

# Poetry Unit of Study

## Activity Guide

Appropriate for Upper Elementary,  
Middle School, and High School Students

### **Unit includes:**

Poetry Unit Virtual Room  
Activity Guide Includes Over 40 links to  
Videos, PDF's, and  
Jamboards for  
**ELA, Speech & Language, and  
SEL Lessons!**



# Poetry Unit of Study Activity Guide

This unit of study was designed to include multiple activities and resources that can be incorporated into a series of lessons for both onsite and distance learning settings. **Suggested grade levels include upper elementary, middle school, and high school** depending on the how the resources are used. Components of the unit include the *Poetry Virtual Room* and this *Poetry Unit of Study Activity Guide*.

Click on the items within the [Poetry Unit Virtual Room](#) to reveal links to activities and resources. Each link in the Virtual Room has been paired with a page in this guide. Each page contains lesson ideas and more links and resources for **ELA, speech therapy, special education, and SEL activities**. When displaying resources virtually for teletherapy or distance learning sessions, share your screen according to your platform's instructions.

This unit was created with reluctant writers, readers, and communicators in mind. Poems are often shorter texts and can be more accessible for students who avoid or struggle with written or verbal language. Starting off a poetry unit with immersing your students in poems is the first step. Use the [Poetry Unit Virtual Room](#) to build interest and background knowledge about poetry. When using the Virtual Room with a group, share your screen or send the link for students to explore the room on their own.

Poetry is written to be seen and heard. Teachers and therapists can read poems aloud and encourage students to read poems, parts of poems, or words from poems out loud. Watch videos of poets reading poems aloud. Show students not only what poetry sounds like, but what it looks like. Encourage students to tell what they notice about poems and how poetry looks the same or different from a story or informational text.

One of the most powerful ways to motivate your student poets is to allow them to watch you write a poem. Sharing your own writing and writing process with students proves that you understand the challenge and risk of putting words on paper or sharing your own writing.

In preparation to teaching poetry writing, start your own writer's notebook and use some of the following lessons to write draft poetry that you can share with your students. Remember that drafts don't need to be perfect. Also, create class anthologies or plan a poetry café reading as a culminating activity to wrap up the unit.

Image Description & Link	Link Description	Instructional Ideas
<a href="#">Sleeping cat</a>	Link to humorous poem about a cat.	<a href="#">Page 4</a>
<a href="#">Amanda Gorman Poster</a>	Link of Amanda Gorman reading her poem, <i>The Hill We Climb</i> .	<a href="#">Page 5</a>
<a href="#">Student holding magnifying glass</a>	Link to site PDF of Descriptive Adjectives for Free Verse Poems	<a href="#">Page 6</a>
<a href="#">Photo of colorful hand</a>	Link to Calista Ogburn reciting her poem, <i>Hands</i> .	<a href="#">Page 7</a>

# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description	Instructional Ideas
<a href="#"><u>Writer's Notebook</u></a>	Link to Jamboard for creating your own writer's notebook.	<a href="#"><u>Page 8</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Photo of student with ?</u></a>	Link to video in SafeShare about parts of a poem with Kwame Alexander.	<a href="#"><u>Page 9</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Earphones</u></a>	Link to video in SafeShare to Poetry Rap.	<a href="#"><u>Page 10</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Mug of writing tools</u></a>	Link to PDF of examples of <i>Where I'm From Poems</i> .	<a href="#"><u>Page 11</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Cookies</u></a>	Link in SafeShare of Nikki Grimes describing her process of writing food poems.	<a href="#"><u>Page 12</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Green arrow Found Poetry</u></a>	Link to video in SafeShare of <i>One Boy Told Me</i> by Naomi Shihab Nye, a Found Poem.	<a href="#"><u>Page 13</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Blue arrow List Poems</u></a>	Link to video in SafeShare about writing List Poems.	<a href="#"><u>Page 14</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Yellow arrow Haiku</u></a>	Link to video in SafeShare of Kwame Alexander teaching how to write a Haiku.	<a href="#"><u>Page 15</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Brown arrow Borrowed Poems</u></a>	Link to video in SafeShare of Kwame Alexander teaching how to write a Borrowed Poem.	<a href="#"><u>Page 16</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Red arrow Acrostic Poems</u></a>	Link in SafeShare for writing Acrostic Poems.	<a href="#"><u>Page 17</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>More Resources</u></a>	Link to resources for student poets and teachers of poetry	<a href="#"><u>Page 18</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Still More Resources</u></a>	Still more links to resources for student poets and teachers of poetry	<a href="#"><u>Page 19</u></a>



# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#"><u>Sleeping cat</u></a></p>	<p>Link to humorous poem about a cat.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Ask students what they notice about the poem.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>What is the poem about?</i></li><li>• <i>Who is telling the story or whose voice is talking in the poem?</i></li><li>• <i>Was there any rhyme?</i></li><li>• <i>What word endings did you notice (ful as in plateful)?</i></li></ul> <p><i>Another humorous pet poem:</i></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Mother Doesn't Want a Dog by Judith Viorst video</u></a></p> <p><i>Make lists of favorite animals or pets.</i></p> <p><i>Make lists of words that describe animals or pets using different senses (sound, smell, touch, looks like).</i></p> <p><i>Use lists to make a list poem starting with I see, I like, I feel, I hear, or I smell.</i></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Descriptive Adjectives List</u></a></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Pet Photo Wall Jamboard</u></a></p> <p>Discuss feelings about pets and how spending time with pets does or does not increase calm and/or reduce stress.</p>

# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p><a href="#"><u>Amanda Gorman Poster</u></a></p>	<p>Link of Amanda Gorman reading her poem, <i>The Hill We Climb</i>.</p>
<p><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Ask students what they notice about the poem.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>What is the poem about?</i></li><li><i>Who is telling the story or whose voice is talking in the poem?</i></li><li><i>Was there any rhyme?</i></li><li><i>What did you notice about the words?</i></li><li><i>How is listening to a poem different than just seeing the poem in print?</i></li><li><i>What is your favorite line in the poem? Write that line in your writer's notebook.</i></li></ul> <p><a href="#"><u>Writer's Notebook Jamboard</u></a></p>	<p><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p>Discuss or list interests and passions in a Writer's Notebook or in a Google Document. How can your passions and interests make your community a better place to live or your school a better place to attend?</p> <p>Discuss or write the following questions with the students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What hill do you have to climb?</li><li>Who are the everyday heroes in your life?</li></ul>

# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p><a href="#">Student holding magnifying glass</a></p>	<p>Link to site PDF of Descriptive Adjectives for Free Verse Poems</p>
<p><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p>Using the <a href="#">“Other Ways to Say” list</a>, choose two words from each list and write them in your writer’s notebook.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make up sentences using the words.</li><li>• Articulation students can practice the words with their target sound.</li></ul> <p>Watch <a href="#">Free Verse Poems Video</a> then discuss how free verse poems don’t have to rhyme and don’t have rules.</p>	<p><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p>Use emotion words from the “Other Ways to Say” list to write list poems.</p> <p>Use these examples as mentor texts:</p> <p><a href="#">Emotion List Poem: Fear</a></p> <p><a href="#">Emotion List Poem: Joy</a></p> <p><a href="#">Color Poems</a></p>

# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p><a href="#"><u>Photo of colorful hand</u></a></p>	<p>Link to Calista Ogburn reciting her poem, <i>Hands</i>.</p>
<p><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Ask students what they notice about the poem.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>What is the poem about?</i></li><li><i>Who is telling the story or whose voice is talking in the poem? How do you know?</i></li><li><i>Was there any rhyme?</i></li><li><i>What words or lines in the poem really stuck with you?</i></li><li><i>What did you notice about the poet?</i></li></ul>	<p><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Describe your own hands and what your hands can do to create a poem:</i></b></p> <p>Listen to <a href="#"><u>These Hands</u></a> by Hope Lynne Price.</p> <p>Use the book as a mentor text for creating your own list poem:</p> <p>These hands can_____.</p>

# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p><a href="#"><u>Writer's Notebook</u></a></p>	<p>Link to Jamboard for creating your own writer's notebook.</p>
<p><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Creating your own writer's notebook</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use the link above and choose one of the writer's notebook templates.</li><li>• Duplicate the entry pages with date several times.</li><li>• Use the annotation tools to write on the pages.</li></ul>	<p><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p>Use the <a href="#"><u>"Other Ways to Say" list</u></a> to find search and find images that match emotions.</p> <p>Students can also upload their own images and photos into their Writer's Notebook that are important to them.</p>



# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p><a href="#"><u>Photo of student with ?</u></a></p>	<p>Link to video in SafeShare about ingredients of a poem with Kwame Alexander.</p>
<p><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p>After viewing the video about defining poetry, Listen to <a href="#"><u>Crocodile's Toothache</u></a>.</p> <p>What ingredients did this poem have?</p> <p>Did you hear rhyme? Did you hear a rhythm? Did you hear repetition?</p> <p>What other ingredients might go into a poem? Make a list in your writer's notebook.</p>	<p><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p>Discuss with students that poems can be about anything. Have students search for poems they like and either write them or add images of them into their Writer's Notebook.</p> <p>Watch <a href="#"><u>If You Give a Child a Word</u></a></p> <p>Respond in either a discussion or in writing about what you noticed and how the poems made you feel.</p>

# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#"><u>Earphones</u></a></p>	<p>Link to video in SafeShare to Poetry Rap.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Have students listen to the video then ask them what they notice about the poem.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>• What is the poem about?</i></li><li><i>• Who is telling the story or whose voice is talking in the poem?</i></li><li><i>• Was there any rhyme?</i></li><li><i>• What did you notice about the rhythm?</i></li></ul> <p><i>Discuss how rap and song lyrics are poetry. Write a list of favorite songs in your Writer's Notebook.</i></p> <p><i>Do a search for the lyrics and discuss the following questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>• How is rap the same or different from poetry?</i></li><li><i>• How are song lyrics the same or different from poetry?</i></li><li><i>• What words or lines really stick with you in the song or rap?</i></li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p><i>Discuss how rap and song lyrics are poetry. Write a list of favorite songs in your Writer's Notebook.</i></p> <p><i>Do a search for lyrics to these favorite songs.</i></p> <p><i>*make sure any lyrics <u>you</u> share with the students are school appropriate before sharing.</i></p>

# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p><a href="#"><u>Mug of writing tools</u></a></p>	<p>Link to PDF of examples of <i>Where I'm From</i> Poems.</p>
<p><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p>Read examples of <i>Where I'm From</i> poems.</p> <p>Listen to <i>Where I'm From</i> poems made into videos with photos.</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Where I'm From by Kay Little</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Where I'm From by Priscilla Farinas</u></a></p> <p>Use these videos as mentor texts for writing your own draft <i>Where I'm From</i> poem in your writer's notebook.</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Where I'm From poem template PDF</u></a></p> <p>Collect photos or images that help you to think about where you are from and add them to your writer's notebook.</p>	<p><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p>Review similar forms of poetry called, I Am poems or Bio Poems. These poetry forms encourage self-reflection and feelings of empathy with other writers and poets.</p> <p><a href="#"><u>I Am Poem Generator</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Bio Poem</u></a></p>

# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#"><u>Cookies</u></a></p>	<p>Link in SafeShare of Nikki Grimes describing her process of writing food poems.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Have students listen to the video then ask them to make the lists that Nikki Grimes talked about in the video.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make several different food lists in your writer’s notebook.</li><li>• Share lists with group members.</li><li>• Make up sentences using the words.</li><li>• Write metaphors and similes with the foods.</li></ul> <p><a href="#"><u>Metaphor and Simile PDF worksheet #1</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Metaphor and Simile PDF worksheet #2</u></a></p> <p><b><i>What so you notice about the poems about pineapple upside down cake?</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>What is the poem about?</i></li><li>• <i>Who is telling the story or whose voice is talking in the poem?</i></li><li>• <i>Was there any rhyme?</i></li><li>• <i>What did you notice about the rhythm?</i></li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Have students listen to the video then ask them to discuss Nikki Grimes’ feelings about her grandmother.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What did Nikki Grimes say about her grandmother?</li><li>• How does she feel about her grandmother?</li><li>• How do you know?</li><li>• What does it mean to feel “safe” around another person?</li></ul>

# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p><a href="#"><u>Green arrow Found Poetry</u></a></p>	<p>Link to video in SafeShare of <i>One Boy Told Me</i> by Naomi Shihab Nye, a Found Poem.</p>
<p><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Have students listen and watch Naomi Shihab Nye read her poem and tell what they notice about the poem.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the poem about?</li><li>• Who is telling the story or whose voice is talking in the poem?</li><li>• Was there any rhyme?</li><li>• What makes the poem a “found poem?”</li></ul> <p><i>Use the poem as a mentor text to begin your own found poem. Create a page in your writer’s notebook add a list of titles such as:</i></p> <p><i>One Boy Told Me</i> <i>One Girl Told Me</i> <i>One Grandma Told Me</i> <i>One Father Told Me</i></p> <p><i>Begin collecting or remembering things you were told and write them under the title.</i></p>	<p><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Have students listen and watch Naomi Shihab Nye read her poem and tell what they notice about the poem.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the poem about?</li><li>• Who is telling the story or whose voice is talking in the poem?</li><li>• What different emotions did you notice or feel as she read her poem.</li></ul> <p><b>Take On a Different Perspective</b></p> <p>If the poem was titled, <i>One Mom Told Me</i> or <i>One Grandfather Told Me</i>, how might the words change?</p> <p>If the poem was titled, <i>One Dog Told Me</i> or <i>One Pencil Told Me</i>, how might the words change?</p>

# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p><a href="#">Blue arrow List Poems</a></p>	<p>Link to video in SafeShare about writing List Poems.</p>
<p><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Have students listen to the video then ask them to make lists in their writer's notebooks.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make a list of things you enjoy.</li><li>• Make a list of your favorite people.</li><li>• Make a list of your pets or pets you wish you had.</li><li>• Make a list of family members</li></ul> <p>Choose one topic from your lists and brainstorm ideas about that topic. Create your own draft of a list poem in your writer's notebook.</p>	<p><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Have students listen to the video then ask them to make the lists in their writer's notebooks.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make a list of things you enjoy.</li><li>• Make a list of your favorite people.</li><li>• Make a list of your pets or pets you wish you had.</li><li>• Make a list of family members</li></ul> <p>Share your lists with other group members. <b><i>Did you hear something from another group member's list that you would like to add to your own?</i></b></p> <p>Offer words of encouragement and caring as group members share their lists.</p>

# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p><a href="#">Yellow arrow Haiku</a></p>	<p>Link to video in SafeShare of Kwame Alexander teaching how to write a Haiku.</p>
<p><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p>After watching the Kwame Alexander video about Haiku, use the <a href="#">Haiku Writing Template PDF</a> to show how you wrote your own Haiku. The template can also be used as a shared writing or independent writing activity.</p> <p>More Poem Patterns to explore:</p> <p><a href="#">Cinquain Graphic Organizer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Writing Diamante Poem</a></p> <p><a href="#">How to Write a Diamante Poem Video</a></p> <p><a href="#">Diamante Poem Template</a></p>	<p><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p>Use this <a href="#">Editable Haiku Template</a> to brainstorm lists of emotions. Choose one emotion as your topic and use the template to create your poem.</p> <p>Share your poems or drafts with group members. <b>If you are stuck, that is okay.</b> Share what you have and ask for suggestions from others.</p> <p>*Tell students to remember that <b>drafts are just drafts</b>. You can always go back and revise later. They <b>don't have to be perfect</b>. You can help your students to take more writing risks if you are willing to share your own drafts and ask for suggestions from your students.</p>

# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p><a href="#">Brown arrow Borrowed Poems</a></p>	<p>Link to video in SafeShare of Kwame Alexander teaching how to write a Borrowed Poem.</p>
<p><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p>After watching the Kwame Alexander video about Borrowed Poems, try out the format presented in the video in your writer's notebook.</p> <p><b>More Borrowed Poem Patterns to explore:</b></p> <p>Use the book, <a href="#">The Important Book</a>, as a mentor text to create your own borrowed poem.</p> <p><a href="#">The Important Book Read Aloud Video</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Important Poem Template</a></p> <p>Use the book, <a href="#">Happiness is a Warm Puppy</a>, as a mentor text to create your own borrowed poem. Start each line with, "Happiness is _____."</p> <p><a href="#">Happiness is a Warm Puppy</a></p>	<p><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p>Using the read aloud video of <a href="#">Happiness is a Warm Puppy</a>, create your own borrowed poem with each line starting with, "Happiness is _____."</p> <p>Expand on this concept by exploring other emotions and making poems where all lines or most lines begin with, "Sadness is" or "Loneliness is" or "Joy is."</p> <p>Share your poems with the group. Offer words of encouragement to group members. Did someone share an idea that you really liked? Add it to your writer's notebook.</p>



# Poetry Unit of Study

Image Description & Link	Link Description
<p><a href="#">Red arrow Acrostic Poems</a></p>	<p>Link in SafeShare for writing Acrostic Poems.</p>
<p><b><i>Speech Therapy &amp; ELA Ideas</i></b></p> <p>After watching the video demonstrating how to write an Acrostic Poem, try one of your own using your name, the season, or the month you were born.</p> <p>Use the <a href="#">Acrostic Poem Template</a> to model write in front of your students. Students can also use the template to get started or write drafts in their Writer's Notebook.</p> <p>Resources for Writing Acrostics:</p> <p><a href="#">Acrostic Poem Checklist</a></p> <p><a href="#">ABC wordlist for writing Acrostic Poems</a></p>	<p><b><i>SEL Ideas</i></b></p> <p>After watching the video demonstrating how to write an Acrostic Poem, try one of your own using your name, emotion words, or names of people you care about you.</p> <p>Use the <a href="#">Acrostic Poem Template</a> to model write in front of your students. Students can also use the template to get started or write drafts in your Writer's Notebook.</p> <p>More Acrostic Templates:</p> <p><a href="#">4-letter words</a></p> <p><a href="#">5-letter words</a></p> <p><a href="#">6-letter words</a></p> <p><a href="#">7-letter words</a></p> <p><a href="#">8-letter words</a></p> <p><a href="#">9-letter words</a></p> <p><a href="#">10-letter words</a></p>

# Poetry Unit of Study

## More Resources

Resource Link	Resource Description
<a href="#"><u>Short Poem Examples for Elementary Students</u></a>	Students need to hear and see lots of poetry. This list provides many examples.
<a href="#"><u>Short Poem Examples for Teens</u></a>	More examples of poetry written by teens to share with students.
<a href="#"><u>Poetry Prompts</u></a>	Great resource for poetry ideas and brainstorming.
<a href="#"><u>Rhyme Desk Family Friendly Rhyming Dictionary</u></a>	Great resource to assist with finding words that rhyme with words in your poems.
<a href="#"><u>Student Thesaurus</u></a>	Another great resource to help with finding just the write words.

# Poetry Unit of Study



## Still More Resources

Resource Link	Resource Description
<a href="#"><u>Kid's Poems: How to Introduce Poetry Into the Elementary School Classroom</u></a>	Regie Routman provides some excellent advice on how to introduce poetry and poetry writing to your students.
<a href="#"><u>Poem in Your Pocket Day</u></a>	A great way to build enthusiasm around the reading and writing of poetry.
<a href="#"><u>Poem in Your Pocket Day Printables</u></a>	Resource goes along with Poem in Your Pocket Day.
<a href="#"><u>National Poetry Month Resources</u></a>	April is Poetry Month. This link provides details and ideas for celebrating poetry.
<a href="#"><u>Creative Communication Poetry Machine</u></a>	Super fun online poetry generator. Great for teaching kids that poetry writing is easier than they think.

# Poetry Unit of Study



Hi!

My name is Diana Parafiniuk, and I am founder and CMO of E-Therapy, the teletherapy experts. I hope you enjoy this activity. Please visit us at  **E-Therapy** for information about our online therapy services and check out our blog, [Empower](#), for more activities and resources. During these uncertain times,  **E-Therapy** is here to help.

Kindly,  
Diana

Home



Next