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Title: Studying the Structure of Poems using Tagxedo

Duration: two class periods

Subject Area: ELA

Grade Level: 4th Grade

Unit: Unit One

Standards:

ELACC4RL5: Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text

ELACC4RL2: Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text

Opening: Present students with a wide variety of poems to browse. Include poems that have a purposeful use of line breaks and stanzas within the structure (for example, to emphasize particular words or phrases in the poem). Students will work independently to make observations about the structure of the poems – describe the “look” of poetry on the page. Share observations through class discussion and create an anchor chart to document key details of structure of poems (verses, line breaks, stanzas, rhythm, rhyme, etc.) Focus discussion on key differences between the structural elements of poems and the structural elements of drama and prose.

Explain to students that because of key differences between the structure of poems and the structure of prose, the arrangement of words on the page within a poem is very important. Sometimes, the shape of the words on the page helps illustrate or highlight the theme. These poems are called concrete poetry or shape poetry.

Work Period: Students will choose a theme for their poem and brainstorm possible topics, words, and phrases related to this theme. Using details that support the theme, students will write and publish their poem using word processing software, focusing on using traditional line breaks and stanzas within the structure of the poem.

Students will visit www.tagxedo.com and will copy and paste the text of their poem to create a word cloud representation of their poem – also called a concrete or shape poem.

Closing: Students print Tagxedo shape poem and traditional line break and stanza poem. Display both versions of the poem and invite students to do a “gallery walk” in which they read and make observations about each poem. Students should focus on making observations about the structure of each poem. Compare the two using guiding questions – How is the structure similar? How is the structure different? How does the structure of these poems compare to the structure of prose? In which poem can you more easily identify the theme? (Optional: Instead, students can publish their typed poems and Tagxedo images to a website, blog, or Edmodo group to complete this comparison step in an online environment).

Optional extension: Invite students to use the Theme Poem creator at readwritethink.org

Differentiation: Differentiate the lesson during the work period by encouraging students who need an additional challenge to utilize poetic devices within the text of their poem (rhyme, alliteration, similes, metaphors, repetition, etc.) Provide additional support as needed by allowing students to arrange pre-written lines of poetry into stanzas to create their own poem.

Differentiation

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Small group | <input type="checkbox"/> Product Matrix | <input type="checkbox"/> Choice of product |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborative group | <input type="checkbox"/> Project based learning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Time or method |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible grouping | <input type="checkbox"/> Problem based learning | <input type="checkbox"/> Compacting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tiered instruction | <input type="checkbox"/> Level of text | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (see procedures) |