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Dr. Craig
Creative Writing Pedagogy
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Introduction/Teaching Statement

When I was a student teacher, my mentor once told me that “Poetry is the Cadillac of Emotion.” At first, I didn’t know how to respond, but for some reason, that metaphor has stuck with me ever since. I’ve read numerous definitions of poetry, but most are technical definitions that you would find in a textbook. To me, this definition embodies what poetry does to bland descriptions and images. To me, poetry is much more.

Our definitions on poetry should differ based on how well-read we are, how many poems we have actually written and not just scribbled, and also, how many ears have heard our poems because poetry is meant to be heard. My teaching pedagogy in regards to poetry fits this mold. Teaching poetry involves the extensive critical reading and analyzing of various types and styles, writing using creative constraints, and one-to-one peer workshopping.

When it comes to reading and analyzing poetry, I am a big advocate of critical reading including phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Phonemic awareness involves the “ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds - in spoken words” (Begin to Read). I learned in college that poetry is meant to be heard, and this is a very important aspect of how I teach it. The way you read poetry on a page to yourself is completely different than hearing it out loud. This was corroborated in class this semester during the workshop of my poem, “Where I’m From.” Our professor had us read the poem first and then add comments. However, before we discussed, she asked me to read it out

loud first. Immediately before discussion began, a classmate of mine mentioned that “the meaning of the poem completely changed” after hearing me read it vs. just him reading it alone. To me, this is why phonemic awareness is paramount.

The average short story is between 1,000 and 7,500 words. The average novel varies, but is usually at least 60,000 words. The average poem depends strictly on form, but 6-12 lines is the most common. What this means is that word choice and the vocabulary that is used is of the utmost importance - you only have x amount of words to use, so you better make them count. Sometimes, even a single word and its definition can change the entire meaning of a poem. I feel that this is extremely important for students to recognize and utilize when reading, analyzing, and writing poetry. Not only this, but an emphasis on vocabulary also puts a large stress on the editing and revising stage, which should be an automatic behavior when writing original poetry. My college professor put it best when he once stated, “a poem is never finished, it is always a work in progress.”

Comprehension of poetry is an obvious focus when it comes to teaching poetry; however, for most students, this is the hardest part because poetry is so subjective. Due to this, I usually stress that all arguments of interpretation during discussion should be defended with textual evidence. Fielding & Pearson (1994) stated it best when they shared that comprehension is “a complex process involving knowledge, experience, thinking, and teaching.” As a teacher of poetry, I believe that all four of these entities must be prevalent before comprehension of text can occur. This is why I believe that students must experience different poets, devices, and styles in order to truly understand and write poetry. Through all of these critical experiences and

metacognitive thinking provided, then knowledge is developed and poetry comprehension skills and strategies can become second-nature and used in the classroom, but also at a Starbucks Cafe.

As long as I've designed poetry prompts, they have been deeply rooted under the pedagogy of creative constraints, or "creative limitations." According to Catrinel Haught-Tromp's "Green Eggs and Ham" theory, "creativity stems from choices and does not thrive under boundless conditions" (Haught-Tromp). Based on my experience, whenever you assign a poem strictly on style requirements, the immediate response from students is "I don't know what to write." However, whenever you give them a random scenario or topic, writing occurs. On top of this, when you add more constraints i.e. x number of lines or x number of poetic devices, most students view it as a challenge and work hard to meet the requirements. I'm not saying that giving a kid the creative limitation of eating a pineapple in the snow is going to develop the next William Shakespeare, but words at least get on the paper or screen. I've always been a supporter of the quote, "it's easier to work off of something than off of nothing." Words on the page lead to drafts which eventually, after revisions, leads to poetry.

The final aspect of my poetry pedagogy is the concept of one-to-one peer workshops. Although I plan on using a wide variety of workshopping structures in this class, including Iowa, my go-to form of workshops is the one-on-one peer workshop that I learned and used as an undergraduate student at Penn State University under the tutelage of Dr. Jon Olson. As a writing center tutor, I gained extensive knowledge about the benefits of one-to-one including the development of trust between tutor and writer and a deeper appreciation for the revision process. I found that certain undergraduates always came back and asked for me because they trusted my input and revisions - which in part solidified in my pedagogy the importance of a good revision

session. As stated, I do plan on changing it up, so one-to-one doesn't become oversaturated, but my hope is that students find one-to-one as a rewarding experience to the writing process as I did.

I've tried a myriad of different ways to teach poetry including a poetry month, a 2-week poetry unit, and even a poem per unit throughout the school year. Each time, I've been met with those who loves poetry and cite me as being the reason why all the way down to those who hate poetry even more because of the amount they had to read and write. Now that I actually have a poetry course of my own, I can teach it the way that I want to - which is to become fully immersed in the genre for a whole semester, allowing students to come in contact with some poetry that they've seen before, and more importantly, poetry that they didn't even know existed. Just like finding your favorite band that you never knew existed, sometimes it takes that one song you hear for the first time. If I can be that conduit between poetry and a student, then I will have succeeded in my quest. Poetry is the Cadillac of expression. But to me, it can be a lot more.

Poetry¹

1st Semester 2019
M-F Period 1³

Mr. Mark Curcio, M. Ed.²
E300

Course Description: What is poetry? Does it still matter? Is it something as simple as just taking a line and splitting it up with pauses? When moments in our lives happen where we need guidance or positivity, why is poetry our go-to medium? While I was student teaching, my mentor told me that “poetry is the Cadillac of expression.” I appreciated this quote so much that I made it a huge part of how I read, teach, and write poetry. In this semester course, you’ll learn about poetry’s history, “how this profound power of expression has evolved, and how you can be a part of it” (Hutchinson & Blake). My goal is that by the end of the semester, you won’t just tolerate poetry, but you’ll appreciate it.

Course Objectives: Upon completing this course, students should be able to:

- Recognize and evaluate different styles of poetry and their authors
- Define and identify key poetic terms with the goal of using them in their own poetry
- Produce and reflect on original poetry
- Offer and accept constructive criticism and feedback to and from their peers

Text and Materials:

Acevedo, Elizabeth. *The Poet X: a Novel*. Thorndike Press, a Part of Gale, a Cengage Company, 2019.

Hutchison, Rayna, and Samuel Blake. *You/Poet: Learn the Art, Speak Your Truth, Share Your Voice*. Adams Media, 2018⁴.

¹ Poetry is near and dear to my heart, so I plan on teaching it as such. With this being said, this is my first time teaching a poetry course, so it is all a work in progress. This is ironic because I am a firm believer that there is no such thing as a “completed poem,” as I think all poems are all a work in progress. Also, I do teach poetry in my regular sophomore classes, so some of the assignments might be re-used - just a forewarning.

² I am currently in the process of earning my PhD in English, but since we are in an academic setting, I should be referred to as “Mr. Curcio” or “Mr. C.” The latter allows you some poetic freedom to call me something not as formal as my full last name, but also sticks to the professionalism that needs to be evident.

I am not an extensively published poet; however, two of my poems were accepted into Penn State Greater Allegheny’s ABSENCE magazine while I was a student there. I do plan on writing all assignments with you to show you that, despite what you’ve heard, writing poetry isn’t “easy” in comparison to writing essays. You will find that sometimes writing a poem actually takes more time.

³ I know a lot of you would still rather be in bed, but according to your Health textbooks, our best ideas usually appear early in the morning while our minds are fresh and rested (hopefully).

⁴ So, I debated for a while if I wanted to have a textbook for this class, but then I was walking around Five Below and found this gem for \$5. On Amazon, it costs \$13 - so it was a steal. The back is what sold it to

Folder, for this class only, for housing all class handouts and revisions⁵

Notebook that is an extension of you⁶

Pen or Pencil to scribe with

Late Work: Because of the amount of class and workshop time to write, plus our use of Google Classroom, late work for workshops will not be accepted.⁷ I will post all poems and prompts on Google Classroom daily - it is your responsibility to check it.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism will not be tolerated and if caught, will result in an automatic zero for said draft, but you have the opportunity to make the change for future draft(s).⁸ If you use a quote from somewhere else or make an allusion to another poem, song, movie, TV show, etc. cite it!⁹

Minimal Course Requirements: At least, you are required to:

me: "Every page you turn will become the next step on the path toward identifying your own voice as a poet. Read it, write it, and share it with You/Poet." I couldn't have said it better myself.

⁵ One of my biggest pet peeves is whenever students have one folder that houses all of their classes. Because of this, a common scenario frequently arises:

Me: "Alright class, please take out last week's revision of poem #2."

Student: *leafing through a cluster of papers*

Me: "[Student Name], do you have yours, we have to get started."

Student: "It's in here somewhere."

Five minutes passes

Student: "I can't find it."

Workshop. Ruined.

⁶ Kurt Cobain wrote in a simple black notebook. You can buy a \$1 notebook at Dollar General or a \$12 Campus Twin Ring Notebook (rated the best overall notebook by balancesmb) (Nguyen). Either way, all final poems will be typed and printed, but all drafts are to be written. Why? It's easier to carry around a small notebook and pencil/pen than a laptop. You never know when a good idea or revision will come up!

⁷ Let me give you a scenario: let's say you work after school from 4-9 PM. You know that tomorrow, your poem is due, so you think and brainstorm about it during your break and when you get home at 9:15, you have to shower, do your other homework assignments, work on your poem, and then go to bed.

Tomorrow in class, you have your poem ready for workshop, but your classmate tells me "I didn't get a chance to do it." If I responded, "it's fine, just finish it for tomorrow." How would you feel?

⁸ Remember that catchy little jingle by Miley Cyrus, "We Can't Stop"? Well, in 2018, she was "slapped with a \$300 million copyright infringement lawsuit" by a songwriter named Michael May who claims that "her song took 'about 50 percent' from his song (Oswald & Torres). Now, I cannot fine you \$1 let alone \$300 million, but that number alone should prove to you enough that stealing other people's work and calling it your own is wrong. Now, you might have heard that "Rodgers and Hammerstein control 90 percent of the songwriting royalties" for Ariana Grande's "7 Rings" (Calvario). Again, that's cool - but she's Ariana Grande who makes "between \$50 million and \$80 million" per year (Miller). Until you make that kind of money, plagiarism isn't tolerated. Actually, no, she asked permission to use the melody... so still, I don't care if you make \$1 million per year - plagiarism is NEVER tolerated.

⁹ Rule of thumb: If you have to look somewhere else to find something and use it, cite it.

- Attend class regularly as per the Derry Area School District attendance policy¹⁰
- Participate in class discussions, writing exercises, and workshops¹¹
- Complete multiple drafts of all assigned poems
- Keep up with assigned reading
- Provide your classmates with constructive criticism¹² on their poems

Grading: The course will be graded as following:

- Each poem draft will be worth 1 point for completion.
- Each workshop/revision will be worth 1 point for effort.
- Each chapter/poem discussion will be worth 1 point for participation.
- Each Freewrite will be worth 1 point for writing.
- Final portfolio is worth 50 points - as it is a collection of your top 3 poems written the entire semester, a poetic declaration of what poetry is, and a reflection (see below).

Schedule

Day 1	Discuss syllabus Hand out <i>You/Poet</i> HW: Read Introduction & Chapter 1
Day 2	Discuss Introduction & Chapter 1 Read and analyze a page of Homer's <i>Iliad</i> ¹³ HW: Read Chapter 2
Day 3	Discuss Chapter 2 Develop a class pen name ¹⁴ Read examples of Haiku and Tanka Writing Prompt: Write a Haiku Sonnet including three linked haiku and a tanka, for a total of 14 lines, with a rhyme scheme of aba, bcd, cde, fef, gg. First, write a haiku, following a syllable pattern of 5-7-5. The 1st and 3rd lines should rhyme with each other, but the second line should not. Label these lines "aba." The first line of the second

¹⁰ "Any student who misses seven or more sessions per nine weeks may be failed on the basis of excessive absenteeism by the teacher in consultation with the principal."

¹¹ Your commentary on the work should give both positive and negative feedback, but criticism should be concrete and specific: Anyone responding: "I liked it" or "I don't like this stanza" will immediately be asked "why?"

¹² As per definitions.net, "Constructive criticism is the process of offering valid and well-reasoned opinions about the work of others, usually involving both positive and negative comments, in a friendly manner rather than an oppositional one." We will learn and memorize this definition verbatim throughout the semester.

¹³ Forewarning: This will be difficult. But as Homer once said, "Wise to resolve, and patient to perform," aka if you can figure it out, you'll be wise to continue... but you must be patient because it's not easy.

¹⁴ <https://kindlepreneur.com/how-to-choose-a-pen-name/>

stanza should rhyme with the second line of the 1st stanza (b rhyme), etc. Then write the rest of your haiku and the closing tanka, following the correct rhyme scheme.¹⁵

- Day 4 Listen & Analyze “Song” Lyrics¹⁶
HW: Read Chapter 7
- Day 5 Workshop Haiku Sonnet Drafts¹⁷
- Day 6 Share Haiku Sonnets / Freewrite¹⁸
HW: Read Chapter 3
- Day 7 Discuss Chapter 3
Read, Analyze, & Watch “Touchscreen” + 1-2 other slam poems
- Day 8 Listen & Analyze “Song” Lyrics
- Day 9 Writing Prompt: Write and Record a Slam
“Become a slam poem in five steps” by Gayle Danley¹⁹
Basic requirement: Find something you’re passionate about and slam it for up to 3 minutes MAX in length
- Day 10 Workshop written slams
- Day 11 Workshop slams
- Day 12 Share recorded or LIVE slams / Freewrite
HW: Read Chapter 4 & 5
- Day 13 Discuss Chapter 4 & 5
Read and Discuss Chapter 5
Themes, Images, Metaphors, Similes, and Punctuation
- Day 14 Listen & Analyze “Song” Lyrics
- Day 15 Writing Prompt: Versed to Grammar Challenge²⁰
Write a 30 line poem following instructions to the letter. Borrow a grammar handbook when you need to. This might drive you crazy, but it

¹⁵ Got this prompt from page 87 of Tom Hunley’s “The Poetry Gymnasium.”

¹⁶ To me, lyrics are a form of poetry. Plus, I like to listen to music... and I like sharing music with others. Who knows... maybe a song you listen to might be inspiration for a future poem or I might even introduce you to a new band that you never heard of before? All songs will be based on material discussed.

¹⁷ We will be using a wide variety of workshoping techniques including Iowa, one-to-one, blind editing, plus more!

¹⁸ In your *You Poet* books, there are a bunch of prompts in the back for freewriting including single-word prompts, word jumble prompts, image prompts, micropoetry prompts, and thematic prompts. After sharing, the rest of the class will be given for you to freewrite to these prompts. The more you write, the better you write, and who knows... maybe one of those freewrites might become the inspiration for a future poem for submission!

¹⁹

²⁰ I did this exercise this past summer, but instead of a poem, I had to write a short story. At first, I was timid - but then once I got started, I actually was surprised on how easily everything came together.

also might help you write in a way you've never composed before, giving language the primacy, letting poetry shape itself around the medium of language.

- Day 16 Workshop Versed to Grammar Challenge drafts
 Day 17 Workshop Versed to Grammar Challenge drafts
 Day 18 Share Versed to Grammar Challenge poems / Freewrite
- Days 19-28 Read and discuss novel *Poet X*²¹
 This unit will include a variety of different discussions and prompts based on the interests of the class.
- Day 29 Read and Discuss Chapter 6 Together
 The Power of Words
 "Let's Make it Visible" Activity
- Day 30 Listen & Analyze a Shakespearean Sonnet
 Day 31 Apples to Apples Sonnet
 Write a 14 line Shakespearean Sonnet with two noun and one adjective cards²²
- Day 32 Workshop Apples to Apples Sonnet Drafts²³

²¹ Poetry can be in the form of a story too. Our goal is to finish this novel in two weeks. In order to accomplish this, Sam Thomas Davies developed the 10% rule i.e. "read 10% everyday." So for *Poet X*, which is 368 pages, we will be reading 36-37 pages per evening. Class time is reserved for discussion and writing prompts.

²² Because there is an emphasis on syllable count and there's only 14 lines in a sonnet, word choice is of the utmost importance.

²³ Example:

Is finding love a simple dinner date?
 Food followed by a movie, oh what fun.
 You both skip the previews, but don't be late.
 You are wondering if they are the one.

The film was fine, you even slipped an arm,
 They smiled back at you - you're now on cloud nine.
 Maybe a second date - what is the harm?
 In the car, just waiting for that one sign.

But this fresh, new love begins to pull you,
 You think it's harvesting, but there's nothing.
 No texts, no fruit, wondering what to do,
 You did all the steps, it's just not growing.

Love is fun at first, give it time to grow.

Day 33 Workshop Apples to Apples Sonnet Drafts

Day 34 Share Apples to Apples Sonnets / Freewrite

Day 35 Read & Analyze “After the Disaster” by Abigail Deutsch

Day 36 Listen & Analyze “Song” Lyrics

Day 37 Writing Prompt:

A national tragedy has occurred. You were asked to write and read an original poem to help calm the nation. Your words will help people cope and move on. Use your words wisely. Any style or form is acceptable.²⁴

Day 38 Workshop Drafts

Day 39 Share Poems / Freewrite

Day 40 Read & Analyze “Poem”²⁵

Day 41 Listen & Analyze “Song” Lyrics

Day 42 Writing Prompt: Predictive Text Reflective Analysis²⁶

Instructions:

1. Take first line of one of the poems you chose to bring to class
2. Now, enter the beginning of the line (as much as you want but at least three words) into your message box and then allow predictive text to fill in at least three and as many as ten of the next words.
3. Return to your model poem, and use at least two words from line two or three, and then again allow predictive text to suggest what you write next.
4. At this point, continue to allow predictive text to interweave with your model poem, and go on for the next five to seven lines.
5. Take a break at about six or so lines in, and reflect back on the words you use most often, and see if there’s something that coming out of your go-to, or most-often-used words. Keep going until you feel there is enough to analyze the use of the words that are popping up (perhaps repeatedly).
6. Highlight the words that keep coming up. Are they words you would choose? Where do they come from?
7. Begin a poem connecting the regularly used words to why you think they say about you, or refer to in your life.

Sometimes it takes a first kiss, then you know.

²⁴ This helps answer if “does poetry still matter?” because it is during times of turmoil and tragedy that people turn to the arts for inspiration, reflection, and coping.

²⁵ TBA

²⁶ This activity was developed/shared by a fellow classmate of mine this summer.

Day 43	Workshop PTRAs Drafts ²⁷
Day 44	Share PTRAs Poems / Freewrite
Day 45	Introduce Famous Poem “Flash” ²⁸ Creative Nonfiction Assignment Read “Chicago Poems: The Writing of Carl Sandburg’s Chicago Poems” ²⁹ Assignment: Find a poem that you really enjoy. Research the poem’s content and its poet focusing on when it was written, why it was written, and who it was written for and write a flash creative nonfiction short story about the writing of the poem.
Day 46	Research poems and poets
Day 47	Research poems and poets
Day 48	Work Day
Day 49	Work Day
Day 50	Work Day
Day 51	Workshop stories
Day 52	Workshop stories
Day 53	Workshop stories
Day 54	Share stories
Day 55	Share stories
Day 56	Freewrite
Day 57	Read & Analyze “Where I’m From” ³⁰
Day 58	Listen & Analyze “Song” Lyrics
Day 59	Writing Prompt: “Where I’m From”

²⁷ Example:

One night, not long ago after school,
our train door was closed, but this was my last chance.
A girl, with hair that looked good,
came flying down the road with a good man;
but it was a little too much to see.

²⁸ “Exact definitions can vary by specific market, but generally, complete stories of fewer than 1,500, 1,000, 500 or even 300 words can be classified as flash fiction” (Highsmith). But for this assignment, your story should be between 1,000 - 1,500 words.

²⁹ I actually wrote this as an undergraduate at Penn State. Now, if you’re sitting there saying, “but Mr. C, we are in high school... not college!” First off, good observation. Secondly, the purpose of the assignment is to allow you to creatively develop the story of how famous poems were written based off on actual research of the poem, the poet, and what was going on during that time in history. It doesn’t matter if you’re in grad school, college, high school, or middle school - research is research. What makes this assignment great is that the story will only be as good as the research effort that you put in. Challenge yourself! <http://mcurcio.weebly.com/uploads/1/5/2/3/1523439/sandburgstory.pdf>

³⁰ <http://www.georgeellayon.com/where.html>

Day 60	Workshop “Where I’m From” drafts ³¹
Day 61	Share Poem / Freewrite
Day 62	Read & Analyze “Poem”
Day 63	Listen & Analyze “Song” Lyrics
Day 64	Writing Prompt: Poetry Translation ³²

³¹ Example:

I come from what is now a small city,
 but was once considered a small town,
 My father moved us when I was barely one
 for better opportunities - not his own.

I’m from front yard wiffleball games in the rain,
 touch football matches in the street,
 and Mario Kart tournaments in the snow.
 I am from Luciano’s and Hill’s,
 Soft pretzels and ICEE chills.
 I’m from homemade sauerkraut buns, ravioli, and wine.
 Smells are what I associate with holidays,
 for the sounds were harder to hear.
 I’m from the adage of “you are who you’re with,”
 and decades later,
 who I was with was with me on the altar.
 I’m from *aspettare, vieni qui, and Buongiorno*.
 As a kid, I never could translate -
 Yet I completely understood.
 I am from hidden family secrets -
 Only alluded to during stories driven by anger.

Complacency is my hometown,
 But I was never an inhabitant.
 Yet recently I’m surrounded by it -
 Trying to find my way back.

³² Example:

I took “The Man with Night Sweats” by Thom Gunn and translated it into French.
 Then I switched the swapped the translation and the line “My flesh shrank and sank” was
 completely different. This is my original poem, translated in Italian.

La mia carne si contrasse e affondò
 Mentre la barca scendeva quella fatidica notte.
 Dicevano che era inaffondabile,
 Ma è andato giù apparentemente senza combattere.

Sembra solo ieri,
 Stavamo tutti fissando la sua magnifica meraviglia.
 Ma quando la barca si spezzò a metà,
 Lo schiaffo contro l'acqua sembrava un tuono.

Take any poem of your choice and translate it into the language that you're currently taking for a class. For some of the words you don't know, you may use Google Translate. Once finished, give it to your language teacher and have him/her translate it back to English. Find the one line that you translated that is completely different in meaning or wording and use that as your first line - then write a 10-20 line poem. Once done, copy the entire poem into Google Translate and translate it into a language that you're interested in learning, but never got the chance to do it. Whatever comes out of the translation... that's your final poem. Maybe you'll learn some words!

Day 65	Workshop Poetry Translation Drafts
Day 66	Share Poem / Freewrite
Day 67	Read & Analyze "Poem"
Day 68	Listen & Analyze "Song" Lyrics
Day 69	Writing Prompt: Write a song ³³ Write a song in any genre complete with verse(s), refrain(s), and a chorus. Challenge: add the musical composition to it as well.
Day 70	Work Time
Day 71	Workshop Song Drafts
Day 72	Workshop Song Drafts
Day 73	Share Songs / Freewrite
Day 74	Read & Analyze "We Real Cool" by Gwendolyn Brooks
Day 75	Listen & Analyze "Song" Lyrics
Day 76	Writing Prompt:

A differenza del fulmine che di solito segue,
Era stranamente buio con urla di speranza persa.
Ero tutto solo là fuori,
Non era nemmeno un obiettivo in ambito di qualche nave lontana.

La mia carne si contrasse e affondò
Momenti dopo la discesa del RMS.
Il mio cuore si abbassò e si fermò,
Quando il mio ultimo respiro si è capovolto e si è concluso.

³³ Got this idea from Tom Hunley's English 329/G: Special topics in creative writing: The poetry of music, the music of poetry syllabus. He has his class write an original song every week and then at the end of the class, he has an open mic to allow them to perform their songs live. I thought about it - but I decided to just focus on poetry this semester. However, if this class motivates you to write lyrics as a hobby... rock on!

Using magazine and newspaper clippings or *Canva*³⁴, write a ekphrastic poem (art poetry) modelled off of “We Real Cool” using only 24 words, 8 examples of punctuation, and 2-4 rhymes.

- Day 77 Work Day
- Day 78 Workshop/Share “We Real Cool” Poems / Freewrite
- Day 79 What is Poetry?
Poetry is [a simile]³⁵
Poetry is [a metaphor given to you at random]³⁶
- Day 80 Read & Analyze “Poetry” by Emilio Villa
- Day 81 Write a poem in any style learned answering “What is Poetry?”
Poem should begin with “Poetry is,” include at least four footnoted allusions/other languages, and include at least one example of: metaphor, simile, repetition, colon, semi-colon, rhyme, alliteration, assonance, consonance, and personification
- Day 82 Work Day
- Day 83 Work Day
- Day 84 Discussion: What makes a good portfolio?³⁷
Introduce Portfolio Assignment - 50 points
Portfolio will begin with “Poetry is” poem
Your top 3 poems written this semester including draft(s)

³⁴ Canva is an online, graphic-design tool that uses a drag-and-drop format with “access to over a million photographs, vectors, graphics, and fonts.”

³⁵ Example:

Writing is like trying to score on a goalie in a shootout. Like a story, you’ve envisioned the moment over a million times in your head. Like strategies, you’ve practiced moves, dekes, shots, and situations countless times on your own or with your team or coach, like a teacher in a classroom. But in that moment... it’s when it matters. Your audience is the fans - and if you succeed, you’ll be revered forever, turned into highlight reels and posters, and your jersey will be the #1 seller for decades to come. But if you miss, you’re viewed as a failure - and everyone will remember that one time when you were stoned by said goalie. Sure, you can come back and accomplish things later on in your career, and if it’s big enough, it will overshadow your miss - but if you don’t... your miss is what defines you. Like words, there are so many moves to choose from, so many angles to take, and you’ve studied so many writers to mimic just like studying film... but you have to decide on just one. The one that will work. Once you shoot it - once you publish it or submit it...that’s it. The goalie, like a teacher or reader, reacts. If they save it, that means it didn’t have any effect on them. But if you score, like a good book or poem... it’ll affect them forever.

³⁶ Got this and “Poetry is like” writing prompt from my class this summer with Dr. Craig. Instead of poetry, she assigned us to do “Writing is” and “Writing is like.”

³⁷ Just like a good album, a good portfolio usually has a common theme. Whenever you’re looking for your top three poems throughout the entire semester, keep this in mind, but sometimes the best themes are the ones that organically arise after choosing your favorite three and analyzing them.

300-500 word Reflection: Talk about your favorites i.e. poet, style, poem, discussion, line, etc. Why did you choose the portfolio theme that you did? What else was a possibility? What poem prompt did you dislike/hate and why? What's the one poetic device that you learned this semester and because of it, your writing has improved? Show an example of this device being used in your work and explain how it made your piece better.

Day 85	Portfolio Focus / Work Day ³⁸
Day 86	Portfolio Focus / Work Day
Day 87	Portfolio Focus / Work Day
Day 88	Portfolios DUE "Open Mic" Poetry Reading ³⁹
Day 89	Freewrite
Day 90	Last Day Celebration

³⁸ I want to make sure I give you all ample class time to work on your portfolios, but because by this part of the semester, all of your drafts and such should be complete - now it's all about putting it together.

³⁹ Poetry is meant to be heard, remember?

Works Cited

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