

Lesson Plan Created for: HAM Slam Poetry Workshop #1

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Lesson Plan Title: Sculpting Your Story

Experience Level: Youth & Adult Participants, self-identified as “Beginner – Advanced”

Lesson Length: 3 Hours with four 5-minute transitions / breaks

Objectives for workshop #1 (revised)

- *Participants will utilize the artistic mediums central to the show to explore the legacy theme of HAMILTON, AN AMERICAN MUSICAL through the lens of history around Memphis.*
- *Participants will support their knowledge of poetic vocabulary through discussion and by viewing written or video examples.*
- *Participants will explore topics about the history around Memphis and choose topics most relevant to them as the starting point for writing an original poem.*
- *Participants will reflect on the theme of legacy and consider ways to include it in an original poem using the form and devices of their choosing.*
- *Participants will create original pieces, safely share using the workshop guidelines, practice reflective analysis / self-evaluation of their work, and receive constructive feedback in small groups.*
- *Participants will practice listening and demonstrate audience etiquette for “poetic performance”, i.e. supportive snaps, focused attention, etc.*

Materials:

Notebooks, paper, pencils, pens smartboard/screen for power point, white board/dry erase markers, giant sticky note tablets, laptop, mp3s, mp4s, Bluetooth speaker, DI box with phone jack music connection, mobile sound station

Concepts/Vocabulary:

- Poetry, poem, poet, slam
- Poet tools & techniques (devices): rhythm, rhyme, simile, metaphor, imagery, etc.
- Presentation tools & techniques: voice projection, enunciation, stance, etc.
- Topic, Theme, Legacy
- Staging, entrance, exit

Opening:

Get Acquainted [20 Minutes; 1:00-1:20pm- facilitated by Jenita in large group format]

- Welcome, purpose of today's event, format for the day, length of event
- Set the mood- Watch "become a slam poet" video <https://youtu.be/9f8VcV8v2LE>
- Brief self-introductions by MCs & TAs
- Brief video of HAMILTON storyline
- "Rules of engagement" power point (moderated safe space operating on "ouch" system, content warnings, and respecting individual choices to share or listen.)

Warm Up [5 Minutes; 1:20-1:25pm- facilitated by Jenita in large group format]

- Tension reducing stretch & vocalizing (*trills, jaw shake, project, peas remix*)
- ABC tongue twisters
 - a) Around the apple tree the rugged rocks amply ran
 - b) The big black bug bit a big black bear and the big black bear bled blue.
 - c) Can I cook a proper cup of coffee in a copper coffee pot?

****Break into small groups with MC/TA pairs [5-mins; 1:25-1:30pm]****

Warm Up continued [facilitated by MCs & TAs in small group format]

- *Name / Gesture Exercise 10 minutes; 1:30-1:40pm - facilitated by MC]*
 - MC asks participants to stand in a circle. The MC will say his or her name with an accompanied gesture. The rest of the circle will repeat the name and gesture attempting to mimic the vocal and physical characteristics as closely as possible. Continue around the circle, with each person sharing name/gesture and the group echoing names/gestures. Once everyone has had a turn, MC will ask one or two volunteers attempt to recall everyone's name. To wrap up review everyone's name one more time.
- *Rhyming War [10 minutes; 1:40-1:50pm- facilitated by MCs in small group]*
 - MC will split group in half to make 2 teams. Teams will choose one person to be the "General" that will select 2 folded slips of paper from a hat. Taking turns, each will unfold their slip of paper that has a pre-written one-syllable, two-syllable, three-syllable, or four-syllable word on it. The goal is for teams to generate rhyming words and whisper them to their General. The Generals will take turns shouting rhyming words at their opponent. MC will act as referee and TA will use a marker to count points with tally marks on a large sheet of sticky paper. When they run out of rhymes, the round is over and the team with the most tally marks wins.

Development:

Brainstorm [10 Minutes; 1:50-2:00pm- facilitated by MCs in small group]

- MC will pose the question: What is legacy?
- MC follows up with a second question: Is legacy about the past, present, or future
- MC writes a prompt on a white board and acts as scribe while the group randomly shouts out words or phrases to complete the prompt.
 - Prompt: “The legacy of Memphis is...”
- MCs snap a picture of the completed brainstorm.

Poetry tools [5 minutes; 2:00-2:05pm- facilitated by MCs in small group]

As a group, MCs will ask participants to consider how a poem is different from other kinds of writing such as an essay, a novel, or a play. Expand conversation by discussing the tools a poet uses to create poetry.

- Literary devices “poetry tools” image [5 mins; 2:05-2:10pm- facilitated by MCs]



***Advanced question: What are some different types of poems {Encourage the group to listen online to soundtrack from HAMILTON in search of poetic examples. }

- *Sculptures [5 minutes; 2:10-2:15pm- facilitated by TAs as partner work]*
 - In pairs, one participant chooses to be the sculptor and the other the clay. TA will call out a Memphis iconic location and the sculptor will use imaginary puppet strings to mold / shape their clay model. Final sculpting instructions can be given verbally. Sculptors look around room to view other clay model sculptures. The partners switches roles, the TA calls out another iconic location, and the sculpting begins.
- *Masterpiece [5 minutes; 2:15-2:20pm- facilitated by TAs as small group exercise]*
 - To expand the “Sculptures” exercise, the TA will ask everyone to form a large circle. The TA will call out a historical event such as “The great depression”. A volunteer will be chosen to come to the middle of a circle and form their own body into a frozen statue representing their interpretation of the event. There is no wrong way to do it. One by one, participants will be invited to join the group of sculptures until everyone is included in the masterpiece. If time permits, invite a few participants at a time to un-freeze from their statuesque pose and walk around to view the rest of the masterpiece. To expand the viewing exercise, each person can point to a pose and tell the group what they “See”. After viewing, everyone goes back to the circle to wipe the slate clean and start over with another historical event masterpiece.
- *Role on the wall [10 mins; 2:20-2:30pm- four 2-min rotations facilitated by TAs]*
 - MCs pass out notebooks as TAs post a “role on the wall” creating four stations in the corners of the room. Explain to participants that they will go to each of the 4 stations and brainstorm aloud with the gathered group to generate thoughts about the image, specifically considering the 5 senses- see, smell, taste, hear, touch. Each person should jot down their own brainstorm notes in their notebook. When the facilitator calls “time” everyone visits a different station and jots down a 5-senses brainstorms on new sheet of paper. Continue this pattern ensuring that each person has visited each station.
- *Free writing [10 minutes; 2:30-2:40pm- facilitated by MCs]*
 - Participants briefly review each page of their role on the wall brainstorm and choose one as inspiration for free writing in sentence/paragraph format. MC calls time after 5 minutes
 - After MC calls “time”, additional instructions are given to delete words and reshape the paragraph into the poetic form the participant chooses.

*****5-Minute Break; 2:40-2:45pm*****

Flying Writing Solo! [25 minutes; 2:45-3:10p- facilitated by MCs as individual exercise]
MCs will invite participants to write individually to create an original poem.

- During this creative writing segment MCs will encourage participants to:
 - continue with their role on the wall writing or begin a new writing
 - consider their thoughts about the history of Memphis as a possible topic
 - reflect on the theme of legacy and possible ways to include it in the poem
 - jot down a brainstorm list of everything that comes to mind
 - choose a topic most relevant to them as the start point for an original poem
 - resist editing, focusing instead on getting the ideas down on paper

*****5-Minute Break; 3:10-3:15pm*****

In-Progress Reading [20 Minutes; 3:15-3:35pm- facilitated by MCs in small groups]
MCs will review the “moderated/safe space” guidelines and then offer the opportunity for volunteers to share their work. MCs will give constructive feedback for participants to consider in future revisions.

Wrap Up

Reflection [10 Minutes; 3:35-3:45pm- facilitated by MCs in small group/closing circle]

- Look inward with these questions:
 - What was it like to say your words aloud?
- Share out with this question:
 - How did saying your words aloud make you feel?

Encourage participants to continue developing them this poem own their own, at home.

*****Transition to the large group space [5 minutes; 3:45-3:50pm]*****

Closing

Rose & Thorn [5-minutes; 3:50-3:55pm in large group using partner format]

Facilitator will ask participants to write a rose and a thorn on a sticky note. A “rose” is a highlight of the day. A “thorn” is a frustration, a road block, or an area where they want to improve. Participants will then talk with a nearest seat partner to share their rose & thorn. Upon exiting, everyone will leave the sticky notes on the large pieces of sticky butcher paper posted on the theatre walls.

Farewell [on exit 3:55-4:00pm] Congratulate 3 people for a job well done with high fives, smiles and kind words.