



Professional Development

November 8th, 2016

8AM-2:30PM

Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts

“Writing For PIANO SLAM”

Connecting music to the core Curriculum through creative and narrative writing for PIANO SLAM. Music’s form, function, and inspiration used in models to develop language and attention for learning in ELA, STEM to STEAM, social studies and the Arts.

Writer Educator and Poet, Neil de la Flor, will lead teachers in use of music and arts to develop lesson plans in writing activities in using new and established models to teach and empower students to write authoritatively in core subjects and connect to a personal creative process.

Throughout the day, lesson plan’s will incorporate the following resource talks:

- Mechanics of Language and Music – evocation of emotional response, form function inspiration – Dr. Juan Chattah, Professor of Music Theory at the University of Miami.
- Putting Music and Art in STEM makes STEAM. Music and Language in Math, Science & Tech – Laura Bracken, University of Miami Rosenstil School.
- Finding your authentic cultural voice through music and creating writing – Chimamanda Adichie Story.
- Neil de la Flor holds a MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Miami. His work appears regularly in top U.S. poetry journals including “Best American Poetry Blog.” He is the performing arts journalist for the Knight Foundation and teaches high school creative writing in Broward County.

Piano Slam Daily Activities – Neil de la Flor, MFA

Introduction & Welcome

Overview of schedule

Schedule of Activities:

Exquisite (Corpse) Sonnets Collaborative Writing – (Theme: migration and/or music)

Participants will create collaborative poems using this surrealist game. This writing game involves 2 or more people. The beauty of this game is that you can add 'rules'. For Piano Slam, I'd suggest limiting the themes to either music and/or migration so that the writers have a theme in mind. For example, "write about your or your family's experience with migration" or "think about your favorite song or musical genre". You can get even more specific by asking participants to include specific words with the same consonant or assonant sounds, such as Consort, Continuo, Contralto, Cor anglais, Cornet. You may even impose iambic pentameter to constrict and force musicality into the writing: <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/sonnet-poetic-form>.

Instructions:

1. Note: everyone in the group will start a poem
2. Participants write two lines of text
3. Fold paper just enough to leave the last line exposed
4. Exchange poem in clockwise fashion.
5. Repeat steps 2-4 for 7 exchanges.
6. At the end, students open poem, read and assign a title.
7. Needs: sheet of paper and pen. (A theme can be applied. Rules can be applied to prompt to direct process.)
Share poems. 45 – 60 minutes.

Sample poems: http://www.fenceportal.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Seaton_de-la-Flor.pdf

Exquisite Corpse: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exquisite_corpse

Introduction (Migration & Identity): Who Are You?

In this exercise, participants will write about their 'Migrant Voyage' and how that voyage shaped their identity. This exercise asks participants to dredge up (or re-imagine) their family history with migration using an extended metaphor, vivid imagery, figurative language and their "native tongues". Note: This can be a prose poem.

Instructions:

1. Participants will first sit in circle. Group leader ask group members to 'think about their earliest and/or most vivid memory of their family's migration story'. Or, an experience in which two worlds collide. See L. Lamar Wilson's "A Patch of Blue in Tenleytown". Group leader will model by sharing. Each student will share a brief personal experience that relates to the topic. No more than 5 minutes.
2. Students will then break off and write about their experience for 15 minutes. Students will come back to circle. Each will share the last 3 – 5 lines of their writing. Students will then go back and write & revise for another 15 minutes. Share poems.

Note: this process can take up 2 to 3 classes to fully develop ideas and revise

Rigoberto Gonzalez: <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/things-shine-night>

Regie Cabico: <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/mango-poem>

Wendy Wu: <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/my-dissent-and-my-love-are-woven-inside-me>

45 – 60 minutes.

Personification: A Musical Instrument or Musical Term Will Save....

In this exercise, participants will personify an object, such as a violin, that saves the world from silence. As an added bonus, you can use this exercise to personify other objects, such as microscope, that will save _____. It's a great way to have students incorporate vocabulary words, musical terms, scientific terms/theories, historical events and even mathematical formulas to stimulate creativity and interest in other fields. Students are given 30 – 45 minutes to craft and mini-epic drama, poem or prose piece in which this object saves something. 45 – 60 minutes.

Ekphrastic Musical Poems/Ekphrastic Visual Poems

*an ekphrastic poem is a vivid description of a scene or, more commonly, a work of art. Through the imaginative act of narrating and reflecting on the “action” of a painting or sculpture, the poet may amplify and expand its meaning. However, in this exercise, we will replace “a work of art” with either “a song” or “a portrait of my family”.

Instructions:

1. Participants will listen to a song (group leader can allow individuals to select their own song or limit choices in another way to serve a particular purpose). For a longer class session or multi-day projects, students may listen to a variety of songs—classical and contemporary—to find the exact inspiration they're looking for. The same goes for using family photographs.
2. Participants will free write while the song plays and then go back and revise for a final piece.
3. Group leader may ask participants to further complicate the ekphrastic piece by asking them to write their poems in a form, such as a sestina or a Ghazal.

Note: The goal is to capture the moods, feelings and memories that the music or photograph/image conjures up

“Joga” or “Hyperballad” by Bjork during her performance at the Royal Albert Concert Hall.

http://youtu.be/tU_Wx8ooRjI

“Ode to Country Music” by Sandra Simonds: <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/ode-country-music>

“I Live in Music” by Ntozake Shange <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=F86YBqmcaMU>

“Sestina: Altaforte” by Ezra Pound: <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/sestina-altaforte>

Share 45 – 60 minutes.

Dinosaurs in the Hood by Danez Smith

Students will write a poem in the style of Danez Smith that subverts a popular film, tv show or pop culture phenomenon, such as pokemon, that places an emphasis on the participants migrant history and their own unique cultural context. Once again, you can ask students to infuse their writing with musical terms to create with the two major themes of the migrant voyage and music.

45 – 60 minutes. Share.

"Dinosaurs in the Hood" by Danez Smith: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/detail/57585> & Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJwiOTeKDOQ>

Science Isn't Just for Scientists

Participants will comb through scientific texts and "steal language" and phrases that they will use to construct poems that fuse found and original text. *The same can be used for musical terms.

1. Locate a scientific text: <https://www.aps.org/publications/apsnews/200512/history.cfm>
2. Ask participants to create a new poem using the language found in the text.

Incredible Bridges: "Translation for Mama" by Richard Blanco

In this final prompt, writers will write a poem in two languages that bridges two cultures. The poem can be written in the point of view of another family member, as a letter to a family member or as a letter to oneself imagining who they'd be if their family had not migrated. Link to Blanco's poem: <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/translation-mam%C3%A1>.

See detailed lesson plan here: <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/lesson/incredible-bridges-translation-mama-richard-blanco>