

LESSON PLAN

Science Poetry

[Elizabeth Gold](#), a master of combining skills as a writer, editor, producer, and T&W teaching artist, helps students do some combining of their own as poets and scientific researchers. In this introductory lesson, Gold meets a class in the midst of individual research projects and demonstrates how to creatively organize and present scientific research. Though her class is working with pre-determined subjects, this model is adaptable to beginning a research project, or to choosing a subject for a stand-alone lesson.

Grade(s) taught: 4th

Genre(s) taught: Poetry, personification poem, descriptive prose, science

Common Core State Standards: (Refer to the Anchor Standards for Writing at <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/4/>)

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3.D
Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience

Guiding Questions: What is the difference between “report” style writing about a specific animal and “creative” writing about the same animal? How do you use research to write creatively? What is another creature’s point of view (POV)? How do you write from that POV?



[via wikimedia](#)

Lesson

Introduction:

I start with introductions. Students say their names and the animals they're studying for their science reports. *Although this was written for students researching animals, one could alternatively ask students their favorite animal (ideally an animal they have some knowledge of) and use those as the students' subjects.*

I ask them for a few facts about their animals, allowing them time to fill in the SHARE YOUR RESEARCH portion of the worksheet. Can their classmates add some other interesting facts about their animals?

Main Activity:

I pass out (and/or project on the board) copies of "[Song of the Worms](#)" by Margaret Atwood. We read the poem aloud, either me to the class silently listening, or in read-around format to engage students. We discuss the poem. Notice that Atwood answers all of our questions from the SHARE YOUR RESEARCH side of the worksheet with this poem. But it's not a report! How does Atwood do this? By entering the animal's POV.

I ask students to complete the FROM YOUR ANIMAL'S POV prompts on the worksheet. After they complete their animal worksheet, I ask them to use the worksheet as a guideline from which to write descriptive prose about their animals.

Closing:

Students share what they've written with the class.

Materials:

Worksheet, Margaret Atwood's *Song of the Worms*, below or available online [here](#).

Vocabulary:

Point of view, perspective, contemptuous

Multi-Modal Approaches to Learning:

This lesson appeals to **kinesthetic** learning, focusing on the physical sensations experienced by students' chosen animals; **verbal** and **aural** learning, poem read aloud in class; and **interpersonal** learning, as this lesson is based on sharing information with one another.