

# The Weekly Update

from SD State Library School Library Services

March 28, 2022

## April is National Poetry Month!

If you are looking for lesson and display ideas in April, consider honoring National Poetry Month!

According to poets.org, National Poetry Month was launched in April 1996 as a reminder to the public that "poets have an integral role to play in our culture and that poetry matters." Since 1996, it has become a large literary celebration with people all around the world marking poetry's importance in our lives.

### Activities to try this month for both you and your students:

- Ask your students to choose a poem to read aloud to their families.
- Organize a virtual reading of your students reading original or favorite poems out loud.
- Ask each student to create an anthology of their favorite poems.
- Begin each day or new class period with a poem.
- Curate a reading list of poetry books for your students and staff.
- Have your students make and send greeting cards to their family members featuring lines of poetry.
- Have your class choose poems and write them in chalk on the sidewalk or driveway.
- Publish a digital, school-wide literary journal or anthology of student poems.
- Celebrate Poem in Your Pocket Day on April 29 and ask your students to mail or email a poem to someone in their community.



## Poetry in the Classroom

As a part of its database collection, the South Dakota State Library offers EBSCOhost's [Professional Development Collection](#). This is a highly specialized database of full-text electronic information especially for educators, professional librarians, and education researchers. It contains content from 450 full-text journals and 750 peer-reviewed, full-text journals.

In doing a quick search for how to teach poetry in the classroom, I found a long list of resources! Here are just a few helpful articles:

### [POETRY IN JOY: Using poetry as a tool for student engagement.](#)

*The article focuses on the use of poetry as a tool for student engagement. One significance of incorporating poetry in the classroom is the opportunity for students to engage in the content. Listed are some ways to use poetry in the classroom including celebrating a subject area by sharing a poem, writing a poem to reflect on the class and the subject area and having students create an image or a piece of art inspired by a poem.*

### [Biography and poetry in the classroom.](#)

*Recommends books that teachers can use in teaching biography and poetry as literary genres. Reasons for concentrating on a specific literary genre; 'Learning About Biographies: A Reading and Writing Approach for Children,' by Myrna Zarnowski; 'For the Good of the Earth and the Sun: Teaching Poetry,' by Georgia Heard; 'Sunrises and Songs: Reading and Writing Poetry in an Elementary Classroom,' by Amy A. McClure.*

### [Birds of a Feather.](#)

The article presents suggestions for teacher-librarian collaboration centered on poetry and the study of science, specifically a unit on birds. The author recommends "Raptors of the World" by James Ferguson-Lees, "Using Poetry in the Classroom," by Ross M. Gurkhardt, and "Seeing the Blue Between: Advice and Inspiration for Young Poets," compiled by Paul B. Janeczko. Teachers and the librarian created an interdisciplinary lesson that included a field trip to a nearby raptor center.

### **A Poetry Coffee House: Creating a Cool Community of Writers.**

*This article explores the sharing of writing through a coffee house-style poetry reading. Although this article focuses on a workshop and share activity used in a preservice teacher language arts and literacy course, it contains tips and ideas for implementing poetry coffee houses with elementary and secondary school students and preservice and inservice teachers. The coffee house activity with preservice teachers consists of three parts: a discussion about poetry, a poetry writing workshop, and an open mike sharing session. The goals of the coffee house are to broaden preservice teachers' conceptions of poetry, to model poetry writing with students, and to create a venue to share poetry as a community of writers.*

**Try your own search in the Professional Development Collection to see what else you can find!**



BY DOROTHY K. MOORE

I'll never forget the day I misread my students' attentive gaze. I'd been elaborating on a poem about the beauty of morning. The room was quiet; the children's eyes were fixed on me. As a first-year teacher, I was in my glory. My classroom was under control and I was extolling the joys of rhythm and rhyme.

Suddenly, Dawn raised her hand and asked a question that would forever change the way I teach poetry. "Why do you keep saying my name?" she asked, visibly embarrassed by her classmates' laughter. As soon as she learned that the subject of the poem was synonymous with her name, Dawn joined the class in laughing at the unintentional humor.

Nowadays, I present poems in a way that generates personal perceptions and deeper appreciation from every child. One method I've found is particularly effective with children for whom English is their second language.

**Getting started.** I begin by gathering the students around me on the floor. I give a copy of the poem to each child. That way, they can all follow along as I read.

I read the poem aloud without comments or questions. After I've finished reading, I ask the students to share with their neighbors any images the poem may have conjured up for them.

The students then discuss these images in small

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*\*A sample article from EBSCOhost's Professional Development Collection.*

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## 1 More April Celebratory Theme

As most of you may already know, April is also **SCHOOL LIBRARY MONTH!**

School Library Month honors school libraries and librarians and the essential role they play in schools and the learning process. It was first celebrated in 1985 and is sponsored by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), a division of the American Library Association.

April is a great time to advocate for and show off your school library! Two ways to do so are to complete the [School Library Survey](#) and to apply for the [21st Century School Library Award](#).



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## 2 Poetry Bulletin Board Ideas





\*From Love Your Library on Flickr



\*From PBL Junior High Library on WordPress

## 3 More SDSL Databases for Finding Poetry



### Books & Authors

Search for poets and poetry books.



### SD Digital Library

Explore poetry from South Dakota.



### Primary Sources

Read poetry from primary sources.



## Upcoming Learning Opportunities

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
July 2022

**MORE INFO**



**EXCITE!**

Exchange. Create. Infuse. Transform. Energize.  
2022 Theme: INFORMATION LITERACY



COLLECT  
+  
CONNECT

BECOME A MEMBER



The SD State Library's Collect + Connect Facebook Group is for SD School Librarians! Join to share your ideas and photos, ask your questions, reach out for advice, and discuss all of the awesomeness that happens in your library!



## ..from SDSL School Library Services

The Weekly Update is a correspondence from the South Dakota State Library focusing on current topics in school libraries, best practices, resources, professional development, and more.

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