REPEATS.

4: COME BACK TO IT DAY ON DAY, HOUR AFTER HOUR, TILL THEY SAY WHAT YOU TELL THEM TO SAY.

1: TO WASH...A B C...OUT OF A BRAIN AND REPLACE IT WITH X Y Z —THIS IS IT.

BOXES AND BAGS

5 Performers

The bigger the box the more it holds.
Empty boxes hold the same as empty heads.
Enough small empty boxes thrown into a big empty box fill it full.

A half-empty box says, "Put more in."
A big enough box could hold the world.
Elephants need big boxes to hold a dozen elephant handkerchiefs.
Fleas fold little handkerchiefs and fix them nice and neat in flea handkerchief boxes.

Bags lean against each other and boxes stand independent.
Boxes are square with corners unless round with circles.
Box can be piled on box till the whole works comes tumbling.
Pile box on box and the bottom box says, "If you will kindly take notice you will see it all rests on me."
Pile box on box and the top says, "Who falls farthest if or when we fall? I ask you."
Box people go looking for boxes and bag people go looking for bags.

All: Boxes and Bags by Carl Sandburg

- 1:** The bigger the box the more it holds.
Empty boxes hold the same as empty heads.
Enough small empty boxes thrown into a big empty box fill it full.
- 2:** A half-empty box says, “Put more in.”
A big enough box could hold the world.
- 3:** Elephants need big boxes to hold a dozen elephant handkerchiefs.
Fleas fold little handkerchiefs and fix them nice and neat in flea handkerchief boxes.
- 4:** Bags lean against each other and boxes stand independent.
Boxes are square with corners unless round with circles.
Box can be piled on box till the whole works comes tumbling.
Pile box on box and the bottom box says,
- 5:** “If you will kindly take notice you will see it all rests on me.”
- 2:** Pile box on box and the top says,
- 5:** “Who falls farthest if or when we fall? I ask you.”
- 3:** Box people go looking for boxes and bag people go looking for bags.

CHILD OF THE ROMANS

4 Performers

The shovelman sits by the railroad track
Eating a noon meal of bread and bologna.

A train whirls by, and men and women at tables
Alive with red roses and yellow jonquils,
Eat steaks running with brown gravy,
Strawberries and cream, eclairs and coffee.

The shovelman finishes the dry bread and bologna,
Washes it down with a dipper from the water-boy,
And goes back to the second half of a ten-hour day's work

Keeping the road-bed so the roses and jonquils
Shake hardly at all in the cut glass vases
Standing slender on the tables in the dining cars.

All: Child of the Romans by Carl Sandburg

- 1: The shovelman sits by the railroad track
Eating a noon meal of bread and bologna.

- 2: A train whirls by, and men and women at tables
Alive with red roses and yellow jonquils,
Eat steaks running with brown gravy,
Strawberries and cream, eclairs and coffee.

- 3: The shovelman finishes the dry bread and
bologna, Washes it down with a dipper from the
water-boy, And goes back to the second half of a
ten-hour day's work

- 4: Keeping the road-bed so the roses and jonquils
Shake hardly at all in the cut glass vases
Standing slender on the tables in the dining cars.

PHIZZOG

4 Performers

This face you got,
This here phizzog you carry around,
You never picked it out for yourself, at all, at all—did you?
This here phizzog—somebody handed it to you—am I right?

Somebody said, “Here’s yours, now go see what you can do with it.”
Somebody slipped it to you and it was like a package marked:
“No goods exchanged after being taken away”—
This face you got.

All: Phizzog by Carl Sandburg

- 1:** This face you got,
This here phizzog you carry around,

- 2:** You never picked it out for yourself, at all, at all—did you? This here phizzog—somebody handed it to you—am I right?

- 3:** Somebody said, “Here’s yours, now go see what you can do with it.”

- 4 :** Somebody slipped it to you and it was like a package marked: “No goods exchanged after being taken away”—

- All:** This face you got.