



Reading With The Head and Heart: A Mindful Analysis of Poetry

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:
English Language Arts, 6-8th grade

Keywords: mindfulness, english language arts, poetry, creative writing, imagery, figurative language

Teaching Standards: See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

Synopsis: In this curriculum unit, students will combine mindfulness strategies with poetry reading and writing. Students will analyze figurative language, structure and perspective through poems, then write their own pieces. Students will also learn to be present by focusing on breath and their emotions. In the end, students will create a portfolio of their finished work, and celebrate with a poetry reading.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 57 students in 7th grade Honors English Language Arts.

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Introduction

Rationale

Nothing garners a larger groan from middle school students than the words “poetry unit.” Conjuring thoughts of metaphor and hyperbole, poetry for students is a sea of nebulous, complicated language that they have to decipher for state tests. For me as a student, this was much the same until my English 11 teacher read us a poem and asked us what we thought. It’s the first time I can remember in my academic career that an adult invited students to share their own opinions about the assigned literature. I still get excited thinking about the genuine conversations my classmates and I had that year, supported and reinforced by my teacher, who recognized we don’t learn to love literature if we only read it to answer multiple choice questions.

For my curriculum unit, I plan to emulate this experience by inviting my students to read poetry for entertainment, joy, and empathy before we read it for assessment. Marrying this with the concepts of mindfulness, I hope to challenge students to find meaning past the figurative language and encourage them to share their thoughts through their own writing.

Demographics

I am a classroom teacher at Alexander Graham Middle School. Of the students at our school, 46% identify as White, 25% as Hispanic, and 24% as Black. 9% of our students are considered students with disabilities, and 24% of our students are identified as AIG. I teach three 7th grade ELA classes. I have 80 students in total, 25% of which identify as Black, 25% Hispanic, and 50% white. Nine of my students have an IEP, and are placed in an inclusion class setting that I co-teach with another colleague. Twenty-three of my students are considered AIG, and are placed in my two honors classes. Two of my students have a 504 plan. Nine students are considered English Language Learners.

Objectives

My primary goal for this curriculum unit is to facilitate student exploration of poetry and mindfulness. I want to encourage students to make personal connections to the content, while learning strategies for better understanding their emotional reactions to situations. Although I have only been a classroom teacher for a short amount of time, it doesn’t take long to observe the difficulty students have with applying their learning to a broader situation. Lessons are usually contained to the classroom. I am hoping that the lessons in this unit are applicable to everyday, lending students strategies for dealing with stress and better communicating their feelings. As a classroom community, I hope we can cultivate an environment of support, respect, and joy.

As would be expected, I also have a few academic goals. See appendix I for the exact standards that will be addressed in this unit. This unit will primarily focus on understanding and identifying examples of figurative language, types and the structure of poetry, and elements of story. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools has adopted EL Education curriculum for middle school grades this year, and so this unit is developed with those requirements in mind. The lessons outlined in this unit can be completed as a three-week unit, or interspersed within the teacher's curriculum to supplement materials. The strategies are adaptable to other poems with similar themes and structures.

Content Research

Mindfulness: A Personal Understanding

The most challenging part of creating a research-based curriculum unit centering on mindfulness is that most of the research is truly internal. Regardless of the number of books read and articles skimmed, the true shift in practice will only come when the ideals become instinct. Kevin Hawkins writes that "Mindfulness is not something we are 'taught' or 'given' as such; it's a natural capacity that we all have that may arise when we are deeply absorbed in something, or in a situation that demands our full attention¹." There are many definitions of mindfulness, many involving religious practices or possessing spiritual tones, but Jon Kabat-Zinn says it "basically boils down to paying attention²."

The simplicity of this definition really attracted me at first, but also stumped me. If mindfulness is just paying attention, then why do I struggle so much with it? I have tried all the tools; guided meditation, nature sounds, musicless walks, journaling, yoga, but I still left my practice feeling I had missed the mark. I was waiting for the cathartic experience of connection that I thought was supposed to happen at the end of one of Tara Brach's sessions. It was not coming. Ironically, while I was attempting to force peace upon myself, the country entered into a myriad of crises. To read what was happening outside while being federally mandated to stay inside did not lend well to my meditation time. I found myself restless every time I tried to set intentions, and the words that came to my mind for journaling seemed empty and frivolous. How could I have time to spend on my own peace when our country was denying it to so many?

After a small, feeble attempt to make sense of our "new normal," I did what I usually would, which is escape into literature. I read nine novels in about three months. It was an accomplishment I was proud to tell others when I was asked how I spent my quarantine. It felt good to say I read, but upon return to the school year, I realized that I had neglected to deal with the emotions I had chased off with prose. There was confusion from the barrage of news coverage of the pandemic, guilt from leaving my previous school without full closure, anger from the continued evidence of systemic, racial oppression, and numbing sadness when I thought about it all at once. So, six months later, I am returning to the start. I am working to "pay attention" to the emotions I fought to push from my mind. As I continue the research into mindfulness, I am realizing that it is not an absence of emotion, but an awareness and nonjudgmental examination of how and why the emotions came to be there.

The research I have compiled for the preparation of this unit is largely based around my growing understanding of the concept, and how I feel I can most authentically create a mindful classroom. I'm finding that it's no small feat to show up for students, ready to embrace their journey as well as not push my own aside. The real aspiration is to take on the trek together.

Mindfulness and Adolescence

Nearly a third of children between the ages of 13 and 18 will experience an anxiety disorder.³ These numbers come as no shock to educators, learning about the increase of mental illness has become part of our required compliance training. However, studies are showing a connection between mindfulness and improvement in overall wellbeing for adolescents⁴⁵.

One of the specific benefits to mindful practices for children is the ability to cope with their environments. The magazine *Mindful* highlighted an example of mindful strategies helping children from a disenfranchised community learn to deal with their surroundings⁶. Three men from Baltimore began the Holistic Life Foundation in the early 2000's, using yoga and mindfulness as the cornerstones of their teaching. Almost twenty years later, and they are seeing the work come full circle; previous students return as staff members, helping to teach the current youth how to "stress breathe" in order to calm down and assess their feelings before they react.

More locally, a West Charlotte High School teacher was motivated to create a space for students and teachers to be able to practice mindfulness and yoga within their campus. She had begun by incorporating mindful practices within her English classroom, and immediately saw her students open up to the concepts. After several months of working with her students and applying for some grants, the high school was able to furnish an unused space with all of the accoutrements of a yoga and meditation studio⁷. West Charlotte is considered a trauma informed school, and the space for students to practice mindfulness is one of their strategies for reaching students who are dealing with issues at home and in their community.

It is important that educators consider what their students bring into the classroom with them besides their books and pencils. Many of our students have experienced more than their fair share of trauma, and some may not have an adult figure who is present physically or emotionally enough to teach them healthy coping strategies. In order to truly teach the whole child, we must be ready to support their emotional learning as well.

Mindfulness and the Classroom

When creating a classroom space that is specifically conducive to mindful learning, it takes more than decoration and desk grouping. In *The Invisible Classroom*, Olson emphasizes the

importance of creating a physically and emotionally safe environment. “Feeling safe depends on our interpersonal environment, possibly more so than our physical environment. The most basic measures for feeling safe in our interpersonal environment are the policies designed to prevent discrimination, sexual harassment, and bullying⁸.” It is not enough to claim that a classroom is a safe space. Students need to see and hear messages of support and respect, and images or language that marginalizes or oppresses one or more groups should be firmly and constructively removed.

I am a firm believer that school is meant to be a safe environment for making mistakes, and some students come to school with not only trauma from their homes and communities, but they also come with misinformed, hurtful perceptions of others. It is important when creating an environment of safety that students are challenged in constructive ways in order to encourage them to form their own opinions and beliefs. Olson says, “When the fear circuits of the brain are active, clear-headed decision making and new learning is difficult or even impossible⁹.” Cornering and interrogating young people about their beliefs that are most likely parroted from someone at home most likely will lead to reaffirming their original ideas instead of pushing them to think past it. A safe mindful classroom requires teachers and students to be nonjudgmental and open to all experiences.

Teacher Presence: One of the most intimidating challenges a new teacher faces is developing their teacher voice and teacher presence. In a mindful classroom, Teachers again should turn their attention inward and check that their own behavior is projecting positive, neutral energy. Ken Hawkins outlines some strategies for teachers to practice in order to train their bodies, such as reading a poem while focusing on the way they speak, breathe or stand¹⁰. The main avenue for a teacher to develop their presence, as asserted by Hawkins, is to continue one’s own practice. Make time for meditation, spend time focusing on the breath, read literature or attend a course that is geared toward improving the connection with one’s self.

Mindful Concepts

The following subtopics are several mindful strategies and ideas that I plan to incorporate into my lessons.

Bringing Focus to the Breath: For the lesson plans in this unit, students will begin each lesson by focusing on their breath. Tara Brach refers to this as choosing a home base or an anchor. She writes, “It is helpful to select a home base (or several anchors) that allow you to quiet and collect the mind, and to deepen embodied presence¹¹.” The process of focusing on breath brings the mind into the moment, being conscious of the body and emotions. This process is an important step for the beginning of lessons because it helps students check their baggage at the door, so to speak. Brach writes, “We train in mindfulness by establishing an embodied presence and learning to see clearly and feel fully the changing flow of sensations, feelings (pleasantness and unpleasantness), emotions and sounds.” In other words, this process help to more fully recognize and accept the emotions that are being felt. Students come into the classroom carrying the emotional weight of the rest of their day.

For some students, this could mean a snappy, electric energy that may need quelled before they begin their work. For some students, this could mean a grey, nervous energy, brought on from stress at home or in other areas of life, that needs to be recognized, felt, and then calmed before they channel their thoughts elsewhere. This mindful strategy of spending a few moments being still and breathing sets the tone for what will follow.

Lectio Divina: Lectio Divina is Latin for divine reading. It is a religious practice that gives structure to the reading and internalization of scripture¹². I am not personally religious, and I do not teach in a school with religious ties, but the structure of Lectio Divina is a powerful way to regard nonreligious texts for personal connection. Carrie Meyer McGrath writes, “Through stages of reading, meditation, prayer, contemplation and action, participants center themselves on a single Scripture passage and listen deeply for God’s message to them.” In essence, this is a reading strategy that invites someone to make a meaningful connection with the passage and to hopefully find a deeper message through reflection. As my curriculum unit is a marriage of literature and mindfulness, Lectio Divina is an advantageous strategy for facilitating personal connection to poetry. For more information as to how I use Lectio Divina in a lesson, see the instructional implementation section of this unit.

Body as Barometer: Hawkins writes “mindful awareness training involves consciously connecting with our bodies- noticing our physical aliveness, the physicality of breath and of sensory experiences¹³.” Much like focusing on breath, thinking of the body as a barometer gives students an opportunity to name the emotions they are bringing into class. As students adjust to spending time mindfully breathing and sitting still, Hawkins says they will begin to use the body “as a radar system giving us early warning of tensions and pressures that, unnoticed, might lead to physical tensions or illness.” Besides the health benefits, students can use this exercise to make analogies, connecting their emotions to their bodies or describing their feelings in more figurative ways.

Poetry and Mindfulness

Matthea Harvey writes that poetry is “a place for silliness and sadness, delight and despair, invention and ideas (and also, apparently, alliteration)¹⁴.” This is why poetry is such an ideal pairing for mindfulness. Poetry is a form of literature that condenses emotion, story and images into a finite number of lines. Poetry is meant to be read aloud and reflected upon afterward, finding personal connection and new ideas.

Too often when poetry is taught, it is reduced to linguistic comprehension and figurative interpretation. For the sake of Common Core standard alignment, this unit still addresses poetic structure and figurative language, but the true core of student learning will be what they discover about the joy of reading and personal connection to others through literature. Harvey writes, “pick poems that will speak to kids’ lives- give them a poem about characters or situations they know already... but also give them poems that can crack open their understanding of the world¹⁵.” Poetry should not only be used in the classroom to teach

simile and metaphor. Instead, through the pairing of mindful strategies, students will read poems for enjoyment and for self-understanding.

Haibun: Haibun is a form of Japanese poetry that uses both prose and poetic form to explore ideas from our everyday life¹⁶. This form pairs well with mindful strategies because the poems tend to read like a journal entry. Students can use this form almost as a brain dump, getting their thoughts about their day onto page. Then after some intentional thought, beautiful moments that they want to highlight can be pulled out and focused on in a haiku-like couplet. This form is used in one of the lesson plans of this curriculum unit.

Instructional Implementation

Teaching Strategies

Mentor Texts/Read Alouds: Throughout the lessons, we will frequently read aloud as a class. This strategy is used both to model for students how we should read aloud, and also as an informal assessment of student fluency skills. The mentor texts that we will read are listed in the resources section of this unit.

Modeled Instruction: With the same sentiment as the read aloud strategy, modeled instruction is an opportunity to demonstrate the ideal way to complete different activities. Teachers should explain the thoughts they have, the inferences they make, and the questions that come to their mind, so students have a solid idea of whether they are meeting expectations.

Annotation Guide: Annotation guides help students focus on particular elements while reading. These guides can be complex, with various colors and codes, or extremely simple, with one or two marks for students to use. There are annotation guides in appendix 3 of this unit.

Graphic Organizers: Graphic organizers will be used in this unit to guide student thinking as they craft their own poems. If the teacher feels that their students are higher level and do not require the graphic organizers, they can be omitted. Graphic organizers are listed in appendix 3 of this unit.

Journaling: Students will begin just about every lesson with a mindful breathing moment, then a journal prompt. The objective of the prompt is to get students to think about the ideas and concepts involved in that day's lesson. Students can keep these journal entries in a notebook or digitally through Google or Canvas.

Peer Editing: Students will offer feedback to a partner for their poetry portfolio. It is important to instruct students on how to give meaningful, specific feedback. There is a feedback guide in appendix 3 of this unit.

Lessons and Activities

Lesson 1: How to Read a Poem	
Prepare the Learner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Journal: How do you read a poem? Students will answer the question individually and then share aloud. 2. The teacher will introduce the poetry unit, taking time to review the end of unit project and expectations for participation.
Interact with the Text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Aloud: The teacher will read the poem “How To Eat A Poem” to students, modeling how to pause at punctuation. 2. Annotation Guide: The teacher will use the poem to identify the parts of the poem (this activity may be omitted for students who have a familiarity with poetic structure). 3. Modeled Instruction: The teacher will introduce students to the Lectio Divina protocol, modeling steps for students.
Extend the Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annotation Guide: Students will annotate the poem “Introduction to Poetry,” focusing on structure and where the reader should pause. 2. Students will then read the poem using the Lectio Divina protocol.
Closure/ Assessment	Students will share out their reflections with the class.

Lesson 2: Show, Not Tell	
Prepare the Learner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teacher will invite students to close their eyes and participate in a breathing exercise. 2. Journal: The teacher will describe an object to students, while eyes still closed and focusing on breath. Students will open eyes and share what they believe the object is.
Interact with the Text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Aloud: The teacher will use the poem “Gathering Leaves” to discuss imagery, focusing on how the poet creates scenery for the reader with specific, vivid details. 2. Modeled Instruction: The teacher will guide students through the Lectio Divina protocol.
Extend the Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graphic Organizer: Students will choose an object and follow the prompts in the graphic organizer to “show” their object.
Closure/ Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will share with a partner and their partner will guess the object.

Lesson 3: What Makes This a Poem? (Adapted Lesson from <i>Open the Door</i>)	
Prepare the Learner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Journal: Students will close their eyes and the teacher will lead a guided breathing exercise. Afterward, students will answer the prompt: what makes a poem? 2. The teacher will lead a mini lesson on the poetic form <i>haibun</i>.
Interact with the Text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Aloud: The teacher will read the haibun poem “Finding Good Soil” aloud. 2. Modeled Instruction: The teacher will guide the class through the poem, identifying clear images and emotions.
Extend the Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graphic Organizer: Students will use the prompts to write their own haibun.
Closure/ Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will share their poems with the class.

Lesson 4: PoEmotions	
Prepare the Learner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Journal: The teacher will guide students through breathing and noticing emotions. Afterward, students will respond to the prompt: if your emotion were a color, what would it be? Students will share out.
Interact with the Text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Aloud/ Guided annotation: The teacher will read the poem “From Blossoms” aloud for students. As a class, students will identify the emotions that are portrayed. 2. The teacher will lead a mini lesson about figurative language using the poem as a mentor text. 3. Modeled Instruction: The teacher will read “Heart To Heart” and model identifying the examples of figurative language. The teacher will show the connections to emotion.
Extend the Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graphic Organizer: Students will use the prompts to write a poem about their emotion including several examples of figurative language.
Closure/ Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will share their poems with the class.

Lesson 5: Is this Poem a Mirror or Window?	
Prepare the	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Journal: Students will first close their eyes and focus on their breath.

Learner	After, students will respond to the prompt: Is there a fictional character in books, movies or TV that you connect with? Why? Students will share with the class.
Interact with the Text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Modeled Instruction: The teacher will discuss with students the mirror and window concept (see content research for information). 2. Think Pair Share: Using the poem “Knock Knock”, the class will use this protocol to discuss whether they connect with the poem personally or whether the poem helps them better understand another perspective.
Extend the Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annotation Guide: Students will read the poem “Mothers”, highlight, and explain their connections to the poem.
Closure/ Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will share their connections with the class.

Lesson 6: The Traveling Poem	
Prepare the Learner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Journal: Students will close their eyes as the teacher reads a guided meditation describing a scene or walk. After, students will record sensory details that they recall in their journal.
Interact with the Text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Modeled Instruction: The teacher will review imagery with students using the poem “Blizzard”.
Extend the Learning	<p>In Person Extension:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graphic Organizer: Students will walk around their environment, preferably outside, and use the prompts to write a poem describing their surroundings. <p>Remote Extension:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graphic Organizer: The teacher will provide links to virtual tours of various places, possibly museums or wildlife reserves. Students will choose one and use the virtual location to write a poem.
Closure/ Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will share their poem with a partner.

Lesson 7: The Breathing Poem	
Prepare the Learner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Journal: Students will start by closing their eyes and taking a moment to focus on their breath. Then they will respond to the prompt “how has taking time to breathe helped you over the last several days?”

Interact with the Text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Think Pair Share: Students will discuss the usefulness of taking time to be mindful before class starts. 2. Modeled Instruction: The teacher will use the poem “Keeping Quiet” to discuss how the breaking up of the lines reminds us of breathing
Extend the Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graphic Organizer: Students will listen to a few of the guided breathings from previous lessons independently then use the graphic organizer to write a breathing poem. 2. Students will share their poems in small groups, following each other’s poems as directions for a guided breathing.
Closure/ Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One or two students should share their poems with the whole class.

Lesson 8: Portfolio Day 1	
Prepare the Learner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will start by gathering all of their materials from past lessons.
Interact with the Text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teacher will review the project directions and rubric with students, clarifying when needed.
Extend the Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will review their poems and make changes. 2. Students should begin formatting either their physical or digital portfolio.
Closure/ Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teacher should remind students that tomorrow they will work with a peer to edit and finalize their portfolio.

Lesson 9: Portfolio Day 2 (may need to be extended into a third day, depending on whether students are expected to work outside of class)	
Prepare the Learner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students should gather materials and move to sit with a partner.
Interact with the Text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teacher will outline what meaningful feedback looks and sounds like.
Extend the Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annotation Guide: Students will work in pairs to read and give feedback to their peer. 2. Students will move to work independently to finalize their portfolio. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. If making physical portfolios, students should be using art supplies to add color and design b. If making a digital portfolio. students should be adding color,

	various fonts and images to their slideshow.
Closure/ Assessment	1. The teacher should remind students that work will be turned in tomorrow and students will be selecting one poem to share with the class for their poetry reading.

Lesson 10: Poetry Reading	
Prepare the Learner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students should prepare by placing their finished portfolio on their desk for other students to view. 2. (OPTIONAL) The teacher can set up a stage or podium for students to stand at when they read their poem, decorate their class, invite students to bring snacks, etc.
Interact with the Text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teacher will invite students to walk around and view the various portfolios. Music can be playing. This is meant to be a celebration of their creations! 2. (OPTIONAL) The teacher can make a brief statement about things they noticed during the unit, offering praise to students for their hard work and open minds.
Extend the Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each student will have an opportunity to read aloud one of their poems that they wrote during the unit.
Closure/ Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will turn in their finished portfolios for grading.

Appendix 1: Teaching Standards

North Carolina Standard Course of Study

RL.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.7.2 Determine a theme of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.7.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text; analyze the impact of rhymes and repetitions of sounds on meaning and tone in a specific line or section of a literary work.

RL.7.5 Analyze how a drama's or poem's (or other literary genre's) form or structure contributes to its meaning.

L.7.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language and nuances in word meanings.

Appendix 2: Poetry Portfolio Directions and Rubric

Poetry Portfolio Project

Directions: Now that we have spent several days reading and writing poetry, we will create portfolios of our refined pieces to showcase them in a colorful, creative way! Your portfolio will consist of the following:

- 4 original poems, proofread and finalized, typed.
- Images added to each poem that connect to and enhance the meaning of your poems
- If your portfolio is represented physically, it should include:
 - ◆ each poem printed on a separate page, in color or colored in
 - ◆ a cover page with a title, your name, and at least one image. This should also be in color or colored in
- If your portfolio is represented digitally, it should include:
 - ◆ each poem on a separate slide, in a readable font, with a colorful background and at least one image
 - ◆ a title slide with a title, your name and at least one image, also with readable font and colorful background

Once we have finished creating our portfolios, we will host a poetry reading, where you will choose your favorite piece to read aloud. For our poetry reading, you must:

- Stand and speak with a clear, audible voice
- Actively listen to all other presentations

Timeline:

- Day 1: directions overview and proofreading
- Day 2: peer editing and finalizing
- Day 2 ½: continued finalizing (if needed)
- Day 3: Poetry Reading and submit project

Project Rubric

Element	Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Beginning
Poem (Content)	Poem follows the guidelines for the form, and includes	Poem mostly follows the guidelines for the	Poem attempts to follow the guidelines for the	Poem does not follow the guidelines, or

	coherent, well connected ideas	form, and includes coherent, somewhat connected ideas	form, and includes loosely connected ideas	the ideas do not connect
Poem (Mechanics)	Poem uses line and structure to enhance the meaning	Poem uses line and structure in an attempt to enhance the meaning	Poem uses line and structure, but does not enhance the meaning	Poem does not use line or structure
Visual Representation	Poem is typed in a readable font and accompanied by at least one image that enhances the meaning of the poem	Poem is typed and accompanied by a somewhat relevant image	Poem is typed and accompanied by an image without an obvious connect	Poem is unreadable, or there are no images

Appendix 3: Annotation Guides and Graphic Organizers

Annotation Guide: Parts of a Poem	
Element	Mark
Stanza	Circle the whole stanza
Line	number the lines along the left hand side
Rhyme	Along the right side of each line, write a letter for lines that rhyme
Punctuation	circle each of the punctuation marks that signify a pause or breath

Annotation Guide: Figurative Language	
Element	Mark

Metaphor: a comparison between two things without using like or as	Highlight in yellow
Simile: a comparison between two things using the words like or as	highlight in blue
Personification: giving a nonhuman object humanlike qualities or abilities	Highlight in green
Alliteration: the repetition of word sounds at the beginning of words	Highlight in purple

Annotation Guide: Mirror or Window	
Element	Mark
Mirror	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlight the lines of the poem that you connect with in yellow 2. In the margin, or in a comment on the document, explain why you connect to these lines
Window	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlight the lines of the poem that offer a new perspective in green 2. In the margin, or in a comment on the document, explain how these lines help you understand a new perspective,

Annotation Guide: Peer Feedback	
Element	Mark
Content	<p>GLOW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → After reading your poem, I can tell that you are trying to communicate... → You used [type of figurative language] well; it helps me better understand... <p>GROW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I think you should clarify [lines], I'm struggling to understand what you mean by...
Line and	GLOW:

Structure	<p>→ I like how you used [shorter or longer] lines to enhance...</p> <p>→ I can see how you used stanzas to...</p> <p>GROW:</p> <p>→ I think you should consider using [shorter or longer] lines here because...</p> <p>→ I think you might want to [break up or combine] these stanzas to better present your poem</p>
Spelling or Grammar	If your partner has any misspelled words, wrong verb tenses, or any other errors, let them know!

Name: _____ Block: _____

Lectio Divina Protocol

When we read mindfully, it is important that we think about our personal connection to the text and what the text is “saying to you.”

Directions:

1. READ: Read the text all the way through. Take note of words that jump out at you. There doesn't have to be a reason; maybe the phrase sounded cool or made you think of something else.
2. THINK: Take a moment to look back over the words and phrases that you've marked. What is this text saying to you? What message can you find?
3. WRITE: In at least one paragraph, reflect on the meaning of the text for you. Explain what spoke to you, what you thought was interesting, and what message you found in the text.

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Name: _____ Block: _____

Show, Not Tell Poem

Directions	Your Work
What object are you writing about?	
Describe your object in as much detail as possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Color • Size • Shape • Smell • Taste (maybe!) • Feeling, texture • Weight 	
Think about your object as if it were living. If your object had a name what would it be? What job would it have? How would it behave?	
Lastly, go back through your notes and circle the most important and interesting details that you want to include in your poem. On a sheet of lined paper, write a poem about your object without naming it. Remember the goal is for the reader to be able to see and experience the object for themselves!	

Name: _____ Block: _____

Haibun Poem

Directions	Your Work
Go back to your journal from earlier, choose a moment from your day to focus on. Expand upon	

that moment.	
Why does this moment matter to you? What made it important or significant in some way? Was it a moment of clarity or peace or anger? Explain how you were feeling.	
Look back over the haibun poem we read in class. Use it as a template for your poem's structure. On a sheet of lined paper, write a haibun poem that describes a moment in time and zooms in on your feelings at the time.	

Name: _____ Block: _____

PoEmotions

Directions	Your Work
How are you feeling today? Try to be very specific with the emotion that you feel. Even if you're bored, how bored? And with what?	
If your emotion was ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A color? • A person? • A body part? • A type of weather? • A monster? ... What would it be and why?	
On a sheet of lined paper, write a poem personifying your emotion. Help the reader understand how that feeling feels!	

Name: _____ Block: _____

Guided Imagery Poem

Directions	Your Work
Where are you? This will either be your physical location or a place that you are exploring digitally.	
<p>For the next few rows, you will complete the same steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a few steps (or click to a spot in your digital tour) • Get comfortable and observe your surroundings. Take a mental note of what you see, smell, hear. • On you paper, describe part of your surroundings using very descriptive language (imagery and figurative language) • Take a few steps and repeat! 	
Spot #1	
Spot #2	
Spot #3	
Spot #4	
After you're done exploring, think about the mood of your environment. How do you feel being here?	
On a sheet of lined paper, take your notes and write a traveling poem. Your poem should take the reader on a journey through your environment.	

Name: _____ Block: _____

Breathing Poem

Directions	Your Work
For this poem, you are guiding your reader through a mindful moment. For each row, you will write a line for what you want the reader to think about or focus on.	
Closing eyes:	
Breathe in:	
Breathe out:	
Breathe in:	
Breathe Out:	
Opening eyes:	
On a sheet of lined paper, turn your notes into a poem. Think about the importance of line as you write. Look back at our poem from class for an example of how breaking up lines can effect the meaning of the poem.	

Resources

Materials: Most lessons intentionally require very few resources. The materials that will be needed are as follows:

- Journals or notebooks for students
- Physical copies or digital access to poems
- Speaker to play guided meditations

Mentor texts

“Poem of the Day: ‘Keeping Quiet.’” Duke University English Department.

[https://english.duke.edu/news/poem-day-keeping-quiet.](https://english.duke.edu/news/poem-day-keeping-quiet)

This poem is used in lesson 7 of the curriculum unit.

Beaty, Daniel. "Knock Knock." CommonLit. <https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/knock-knock>

This poem is used in lesson 5 of the curriculum unit. The poem is published on CommonLit.org. This a free resource for educators that requires registering using an educational email.

Brach, Tara. "Meditation: 'A Moment of Calm.'" Tara Brach, January 4, 2016.

<https://www.tarabrach.com/guided-meditation-a-moment-of-calm-2/>.

This is a short meditation that can be used during the opening on each lesson. There are many more available on Tara Brach's website.

Collins, Billy. "Introduction to Poetry by Billy Collins." Poetry Foundation. Poetry Foundation. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46712/introduction-to-poetry>.

This poem is used in lesson 1 of the curriculum unit.

Davis, Tish. "Finding Good Soil." *Modern Haibun & Tanka Prose*, no. 2 (Winter 2009): 15.

This poem is used in lesson 3 of the curriculum unit.

Dove, Rita. "Heart to Heart." CommonLit. <https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/heart-to-heart>.

This poem is used in lesson 4 of the curriculum unit. The poem is published on CommonLit.org. This a free resource for educators that requires registering using an educational email.

Frost, Robert. "Gathering Leaves by Robert Frost." Poetry Foundation. Poetry Foundation. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/148658/gathering-leaves>.

This poem is used in lesson 2 of the curriculum unit.

Giovanni, Nikki. "Mothers." CommonLit. <https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/mothers>

This poem is used in lesson 5 of the curriculum unit. The poem is published on CommonLit.org. This a free resource for educators that requires registering using an educational email.

Lee, Li-Young. "From Blossoms." CommonLit. <https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/from-blossoms>.

This poem is used in lesson 4 of the curriculum unit. The poem is published on CommonLit.org. This a free resource for educators that requires registering using an educational email.

Merriam, Eve. "How to Eat a Poem." *Reflections on a Gift of Watermelon Pickle: And Other Modern Verse*. Stephen Dunning, Edward Lueders, Hugh Smith, eds. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1967. Print

This poem is used in lesson 1 of the curriculum unit.

Pastan, Linda. "Blizzard." CommonLit. <https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/blizzard>

This poem is used in lesson 6 of the curriculum unit. The poem is published on CommonLit.org. This a free resource for educators that requires registering using an educational email.

Teacher Resources

"Window or Mirror?" Teaching Tolerance. <https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/teaching-strategies/close-and-critical-reading/window-or-mirror>.

This lesson plan from Teaching Tolerance further explains the concept of teaching a text as a window or mirrors. Teachers who want additional support with lesson 5 may want to consult this lesson.

Brach, Tara. "Guided Meditations - Basic Meditations." Tara Brach, January 9, 2019. <https://www.tarabrach.com/guided-meditation-basic-meditations/>.

This website will supply teachers with a variety of meditations to use in the classroom. There are shorter and longer meditations depending on the need of the students.

¹ Hawkins, Kevin. *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School: Improving Wellbeing in Teaching and Learning*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2017. 15.

² Kabat-Zinn, Jon. "Mindfulness." *Mindfulness* (2015) 28 October 2015. 1481.

³ <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/emotional-problems/Pages/Anxiety-Disorders.aspx#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20National%20Institutes,will%20experience%20an%20anxiety%20disorder>.

⁴ De Bruin, Esther. "The Meaning of Mindfulness in Children and Adolescents: Further Validation of the Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure (CAMM) in Two Independent Samples From the Netherlands." *Mindfulness* (2014) 6 February 2014. 422-430.

⁵ Carsley, Dana. *Effectiveness of Mindfulness Interventions for Mental Health in Schools: a Comprehensive Meta-analysis*. *Mindfulness*, 23 October 2017.

⁶ Huber, Bob. "Leading with Love." *Mindful*. February 2020, 54.

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- ⁷ Huff, Jaimis. “JamsCity: Bringing Mindfulness to Public Schools.” SweatNET, September 11, 2019. https://sweatnet.com/jamscity-bringing-mindfulness-to-public-schools/?fbclid=IwAR2mQXo3P0TNYqxWmkSglzFsfeRTR1yeogarmAAp7dy_xztszGSDAcCTjJk.
- ⁸ Olson, Kirke. *The Invisible Classroom: Relationships, Neuroscience & Mindfulness in School*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 2014. 15.
- ⁹ Olson, Kirke. 14.
- ¹⁰ Hawkins, Kevin. *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School: Improving Wellbeing in Teaching and Learning*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2017. 61.
- ¹¹ Brach, Tara. “How To Meditate.” Tara Brach, PhD. Accessed November 22, 2020. <https://www.tarabrach.com/wp-content/uploads/pdf/How-to-Meditate--FAQ.pdf>
- ¹² Meyer McGrath, Carrie. “Lectio Divina.” *Health Progress* (2018) 96.
- ¹³ Hawkins, Kevin. *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School: Improving Wellbeing in Teaching and Learning*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2017. 58.
- ¹⁴ Lasky, Dorothea, Dominic Luxford, Jesse Nathan, and Matthea Harvey. “Poetry Is an Egg With a Horse Inside.” Essay. In *Open the Door: How to Excite Young People about Poetry*, 27–38. San Francisco: McSweeney's Books, 2013. 27.
- ¹⁵ Lasky, Dorothea, Dominic Luxford, Jesse Nathan, and Matthea Harvey. 33.
- ¹⁶ Lasky, Dorothea, Dominic Luxford, Jesse Nathan, and Elizabeth Bradfield. “Attending the Living Word/World: Using *Haibun* to Discover Poetry.” Essay. In *Open the Door: How to Excite Young People about Poetry*, 267–273. San Francisco: McSweeney's Books, 2013.

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- Hawkins, Kevin. *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School: Improving Wellbeing in Teaching and Learning*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2017.
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Lasky, Dorothea, Dominic Luxford, and Jesse Nathan. *Open the Door: How to Excite Young People about Poetry*. San Francisco, CA: McSweeney's Books, 2013.

McCarthy, Claire. "Anxiety in Teens Is Rising: What's Going On?" HealthyChildren.org, November 20, 2019. <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/emotional-problems/Pages/Anxiety-Disorders.aspx>.

Meyer McGrath, Carrie. "Lectio Divina." *Health Progress* (2018) 96.

Olson, Kirke. *The Invisible Classroom: Relationships, Neuroscience & Mindfulness in School*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 2014.