

using poetry and creative writing to enhance speaking skills

Produced by Julia Gardiner (Swinburne University English Language Centre-SUELC) for the 2018 UECA PD Fest at Monash College, Melbourne 4 August.

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Session rationale, format and 'take-aways'

This PD session uses 2 texts (poetry) to focus on pronunciation and negotiating meaning. The format is a combination of activities, presentation and, where possible hands-on 'technical tasks'.

Participants will use their phones.

It is hoped that the session will:

- encourage teachers to think about how they can leverage different forms of spoken text to develop students' awareness of a range of phonological features such as rhythm, elision, connected speech, intonation and so on.
- encourage teachers to consider using shorter and varied spoken or written texts in a variety of lesson contexts, and at various points in a lesson, to develop a range of skills such as discussion skills, negotiating meaning, comprehension skills, reflection, and to stimulate writing and so on.
- introduce teachers to some useful digital tools which can be used in a range of teaching and learning contexts.



Task set up

The basic idea is quite simple: students will listen to a section of a poem and reconstruct it with a group.

Pre- task teacher brainstorms with the class:

What is poetry?

How can you tell is something is a poem or not?

Students will probably make suggestions about content, feeling, description and hopefully what should emerge in term of the form is that some poems rhyme while others don't. You can then direct the students to think about their experience of poetry and what rhyming patterns they are familiar with.

This pre-task activity is setting them up for the task of organising lines of poetry with regard to rhyme (text type 1 - Rhyming Poem) or negotiating meaning (text type 2 - Prose Poem)

Post-reconstruction, other tasks can be set depending on the learning outcomes/lesson focus.

STUDENT TASK - materials required and delivery suggestions

Materials required:

- o 1 poem – deconstructed into lines or couplets depending on class size and cut up into strips - **Option #1**
- o 1 poem – deconstructed into lines or couplets depending on class size, recorded and captured on QR codes - **Option #2**
- o Student phones
- o Set of sticky labels for **Option #1**
- o Student notebook or teacher supplied scrap paper
- o Bluetac for **Option #2**

STUDENTS will need:

phone

QR code reader - suggest free app iNigma - if their phone doesn't have an inbuilt scan function.

Suggested delivery:

Option #1:

NOTE you need to check if students are comfortable with others using their phone to listen to their recording. the phones will have to be unlocked to allow ease of access. If you are in a computer lab, students can record themselves on the PC using the inbuilt voice recorder or a simple online tool like <https://vocaroo.com>

1. **Pre-Lesson.** Teacher sources a poem and creates strips containing 1 or two lines. **In-class:** Teacher issues each student with a strip of paper with line(s) from the poem. These are randomly numbered – not in the sequence they appear in the poem.
2. Student reads the line(s) and checks any unfamiliar vocabulary for meaning and pronunciation.
3. Each student labels their phone according to the number associated with lines the student has recorded.
4. Student records their line(s) on their phone and then returns the strip to the teacher.
5. Phones are put on a table at the front of the room. NOTE: They need to be unlocked and open at the recording.
6. Each student selects one phone (not their own), listens to the audio and writes down what they hear.
7. They then check with the teacher for accuracy. If it is inaccurate, they listen again and make any corrections. If/When it has been accurately transcribed, the teacher gives the student the printed slip on the line(s).
8. Students then work together as a group to reconstruct the poem.
9. Finally, the poem is displayed on the WB or students can be issued with a copy. OR if you can find a video of the poem being spoken, play that.

Option #2 *(see below for tech tool information)

1. **Pre-Lesson:** Teacher records* the poem 1 line or couplet at a time. The audio is then captured on a QR Code*. Teacher copies the QR codes onto a word document, randomly numbers the codes, and then prints them and cuts them up into individual codes.
2. **In-class:** QR codes are placed around the room either on tables or stuck on the walls.
3. Each student is issued with a number.
4. Student locates the code matching their number, scans the code and writes down what they hear.

5. They then check with the teacher for accuracy. If it is inaccurate, they listen again and make any corrections.
6. When the line(s) is accurately transcribed, students then work together as a group to reconstruct the poem with the lines they have transcribed.
7. Finally, the poem is displayed on the WB or student can be issued with a copy. OR if you can find a video of the poem being spoken, play that – good modelling.

POST - RECONSTRUCTION - it is a good idea to encourage students to record themselves reciting the entire poem focusing especially on connected speech and rhythm.

A sample poem

I have used this poem with lower level learners. I like the rhyming patterns and the simplicity of it.



A Poem is - The Wind on the Hill read by Kenneth Branagh
by DisneyJuniorUK
YOUTUBE

The Wind on the Hill

If you want to try this out with your students, here is a word document of the poem as well as the strips format. It is formatted for a class of 10.

It's flying from somewhere
As fast as it can,
I couldn't keep up with it,
Not if I ran.

But if I stopped holding
The string of my kite,
It would blow with the wind
For a day and a night.

And then when I found it,
Wherever it blew,
I should know that the wind
Had been going there too.

So then I could tell them
Where the wind goes...
But where the wind comes from
Nobody knows.



The Wind On The Hill by A

Word document

PADLET DRIVE

*The Technology - tech tool information

Options for recording and creation of QR codes

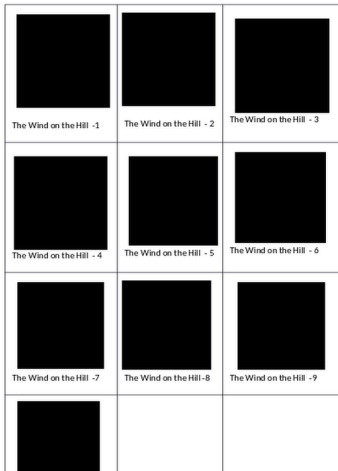
#1 Poem lines can be recorded on your phone using the memo function, emailed to yourself and filed on your PC.

This audio file can then be uploaded to <https://vocaroo.com> where you can generate a QR code generator site.

#2 Record directly using <https://vocaroo.com/> and then generate a QR code directly

TIP: As well as producing a QR code, save the audio file too. This is always a good idea as the code may become inactive over time. Vocaroo doesn't store audio files indefinitely

Here are the discrete line pairs for *The Wind on the Hill*. Although the QR codes are not showing here, when you download you will see them.



The Wind on the Hill_ QR codes 2 Aug 2108

Word document

PADLET DRIVE

Prose poetry

I have been given permission to use this poem 'Love' written by a 14-year old family friend - Giselle. It was part of a school poetry project and she wanted to explore the theme of domestic violence with a poem that had a strong aural element. I am thinking of using it next term as pron focus lesson as a lead in to a project about social issues.

Reconstruction of this poem will involve a greater level of cognitive demand and a higher level of negotiation of meaning than the previous rhyming poem. Sequencing the lines also depends on a sense of the internal rhythm of the poem as well as narrative.

Here is the whole poem and grid of lines for 13 students

Giselle 2017

Love

Crashing, smashing, breaking and shattering.

A clatter of books and glass everywhere.

Thumping fists on the kitchen table.

Screaming - he..... she.

"I'm sick of you," he yells.

The words hit like a tsunami.

Whoosh!

A slap follows the words.

Then another

and another

and another.

"Get out of my house!"



LOVE_ A POEM

Word document

PADLET DRIVE

And for more advanced learners and on the theme of conflict and responsibility (or something similar) ...

This cumulative/ narrative poem is rather dark in its content but it is an interesting challenge (both conceptually and linguistically) for more advanced learners .



"The Responsibility" by Peter Appleton (read by Tom O'Bedlam)

by SpokenVerse

YOUTUBE

As with poetry so with creative prose

This technique of deconstructing and reconstructing a poem could also be used with short pieces of creative writing. You could work with one story over a term and build it up until the class had in fact read (and spoken) the entire text by working with it in this way.

Other ideas: individual students could be given short sections of the story which they have to read and record (at home or in class). One section per day. The teacher (or student) then posts the audio online (class Facebook, blog or CANVAS etc) and other students predict what will happen next, or comment on what was read. This could be a day starter, concluding activity or homework perhaps . You might ask students to predict the ending together at the end of the term. They could write this in teams and you could post online.

It could also be combined with running dictation.

.....
.....

Would love to hear your ideas.

Please email me if you are inspired to share:

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The Responsibility by Peter Appleton

There are lots of different ways to use a poem like this beyond what we have been doing today. For example, students could physicalize the poem or perform it. Ask students to work in small groups to identify how many men are referred to in the poem. Then you could give individual students in your class the identity of one of the men. They then learn the lines associated with that identity. The final 'performance ' pulls all the lines together to create a cohesive spoken text. Record or film.

The Responsibility by Peter Appleton

I am the man who gives the word,
If it should come, to use the Bomb.

I am the man who spreads the word
From him to them, if it should come.

I am the man who gets the word
From him who spreads the word from him.

I am the man who drops the Bomb
If ordered by the one who's heard
From him who merely spreads the word
The first one gives, if it should come.

I am the man who loads the Bomb
That he must drop should orders come
From him who gets the word passed on
By one who waits to hear from him.

I am the man who makes the Bomb
That he must load for him to drop
If told by one who gets the word
From one who passes it from him.

I am the man who fills the till,
Who pays the tax, who foots the bill
That guarantees the Bomb he makes
For him to load for him to drop
If orders come from one who gets
The word passed on to him by one
Who waits to hear it from the man
Who gives the word to use the Bomb.

I am the man behind it all;
I am the one responsible.

The Responsibility

Word document

PADLET DRIVE

