

The Word Hunter's Workshop: Creating Found Poetry

Materials Needed:

- Old magazines, newspapers, or discarded books (that you have permission to cut up!)
 - Scissors
 - Glue stick
 - Several sheets of construction paper or cardstock (different colors are great)
 - Optional: Markers, colored pencils, or glitter glue for decoration
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Lesson Plan Details

1. Learning Objectives (The Goal for Today)

- **Understand:** The student will be able to define "Found Poetry" as poetry created by taking words and phrases from other sources and reframing them.
- **Create:** The student will create at least one original found poem by selecting, arranging, and pasting words from a magazine or newspaper.
- **Express:** The student will use word choice and arrangement to convey a specific mood, image, or idea.

2. Warm-Up: "Word Association Chain" (5 minutes)

Let's get our brains warmed up for poetry! We'll play a quick game. I'll say a word, and you say the very first word that pops into your head. Then, I'll say a word that connects to yours, and we'll go back and forth to create a chain of connected ideas.

Example:

- Teacher: "Ocean"
- Student: "Blue"
- Teacher: "Sky"
- Student: "Cloud"
- Teacher: "Pillow"

Teacher's Note: This activity shows the student how words can connect in surprising ways, which is the foundation of today's poetry project. There are no wrong answers!

3. What is Found Poetry? (10 minutes)

Introduction: "Today, we're not going to write a poem from scratch. We are going to be 'word hunters!' We are going to find words that are already written and give them a new home in a poem. This is called **Found Poetry**."

Explanation:

- Show an example of a found poem (you can create a simple one beforehand). Point out how it uses different fonts, sizes, and words that don't seem to go together at first.
 - Explain the process in simple terms: "Think of it like making a collage, but instead of pictures, we're using words. You hunt through magazines for words that catch your eye—words that are interesting, funny, or beautiful. Then, you arrange them to make something totally new."
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- Discuss how the meaning can change. The word "dream" in a mattress advertisement feels different than when you place it next to the word "wild" from a travel article. You are the artist giving the words new power!

4. The Word Hunt: Guided Practice (15 minutes)

Let's do the first part together. We'll both look through the same magazine page.

1. **Step 1: The Hunt.** "First, just scan the page. Don't read the articles. Just let your eyes find individual words that pop out. Let's look for words that feel exciting or sound cool." As you find them, point them out. "Ooh, I see 'discover,' 'brilliant,' and 'secret.' What words do you see?"
2. **Step 2: The Harvest.** "Now, let's cut them out. Don't worry about being neat. Just snip out the words we liked." Cut out 10-15 words together.
3. **Step 3: The Playground.** "Let's spread our words out on the table. This is the fun part. Move them around. See what happens when you put 'secret' next to 'brilliant.' What about 'discover the secret?' Try making a few different lines. There is no right or wrong way, just what feels interesting to you."

Teacher's Note: This guided stage removes the pressure of the blank page and models the creative, playful process. Emphasize exploration over perfection.

5. Independent Creation: Your Found Poem (20-25 minutes)

Now it's your turn to be the lead poet! Here is your mission:

1. **Choose Your Source:** Pick a few pages from any of the magazines or newspapers.
2. **Go Hunting:** Look for at least 15-20 words or short phrases that you find interesting. Think about words that are descriptive (like "silky," "loud," "glowing") or action words (like "running," "falling," "whispering"). Cut them out.
3. **Arrange & Play:** On a blank sheet of construction paper, start arranging your words.
 - Try starting with your favorite word. What could come next?
 - Move them around until you create a phrase, an image, or a feeling you like.
 - Your poem can be very short (just a few words) or longer. It doesn't have to rhyme or make perfect sense. It just has to be *yours*.
4. **Glue & Decorate:** Once you have an arrangement you love, glue the words down. If you want, you can use markers or colored pencils to add drawings or designs around your poem that match its feeling.

6. Sharing & Reflection: Poet's Chair (5-10 minutes)

Let's celebrate your creation! Please share your poem by reading it aloud. After you read it, I'd love to hear your thoughts:

- What was your favorite word that you found?
- Why did you decide to arrange the words the way you did?
- How did it feel to create a poem this way? Was it easier or harder than writing from scratch?
- If your poem had a color, what would it be? Why?

Teacher's Note: The focus here is on celebrating the creative process, not on critiquing the work. This builds confidence and encourages the student to see themselves as a creative individual.

7. Differentiation & Extension (Optional)

- **For Extra Support:** Work alongside the student, creating your own poem while they create theirs. You can "trade" interesting words you find. Or, offer a pre-selected article with a strong theme (e.g., an article about space or animals) to narrow the focus.

- **For an Extra Challenge:** Challenge the student to create a found poem with a specific goal:
 - Create a poem using only words of a certain color.
 - Create a poem that tells a tiny story (with a beginning, middle, and end).
 - Create a poem about a specific emotion (joy, mystery, etc.).