



PROJECT

Lunch Poems

Session 2 of 6

Poems Are Alive

Students will discover that poems and readings of poems differ because we all bring our own feelings and memories to writing and reading. We can use poems to understand and explore ourselves and the world around us.

YOU WILL NEED

- Lunch Poems — Session 2 Handouts.
 - Pages 3 and 4—1 copy per student
- 1 notecard
- Tape
- [Pronunciation guide for *miini-baashkimasigani-biitoosijigani-bakwezhigan*](#)
- Computer and speakers
- Projector
- Blank paper
 - 1 sheet per student + extras

BEFORE YOU START

- Write the warm-up question on the board: “What is something that brings you joy and why?”
- Write “still life” on the notecard
- Open up the [pronunciation guide](#).

How to begin (10 Minutes)

Warm-Up

Students will write their answer to the question written on the board, “What is something that brings you joy and why?” Encourage them to answer in full sentences.

Review the vocabulary learned yesterday, “genre” and “artistic medium,” and introduce today’s new phrase: still life. Ask students what they know about the phrase “still life”—have they heard it before and in what situation? Are there any context clues in the phrase that might help them guess the definition? Write their thoughts on the board.

Throughout the lesson, students will gain an understanding of these words and be able to make their own meanings. You will ask them this question again at the end of the session.

“Still life” is a genre of visual art that depicts inanimate objects, such as flowers or food. Students do not need to come up with these exact words, rather this definition is shared mainly to provide context to you for the lesson.

STEP 1 (5 Minutes)

Project Page 1, [Lunch Poems — Session 2 Handouts](#) for all students to see. Tell them this is a still life painting, created by a Dutch artist named Severin Rosen. Ask them to shout out what they notice about this painting: What do they think makes this a still life? Why do they think the artist chose to paint fruit?

After students have shared their observations, point out that poems are a lot like still life paintings. This artist selected and arranged this fruit to paint; a poem is similar because the writer chooses specific moments of their life to hold “still” and arrange them into a poem.

Explain that we normally think that recipes are for making food, but there are also recipes for poems. Those recipes are sometimes made up—from your own head—or they come from someone else (syllables, rhyme scheme). And just like with real recipes, there can be many recipes for one dish or poem, and many different experiences of the same recipe/poem/prompt.

STEP 2 (10 Minutes)

Next, project Page 2, “Lunch Poems — Session 2 Handouts” for the whole class to read together. Preface the poem by telling students they are about to read a poem about blueberry pie called “Living the Language.” While reading the poem, they should think about the conversation they just had about poems and pasta or noodles: The experience that the poem conveys might be completely different from any experience they have had with blueberry pie. This difference is not bad or wrong, but an opportunity to learn about someone else’s life.

Read “Living the Language” out loud for the students, stopping to play the pronunciation of [miini-baashkimasigani-biitoosijigani-bakwezhigan](#) when you reach it in the text.

After you have finished reading the poem, lead a discussion, asking the following questions:

- Are there words or areas of the poem that you’re interested in, or that you didn’t recognize that you want to know more about?
- What about the word played at the beginning of the poem? That word means “blueberry pie” in Ojibwemowin. The Ojibwe people are one of many Native American tribes in the United States, whose land we live on. Ojibwemowin, like lots of other languages, has a different structure than English. But, those differences help open new possibilities for our understanding of people and their experiences. This is what Molly McGlennen means with the line, “We are this language of progression” in the poem that was just read.

STEP 3 (25 Minutes)

Molly McGlennen makes us think about how our lives are a recipe for who we are today, right now—and the recipe that makes us up changes every day we are alive, because we are always encountering something new.

Pass out pages 3 and 4 of “Lunch Poems — Session 2 Handouts.” Students will write a poem that captures a moment from their lives or the person that they are right now, similar to the still life painting they viewed at the beginning of the session. They can use Page 3 to sketch out a single moment where they were doing something they enjoyed with another person (like McGlennen, having fun picking blueberries and thinking about blueberry pie), or they can sketch a self-portrait of who they are right now. Page 4 will guide students through the process of writing their poem.

STEP 4 (10 Minutes)

Make space for students to share their pictures and their poems—they can either read their poems for the class, or explain their pictures.

Ask students again what they think the definition of “still life” is, based on all of the resources they looked at. Which of the resources helped them achieve this understanding the most? Write their definitions on the board, alongside their thoughts from the beginning of the session and make note of any similarities or differences you see between the two sets.

At the end of the session, write both sets of their definitions to the notecard labeled “still life.” Tape this notecard to the board or an empty space on the wall, next to the previous sessions’ notecards.