



Grade level: 11
Length: 3-4 weeks

Introduction

One way to explore a topic like September 11th is by allowing students to explore their emotions creatively. As demonstrated in this excerpt from the HBO documentary What Happened on September 11, students can create beautiful works of art using sadness, empathy, and hope to express what they have learned in constructive and critical ways.

Watch the Exploring 9/11 In Creative Arts excerpt, then review this lesson plan to see how your students can explore 9/11 in a creative way.

Objective

To explore how the 9/11 attacks have impacted the course of history and the effect they have had on the personal narrative of those who were there. Students will create their own perceptions of the events of 9/11 through creating and analyzing poetry.

Common Core Standards

Comprehensive Common Core Alignments at end of lesson plan.

Reading Standards for Literature: 1, 2, 3, 4

English Language Arts Standards for Writing: 9

English Language Arts Standards for Speaking & Listening: 1, 1C

Resources

- Exploring 9/11 in Creative Arts Excerpt
- "What Happened on September 11", HBO
- The Survivor Tree poem
- Online audio of the Survivor Tree poem
- 9/11 Headlines

Preparation

1. Give students a copy of the Survivor Tree poem. Before hearing the poem out loud, students will take a few moments to read it to themselves. Ask students if any words jump out at them in a positive or negative connotation and explain why.
2. Students will then listen to an online audio version of the poem to help them understand the pace and flow. We will go through half of the poem together line by line and find sign posts. Students will be expected to explain why a particular sign post was chosen to describe a line of phrase. Students will complete the rest of the analyzing at home as a homework assignment.

Activity

1. Students will share their analyzed poems in partners or trios and then discuss with the class their interpretations and information they found to compare and contrast between each other's analysis. This will lead to a larger discussion about perception and point of view.

2. After the discussion, students will create a 9/11 headline poem using headlines from newspapers that ran the day after 9/11/2001.
 - A headline poem is a poem that borrows words or phrases from a variety of newspaper and magazine headlines until they form a poem. The only basic rules are that the poet should not copy an entire headline, and the poet cannot add any additional words.
 - The length should be a minimum of 14 lines.
 - Sample Headline Poem #1:

Unlikely Faces
Fading
In pursuit of Promises
Precarious
Currents in a Bitter River

Assessment/Reflection

Students share their “found” poems with the class and discuss the intention behind their writing, as well as how their perceptions of 9/11 have changed as a result of the lesson.

Common Core Alignments

These alignments were written for the 11-12th grade level. However, this lesson can easily be adjusted for use in other grades and corresponds to the following Common Core Standards. Student assessments and expectation may vary depending upon grade level and ability

Reading Standards for Literature

Key Ideas and Details

- Standard 1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- Standard 2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
- Standard 3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

Craft and Structure

- Standard 4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

ELA Standards for Writing

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- Standard 9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.



Newspaper Headline Poetry

Stefanie Woods

Bayonne High School, Bayonne, NJ

ELA Standards for Speaking & Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

- Standard 1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- Standard 1C: Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.