

April Madness

Indiana Standards addressed

11.7.5/12.7.5	Use appropriate rehearsal strategies to pay attention to performance details, achieve command of the text, and create skillful artistic staging.
11.7.12/12.7.12	Critique a speaker's use of words and language in relation to the purpose of an oral communication and the impact the words may have on the audience.
11.7.20/12.7.20	Recite poems, selections from speeches, or dramatic soliloquies with attention to performance details to achieve clarity, force, and aesthetic effect and to demonstrate an understanding of the meaning

Students will critique presentations of winning poems from the [Poetry Out Loud](#) competition to determine criteria for an excellent poetry presentation. They will then use those criteria to prepare and rehearse a poetry presentation of their own.

Day One

1. Present an overview of the April Madness project.
2. Ask students to identify elements of a strong poetry presentation based on their previous experience with poetry.
3. Use [the criteria from the Poetry Out Loud site](#) to affirm or add to student lists. Compile a tentative class checklist. (If students do not have to memorize their poems for your project, address the issue of note cards now.)
4. Hand out hard copies of poems, read aloud. Then show some [YouTube videos](#) of students performing the same poems as they participate in the Poetry Out Loud competition. Ask students to critique the presentations using the tentative checklist.
 - ["Forgetfulness" by Billy Collins](#)
 - ["Frederick Douglass" by Robert E. Hayden](#)
 - ["Dulce et Decorum Est" by Wilfred Owen](#)
 - ["Pied Beauty" by Gerard Manly Hopkins](#)
 - ["Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll](#)
5. Ticket out: Students identify the 2 criteria they believe are most important to a successful poetry presentation.

Day Two

1. Return to the previous day's discussion of the qualities of a successful poetry presentation. Do students want to add anything to the checklist they designed together yesterday?

2. Students are to find a poem they can recite before the class.
3. Working with a partner, students practice saying the poem aloud with expression.

Day Three

1. The first two students recite their poems.
2. When they have finished reciting, the other students cast ballots for the presentation they believe was better. (Decide in advance whether the presenters will vote. If they vote, assure them that they are allowed to vote for themselves if they want to.) The teacher decides how to divide up her ballots.
3. When the ballots have been collected, the teacher says a few words about each presentation and announces how the teacher's ballots have been cast.
4. Student ballots are counted, the totals are tallied, and the winner is announced.
5. Repeat as needed at the beginning of class for the rest of the competition.

April Madness

- All poems must be appropriate for school. Aside from that, choose the poems you like: Shakespeare, Dr. Seuss, song, psalm, something you wrote - it's all good.
- You do not have to memorize your poem.
- Every day we will vote on which presentation we believe is better. Students each cast one ballot. Ms. Beard will cast the same number of ballots as there are students in the class that day, divided between the presenters as she sees fit.
- You receive a grade for the quality of your first presentation. This grade is based on the rubric, not the number of ballots received.
- Each time you advance, you earn 2 bonus points.
- You can select a new poem each time you advance, or you can keep the one you used before.
- If you miss your initial presentation (for a grade), be prepared to make it up the day you return. If you are absent the day you are scheduled to present, you forfeit.
- If you have a field trip or other scheduled absence, you are allowed to trade with someone. You must trade at least 24 hours in advance and tell me.
- The winner in each bracket (class) receives a gift certificate to Brian's Bookstore.

Sample Presentation Checklist

Student Name:	Yes	Mostly	No
The poem is appropriate for school.			
The speaker is comfortable with the poem (knows all the words, pauses appropriately, seems to have practiced).			
The speaker makes good eye contact with the audience.			
Everyone can hear the speaker easily.			
The speaker's voice supports the poem by adjusting volume, speed, and expression appropriately.			
The speaker begins by stating the title and poet.			
The presentation concludes solidly.			