



ART BRIDGES: Lesson Plans for Enrichment, Growth and Healing

Poetry and More

Including

Cinquain Poetry

Developed by

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With

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“Accordion Poetry” and “Illuminated Text”

Objectives:

The participants will:

1. Learn about various forms of simple poetry: Cinquain, Acrostic, and Diamante
2. Create their own poetry with prompts from their facilitator/teacher
3. Create art using their poetry as the focal point

Audiences:

This activity is suitable for all age groups who are able to write.

Note to Facilitator:

One of the best ways to get people excited about poetry is to encourage them to write it. And the best way into the wonderful world of writing poetry is via the “Cinquain.” Anyone can write a really wonderful Cinquain—it will stand alone as a nice little poetic work of art or it can be the first step to other poetic forms. Your participants’ Cinquains will be so good, they’ll want to write more, and more and more!

Cinquain Poetry

Learning Opportunities (Optional):

The word “Poetry” comes from the Greek “ποίησις”, *poiesis*, which means “making” or “creating”. A poet, therefore, is one who creates and poetry is what the poet creates. Poetry as an art form may predate literacy. In prehistoric and ancient societies, poetry was used to record oral history, storytelling, genealogy, and even law. It aided memorization and oral transmission in these earliest cultures. Poetry appears among the earliest records of most literate cultures and can be found on monoliths and ruin stones.

Throughout history, poetry has evolved into a number of different forms that have entertained, puzzled, enlightened—sonnets, narrative poetry, dramatic poetry, epic poetry, romantic poetry, satirical poetry, lyric poetry, and Haiku are just a few examples of the many avenues the poet may explore in creating works. When writing poetry, poets can draw on many tools at their disposal: rhythm, rhyming schemes, theme, tension, complex emotion, reflective thought, alliteration, patterns, assonance, consonance, dissonance, simile, symbolism, allusions and tone are just a few. No matter what form it takes, poetry conveys feelings, emotions and ideas. It relies on imagery and the musical quality of language as a means of expression and conveyance of the poet’s message.

Cinquain, the poetry form for this lesson developed by Pippa White, is derived from the French word for “five”. An American poet named Adelaide Crapsey (1878-1914) invented the Cinquain which is a short, five-line poetry form with distinct patterns. Her interest in rhythm and meter led her to create a variation on the Cinquain.

Sources: www.prose-n-poetry.com and www.theenchantingverses.org

Supplies/Materials:

- Writing materials—pens, pencils, paper
- Thesaurus

Class Instruction:

1. Introduce the concept of a Cinquain to the participants:
 - a. A Cinquain is a poem of five lines.
 - b. One of the great things about Cinquains is that though they are short-- they are very individual and a perfect foray into the world of self-expression. If thirty people are asked to write about a particular topic, you will get thirty very different five-line poems, and chances are, they will all be good.
 - c. Cinquains can be funny, serious, dark, light, naughty, mysterious, foolish or wise.
 - d. Cinquains are the perfect jumping off place for writing any kind of poetry.
2. To write a Cinquain:
 - A. Start with a subject that interests you, and choose a one word title for your poem. Examples: Summer, Gardening, Cats, Jazz, London, Astronomy.....your choice!
 - B. Build this first Cinquain together with the class: The first line of your Cinquain will be the same as your title. So if you chose Cats as your subject and title, then that is also your first line.

CATS

Cats

- C. For your second line you need two words that describe your first line. For our example Cinquain here I'll choose: "quiet" and "graceful". So now we have:

CATS

Cats

Quiet, Graceful

- D. For your third line you'll need three action words (verbs or adverbs most likely). These will frequently be "ing" words. I'm going to use: "Stretching", "Dancing", and "Mesmerizing". Now our poem looks like this:

CATS

Cats

Quiet, Graceful

Mesmerizing, Stretching, Dancing

- E. Your fourth line will be a four word phrase, further describing your subject matter. I'm choosing: "Is it Yoga, Ballet?" Let's add that to the whole, along with the fifth line, which is just a repeat of your first line. So here's our finished product.

CATS

Cats

Quiet, Graceful

Mesmerizing, Stretching, Dancing

Is it Yoga, Ballet?

Cats

3. There you have it! In the fourth line for this example, the phrase was a question. It doesn't have to be, but it's certainly OK if that is your choice.
4. Here is one more example:

GARDENING

Gardening

Dirt, Seed

Digging, Burrowing, Puttering

Me and the Moles

Gardening

5. Now turn the class loose to create their own Cinquains. You can direct them with subjects or allow them to create their poetry using any topics they desire.

Other Poetry Forms to Explore

Acrostic Poems:

Another great way to help budding poets get started with their “craft” is utilizing the acrostic poem format. An acrostic poem uses the letters of a word to form the beginning letter of each line of a poem. For instance, if you use the word “ball”, you will have a four-lined poem. The first line would begin with a “b”. The second line would begin with an “a”. The third line would begin with an “l”, etc. You can start easily with one word for each line as below:

Flower

Fragrant

Lovely

Orchids

Winking

Elegant

Radiant

You can have multiple words on each line as follows:

Frilly buds

Lost in a field

Of rolling grasses

Waiting to be discovered

Ever patient

Reaching to the sun

Or you can have the lines flow together as follows:

Fresh blossoms that are

Loved by tickling breezes

Only to be plucked and placed into

Water-filled vases

Eager to

Receive the fragrant offerings

Diamante (Diamond) Poems:

A diamante poem (or diamond poem) is in the shape of a diamond. Each line uses specific types of words like adjectives and “ing” words. These poems can, but do not need to, rhyme and can either be a Synonym Diamante or an Antonym Diamante. The format for the poetry form is this:

Noun
Adjective, Adjective
Verb, Verb, Verb
Noun, Noun, Noun, Noun
Verb, Verb, Verb
Adjective Adjective
Noun

In a Synonym Diamante Poem, the nouns at the beginning and end are two words that mean basically the same thing. In an Antonym Diamante, the two nouns in Lines 1 and 7 are opposites. Here are a couple of examples:

Synonym Diamante:

Dogs
Happy, Playful
Fetching, Running, Panting
Greyhounds, Collies, Beagles Schnauzers
Wagging, Scratching, Yipping
Loyal, Loveable
Canines

Antonym Diamante:

Anger
Irritable, Cranky
Complaining, Fuming, Scowling
Emotion, Feelings, Demeanor, Attitude
Smiling, Laughing, Loving
Complete, Sweet
Happiness

At the Conclusion of the Class:

Invite the participants to read their poetry aloud to share with one another. Consider collecting all the poems and compiling them into a booklet or put them on display for all to read.

Extensions and Expansions:

The visual appearance of poetry can often add meaning and depth. By using calligraphy, illumination and visuals, poetry is raised to an entirely new level of enjoyment and interpretation.

Option One: Using colored pencils, crayons, markers, etc., ask the students to include illustrations with their Cinquains or other poetry. “Illumination” is the decorating of books or manuscripts with ornate lettering, scrollwork, icons and images.



This Dick Blick lesson plan introduces an easy and inexpensive way to apply metal leaf to a single letter then embellish it using colored pencils. This lesson was designed for Grades 5-12 but could be used by adults as well. Please see link www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/illuminated-text/ to access this lesson.

Option Two: Create a collage using the Cinquain or other poetry written as the focal point and theme for the creation. (See the Lesson Plan for “Introduction to Collage” included in this project.)

Option Three: Create “Accordion Poetry” that combines art and literature using the Dick Blick lesson plan. Handmade accordion books will stand upright and all pages can be viewed at the same time. With adjustments, it will be a



perfect way to display Cinquains created in class. See PDF Link www.dickblick.com/lessonplans/accordion-poetry/accordion-poetry-accordion-book/

Option Four: Encourage your participants to display their poetry in interesting and artistic ways such as this “thumb print” format. Check out the lesson plan “Thumb Print Self Portrait” by Cheryl Trowbridge on the Hildegard “Art Bridges” website or visit Cheryl’s site at <http://www.teachkidsart.net/thumbprint-self-portrait/> .



Plan in Action:

Laurie Reinsch, LMHP from the Lincoln Regional Center (one of Hildegard Center’s pilot programs) used this lesson for “Acrostic Poetry” with one of her men’s grief groups. “I asked the men in my grief group to take the name of the person they were grieving and use the initials of the name to describe them. I liked the activity and will likely have the group do similar exercises in future grief sessions.”

Retha Knapp (Team Leader and Peer Support Specialist) and her colleagues at CenterPointe of Lincoln, NE adapted this plan for use with their clientele. The mission of CenterPointe (www.CenterPointe.org) is to “*help provide pivotal treatment and services for people experiencing homelessness, mental illness and addiction.*” Retha shares: “This project was well-received and enjoyed by the consumers. Those who feel they do not have an artistic talent have appreciated the ideas.”

Pippa White, when not on the road entertaining audiences with her “One’s Company Productions” (a combination of theater, storytelling and history), offers workshops and residencies and has been a teaching artist with the Nebraska Arts Council for nineteen years. She is actively involved in aesthetic education including coaching Poetry Out Loud for the NAC. To learn more about Pippa, visit <http://www.pippawhiteonecompany.com> .

Special Thanks to **Dick Blick** for graciously allowing Hildegard Center to link to DB lesson plans in conjunction with its “Art Bridges” Project. Dick Blick’s commitment to the educational community extends far beyond providing high-quality products at low prices. DB offers art lesson plans created for all ages and skill levels. Every project also meets several National Standards for Visual Arts education. PDF downloads and videos of these original lessons are available free of charge. Visit www.dickblick.com to see the many ways DB support schools, communities and art education and make DB your one-stop shopping destination for art supplies.

If you have used this lesson plan, we’d love to hear from you! Please send questions or comments through our website www.hildegardcenter.org .

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