



Wheels

Poetry on a transportation theme

Poetry Lesson Plan for Elementary Students

Subject areas addressed: Creative writing, science, and a bit of geography

Objectives:

- Use a mode of transportation as the theme for a poem that shares either personal experiences with the transportation or observations about that method of transportation
- Explore some of the scientific background behind types of transportation and how they operate.
- Create a poem that blends travel experiences with science and the geography that can be covered using the chosen type of transportation.

Activities:

- Ask students how they like to get from place to place, when they're not walking. Have them choose their preferred method of transportation that includes wheels for locomotion.
- Have them do a bit of research about how that mode of transportation works. What powers the wheels? How far can you go with that form of transportation? (Trains go further than skateboards.)
- As a third element, ask students to imagine the type of road trip they could experience via their selected mode of transportation.
- Compose a poem (in the teacher's preferred style) that includes 2 or 3 of these elements:
 - Conveying the feeling of traveling on the selected mode of transportation
 - The science behind how that type of transportation works
 - The geography that can be covered when using this method or
 - Attributes of the destination that they can travel to

Procedures and Ideas:

- Depending on the age and grade of your students they'll have some varied experiences to share. Those who haven't ventured far from home may think in terms of a car, bus or subway. Others may have traveled on the Orient Express. Some will choose their scooter, skates or bike as the conveyance they wish to write about.
- If you have a map available in your classroom, use the map to illustrate the distance that can be covered in a day via bike, car, plane (yes they have

wheels) or train. If your classroom is the departure point, where would your students end up and what would they find in their new geography at the end of that day? For older elementary students, have them do the math. For example, if a train has an average speed of 67 mph, plot on a map where you could be nine hours from now.

- As your students explore the science behind what fuels their mode of transportation and how it works, there may be teachable moments about different forms of energy. The peanut butter and banana sandwich that fuels the skater is a different type of energy than the diesel that fuels the train. Older students will understand differences between energy created through the calories in their food vs. energy created with gasoline. You can take this a step further and talk about vehicles that burn used grease to run the engine.
- Talk with students about the words they use to compose their poem, and how the rhythm of the spoken word can match the movement of the bike, bus, subway or other mode of transportation.
- When your Wheels poems are completed remember that the Anthology of Poetry would love to have them submitted for consideration in our forum for young writers. Visit www.anthologyofpoetry.com for more information, or to electronically submit individual stories.