

**Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park
Park Research Partnership**

Teacher Name(s): Martha Perkins

School/Grade/Subject: Woodstock Union High School/10th Grade/Honors American Literature

Unit Title: Dickinson, Frost, and You in Dialogue across Time and Place

Date Submitted: September 9, 2011

Park Visit Dates Requested: to be determined –late April and May, 2012

Material and Professional Resources Needed:

The Complete Poems of Robert Frost Lathem, editor
The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson Franklin, editor
The Emily Dickinson Handbook Grabher, Hagenbuchle, Miller, editors
The National Parks – America's Best Idea Ken Burns
Reading the Forested Landscape T. Wessels
Access to trails/forests at MBRNHP and/or King Farm
Poetryfoundation.org
Loaded Gun – documentary/dvd (Billy Collins & Julie Harris)

Additional Information:

Park Visit 1: students work in pairs to explore an area of the park and to choose their site (sit spots, journaling, haiku writing (Renga Party with class to follow), photographing in that chosen site).

Park Visit 2: Students re-visit chosen site with poems they have selected for that site, additional photographing time – Visit 2 is an opportunity to gather additional details for their digital essays.

Park Visit 3 (spring?): Students mount the Frost poem, the Dickinson poem, and their own 21st century version of those poems in dialogue from the 19th and 20th centuries. The class walks the trail from site to site (7 total) and students work in pairs to present their site and to talk about the dialogue they perceive between the two poets, and their own writing process to generate a 21st century version of Frost's and Dickinson's truths.

A Place-Based Understanding by Design (UbD) Unit Template v2.0¹

Stage 1-Desired Results			
<p>Established Goals</p> <p>1. Students’ creative work to engage poets from different times and cultures <i>in dialogue via the language of their poems</i> and to set those poems in a specific place for that “dialogue” is a means to derive truths common to human nature over time.</p> <p>2. Students will qualify those understandings via their own place-based experiences and writing in the present time.</p>	Transfer		<p>Place Prompts: Choose the most relevant: Collaboration will happen through... <i>Students working in pairs to capture the essence of a chosen place in MBRNHP.</i> <i>Students working as a class to interpret Dickinson’s and Frost’s poems.</i> <i>Students working in pairs to create a “digital essay” that captures the essence of their chosen site at MBRNHP via photography, music, poetry.</i></p> <p>Students will make a difference by... <i>calling attention to understandings about human nature as a close study of some aspect of the natural world to them.</i> Students will address real world</p>
	<p>ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS: Students will understand that...<i>the natural world has the capacity to reveal if not “answers” then understandings about an individual’s interior, spiritual or private aspects of being.</i></p>	<p>ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS: Students will keep considering ...</p> <p>...<i>how close scrutiny, observation and creative thinking/writing about nature can teach them something about themselves.</i></p> <p>...<i>how on one level, stewardship and sustainability are about an individual’s ability to be in some kind of “dialogue” with the Natural World.</i></p>	
	Acquisition		
	<p>Students will know...<i>that place in forms person only in as deep an understanding as that person is willing to engage respectfully, creatively and analytically with that particular place.</i></p>	<p>Students will be skilled at...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *<i>determining meaning of words and phrases in a poem (figurative language, tone, voice, etc)</i> *<i>analyzing how the poem’s structure contributes to the essential meaning/truth in a poem.</i> *<i>determining comparable ideas (similar or in contrast) in two different poets’ works as by “reading” a Place.</i> *<i>Analyzing/assessing how words, music, image inform a place (and vice versa)</i> <p>Students will be skilled at... <i>Analytical and creative writing.</i></p>	

Adapted by Shelburne Farms from the *Understanding by Design Guide to Creating High-Quality Units* by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, 2011

			<p>issues through... <i>*exploring how some truth or understanding Dickinson illuminates in the 19th century has held steady or evolved over time, as evidenced by Frost's poems in the 20th century and their own ideas (expressed in verse) on the same topic in the 21st century.</i></p> <p>Students will use park resources and learning sites when they... <i>create a digital essay using photography, music and poetry to capture the essence of a chosen place in the park ... create a "trail" and dialogue of poets via their poems across three distinct centuries.</i></p>
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LEARNING EVENTS—*Student success at transfer, meaning, and acquisition depends on...*

Testing a Dialogue: Whole Group Activity (classroom)

*Arrange desks in concentric circles, 2 in the center (bull's eye), 4 in the next ring, 6 in the next ring, 8 in the outer circle.

* Place a Frost Poem on one of the paired desks in the center ring, and 1-2 Emily Dickinson poems on the other desk in the center ring (These are essentially the poets' seats)

*One student in the center will read from the Frost poem, as much of the poem as he/she sees "fit" to establish the point. The Dickinson student will respond with a line (or two or three, as he/she sees "fit," and the conversation "continues" back and forth between the two poet-students.

* KEY RULE for this "Game": students in the center circle (Frost and Dickinson) can only parley in specific lines from their poems. While it may make sense to go through each poem "in dialogue" chronologically first, students in the center ring may jump around in their offerings from the poem in a non-linear fashion. A poet-student may wish to repeat a certain word or phrase for intensifying a point, but he/she may not ADD words to the poem, nor subtract words (goal is to use all lines, eventually, but this is debatable – needs to be tested.)

*Once the two poets have determined the "conversation" is concluded, the "microphone" shifts to students in the second circle. These students can only question, and the question each student in the second ring offers should be directed to a specific poet in the center ring. (However, poets do not respond at this time.)

*Once each student in the second ring has shared a question directed at the Frost student/reader or directed at the Dickinson student/reader in the center ring, the "microphone" shifts to the third circle (6 students). These students may make comments directly to the poets who conversed. These students in the third ring need to make a statement that is directed to one or the other of the poets in the center points or images in his/her poem.

*Students in the outer ring (8) have a choice: they can respond to a specific question from the 2nd ring OR they can respond to a comment they heard from the third

ring. Students in the Outer ring cannot address the poets in the center directly – the outer ring students are focused on addressing questions from circle two, or comments from circle three.

*Finally, the “microphone” returns to the center ring where the poets have a chance to make any closing comments about their experience as dialoging a poem, OR to the questions and comments they heard from the several outer rings.

Round 2: Once music starts, all students need to rise and “trek” around the various circles, landing in a “ring” in which they have not sat before when the music stops. Place new Frost poem (from the poems on the trail) as well as one or two different Dickinson poems in the center ring. Play again – new positions/roles for each student.

Notes: Each student will need a copy of the two (or 3) poems under discussion. This format for discussion does require each student to speak in turn, under a certain kind of direction/protocol (reader, questioner, commentator) – IMPORTANTLY, students will need to take notes about the questions they want to respond to, or the “conversation” they hear that they want to comment upon or question... this is because every student in the 2nd ring needs to question before the “microphone” moves to the next ring. Exercise “forces” students to listen to one another, as well as to be individual contributors....

Conclude class activity with a brief **oral survey** – Do these pairs of Frost and Dickinson poems “work” in dialogue? What views do the poets share? On one points do they differ? Is that clear in their poems pairing? What poetic devices (or strategies) has each poet chosen that “heightens” this shared view or “truth” or accentuates a difference in their opinions?

If survey shows (or the activity itself) shows the Dickinson and Frost poems do not necessarily “dialogue” well, use the Emily Dickinson Lexicon website (input key words/ideas from Frost’s poem perhaps to generate a list of poems wherein Dickinson engages that word) to generate some other possible Dickinson poems that might work well (or in “interestingly problematic” ways) with the Frost poems on site at Marsh Billings Rockefeller National Historic Park.

3. Some Questions to Consider along the route: [Journal Entries]

*In locating comparable poems written by each poet (Dickinson and Frost), *how* might their conversation ensue, using the very lines from each poet’s original poem?

*Are there gender-related differences either in the content or style/approach to the topic each poet elicits?

*In placing a Dickinson poem and a Frost poem in your chosen place at The Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park, do her ideas occasion you(student/reader) to focus on different aspects of that environment than what Frost’s poems call up? Does Dickinson’s poem “fit” the space in similar or dissimilar ways to Frost’s poem already situated there?

*We have deliberated on the ways in which person informs place and place informs person in literature before this year; consider how or if Dickinson’s verse redefines or re-appropriates your chosen space, as well as how or if the introduction of Frost’s poem as well as your own occasions a viewer to “see”/”read” the place at MBRNHP differently (and how so).

* Most of these activities, mini projects and tasks have centered on Frost’s and Dickinson’s 20th and 19th century ideas about an aspect of human nature or experience; what about their 19th and 20th ideas about a commonly used object or prop transfer to the same object/prop in the 21st century, or has their object or prop been transformed?
For example, when you think of house (or home) in the 21st century, what kind of space is it? (“Drumlin Woodchuck”) etc.