

Lesson 8: Preparing to Write a Literary Essay: Gathering Evidence



CCS Standards

- **RI.4.1:** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **W.4.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
 - a. Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
 - b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
 - c. Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., *another*, *for example*, *also*, *because*).
 - d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
 - e. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

Daily Learning Target

- I can describe what inspired my poet to write poetry using evidence from his or her poems. (RI.4.1, W.4.2b)

Ongoing Assessment

- Close Read Note-catcher: Expert Group Poet (RI.4.1, W.4.2b)

Agenda

1. **Opening**
 - A. Reviewing Learning Target (5 minutes)
2. **Work Time**
 - A. Guided Practice: Rereading to Gather Evidence (20 minutes)
 - B. Expert Group Work: Reading to Gather Evidence (30 minutes)
3. **Closing and Assessment**
 - A. Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face: Sharing Our Work (5 minutes)
4. **Homework**
 - A. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt and respond in the front of your independent reading journal.

Teaching Notes

Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:

- In this lesson, students read poems and gather evidence of what inspired poets to write. As a class, they analyze poems by William Carlos Williams. Then they work in their expert groups to analyze poems by their group's selected poet (RI.4.1, W.4.2b).
- To find poems by their expert group poet, students use an internet search engine to find poems. If the technology necessary for students to complete this reading online is unavailable, find and provide students with printed copies of poems by their expert group poets.
- In this lesson, the habit of character focus is on working to become an effective learner. The characteristics that students are reminded of specifically are collaboration and initiative as they continue to work in expert groups.
- Students practice their fluency in this lesson by reading poems by William Carlos Williams and their expert group poets in Work Times A and B.
- The research reading that students complete for homework will help build both their vocabulary and knowledge pertaining to poetry and what inspires people to write. By participating in this volume of reading over a span of time, students will develop a wide base of knowledge about the world and the words that help describe and make sense of it.

How it builds on previous work:

- In Unit 1 and the first half of Unit 2, students thought about and gathered evidence for what inspired Jack to write poetry. In this lesson, students think about and gather evidence for what inspired William Carlos Williams and their expert group poet to write poetry.
- The Close Read Note-catcher: *A River of Words*, Author's Note and the Close Read Note-catcher: Expert Group Poet follow the same overall structure and format as the note-catcher used when students gathered evidence about what inspired Jack when reading *Love That Dog* in the first half of this unit.
- Continue to use Goal 1 Conversation Cues to promote productive and equitable conversation.

Areas in which students may need additional support:

- Some students may need additional support completing their Close Read Note-catcher: Expert Group Poet. Consider inviting those students to write key words or draw pictures to complete the note-catcher. Or consider drawing lines on these students' note-catchers to help them organize their notes.

Assessment guidance:

- Check students' learning by reading their completed note-catchers, as incorrect information on these will affect the factual accuracy of the informational essays they will write later in the unit.
- Consider using the Reading: Foundational Skills Informal Assessment: Reading Fluency Checklist when students read their expert group poet's poems in Work Time B. See Module 1 Appendix.
- Consider using the Speaking and Listening Informal Assessment: Collaborative Discussion Checklist during students' small group discussions in Work Time B. See Module 1 Appendix.

Down the road:

- Students will continue adding to the Close Read Note-catcher: *A River of Words*, Author's Note and Close Read Note-catcher: Expert Group Poet as they learn how to write informational essays. Because of this, the Focus Statement and Reflection/Connection parts of the note-catcher should be left blank for now.

In advance:

- Prepare:
 - The following poems for display: “The Red Wheelbarrow,” “This Is Just to Say,” and “Children’s Games II.” These poems can be found on the inside front and back covers of *A River of Words*.
 - Steps to display during the expert group work in Work Time B.
 - Technology necessary for each student to research and read his or her expert group poet’s poems.
- Review the Thumb-O-Meter and Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face protocols. See Classroom Protocols.
- Post: Learning targets, Working to Become Effective Learners anchor chart, and Discussion Norms anchor chart.

Technology & Multimedia

- Work Time B: Prepare technology necessary for each student to research poems by his or her expert group’s poet using a search engine.
- Consider that YouTube, social media video sites, and other website links may incorporate inappropriate content via comment banks and ads. Although some lessons include these links as the most efficient means to view content in preparation for the lesson, be sure to preview links and/or use a filter service, such as www.safeshare.tv, for actually viewing these links in the classroom.
- Work Time B: Students complete note-catchers using word-processing software—for example, a Google Doc—using Speech to Text facilities activated on devices, or using an app or software such as Dictation.io (<https://dictation.io/speech>).

Supporting English Language Learners

Supports guided in part by CA ELD Standards 4.I.B.6 and 4.I.C.11

Important points in the lesson itself

- The basic design of this lesson supports ELLs with opportunities to use a graphic organizer to collect and categorize information they will use in their writing. The lesson also provides opportunities for them to work in small groups, which will afford them more time to verbally exchange ideas in an academic context.

- ELLs may find it challenging to identify evidence that supports their ideas. Collecting evidence according to U.S. writing conventions may be unfamiliar to some students. Allow students to discuss their knowledge of the concept of evidence. Spell it aloud. Ask: “Why do you need to give evidence after you share an answer or an idea?” (to help the reader believe and understand my ideas) Draw on background knowledge with some quick games, such as a kinesthetic activity in which students match shuffled “inspiration” sticky notes to “evidence” notes from familiar poems. To up the challenge, include some faulty pieces of evidence as red herrings. See the Meeting Students’ Needs column for supports.

Levels of support

For lighter support:

- Invite advanced or intermediate proficiency students to facilitate the close reading session in their groups. Encourage students to take on roles such as writer, time-keeper, or evidence detective.
- Encourage students to use Conversation Cues with other students to promote productive and equitable conversation and enhance language development.

For heavier support:

- Group ELLs together in the Walter Dean Myers biography group and work with them closely during Work Time B. Read the poems aloud to the group as they follow along. Read them more than once if helpful. Facilitate student thinking and discussion to determine the gist of each part of the text. After guiding students through completing the Close Read Note-catcher: Expert Group Poet, facilitate an optional Language Dive conversation.
- During Work Time B, distribute a partially filled-in copy of the What Inspires Poets to Write Poetry? note-catcher. This provides students with models for the kind of information they should enter, while relieving the volume of writing required. Refer to What Inspires Poets to Write Poetry? note-catcher (answers, for teacher reference) to determine which sections of the note-catcher to provide for students.

Universal Design for Learning

- **Multiples Means of Representation (MMR):** In this lesson, students work in small groups and with partners to interpret poetry. To help them get the most out of this exercise, try to decrease barriers to expressive language. For instance, provide sentence frames so that students have an entry point into the discussion with their classmates (see Meeting Students’ Needs column).
- **Multiples Means of Action and Expression (MMAE):** During Work Time A, students practice finding evidence in a poem. In order to reduce barriers related to writing, consider providing pre-written sticky notes with examples of inspiration and the matching evidence. This way, students can just match them without getting bogged down with writing.
- **Multiples Means of Engagement (MME):** Build engagement for the informative essay by telling students that they get to become experts about a specific poet. Then they will be able to teach others all about the poet and demonstrate their knowledge.

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

(W): Vocabulary Used in Writing

- inspired, evidence, initiative, collaboration (L)

Materials

- ✓ Informative Essay Prompt: What Inspires Poets? (from Lesson 6; one per student)
- ✓ Working to Become Effective Learners anchor chart (begun in Lesson 1)
- ✓ Close Read Note-catcher: *A River of Words*, Author's Note (from Lesson 6; one per student and one to display)
- ✓ Close Read Note-catcher: *A River of Words*, Author's Note (from Lesson 6; answers, for teacher reference)
- ✓ "The Red Wheelbarrow" (one to display)
- ✓ What Makes a Poem a Poem? anchor chart (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 3)
- ✓ "This Is Just to Say" (one to display)
- ✓ "Children's Games II" (one to display)
- ✓ Expert group poet biographies (from Lesson 7; one per student in each expert group)
- ✓ Close Read Note-catcher: Expert Group Poet (from Lesson 7; see Teaching Notes; one per student)
- ✓ Discussion Norms anchor chart (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 1)
- ✓ Device (one per student; see Technology and Multimedia)
- ✓ Expert group poems (one per student; see Teaching Notes)
- ✓ Close Read Note-catcher: Expert Group Poet (from Lesson 7; answers, for teacher reference)
- ✓ What Inspires Poets to Write Poetry? note-catcher (from Unit 1, Lesson 10; one per student)
- ✓ What Inspires Poets to Write Poetry? note-catcher (example, for teacher reference)

Opening

A. Reviewing Learning Target (5 minutes)

- Direct students' attention to the learning target and read it aloud:
"I can describe what inspired my poet to write poetry using evidence from his or her poems."
- Remind students that they have been reading biographies about poets to learn more about their lives and what *inspired* them to write.
- Display the **Informative Essay Prompt: What Inspires Poets?** and invite students to take out their copy. Remind students that they have been learning more about different poets in order to write an informational essay explaining what inspired their poet and describing the evidence of this in his or her poetry.

- Select a volunteer to read aloud the “REMEMBER: A well-written informational piece” section. Reassure students that they may not understand each bullet point in this section right now, but they will by the end of the unit.
- Point out the following bullet points:
 - “Uses accurate and relevant facts, details, and other information to develop the topic”
 - “Includes details from the poet’s poems and explains how each detail is evidence of what inspired the poet”
- Tell students that today, they will read poems to find *evidence* of what inspired their poets to write, and that they will use this evidence when writing their essays later in the unit.
- Focus students on the **Working to Become Effective Learners anchor chart** and remind them of *collaboration* and *initiative*, as students will be working in expert groups and will need to work well together to accomplish today’s tasks.

Meeting Students’ Needs

- When reviewing the bullet points in the informative essay prompt, go in depth when discussing the meaning of *accurate* and *relevant*. Tell students that accurate means that it is correct and relevant means appropriate or connected to the topic at hand. Provide an essay topic and potential facts, details, or information and have students give a thumb-up or thumbs-down depending on whether or not it is accurate and relevant for the topic. For instance, if you are writing an essay about dogs and you include information about the healthiest dog food, they would give a thumbs-up. However, if you provide information about bathing small rodents, that would be a thumbs-down. (MMR)
- For ELLs: Invite students to reread the learning target, replacing the pronouns with details based on the poets they are studying in their expert groups. (Example: I can describe what inspired Walter Dean Myers to write poetry using evidence from “Love That Boy,” “Harlem: A Poem,” and “Summer.”)
- For ELLs: Ask about the hyphenated phrase *well-written* on their informative essay prompt:
 - “What is a well-written informative piece?” (a piece that is written well)
 - “Does anybody know what this line is called? Why is it there?” (hyphen; the two words, an adverb and the verb it describes, are combined to create an adjective that describes the essay.)
 - “What could we call an informative piece that is not well-written?” (poorly written, carelessly written, badly written).

Work Time

A. Guided Practice: Rereading to Gather Evidence (20 minutes)

- Tell students that before they work with their expert groups to read and analyze poems by their poet, they will practice as a class to read some poems by William Carlos Williams, looking for evidence in his poetry of what inspired him.

- Display and invite students to retrieve their **Close Read Note-catcher: A River of Words, Author's Note** and tell them that they will record their thinking in the "What evidence do you see of this in his poetry?" box on the note-catcher.
- Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group:
"What inspired William Carlos Williams?" (everyday objects and the lives of common people)
"What poems have we read by William Carlos Williams?" ("The Red Wheelbarrow")
- Display **"The Red Wheelbarrow"** and direct students' attention to the **What Makes a Poem a Poem? anchor chart** from Unit 1. Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group:
"What characteristics of poetry did this poem have?" (It is organized with short lines and stanzas; one sentence is broken into four stanzas; it uses imagery to help the reader imagine what the wheelbarrow looks like.)
"What is this poem about?" (It describes a red wheelbarrow and tells how beautiful a common wheelbarrow can be.)
"What evidence do you see in this poem of what inspired William Carlos Williams?" (The poem is about an everyday object.)
- If productive, cue students to expand the conversation by saying more:
"Can you say more about that?" (Responses will vary.)
- As students share out, capture their responses in the "What evidence do you see of this in his poetry?" box on the Close Read Note-catcher: A River of Words Author's Note. Refer to **Close Read Note-catcher: A River of Words, Author's Note (answers, for teacher reference)** as necessary.
- Display **"This Is Just to Say"** and invite students to chorally read it aloud with you.
- Discuss with students what the poem is about and what evidence they see in the poem of what inspired William Carlos Williams.
- As students share out, capture their responses in the "What evidence do you see of this in his poetry?" box on the note-catcher. Refer to Close Read Note-catcher: A River of Words, Author's Note (answers, for teacher reference) as necessary.
- If students need additional practice with identifying evidence of what inspired William Carlos Williams, display **"Children's Games II"** and repeat as needed.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need additional support with comprehension: Consider providing two sets of pre-written sticky notes. One set will have examples of things that inspired the poet and the other set will be evidence from the poem. Have students match the appropriate evidence to the inspiration. (MMAE)
- For ELLs: While modeling finding evidence for inspiration in each poem, think aloud the process of identifying the evidence and deciding what to capture in the note-catcher. Use colored markers to circle, underline, and annotate the parts of each poem that correspond to each note. Write the notes in the same color used to identify evidence. (Example: "Hmm. I know that William Carlos Williams was inspired by everyday objects. So what is an everyday object in this poem? A wheelbarrow!")

So I am going to circle *wheelbarrow* in red and write *everyday object* next to it. Now I'll write in my note-catcher.")

- For ELLs: Ask students about the shape of the stanzas in "The Red Wheelbarrow":
 - "Look at the shape of the stanzas in 'The Red Wheelbarrow.' What does it remind you of?" (a wheelbarrow)
 - "So if you don't understand every word in a poem, what is something you can sometimes do?" (Look for clues in the form that it is written.)
- For ELLs: Ask about the poem "This Is Just to Say." Examples:
 - "William Carlos Williams was inspired by everyday objects. What are some everyday objects that you see in this poem?" (plums, icebox)
 - "What is an icebox?" (a refrigerator)
 - "What does William Carlos Williams refer to when he writes *and which*? How do you know?" (The plum. He is talking about it in the first stanza.)
 - "What evidence have we found in this poem?" (Responses will vary.)

B. Expert Group Work: Reading to Gather Evidence (30 minutes)

- Invite students to take out their **expert group poet biographies** and their **Close Read Note-catcher: Expert Group Poet** and move to sit with their expert groups.
- Tell students they will work in their groups to read a familiar poem by their poet, as well as some new poems by their poet. As they read, they should think about the evidence they see in their poet's poems of what inspired him or her.
- Post and review the following directions:
 1. As a group, use a search engine to find poems by your expert group poet.
 2. As a group, select a poem to read.
 3. Chorally read the poem.
 4. Discuss these questions with your group:
 - A. What characteristics of poetry does this poem have?
 - B. What is this poem about?
 - C. What evidence do you see in this poem of what inspired your expert group's poet?
 5. Record your group's ideas in the "What evidence do you see of this in his/her poetry?" box on the Close Read Note-catcher: Expert Group Poet.
 6. Select another poem and repeat steps 1–4.
- Review the **Discussion Norms anchor chart** and remind students to think about these norms as they analyze poems by their poets.
- Invite students to turn and talk with their expert groups:

"What inspired your poet to write?" (Responses will vary based on poet.)
- Model for students how to use a search engine to find poems by their expert group poet. Use William Carlos Williams as a model and use terms such as "William Carlos Williams poems."
- Invite students to use their **device** to research the **expert group poems** and begin working.

- Circulate to support students as they work. Check that they are discussing what inspired their expert group poet to write and citing specific evidence from the poems when writing notes on their Close Read Note-catcher: Expert Group Poet. Refer to **Close Read Note-catcher: Expert Group Poet (answers, for teacher reference)** as necessary.
- Refocus students and invite them to use what they learned today to complete the evidence column of their **What Inspires Poets to Write Poetry? note-catcher**. Refer to **What Inspires Poets to Write Poetry? note-catcher (example, for teacher reference)** as necessary.
- Tell students they are now going to use the Thumb-O-Meter protocol to reflect on their progress toward the learning target. Remind them that they used this protocol in the first half of the unit and review as necessary. Refer to the Classroom Protocols document for the full version of the protocol.
- Guide students through the Thumb-O-Meter protocol using the learning target. Scan student responses and make a note of students who may need more support with this moving forward.
- Repeat, inviting students to self-assess against how well they collaborated and took initiative in this lesson.

Meeting Students' Needs

- The poet biographies may be above some students' reading levels. Consider allowing students to complete the note-catcher as they listen to the book on tape. (MMAE)
- For students who may need additional support with reading comprehension: Pre-highlight key sections in their texts. This will help students focus on smaller sections rather than scanning the whole text. (MMR, MMAE)
- For ELLs: Before students work in their groups, invite a group to "fishbowl" the process of discussing a poem, finding evidence, and recording the evidence in their note-catchers.
- For ELLs: As groups interact, jot down some verb tense errors that are impeding communication. Briefly review the verb tense for the whole class. Encourage the group to identify the verb that communicates the message clearly and accurately.

Closing and Assessment

A. Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face: Sharing Our Work (5 minutes)

- Direct students' attention to their Close Read Note-catcher: Expert Group Poet.
- Tell them they are going to share evidence of what inspired their expert group's poet using the Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face protocol. Remind students that they used this protocol in Lesson 3 and review as necessary. Refer to the Classroom Protocols document for the full version of the protocol.

- Guide students through the protocol using the following question:
“What inspired your expert group’s poet? What evidence do you see of this in his or her poetry?”
- If productive, cue students to expand the conversation by giving an example:
“Can you give an example?” (Responses will vary.)
- Have students repeat this process with a new partner, using the same question.
- Ask students to return to their seats.

Meeting Students’ Needs

- For ELLs: Review the bullet points from the informative essay prompt introduced in Opening A. Ask students to give specific examples of how they worked toward achieving them in this lesson. Invite students to rephrase the bullet points now that they have more experience finding facts and details.

Homework

A. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt and respond in the front of your independent reading journal.

Meeting Students’ Needs

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with reading and writing: Refer to the suggested homework support in Lesson 1. (MMAE, MMR)