

## “Ransom Note” Poetry

<b>Grade Level</b>	8
<b>Subject</b>	English/Language Arts, Technology
<b>Curriculum Objective</b>	<p><b>English/Language Arts 5.02</b></p> <p>Study the characteristics of literary genres (fiction, nonfiction, drama, and <b>poetry</b>) through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reading a variety of literature and other text (e.g., young adult novels, short stories, biographies, plays, free verse, narrative poems).</li> <li>• evaluating what impact genre-specific characteristics have on the meaning of the text.</li> <li>• evaluating how the author's choice and use of a genre shapes the meaning of the literary work.</li> <li>• evaluating what impact literary elements have on the meaning of the text.</li> </ul> <p><b>Technology 3.01</b></p> <p>Select and use a variety of technology tools to collect, analyze, and present information.</p>
<b>Guiding Question</b>	How important is choosing the right words in creating poetry?
<b>Lesson Summary</b>	Students will read two poems (instructor’s choice) and discuss imagery and word choices made by the poet to create the work. After reading the poems, students will then use newspaper and magazine headlines to create their own original “ransom note” poetry in free verse.
<b>Activating Strategy</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Start off lesson with two previously selected poems to analyze. The first poem is read aloud by the instructor and projected for the rest of the class to see via use of a PowerPoint slide or other projection device. Instructor leads a classroom discussion about the poet’s word choices, the tone of the poem, and the poetic imagery used to present the author’s message and intent.</li> <li>2. The second poem should be given as a handout, so each student can work independently. Students should read silently. Allow them to highlight and make notes on the handout. Monitor student progress and then allow them to discuss conclusions in small groups or pairs.</li> <li>3. After the independent reading is complete, the second poem can be shown to the entire class in the manner of the first and discussed as a group.</li> </ol>

<p><b>Cognitive Strategy</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keeping the pairs or small groups of students together, give each one a stack of old newspapers or magazines (or both), along with scissors and a folder.</li> <li>2. Their assignment is to go through the newspapers or magazines and cut out words or phrases that are “strong” attract their attention. Don’t worry about context, or if the words make sense. Stress they should NOT try to compose or write their poems at this point, but instead pick words that appeal to them.</li> <li>3. The goal should be at for each student to cut out at least fifty words. As the words are selected, they should be placed in the folder for sale keeping. Students may also cut out images or pictures they find to be engaging, but the focus should be on collecting words.</li> <li>4. After the words are obtained, show the students via projected image examples of real “ransom notes” (these can be found on the Internet). Advise they are now going to use their words and phrases to create “ransom note poetry” in the same fashion.</li> <li>5. At this stage, colored construction paper and glue sticks should be given to each student so they can compose poems from the words they have collected. They can also use the images they have collected. In essence, they are creating mini posters.</li> <li>6. Markers can also be used to decorate the poems, as well as fill in a missing word or letter if needed (adds to the effect).</li> <li>7. As each student finishes a poem, the instructor can use an ELMO or other overhead projection device to show off each new example to the rest of the class – giving inspiration to the rest of the group as they work.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Summarizing Strategy</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. After completing the “ransom note” (some students will want to do more than one – which is fine if there is time), direct them to write a summary on the back of the poem as to what their poem is about, and what types of imagery or expressive language they used to create their work.</li> <li>2. Allow students to then hang their poems on a blank wall with tape or tacks. Let them design the look of the wall display – it should be a bit chaotic due to the very nature of how the poems were conceived.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>	<p>Students can be evaluated on knowledge of how well they understand how word choice is critical to an effective poem, as well the use of economy in poetry. By the very nature of what poetry is (or is not), they should now understand some of the mechanics of creating a good poem. Students can be judged on the creative effort of their poem, appearance, as well as their own written self-analysis.</p>

<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proxima Projector w/Internet Access</li><li>• ELMO or other Overhead Projection Device</li><li>• Newspapers and Magazines</li><li>• Markers</li><li>• Scissors</li><li>• Glue Sticks</li><li>• Construction Paper</li><li>• Two Pre-Selected Poems (chosen by instructor – short examples of free verse works best for this exercise)</li></ul>
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