

**Shawn Lees-Carr**  
**Thematic Literature Activity**  
**Poetry Month Celebration**  
**April 20, 2013**

Overview:

In honor of Poetry Month, I collaborated with two other English teachers and the media specialist to develop several activities. These activities included:

- Staff reading self-selected poems on the morning announcements
- A school-wide Poetry Outloud recitation competition contest
- Poem-In-Your-Pocket Day
- I-Spy poems competition
- Poet's Perch Coffee House
- Poetry Rotations/Passports instructional activity based on HSA/Curriculum indicators

The thematic activity described within this report is the Poetry Rotations/Passports based on curriculum indicators. This activity was held on April 29, 2013.

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## **ACTIVITY LESSON**

### ***Participants:***

Five classes of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students of different abilities, learning styles, interests, etc.  
Classroom teacher, reading specialist, media specialist, instructional assistant, if available.

### ***Materials***

- Center materials
- Computers
- Center signs
- Directions
- Passports
- Magnetic poetry kits
- Notebook paper
- Extra pencils
- Assessment/Evaluation/Reflection
- Document camera, projector and laptop
- Timer
- Treats
- Camera

### ***Procedure***

1. Create groups of 4 to 5 students.
2. Meet in library with class.
3. Review directions and explanation of purpose.
4. Identify rotation locations.
5. Students break into groups and attend first rotation.

6. Set the timer for 10-15 minutes.
7. Give students a two-minute warning before time buzzes.
8. “Stamp” passport.
9. Supervise. Supervise. Supervise.
10. Wrap-Up: At the final center, students clean up, complete feedback form and turn in passport/papers.
11. Evaluate and assess student work.

## ***Activities***

### **Location A: Poem Analysis**

Students will analyze and answer HSA-style questions related to poems and the tools authors use to create meaning, themes and main idea. A straight-forward replication of what students can expect to find on the HSA. (Theme, main idea, author’s purpose, etc. The student will determine how the speaker, organization, sentence structure, word choice, tone, rhythm, and imagery reveal an author’s purpose. The student will explain the effectiveness of stylistic elements that communicate an author’s purpose.)

### **Location B: Poetry Tag or Chains**

Students will examine self-selected poems and identify common themes, topics, forms, figurative language, etc. They will create a chain of poems in which one connects to the next based on commonalities. (The student will identify and/or explain connections between and among themes and/or styles of two or more texts. The student will use available resources to locate information.)

### **Location C: Poetry Creation**

Students will use magnetic poetry kits or book spines to create their own original pieces of poetry. They then will take pictures of their creations.

### **Location D: Poetry Resources and Research**

Using an anticipation guide, students will assess prior knowledge of resources used to collect academic information about poetry and how to document these sources. Students will then read and extend their knowledge of resources and documenting sources in a bibliography. Finally, students will practice and apply their knowledge by answering several HSA-style questions related to resources and research.

### **Location E: Poetry Trivia Scavenger Hunt**

Using the computers, students will follow a “poetry scavenger hunt” by learning about different poetry forms and poets.

## **OPTIONAL/FUTURE LOCATIONS**

### **Location F: Poetry Scramble and word play**

(The student will alter the tone of a text by revising its diction. The student will identify features of language that create tone and voice. The student will select and organize ideas for specific audiences and purposes.)

Students receive an envelope with a poem that has been cut up and scrambled. Students reconstruct the poem and then consider ways to alter the tone by changing the diction.

### **Location G: Poetry and nonprint texts**

(The student will apply reading strategies when comparing, making connections, and drawing conclusions about non-print text. The student will extend or further develop meaning by explaining the implications of the text for the reader or contemporary society.)

Students read and analyze several poems of their choice and then “match” the poems to nonprint images, songs, videos, etc. After matching, students justify their decisions and make connections to current events and modern life experiences.

### ***Assessment and Reflection***

This lesson was mostly successful. On one hand, it was well-organized, and the materials were clear and effective. On the other hand, I included too many activities for our time frame. As a result, the students didn’t get to visit all of the rotations. Fortunately, we were able to schedule an additional day for students to return. The teachers found the activities valuable enough to return, however, I know they have their weekly plans in place and additional curriculum to cover. In discussing this situation with teachers, we determined that I could have limited the rotations by having multiple copies of the three most important centers. For example, two groups could have worked on poetry analysis, two groups on the research and resources and two groups on poetry connections/poetry “tag.” When I do this activity in the future, I will preplan with the teachers better so we can select the best activities. Most of the teachers felt the activities directly related to the HSA were most important and wanted all students to participate in them.

While the teachers appreciated the HSA-style poetry lessons, the students enjoyed the more creative and interactive rotations. The students were more engaged in the poetry creation, poetry trivia scavenger hunt and the poetry “tag” activities. Even the media specialist and teachers noted students’ enthusiasm for the poetry creation rotation. Students worked together to build poems using either the magnet poetry tiles or the spines of books. The students said they liked the manipulative features and open-ended aspect. Most students were very successful here, although they said they needed more time. Some of our more struggling students could have benefitted from more guidance in constructing a poem, even though they have practiced this skill in the classroom. Several stated that it was too difficult to develop a poem “right off our heads.” The next time, I will include some poetry templates for those who desire more structure.

Overall the teachers, students and media specialist were very complimentary about the activities, the learning skills reinforced and the structure of the rotations. We all agreed I tried to do much in too short amount of time.

Out of all of the activities, the least important or beneficial was the poetry trivia scavenger hunt. I wanted to include a rotation that used the computers; however, next time I could turn one of the other rotations, such as the poetry analysis location, into a computer-based activity. Revising the poetry analysis activity may help make this rotation more engaging because most students found this boring, although the teachers really valued the HSA-style practice.