



Poetry in Nature Activity

Essential Question:

How can you use your observations of nature as inspiration for writing poetry?

Objective:

Students will be able to explore and observe their outdoor space using all their senses in order to create an original work of poetry.

Background:

Poetry comes from the ancient Greek *poiein*, meaning something made or created. It is an art form that allows students to express their thoughts, feelings, and observations through creative, imaginative writing that evokes an image or emotion. Poetry has its own forms and characteristics that make it a creative art form.

Materials:

- Clipboards
- lined paper (at least two sheets per student)
- pencil

Outdoors Expectations:

Explore and observe in safe areas with adult supervision. Use the seven principles of Leave no Trace, as applicable to your outdoors space.

Procedure:

Introduction:

Stop, look, and listen. Stop and look around the outdoor space. Is there a spot that looks interesting to you? Go and sit in that spot, then make observations by looking and listening from your space. What do you see? Make a note of anything you notice. Close your eyes and listen to what is going on around you. What do you hear? Make a note of the sounds around you. (Give students 5 minutes to make their observations and notes. You want them to immerse themselves in their surroundings.)

Activity: Once students have made their observations, instruct them to write a poem about them. You can have them use any form of poetry, or you can instruct them to focus on a specific form (haiku, five senses, etc.) or element (sound device, imagery, etc.). Students should put serious thought into this, so give them ample time to write. For those who are struggling with what to write, discuss their observations with them and ask if there was anything that really stood out to them.

Uses:

You can use this exercise as a standalone activity for a poetry unit. Another use may be to use this as a reflection on an outdoor activity you completed. Poetry is creative, so be creative with how you would incorporate this activity into any of your lessons across subjects. You can change the essential question to fit your needs by changing “observations of nature” to “observations/experience of (fill in the blank)”.

**I would suggest that you make a book of the class’ poems for them to take home. Have them transfer their poem to a blank sheet of unlined paper and draw a picture to go with it. This may be something they keep for themselves for a long time. It’s also something you can have made into a bound book through Studenttreasures that parents may want to purchase.