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## THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF POETRY TO THE STUDENTS OF ELEMENTARY LEVEL IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT



### ABSTRACT: -

**T**his paper deals with a vital issue that may sometimes comes up in each English teacher's mind – that of instructing or teaching poetry to Indian second dialect or language learners. As I have strived to exhibit in this paper, different strategies and techniques of teaching poetry to the Indian classroom, particularly when teaching and learning of youngsters is concerned (elementary school level). I will perhaps indicate in detail how a proper teaching method can be utilized in teaching poetry and how precisely the teachers could enhance the experience of the learners by making good use of the strategies of teaching poetry.

This paper then gives certain insights for teachers for different activities and tips to be used in classes. Couple of lesson plans are investigated here which is trailed by an assessment and examination of the lesson or action. It is in these examinations, I accept, where we understand that teaching and learning of poetry in the basic classes through different new strategies not just makes student or learner fortified towards adapting language skills, effectively, it additionally helps them hold and remember the language skills in an increased manner, urging them to utilize the same in their daily talks and in their daily activities. The lesson plan and exercises proposed here

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can be put to prompt use in the classroom.

**KEY NOTES:** teaching poetry ,elementary level ,Indian context.

### INTRODUCTION :

As I am a teacher of the middle and senior section teaching English, I often attend many workshops regarding the teaching and learning of English Language and Literature. I have often got many chances to prepare and give a workshop on the methods of teaching of English as second language. Many teachers attend these workshops. But many a times when i talk about different activities and techniques of teaching a lesson , particularly a poem, at least one teacher laments, "The portion in the elementary and secondary school level is so vast that we don't have time to incorporate all your techniques in a real classroom!" or " I would love to use your new teaching methods but the syllabus demands something else from us!". It is very sad to hear all this from practicing teachers of good schools. All do is put off my anger and pretend, of course, explaining the teacher how she could uses these methods as a part of the syllabus and curriculum. She can make teaching poetry a part of her vocabulary lessons or lessons on reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, etc. In simpler words I explain the teacher to teach poetry with a purpose and an aim not just for the sake of it. Being a teacher, I am a realistic and completely agree that dealing with large classes and time limit to complete the portion it is a bit challenging. But, on the other hand I also believe that a teacher teaching a secondary class usually faces challenges everyday. So why not believe in oneself and accept a new challenge.

I have tried to make this challenge much easier by introducing few lesson plans to be used in the classroom.

### WHAT IS POETRY?

Poetry is a part of literature of a particular language. It is concerned with description of beauty or appreciation of beauty- has rhyme and rhythm, various attributes of language such as phonaesthetics, imagery, various symbolisms, and meters- to give rise to a sensible meaning and evoke the feelings and trigger the emotions of an individual. Every poetry runs around a specific theme or a reason for purpose. It is representation of the thoughts, feelings or emotions including a message of a poet written during pleasure or pain.

William Wordsworth defines poetry as, "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity", stressing on the emotional quotient of a poet involved.

If we talk about the origin of poetry we see that it all started in Gilgamesh in the Sumerian Epics. Later on the ancient poetry was nothing but the folklore such as the Chinese Shijing, or the epics that retell the story like from the Sanskrit vedas, Zoroastrian Gathas, Homeric retold epics, the beautiful Odyssey.

### ADVANTAGES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING OF POETRY

Time and again many researchers have proven that teaching and learning of poetry increases one's critical thinking abilities which is a must in this fast paced world. Nevertheless it improves the language skills as well. For example, Roger (2000:1) states: "Being able to read and write brings great benefits. Reading and writing are justifiably referred to as central parts of the "basic" and these basics are the tools for further learning. Writing helps to bring permanence and completeness to communication."

A teacher can integrate more than one language skills at one time or one lesson. The students can listen to the poetry reading to improve their listening skills, read a poem aloud ( loud reading) to develop reading skills, writing the summary of the poem for enhancing the writing skills etc. Many experts state that teaching appropriate poetry also helps in developing the English language competency level. As a learner is introduced to a better language and vocabulary in the poetry as well as the literary aspects of the poetry like imagery, rhythmic sequencing, rhyme scheme, genre including the figures of speech etc., all these aspects together develop the communicative abilities of an individual.

Smart (2005:2) states the importance of teaching and learning of using poetry in language learning class, "I like to bring poetry into the classroom because I believe that it is important and motivating for students to work with authentic texts. I find that poems work well because it is possible to work with a whole text, and sometimes with more than one poem in the same lesson." The secondary and elementary students have to be motivated to learn the second language properly where they are inspired to learn more.

### WHY POETRY IN ESL CLASSROOM?

Younger children learn all aspects of a new language much better by repeating the jingles and the sounds related to the meaning. older children are attracted to the puns as sounds that are repeated etc. Even adults enjoy poetry in the form of rhyme and rhythm, football chants including a proper rhyming sequence, various ringing sounds with a catch phrase or slogans etc, Benton (1978). But the problem arises when a poetry has to be taught to the masses.

Poetry does not only create pleasure as it deals with rhyming words, it has much more to offer. It would benefit largely if it is taught in an age appropriate manner. The right poetry is chosen to the correct age group of the students. If a poetry is introduced to the students specifically exploiting the creativity of the literary usage, style and diction of the poet, the outcomes will go a long way- improve the students creative thinking skills, improve the communication skills, teach the youngster life skills, never the less improve the cognitive abilities-to state a few.

### METHODS AND TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING POETRY

There are different types of approaches that can be adopted in the teaching of literature. The following five are the most common methods in the teaching of literature in ESL/EFL classrooms which . They are:

### **(i) Information Based Technique**

To quote Lazar, "areas such as history and characteristics of literary movements; the social and historical background to text; the biography of the author and its relevance to his or her writings; literary genres and rhetorical devices etc." This method is only used to depart knowledge as given in the surface meaning of the poetry. The method is basically very teacher centered where the teacher only is a giver of the facts and information and knowledge from the poetry. Although the advantage of this approach is that the learner becomes aware of the ethnic and cultural background of the poet and his country.

### **(ii) Personal Response Based Approach**

This approach aims at targeting the students or the learners by allowing them to be more active during this teaching. Here the teacher has to play a passive role by acting only as a facilitator, where the students are the main lead or play an active role. The teacher gives the explanation of the poem and asks the students to give their thoughts on a particular aspect and share their feelings, emotions, opinions and thoughts etc. Here in the Indian classes where the teacher faces the problem of large classes, the class can be divided into groups and group work can be given. This would also increase their creative thinking abilities. This approach helps the students, "to become actively involved both intellectually and emotionally" (Lazar, 1993). Various group discussions, brainstorming activities, inventing ideas are few of the strategies used in this method.

### **(iii) Language Based Approach**

This method is also a student centered approach where he/she learners are given a chance to be a part of various activities such as creative writing, rewriting, paraphrasing, summarising, concluding etc. This also involves the students in various activities like dramatic activities reading and imitating or acting out loud. This is a widely used and widely known method of teaching a poem.

### **(iv) Stylistics Approach**

As indicated by Leech and Short (1981:74), stylistics approach 'utilizes the mechanical assembly of semantic portrayal' for instance exceptional expressive decisions and examples and additionally metalinguistic things to investigate how implications in a content are imparted. Widdowson (1975) proposes that students should be alarmed to deviations from standard English and this is best accomplished through the examination of abstract talk with examples of customary composition. Aside from that, Bock (1993) advocates the advantages of alarming understudies to the expressive decisions and the designing of highlights in the content, and afterward urge them to investigate the impact of these decisions on the importance.

### **(v) Moral Philosophical Approach**

Moral Philosophical Approach embraced in verse instructing empowers educators to lead students in talking about the presence of good esteem discernable in a text. According to Ricoeur (1995), instructors who direct students read and decipher scholarly works under Moral Philosophical approach may help students to achieve self-understanding and self-acknowledgment. Aside from that, the assignment of translation of scholarly messages may additionally help students to investigate how the writings tasks and show the world we occupy (Shin, 1996).

### **Some tips for the teachers while teaching a verse**

To guarantee that verse worth its reality and makes positive washback impact on verse instructing for the upper optional school understudies, elective evaluation is a better alternative. Elective appraisals are more multidimensional in nature. This new vision of learning and assessment of understudy learning is wide based, applicable to genuine living, process arranged, and in view of different measures which give a rich depiction of understudy learning. Aside from that, instructors may embrace some of these sonnets as the asset to educate English in their dialect classroom. Such technique may urge understudies to think about how these highlights work in non-poetical settings and in the meantime help them in word-building. Also, some of these lyrics are

valuable jolt for exploratory writing exercises. Following are the few exercises that could be involved in teaching lessons.

### 1. "I Am" Poem

An "I Am" lyric is a decent approach to acquaint verse with kids, since it enables them to concentrate without anyone else attributes. The procedure is basic. The "I Am" lyric is comprised of three stanzas that are six lines each. It takes after a particular configuration with the aim of depicting something, regularly a man or a question. The start of each line is as of now composed, and the essayist fills toward the finish of the line by embedding a particular word or words. A straightforward methodology that all children will discover fascinating, it's sufficiently simple to actualize and an incredible procedure for understudy self-articulation. As you read their "I Am" lyrics, you may become more acquainted with your children on a more profound level.

### 2. Shape Poetry

Clarify the procedure for shape ballads, which involves beginning with a shape and building a lyric from that point. A few cases of shape ballads are haiku, diamantes and acrostics. Shape verse needs to do with the physical type of the words on the paper. While the words, composing style and abstract gadgets all affect the ballad's importance, the physical shape that the lyric takes is critical. Consolidating substance and frame makes a capable sonnet. This is a straightforward and fun approach to begin with verse in the classroom, and children of all review levels will appreciate it.

### 3. Turn Poems into Illustrations

Have understudies select a most loved ballad and show it. This should be possible on paper, carefully, on a huge sheet of butcher paper on the ground, or on the walkway by your classroom. You can utilize coloured pencils, markers, paint or chalk. Get the children discussing their sonnets while representing, or simply let them draw. After this movement welcome the class to do a "verse stroll" around the room or attracting space to share their impressions of the outlined ballads. Welcome others to see the verse craftsmanship. Consider blending up with an associate who might need to do this action with you. Take photographs of the verse workmanship to document for later discourse. This is an extraordinary, simple approach to begin investigating lyrics and artists while blending the medium of workmanship all the while.

### 4. Use Music to Teach Poetry

Have understudies pick a main tune. (You may need to do a bit of screening here.) Next, have them share the tune verses by understanding them as they would a lyric. Draw them in discussion about the likenesses they note between melody verses and verse. Have them "research" the verse in verses. At that point, utilizing a cell phone or tablet gadget, consider setting aside the opportunity to video you're sprouting classroom writers perusing their most loved verses - or have them do it. You can transfer your substance to YouTube Teachers. On the off chance that that is impossible, utilize or make your own particular YouTube channel and begin a general verse highlight. For instance, my channel is Teaching with Soul YouTube. Check whether this verse perusing enables your understudies to feel more associated with the possibility of verse in their day by day lives.

### 5. Create Your Own Poem in Your Pocket Day

Utilizing thoughts from Poets.org, you can bring this alive in your classroom effectively. For instance, on any day you pick, have your understudies make bookmarks with most loved lines from a most loved ballad. Likewise on that day, venture a sonnet on the divider or on your intuitive whiteboard and have understudies perused it so anyone might hear with you or to each other. Discuss how the sonnet influences them to feel. Talk about any similitudes understudies have as they encounter their lyrics. Have them do their very own intelligent lyric in a note pad or diary. Set aside opportunity to have understudies perused them so anyone might hear on the off chance that they feel good.

**UNIT LESSON PLAN****Understudies will:**

Comprehend the accompanying abstract terms: frame, sound, symbolism, allegorical dialect (comparison, illustration, exemplification)

Perceive the recognizing highlights of verse

**MATERIALS****Whiteboard and markers**

One of your most loved sonnets to impart to understudies

"Life Doesn't Frighten Me" by Maya Angelou

Selection from Lewis Carroll's "The Walrus and the Carpenter"

Nursery rhyme, for example, "Mean Old Mother Goose" that has rehashed words or expressions

"Developing Pains" by Jean Little

"It Seems I Test People" by James Berry

Transparencies and overhead projector or PC projector

Composing paper

Pencils

**LESSON DIRECTIONS**

Stage 1: Explain to understudies that verse resembles music: It ought to be tuned in to and delighted in.

Stage 2: Read and offer one of your most loved ballads.

Stage 3: Explain to understudies that most lyrics have their own particular sound, beat, or mood. Writers utilize numerous procedures to make extraordinary sounds; one is likeness in sound, a word whose sounds recommend its significance (crawl, applaud, and so forth.). Enable understudies to conceptualize a few cases of sound to word imitation.

Stage 4: Discuss rhyme with your understudies. At the point when two words have a similar consummation sound, similar to moon and spoon, they are a rhyming pair. Tell understudies that numerous lyrics have rhyming words toward the finish of lines.

Stage 5: Have understudies perused a section from "Life Doesn't Frighten Me." Make a rundown of the rhyming words in the lines. Ask understudies where are they put in the lines? Which express is rehashed?

Stage 6: Explain to understudies that sonnets have musicality, which is a beat made by an example of pushed and unstressed syllables. Focused on syllables are perused with more accentuation, and unstressed syllables are perused with less accentuation.

Stage 7: Read so anyone might hear the lines from Lewis Carroll's "The Walrus and the Carpenter."

Stage 8: Explain to understudies that in a few ballads, a cadenced example is rehashed again and again. This is known as a meter. Lyrics that don't have a specific mood are said to be composed in free verse.

Stage 9: Read a nursery rhyme to your understudies, for example, "Mean Old Mother Goose," that incorporates rehashed expressions and words. Disclose to them that redundancy is the utilization of sounds, words, expressions, or entire lines more than once. A writer can utilize redundancy to underscore a thought or feeling. Reiteration additionally adds a melodic quality to a sonnet.

Stage 10: Explain to understudies that similar sounding word usage is the reiteration of consonant sounds toward the start of at least two words. Offer a case of similar sounding word usage, for example, "Mean old Mother Goose/Lions free to move around at will." Point out that in the main line, two words start with a m sound; in the second line, two words start with an l sound.

Stage 11: Break understudies into gatherings of three or four. Have the gatherings read the lyric "Developing Pains" by Jean Little. Solicit them to recognize cases from rhyming words, sound to word imitation, redundancy, and similar sounding word usage.

Stage 12: Ask each gathering to react to one of the accompanying points. Urge different gatherings to add to the discourse.

What are the speaker's sentiments about crying before other individuals and about understanding her mom?

Could the speaker talk about with her mom the sentiments communicated in the first and last stanzas? Assuming this is the case, how?

What moves would you make in this circumstance?

Have understudies work together in gatherings of three or four to help each other

### HOME CONNECTIONS

Have understudies examine the topics of the sonnets with their folks, making to react to the inquiry: What were your sentiments about growing up and fitting in?

Post Instructional

### LESSON ASSESSMENT

Did understudies team up and add to dialogs amid gather exercises?

Assess understudies' last realistic coordinator.

Assess understudies' written work when revamping the lyric in this lesson

### CONCLUSION

Verse units in perusing and composing are typically put something aside for April, which is National Poetry Month. Notwithstanding, one month is scarcely enough time to open children to this critical sort.

Any verse in poetry delights youngsters since it causes us comprehend ourselves and the human experience by building spans towards comprehension. Awesome verse plays with dialect and sounds, which stun and please the ears of youthful pursuers and essayists. Numerous lyrics are short, which makes them alluring for hesitant or battling perusers and journalists who can work through them in a contracted measure of time.

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