

ACTFL 2012
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***Increasing Heritage Language
Student Engagement
Through Literacy***

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POETRY SLAM 101

Difficulty Level: Moderate

The planning for steps 1, 2, and 3 was done in a one-week period during planning periods. This is very doable!

1. Venue ideas: school auditorium, local coffee shop, theatre, local café, etc.

- If hosting the poetry slam at the school, make sure to look at the school's event calendar so it does not conflict with other events.
- Have information about the date, the time, and the expected number of attendees when applying for space.
- To get the space for free, play up the fact that this is an opportunity to support literacy education for our youth. Promise to acknowledge the venue in the program.

2. Beg for prizes and freebies!

- Contact local business for help with prizes. Give them a "sponsor" letter for documentation.
- Once one or two businesses signed on to help, it was easier to convince others to participate. We told them that they would get recognized in the program after a convincing sales pitch about how they were helping the local children.
- These are the prizes that we secured for our poetry slam.
 - a. Grant money to offset costs of hosting the event.
 - b. Ten trophies
(1st, 2nd, 3rd, Most Creative, and Most Passionate in two categories)
 - c. \$600 in prize money from local businesses
 - d. Journals for the winners
 - e. Gift bags for the winners' prizes
 - f. Spanish dictionaries and thesauruses for the winners
 - g. Students' poems printed on scrolls as a souvenir
 - h. CD's made with all the students' poems on them
 - i. Students' poems published in the local newspaper
 - j. Air time on the local TV station to read their poems
 - k. Air time on the local Latino radio station to read their poems
 - l. Water donated for the event
 - m. Discounted price on pupusas for the event
 - n. Donated programs
 - o. Frames for the winners' poems
 - p. Recognition in the school newspaper and news channel
 - q. Thank you prizes for the judges

*In addition, students were required to attend. They didn't have to compete, but we felt the need to expose them to aesthetic literacy as audience members.

3. MC and DJ

- Find someone fun, vivacious, and “cool” to host the event...for FREE!
 - We used a hip, Latino DJ from the local radio station.
- The event needs music to give it that definitive poetry slam feel. We got a local DJ to donate his time and equipment.
- Our grant money allowed us to pay \$50 to each as a small honorarium.

4. Present a poetry unit in the classroom.

- After all the above is secure, present the poetry slam idea to your class. Get them excited about the poetry unit by enticing them with what they are working toward.
- Go to *Read, Write, Think* for the lesson plan that we modified to work with our students. Make sure to plan for enough time before the poetry slam to present all the material.

<http://www.readwritethink.org/resources/resource-print.html?id=30525&tab=4>

5. Generate interest in the poetry slam

- Talk about it EVERY day in the classroom. Make it a big deal. It's all about presentation! It needs to sound like the “coolest” thing they'll do all year. The kids need to buy in to it. Feature the prizes on the board.
- Advertise for the poetry slam plenty of time in advance.
- Make flyers that include the who, what, where, why, and how. Include the prizes!
- Make the flyer flashy and visually appealing.
- Email your school's faculty and get the word out.
- Recruit students to make large banners to hang in the school.
- Contact the local newspapers. Our local Latino newspaper featured an article about the poetry slam a couple weeks before the event. They interviewed several students to generate interest.
- Contact local radio stations. Our local Latino radio station advertised for the poetry slam during the weeks leading up to the competition.
- Contact local TV news stations. Our local Latino news station promoted the poetry slam on air.
- Send personal invitations to the Spanish teachers in other school districts.
- Send a letter home to parents about the poetry slam giving them the invitation to attend to see their child perform in the competition.

6. Judges – Find qualified competition judges

- The best judges are usually writers or performers themselves.
- We used a newspaper editor, a college professor of Spanish literature, a retired college professor of education, and a Latino activist.
- Don't give the judges too much to judge or they will become overwhelmed. Have each judge evaluate a different component of each poet's presentation. Appoint that judge the “expert” on that topic so that they will judge consistently throughout the competition.
- Hold a judges' meeting 30 minutes before the poetry slam to go over rules and expectations with the judges.
- There will not be time for the judges to tally up their totals after they fill out the grading rubrics after each performance. Have two or three different people designated to tabulate the scores so that the judges can focus on judging.

7. Props

- Before the day of the event, secure the lighting, the microphones, the podium, and anything else to make the performances sound better.
- We had four tables: one for the stage to display trophies, one for student registration, and two for the restaurant to set up their food.

8. Volunteers

You will need many!

We had four judges, three tally takers, one MC, one DJ, one adult standing in the wings to help kids know when to go on stage, four adults to set up the stage and registration table, two adults to register kids, one adult to assist the Pupuseria, one adult to take pictures, one adult to videotaped the event, and three adults to clean up afterward.

Trusted students could be given some of these tasks.

9. Rehearsal

Students should be given the opportunity to practice their poems in front of their peers for feedback before the actual event. Many had never even held a microphone before. This alleviated their nervousness. We also went to the auditorium so that they could stand on the stage and practice their entrances, exits, and recitations.

10. THE EVENT

- Refreshments? – Based on your venue, you may decide to have a gathering beforehand to ease everyone’s nervous energy. We served pupusas from a local restaurant. The kids and parents really enjoyed this get together.
- Sign in station – Have one or two adults in charge of the registration table
- As people file in to the venue, have high-energy music playing to set the mood.
- Have ushers to hand out programs.
- MC should introduce the judges, explain the rules, discuss crowd expectations, remind people to be respectful, and get everyone excited about the event. The MC should have a photocopied list of all the participants and the order that they will present in to make transitioning easier.
- Poets will be called up in small groups to read based on the number assigned to them at check-in. Students will wait in the wings to prevent lag time between contestants. The DJ will play music between performances. The MC will introduce each student.
- Intermission? We had one.
- Tallying should be completed soon after the last student performs.
- Winners will be announced.
- Have all winners on stage for a photo. Have all participants on stage for a photo.

11. Remember

- Don’t forget to have someone in charge of taking pictures!
- Someone should record the poetry slam.
- If things don’t run perfectly smoothly, it’s okay. Really! Poetry slams are supposed to have a relaxed feel to them.
- Who will clean up afterward?
- Send out thank you notes to all the volunteers and donors.

Documents created with the help of the following sources:

http://www.poetryslam.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=10&Itemid=25

http://www.ehow.com/how_5394360_host-poetry-slam-event.html

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fODIPR9z8M>

LESSON PLAN EXAMPLE

Diamond Poem Activity

Rogers HS

SNS classes

Ms. Sliger / Dr. Bowles

Goal: to build descriptive vocabulary in the TLs of English and Spanish; to lower the affective filter by building confidence in students' abilities to create a poem; to lay the foundation for introducing the poetry unit

Objective: Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of descriptive vocabulary by creating a diamond poem in English and/or Spanish describing themselves.

Standards:

- SNS: Standard 1, Standard 9, Standard 11
- ESL: Standard 6, Standard 7
- CCSS ELA Reading 1, 2, 4 / Writing 4

Materials: Colored pens or crayons, construction paper, writer's notebooks

Engaging the learners: Think, Pair, Share

Dr. Bowles will ask SS to think about how they would describe a poet. Students will answer the following questions: What does a poet look like? Where does a poet live? What does a poet write about? What is a poet like? After 3-5 minutes, students will share their perceptions. Dr. Bowles will then ask a student to come up and identify the poet on the slide. Ss will compare their answers to the picture. Students will be shown several stanzas from different poems and asked to think of a title for each poem with their partner. After writing the title down, Dr. Bowles will reveal the title. (5-7 minutes)

Presenting the material:

Dr. Bowles will ask students to decide if they are poets—thumbs up/side/down. Dr. Bowles will convince students that they are all poets by presenting the simple diamond poem. Ss will identify the types of words in each line. (5 minutes)

Dr. Bowles will ask students to choose three basic colors from the crayon boxes to categorize descriptive words. Ss will draw three columns on a page. At the top of the page, students will label the columns as Sustantivos, Adjetivos, and Verbos. Dr. Bowles will briefly define the terms and ask for examples. Students will work with their partners to think of words that describe themselves and fill in the columns. Students should include at least three words in each column. (10 mins)

Constructing knowledge:

After students have composed their lists, the format and example will be shown on the ELMO. Ms. Sliger and Ms. Story will model their poem for students. Students will write their drafts in their notebooks (10-15 mins)

Presenting their work: If time allows, students will use the crayons to write their poems on colored paper for class exhibition. Students can volunteer to share their poems with the class or have a friend read their poems for them. (10 mins)

Resource:

Blaz, D. (2002). *Bringing the Standards for foreign language learning to life*.
Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS USED FOR ACCURACY AND COMPREHENSION**Scoring method for accuracy:**

If a student skips a word, circle it and mark it wrong.

If a student mispronounces a word or a letter in a word, cross it out and mark it wrong.

If a student self-corrects, write SC on top and count it correct.

Assign a score per line on a 5 (no mistakes) to 1 (5 or more mistakes) scale.

Scoring:

5.0 - no mistakes

4.5 - one mistake

4.0 - two mistakes

3.0 - three mistakes

2.0 - four mistakes

1.0 - five or more mistakes in a single line

Total points: 30

Note: A student with correct pronunciation would be able to score highly on this first assessment. We wanted to focus solely on accuracy this first test so that we could gauge which kids still didn't know the letter sounds. The next assessment focuses on accuracy, fluency, pace, and intonation.

Assessment used for accuracy

Nombre: _____

Fecha: _____

Periodo: _____

Había una vez veinticinco soldaditos de plomo, hermanos todos, ya que los habían fundido en la misma vieja cuchara. Fusil al hombro y la mirada al frente, así era como estaban, con sus espléndidas guerreras rojas y sus pantalones azules. Lo primero que oyeron en su vida, cuando se levantó la tapa de la caja en que venían, fue: "¡Soldaditos de plomo!" Había sido un niño pequeño quien gritó esto, batiendo palmas, pues eran su regalo de cumpleaños.

Enseguida los puso en fila.

Scoring Sample:

Había una vez veinticinco soldaditos de ~~plomo~~ plomo, hermanos todos, ya que los habían ^{sc} 4.5

fundido en la misma vieja cuchara. Fusil al ~~hombro~~ hombro y la mirada al frente, así era ^{sc} 4.5

como estaban, con sus espléndidas ~~guerreras~~ guerreras rojas y sus pantalones azules. Lo ^{sc} 4.5

primero que oyeron en su vida, cuando se levantó la tapa de la caja en que venían, ^{sc} 5

fue: "~~plomo~~ Soldaditos de plomo!" Había sido un niño pequeño quien gritó esto, batiendo ^{sc} 4.5

Rubric for assessing fluency and intonation

Name:

Class Period:

Fluency/Intonation Rubric

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-----------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Expression and Volume | Reads in a quiet voice as if struggling to get words out. The reading does not sound natural like talking to a friend. | Reads in a quiet voice. The reading sounds natural in part of the text, but the reader does not always sound like they are talking to a friend. | Reads with volume and expression. However, sometimes the reader slips into expressionless reading and does not sound like they are talking to a friend. | Reads with varied volume and expression. The reader sounds like they are talking to a friend with their voice matching the interpretation of the passage. |
| Phrasing | Reads word-by-word in a monotone voice. | Reads in two or three word phrases, not adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation. | Reads with a mixture of run-ons, mid-sentence pauses for breath, and some choppiness. There is reasonable stress and intonation. | Reads with good phrasing; adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation. |
| Smoothness | Frequently hesitates while reading, sounds out words, and repeats words or phrases. The reader makes multiple attempts to read the same passage. | Reads with extended pauses or hesitations. The reader has many "rough spots." | Reads with occasional breaks in rhythm. The reader has difficulty with specific words and/or sentence structures. | Reads smoothly with some breaks, but self-corrects with difficult words and/or sentence structures. |
| Pace | Reads slowly and laboriously. | Reads moderately slowly. | Reads fast and slow throughout reading. | Reads at a conversational pace throughout the reading. |

Assessment used for fluency and intonation

Nombre: _____

Fecha: _____

Periodo: _____

El general del establo y yo comenzamos la lección del día lentamente.

Estábamos en el rancho, y el general guiaba el caballo a medida que me hacía preguntas.

-“Joven príncipe, ¿cómo le indicas al caballo que gire a la izquierda?”

-“Tiro de la rienda que tengo más cerca,” contesté.

-“¡Correcto! ¿Qué haces cuando has terminado el paseo y quieres volver al establo?”

-“Debo mantener corta la rienda y no permitir que el caballo corra hacia ello.”

Y con ansiedad, le pregunté, “¿Puedo manejar el carro ahora? ¡Estoy ansioso por comenzar!”

Scoring Sample:

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-----------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Expression and Volume | Reads in a quiet voice as if struggling to get words out. The reading does not sound natural like talking to a friend. | Reads in a quiet voice. The reading sounds natural in part of the text, but the reader does not always sound like they are talking to a friend. | Reads with volume and expression. However, sometimes the reader slips into expressionless reading and does not sound like they are talking to a friend. | Reads with varied volume and expression. The reader sounds like they are talking to a friend with their voice matching the interpretation of the passage. |
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