

Lesson overview

Subject:	English/Language Arts
Grade:	4 th
Topic:	Poetry
Approx. duration of the contracts	5 days
Concepts:	Voice, expression
Essential questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do poetic elements aid in the organization and expression of the poetry?• How do poets use descriptive elements to express their ideas and thoughts?

Objectives

✓ Students will know:

The rules and forms that follow the types of poetry studied throughout the unit.
The terms for various poetic elements and how they are used in poetry.

✓ Students will understand:

That poets use a variety of poetic forms and elements to adequately express their ideas, thoughts, and observations.

✓ Students will be able to do:

Correctly utilize a variety of poetic forms as a form of expression.

**Checking points.*

- Do the “Know” objectives cover the essential information to be learned?
- Are the “Understand” objectives big and transferable ideas of the discipline?
- Are the “Do” objectives observable and measurable? Do they encompass essential skills?
- Do the KUDs “fit together”-in other words, will they come together coherently?

Range or description of learner needs in your class related to this topic

Last year, my fourth graders created a poetry portfolio, so I designed these specific learning contracts with them in mind, although I believe they can easily be implemented in other classes. We leveled the fourth graders for English/Language arts, and I taught the high level group. However, even in this group, there was still a wide range of readiness. Some students were extremely gifted while others were bumped up from the middle group later on in the semester. I had students who were very descriptive in their writing and other students who wrote very simplistically. There was also a range in the independence of the students and the amount of structure needed. Finally, they encompassed a variety of interests.

Factors and elements you'll need to consider in developing the Contracts

(related to time, students, space, materials, etc.)

Student readiness:

Because of the range in readiness levels and the amount of structure needed, I've devised two slightly different learning contracts. All students are required to complete the same number and some of the same types of poems; however, I have provided students with different organizers to help them brainstorm or refine their writing. Students are not required to complete every organizer in their learning contract – they are available should the student need them. I will be looking primarily at their final portfolios. All the learning contracts provide a definition of the type of poem, but one only provides examples of those poems, while the other set of learning contracts spell out the format. Again, this differs on the amount of structure some students need and their readiness.

Materials:

I have also provided students with a cart from the library of books of poetry. These act as resources for the students as they write their own poems. I will also have printed out several types of poems and other resources on the formatting of those poems. These materials will be available in a range of reading levels and the poems will be at varying levels of complexity. Finally, the materials will depict many topics, which will help students see how different topics and their own interests can have a place in poetry.

Student interest and challenge:

Besides differentiating based on readiness (structure and independence), this learning contract differentiates based on student interest. Although the students must write five poems, the format of which has already been assigned, they may also select at least three other formats from a list of five. The students are also given opportunities to extend their own knowledge of poetry and challenging themselves by writing other types of selected poetry. These formats are not required, and the students are given options for these poems as well. Likewise, students are not given specific topics to write about. Rather they may write according to their own interests. Finally, students are required to decide which poetic elements they wish to include in their poems.

Time:

The students will complete self-evaluation sheets that will help themselves, as well as the

teacher, monitor their time on-task.

Activities and materials already available to consider including in the Contracts

- Books and examples of a variety of poems: from my own personal collection, the school library, and the internet.
- Self-evaluation worksheet: This may be an ongoing procedure in the class that the teacher may wish to incorporate into the learning contract.
- Students may revise poems they have already begun during the poetry unit and place them in their poetry portfolio. Lessons were conducted on each type of poetry, so the students will already have begun several poems.

Pre-assessment plans:

Prior to the unit on poetry, the teacher will have provided students with a test that includes two matching sections. In the first section, the students will match the name of a poetic form (such as haiku) to an example. The purpose is to see if the students can identify types of poetry. In the second section, students will match the names of poetic elements (such as stanza) to the definition. This pre-assessment will help the teacher in planning, so that she does not cover things they already know. By the time the students begin this learning contract, which acts as a final product, the students will already be familiar with a wide variety of poetry and poetic elements.

Specific task to be included in the contracts:

As your final project for this unit, you will create a poetry portfolio of your own work. You will be required to write some types of poems, but will have choice over others. The same goes for poetic elements. After you write a few poems, you will briefly conference with me. If I am with a student, you can begin writing another type of poem or can peer-conference with another student who is done. There are many resources available to you on the library cart, should you need examples of poems. When you have finished all your poems, you will publish them in a poetry portfolio. This portfolio can be a book, an electronic portfolio, or an audio recording of you reading your poems. If you do an audio recording, please also provide neatly handwritten or typed copies of the poems, and practice reading the poems aloud prior to recording.

1. Working guidelines for students:

This is an individual project, but the students will have many resources at their fingertips. The teacher will have available a library cart with several books of poetry. The students can also access their class notes for assistance or to look up the guidelines on format. Students are expected to be on task and must manage their time wisely. The teacher will meet with the students for conferences after they complete a few poems (2-3) to check form, grammar, spelling, and make any suggestions. This will also enable the teacher to see how the students are managing their time. During these conferences, the teacher will discuss with the students the

format they want their portfolio to take. Once the students have completed their poems, they will put together their portfolio. Students may be scattered to different locations, from working at their desks to the computers, to the media center. Students doing audio recordings will need a quiet location and may be doing work in the hallway.

2. Time line requirements and student planning:

The students will have approximately five days to complete their poetry portfolio. Throughout the poetry unit, they have been writing poems that they may revise and include in their portfolio, or they may start poems from scratch. Students will be expected to write some of the poems for homework, so that they have enough time to publish in class. Each day in class, the students will have to fill out a self-evaluation sheet indicating the date, what they worked on, and how on task they were.

3. Assigning students to contracts:

Because learning contracts are very independent, the two I have designed are based on the amount of structure the students require and their readiness levels. Some students will be more prepared to jump into writing their poems, while other students will need more guidance.

4. Introducing the Learning Contracts to students:

We have now studied several types of poetry. Who can name some of the types we studied? You will now begin working on a final project for our poetry unit. You will create a poetry portfolio of your choice. This may be a book, an electronic portfolio, or an audio read-aloud of your poetry. Each of you will have a learning contract that specifies what you must include in your portfolio. The teacher will then hand out the learning contracts and go over them with the students. She will also go over her expectations for work quality and student behavior. The students will sign the contracts.

Assessment plans :

1. How work will be graded

The activities/graphic organizers in the two learning contracts will not be graded. These are to help the students *where* they need assistance. I will grade the poetry portfolio on the following criteria: Did the students include the five required poems and at least three of the optional poems? Also, did the students follow the appropriate poetic format for each type of poem written? Did the students include the required poetic elements in at least one poem? Finally, did the students express their thoughts, ideas, or observations in their poems? I have chosen not to grade creativity because it is very subjective, and I will not grade participation. The students' self-evaluation sheets are more for them to keep track of their own work ethic. My hope is that they will learn to self-monitor their own on-task/off-task behavior.

2. Monitoring student work and progress:

The two main ways I will monitor student work is through student conferences, both as they finish their poems and when I feel a conference is necessary. If I see a student who is off-task or who seems frustrated, a conference is in order to examine the source of the problem. I will also keep track of student progress through their self-evaluation sheets, which will let me quickly see what the students have been working on, how they are managing their time, and

how focused they feel they have been throughout the project.

3. Checking work for accuracy, understanding, and quality:

Because the students have already been introduced to each type of poem listed in their learning contract, they should already be fairly familiar with the formats. All the poems that are “main dishes” and “side dishes” have been discussed in extensive detail in separate lessons; the optional poems have been touched on, but will require further research by the student. These mainly serve as anchor activities for students who finish the project early, students who are extremely interested in learning more about poetry, and gifted students who may need more of a challenge, as odes, sonnets, and couplets are more difficult to write. The learning contracts define the types of poetry and provide either the format or an example, so students do have information at their disposal. They also have resources on the library cart.

The first check for accuracy, understanding, and quality comes during the conference when the student will show the teacher the poems they have written thus far. The teacher will look for accuracy in format, grammar, and spelling. She will look to see if the student understand the concept behind that type of poetry; for instance, haiku poems are about nature, animals, or seasons and limericks are generally humorous. The teacher will make suggestions regarding how the student can improve the poem. The student will then have the option to make revisions or publish as is. The teacher will be looking for quality of expression in the final portfolio.

4. Turning work in-when and how:

Students will turn their poems in at the end of the week in a portfolio format. Some students will have created a book, either typed or handwritten, with illustrations or clip art. They will turn in a hard copy. Other students will have created a technology portfolio of their poems, such as a PowerPoint or book from Publisher. These students will turn in the saved media, either burned on a CD or emailed to me. The last group will turn in their audio-recording as well as copies of their poems, handwritten or typed.

Learning Contracts (For all students)

Menu: Poetry Portfolio

Due: All items in the main dish and the specified number of side dishes must be complete by the due date. You may select among the side dishes and you make decide to do some of the dessert items, as well.

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PART A:

Main Dish(you must complete all of these)

1.Bio Poem

2.Haiku

3. Cinquain

4. Acrostic

5. Free Verse

.....

Side Dish (*You must do at least 3 of these*)

1. Concrete

2. Limerick

3. Tanka

4. Quatrain

5. Diamante

.....

Dessert (*You may do one or more of these*)

1. Ode

2. Sonnet

3. Couplet

PART B: This section of the learning contract indicates which poetic elements must be included. You only have to include each of the required elements once in your portfolio. For example, you can have rhyme in one poem and simile in another. Or they can both be in the same poem.

Main Dish (*you must include all of these*)

1. Rhyme

2. Similie

3. Imagery

.....

Side Dish (*You must do at least ___1___ of these*)

1. Metaphor

2. Personification

3. Alliteration

.....
...

Dessert (*You may do one or more of these*)

1. Pun

2. Allusion

Student Signature: _____ ***Date:*** _____

Supplemental Information For Learning Contract#1 (Examples)

Bio Poems

A poem written about one self's life, personality traits, and ambitions.

Line 1: Your first Name

2: Four descriptive traits

3: Sibling of...

4: Lover of (people, ideas)

5: Who feels...

6: Who needs...

7: Who gives...

8: Who fears...

9: Who would like to see...

- 10: Resident of (Your city)
- 11: Your last name

Get to Know Me Chart

Directions: Answer each question in the space below. In the blank column, brainstorm how your answers could be used in the poem.

What are some of my hobbies?	
Who do I like to be around?	
What makes me happy?	
What are my dreams?	
What can I not live without?	

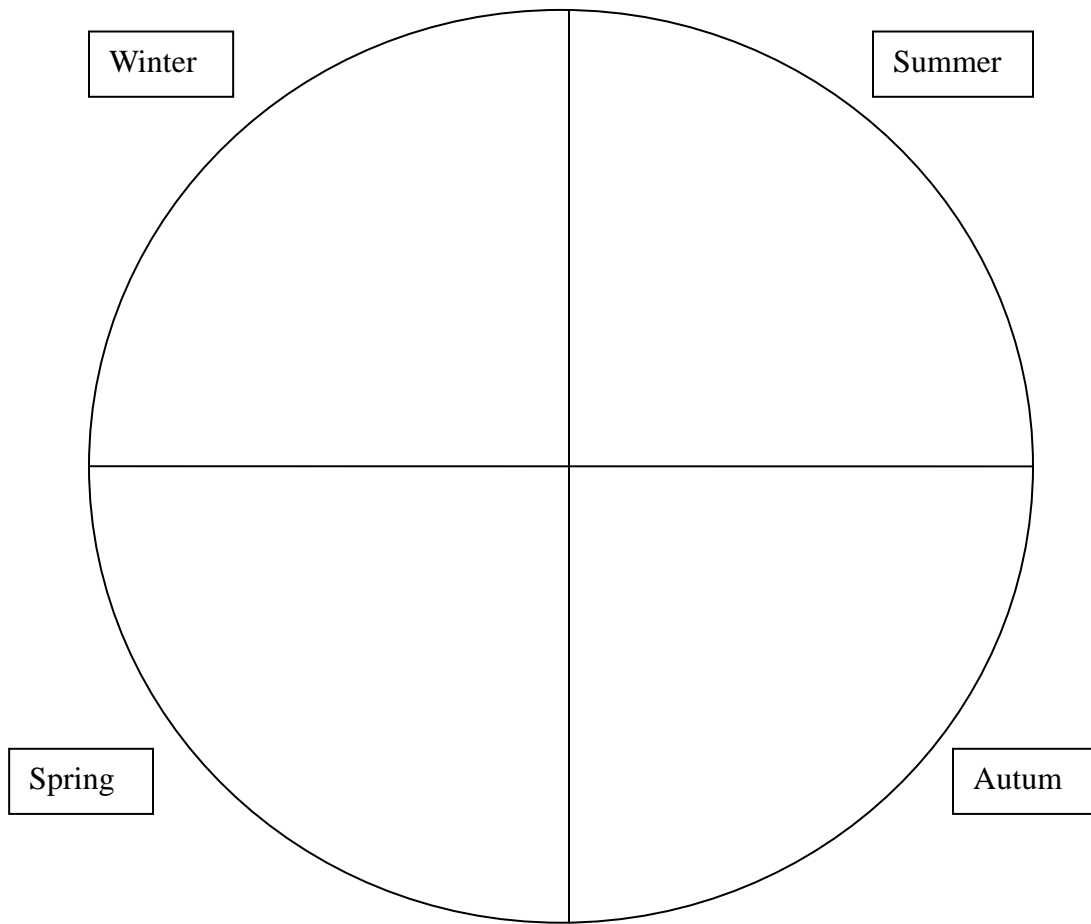
Haiku

A Japanese poem composed of three unrhymed lines of five, seven, and five syllables, usually containing a season word.

- Line 1: 5 syllables
- Line 2: 7 syllables
- Line 3: 5 syllables

Word Brainstorm:

Brainstorm descriptive words for each season. Pick one to act as your season identification (kigo) word and use it in your poem as you write about seasons, nature, or animals.



Supplemental Information for Learning Contract #2 (Examples)

Bio Poems

A poem written about one self's life, personality traits, and ambitions.

Example:

Kaleigh
Considerate, diligent, opinionated, creative
Sibling of Sean and Jillian
Lover of her family, dark chocolate, and truth
Who feels peace when she runs

the same thing. Brainstorm other words that also indicated the season. Look the words up in a thesaurus and write down the ones you like.

Word	Brainstorm Synonyms	Other words/phrases that indicate the same season	Words from the thesaurus

RAFT

In writing your poems, please consider the following:

- Role: The role you are taking as the narrator of the poem. Who are you? How do you feel? How do you indicate that in your poem?
- Audience: Who is your poem addressing?
- Format: What type of poetry are you using for this poem?
- Topic: What topic of interest are you writing about?

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Ex. Nature conservationist	People around the world	Haiku	Respect the environment

Student Self-Evaluation Sheet

Directions: Write today's date and what you worked on today. Then think about how well you worked and write down the appropriate number.

- 1 – I was not on-task today.
- 2 – I did not work as hard as I could have and did not stay on-task for much of the time.
- 3 – I worked hard and stayed on-task most of the time.
- 4 – I did my best today and stayed on-task the whole time.

Date	What I did today?	How on-task was I?

Analyzing your Learning Contracts

1. How are the sample contracts alike in intent and structure? How are they different in intent and structure?

The learning contracts are designed around the same KUDs and have the same in basic requirements – the number of poems students must complete and the number of poetic elements used. Certain poems and elements are also required for all students, and each student has the same choices for the parts that have options. The difference occurs in the structure of the supplemental information in the two learning contracts. The graphic organizers both have the intent of helping guide students in the writing of their poems; however, the graphic organizers in the first contract are designed to help students brainstorm topics. They also explicitly state the format for the poem. The graphic organizers in the second contract deal more with the students’ writing and looking back over the writing and making improvements. They also include written examples of the type of poem rather than the format spelled out. These students need less of guidance in the brainstorming and formatting of their poems.

2. What do you see as essential feature of or elements in making sure students are successful with leaning contracts?

The first thing any teacher must do is explain her expectations for work quality and behavior. She should also meet with each group of learning contract students and go over the assignments and procedures. I also think the conferences are an important part of making sure students are successful. Because the teacher will be briefly meeting with students several times throughout the process, she can monitor their progress and understanding. The self-evaluation sheet also allows students to monitor their own progress. Lastly, the graphic organizers are built-in supports that are available for the students should they need help. Instead of asking for teacher help, the organizers promote independence by providing students with a guide they may follow.

3. What is the link between preassessment and learning contracts?

The pre-assessment helps the teacher see which types of poetry the students are already familiar with. These types may then be left out of the learning contract altogether or may be optional poems. It is the same with poetic elements. The pre-assessment also lets the teacher examine which types of poetry and poetic elements she really wants the students to know and be able to use by the end of this project.

4. Think of several ways the teacher might have given directions for completing contracts successfully when not all students would complete the same task.

With this contract, there are several elements that are the same in both contracts that the teacher can go over with the whole group. Because the requirements are essentially the same, it would make sense to go over the project together and allow all students the opportunity to ask questions and listen to the questions their classmates ask. I would then meet with each learning contract group individually and go over the graphic organizers. While I am working with one group, I would have the other group reading over their contract silently to make sure they haven't misunderstood anything.