

Wednesdays in the Woods Activity: Nature poetry

Materials Needed:

- Writing utensil, paper, and a surface to write on
- Hand lens or jar for collecting a few items from outdoors (optional)

Instructions:

- 1. Go outdoors and spend some time looking for an object or setting that interests you. Use your senses to make observations. Decide what the object or setting reminds you of; what do you wonder?
- 2. Write down some notes or words that come to mind when you make your observations.
- 3. Write some lines or sentences about what you observed, using the notes or words you wrote down. Pick a title it can be mysterious or it can convey exactly what you observed. This is your poem! You could share it out loud with a tree, pet, family member, or nobody.

Reflective Questions:

- How does looking at something, talking about it, and writing about it differ?
- If someone wrote a poem about you, what details would they include; that is, what would they notice or wonder about *you*?

Extensions of this activity

- You could write a poem without a title and see if someone can guess what you wrote about by your description.
- Write an *acrostic* poem: write a word vertically on a piece of paper and then write a sentence or phrase for each letter of the word.

• Write poetry using media besides pencil and paper; for instance, try writing poetry in the mud, in the sand, or with fingerpaints!

Resource

Ferra, Lorraine, and Diane Boardman. *A Crow Doesn't Need a Shadow: A Guide to Writing Poetry from Nature*. Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1994. Print.

Sample poems

Observation poem

by Hannah Raymond

Daffodils

Yellow tissues, freshly churned butter, spring's perfume
Drooping trumpets gathered 'round
Vases in Grandma's window are begging to be filled
With these fragrant bursts of cheer

Acrostic poem

by Hannah Raymond

An astonishing array of yellows
Flourishing in wetlands
Forgotten as soon as the lilacs bloom
Opening in sunshine
Dutifully planted in autumn
Indifferent to spring storms
Little clusters of joy

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Squished by a curious deer

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