



Poetry Card Activity

From PSU writing professor, Meg Peterson

This activity allows for a supportive way to write about an exhibit or an individual artwork and can be modified for students at all levels. I often use this activity as a metaphor for how we all share experiences and cultural materials like language when we write, but how we each read and use these materials in different ways.

Materials:

- Larger (4 x 6) index cards

Process:

Divide the group into smaller groups of about six participants. Each person should be given five index cards. They are to write one word inspired by the exhibit on each card. When everyone has written their words, the leader gathers them into a pack. The groups exchange packs of cards.

With the new pack of cards they have been given, the group, working together, arranges them into a poem. Do not worry about rhyming, and do not worry if there are repeated words. This can be used to effect in the poem.

- Set a time limit and remind the groups when they have one minute left
- Have each group share their poem
- You might discuss how it adds to their understanding of the exhibit or provides a different perspective on it
- You might want to take pictures of them so that they can be preserved

Next, have the group decide on the five most important words they want to keep. Set the other words aside. Spread these words out where everyone can see them.

Each person should write a poem which includes all five words. They may add as many other words as they want.

Share these poems in the group.