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 Eng 504/ Kennedy
 2nd Draft of Genre Study

Genre Study: Free Verse Poetry

What is a genre study?

Part of the success of a genre study is being able to convince a teacher or a set of administrators that it is a valuable endeavor. As with any new technique, before presentation, it requires a clear definition and model. Throughout our seminar we have been confronted with great minds in education that see the value of a genre based study. Randy Bomer in his book *Time for Meaning: Crafting Literate Lives in Middle and High School* states, "When we as readers come across a text, one of the first things we do (automatically, subconsciously) is assess its genre and create a stance for ourselves as readers based on its kind" (117). By getting students adept at identifying genres by their defining features, we prepare students to interpret the world of reading around them. By studying particular genres in depth, students must read, write, listen, and speak the genre with fluency. An ancient Chinese proverb states, "I hear I forget, I see I remember, I do, I understand." At the heart of the genre are performance and the analysis of performance. In this way students fully engage in what they study and in turn gain ownership of what they have learned and participate in making the study authentic.

Explanation of the model step by step

In this study we follow the eight-part plan for genre study as developed by Charles Cooper:

- Reading Models- Presenting touchstone texts to students to model their initial understanding of the genre form.
- Listing the Basic Features- In this section we define what it is that makes poetry truly unique from other genres.
- Choosing Topics- In this section the students take what they've learned and seek out their own poetry for evaluation.
- Inventing and Researching- In this step we engage the students in a series of pre-writing activities from which they will gain a greater understanding of the specific craft features.
- Planning- In this section we revisit old ideas the students have dealt with in their writer's notebooks. Through teacher conferences the students begin to assemble the building blocks of their original compositions. It is in this stage also where we begin to write more polished poetry.
- Revision- this is the step where it is made clear that writing is a process and that pieces of work must be both peer reviewed and discussed with the teacher. It is also in this step where we insert lessons on the conventions of writing to help students polish their pieces.

- Reflection- Students reflect on their process of studying, reading, and writing poetry.
- Portfolio- In this section, students will once again evaluate their writing and assemble a portfolio of poetry. Each poem selected will be accompanied with a brief description of why they believe the piece to be an effective, well crafted, piece of poetry. This also where we can encourage the publishing of work to show that there are audiences outside of their peers and the classroom.

Reading Models

This will be a genre study taught to 11th-12th grade and will address standard two, which states, “Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.” It will also address standard three that states, “Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.” As Bomer states, “the genre study is the most sensible way to unite reading and writing, which is so essential for those of us who have a single period for English/Language Arts.”(127).

For this genre study I have chosen free verse poetry. For the purpose immersion and engagement in the genre, I will focus on poems in free verse and poems in open forms. These poems are the accessible in length, they read like our thoughts, and the experience of writing them feels like a meditation on an idea. They are also the most common poems being written now in modern anthologies and weekly periodicals that students will come in contact with. In free verse poetry the writer is not bound by form yet form is still embodied. Teaching free verse poetry allows a teacher to skip passed the rebellion against the forms and focus directly on expressing content. If our goal is to get students engaged in listening, speaking, writing, and reading poetry then free verse poems are a great place to start. They contain many of the features of traditional poetry, but are not bound by rigid meter and rhyme. The best way for us to start this genre study is by examining closely our touchstone texts. Each of these texts embodied at least one of the features common to free verse poetry. As a class we will be listening to a poem by the slam poet Saul Williams called *Penny for a Thought*, located online at: (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHatA0OgMD0>), and we will read TS Eliot’s *The Love Song of J Alfred Proof rock*, Allen Ginsberg’s *America*, Yusef Komunyakaa’s *Starlight Scope Myopia*, William Carlos Williams, *Spring and All*, and Langston Hughes’s, *I too Am America*. These touchstone texts will be found within *The Making of a Poem: A Norton Anthology of Poetic Forms*. We will also view a student work entitled, *Lunar Eclipse* (Atwell)

See appendix A for model texts.

The students will listen to these poems and take out the writer’s journals that I have given them. These will serve many purposes throughout our study. They will provide the students a place to respond to their reactions of the poems they read. They will provide them with a place to ask questions of the poet, of the teacher and of your fellow students, They will be the place where you eventually we will store our tool box’s containing the features of this genre, as Georgia Heard calls them, and they will be the place where each

student begins their journey as a poetic writer looking at the world through their unique lens and beginning to put what they see onto paper.

I will approach our initial readings of the touchstone texts as Bomer suggests in his book *Time for Meaning*, with the goal to, “extend and build significance of the students initial noticings (in the poetry) to help them notice the techniques they see, so they can use similar strategies in their own poems”(127). He suggests that the teacher let the class initially use their own Meta language to help them name what they see in the texts. In this way we, as teachers, don’t initially squash the aesthetic and emotional responses with dissection of form and technique. For the first couple readings I will model the read aloud. As Nancy Atwells says, ”Everyone is enthralled by a good read aloud. Hearing literature brings it to life and fills the classroom with an author’s language. The teacher’s voice becomes a bridge for kids, taking them into territories they might never have explored because they don’t yet have schemas for the genre, subject author or period” (144). By following her model of the read aloud it allows the words to jump off the page. Students begin to hear the range of inflection that can occur with poems. I will go through each of these poems three times. The first time I would like the students to just listen to the poem. When we as a class finish, you will write your initial reactions to the poem and what you believe its literal meaning to be in your writer’s notebooks. Include vocabulary you didn’t understand and ask questions pertaining to comprehension. After addressing these misunderstandings I will read the poem again. This time you will follow along and mark up your copy of the poem, circling phrases that you enjoyed or ideas that were well conveyed. At this point I want you to ask yourself; what did the author do here to make you have the response you had? You can describe these noticings in any way you find helpful. Bomer uses the example of called quick, imagistic, vignettes, “MTV cuts”. By beginning to define these features in your own words you will have a better chance at remembering what the technical words are for the features you describe in our next lesson. As we learn these features we will practice writing practice converting ordinary language into poetry by examining how to employ the features of the genre. This list of Meta language we create will constantly be expanding, as we get more observant of new features. The last reading of the poem will entail you splitting into groups, dividing our touchstone texts amongst each group, and each of you taking home your assigned poem and practicing reading the poem out loud. Tomorrow in class we will each read our poems so we can see how different students interpret how each poem is read. We will then write in our writer’s notebooks commenting on the experience.

Basic Features of Poetry

Now we align the metalanguage we have used initially to describe poetic features with the technical terms typically used for writing and interpreting free verse poetry. Why? So students can take these skills into any classroom setting and apply these techniques in the common academic language. Poetry is a direct statement of emotion, experience, and observation, through the use of creative and figurative language. The

definition of free verse is that it has no identifiable patterns of rhyme, rhythm, and meter. Free verse poetry still embodies the features of lyric, and free verse poetry but it is not bound by traditional meter, rhyme, or rhythm. Free verse poetry is not a sonnet a sestina, a villanelle, or any other kind of fixed form poem. These are the features of the genre we identified in our touchstone texts:

Theme- what is the universal idea trying to be conveyed in the poem? What is the general idea? Are there any recognizable emotions or experiences being shown?

Diction- this applies to the author's choice of words.

Denotation vs. connotation- Denotation is the exact meaning of a word. Connotation is the meaning suggested by the word that goes beyond its literal meaning.

Persona- who is speaking in the poem?

Tone- what is the poem or speaker's attitude? Some examples of tone are sincere, solemn, joyful reverent, sarcastic, witty, passionate, humorous, ironic, reflective calm, bold, spirited, etc.

Imagery-What do you see in the poem? What pictures does the author paint for you? Images are created through the use of sensory detail; sight, smell, touch sound, and taste.

Symbolism- when one thing represents another. A symbol is an image, object, or concept that represents something or another in addition to its own inherent meaning.

Simile- making a comparison between two nouns using "like" or "as".

Metaphor- making direct comparison without using like or as. Example: The man was a sponge. He could soak up any information the teacher said.

Form- this is the structure of the poem. This is the shape of the poem. Within form there are some key ideas? Is the poem organized into verse stanzas? Where does the author choose to break lines and start new ones. The shape of the poem should always be viewed as intentional.

1. Now we will complete a mini lesson on the differences between a sentence and a poem. Through this lesson students will begin to understand how to use figurative language to transform ordinary sentences into poems. We will practice writing and analyzing the writing of poetry with a few lessons on the craft of poetry.

Is a Sentence a Poem?

From Readwritethink.org

2. Have students view the image that you've chosen and write a sentence of less than 20 words describing the picture. You can have students choose which picture to describe or pass out pictures to the class, ensuring a wide range of difference is represented in the class. You may, of course, also use only one picture for the entire class. (A picture from Susan Sontag And Annie Liebovitz's Woman)
3. Students should set their sentences aside as you begin a discussion of poetry.
4. Lead a class discussion that focuses on the following questions:
 - What is a poem?
 - What makes a poem a poem?
 - Does a poem have a certain look, length, feel, purpose?

Compile students' responses on the board or on chart paper, so that they can return to the information later in the lesson.

5. Have students compare their definitions with those in [Wikipedia entry on the word poetry](#).
6. Read the chosen one-sentence poem. Lead a class discussion that focuses on the following questions:
 - What are the poem-like qualities in this piece?
 - Is it a poem (take a vote if necessary)?
 - What makes it/ does not make it a poem?

Encourage students to refer to the Wikipedia entry and their own notes on the board or chart paper.

7. Chart out students' observations about what makes a poem and what makes a sentence.
8. Have students return to the sentence/poem that they wrote at the beginning of the session, and complete the [A Sentence as a Poem](#) handout, revising and formatting their sentences into a poems. Alternatively, this step can be completed as homework or a journal entry.
9. If time allows, ask for volunteers to share their sentences/poems and reflections.

See Appendix B

Student Selections

As both Bomer and Cooper state, student participation in choosing model texts is key to the genre studies success. Bomer states, "Having students search for model texts not only ensures that our choice of genre will be authentic but also demonstrates that

authenticity, in effect saying to the students, this isn't just a school thing; this is the real thing. You can find this in your world" (124). This is where students can develop their own relationship to the genre, their own concept of it. They also will have to immerse themselves in the genre to find what topics they enjoy exploring the most. Here I agree with Bomer again. This search can often prove difficult. He suggests directing the students to some concrete sources of the genre like, modern poetry anthologies, websites like www.poetrysociety.org, and weekly periodicals such as the New Yorker and letting them see what they find. It is important that the students see the importance of the search because for any lover of a genre knowing where to look to find your next fix is half the battle.

For homework have your students look for five poems they connect to. In their writer's notebook, for each poem, I want the students to locate 2-3 of the features of poetry defined earlier, give a brief literal interpretation/summary, and write why they chose the poem. In class the next day the students will present at least one of their poems and present their findings, their interpretation and their reason for choosing in small groups. Then volunteers from each group can share with the class. I will circulate while they are in groups and offer assistance.

Compile a list of common features they found in majority of the selected poems. Explain why the poem they selected may or may not fit into our genre based on our criteria. If the students didn't find poems with imagery, for example, it does not mean that it is not an important feature of the genre.

Inventing

This mini lesson will help you write your own poems:

This lesson is called **Imitation is Greatest form of Flattery**

In this lesson I want you to think of all the features of poetry that we have covered. Think of all the examples I showed you, and the examples that you discovered on your own and pick the feature poem that reflects the way you want to write the most. Pick the poem with the themes you are most interested in. Once you have found the poem, take out your writer's notebooks and complete one of the following tasks:

- Write the Sequel or prequel poem to the one you have chosen. What do you think the author should have said before or after this poem?
- Re write the poem from another point of view. If it is written from a woman's perspective, rewrite it from a mans. If it is from parent to child, then rewrite from child to parent.
- Write an imitation poem with the same form, tone, and theme as the poem you chose

- Practice using metaphor or simile to describe something with figurative language.

I will model this on the overhead. I will ask the class to give me a poem and I will write an impromptu humorous version of the chosen poem. By imitating a poem the students will familiarize themselves with line breaks, word choice, and tone, making it a natural transition to writing their own original poems.

My next mini lesson is called write like a writer: Most writers need solitude to write. This doesn't mean being isolated. Writers need solitude to be able to focus on their surroundings or their subject to write. I want you to find an inspirational place. Find a place where you can observe. This could be the subway, a park bench, by the window in your apartment, out in the woods, or on a farm. When you get to this place, sit quietly and try to absorb all that is occurring around you for a few minutes. Use all of your senses to interpret. Then write. Describe what you see, smell, taste, hear and touch. Use point of view and tone to give sense of how you relate to what you are describing. Use imagery and symbolism. Think about what form or shape is most appropriate to your poem. Observe something and then describe it by comparing it to something else. This will familiarize you with figurative language. Just write. I want at least thirty lines written. You can write several short pieces if you want. Just make it authentic. Keep writing. The best way to improve your writing is by getting comfortable writing.

Each of these mini lessons will provide the students with the opportunity to write their own poem. The mini lessons give them guidelines to follow so they can be comfortable writing their own poems when given the task. These lessons give them the opportunity to practice applying the features of the genre outlined by our touchstone texts.

Planning

We, as a class, have read, spoken, and listened to some exemplary poetry. Now it is your turn to begin the composition process. I have handed out your writing free verse poetry assignment and rubric (located in Appendix D). This is a time you return to all that you have written about and discovered in your writers notebooks and begin to pick the theme, the ideas, and the conventions you want to adhere to in your own poems. How do the features we have spoken about come together to make a coherent poem? Next conference with me about what you going to write about. Now begin to start your poems. As you will begin to see, writing is a process that requires multiple readings and revisions. It is very rare that your first or second draft will be perfect. As you write you may use one of two techniques. You may write just the bare bones ideas of your poem and through the next stage add detail. The other method is called the, "whittle down technique". This is where you write as much as you can through a stream of consciousness and then "whittle down" your thoughts through revision to the core ideas and themes in your writing. As you write, during this process, I will also write a poem that we as a class will revise together. By my modeling of my own writing you will learn

not to take criticisms from peer reviews personally. Our peer reviews and rubrics exist so the standards are clear and your writing can improve.

See appendix D for Assignment and Rubric

Revising

The revision section is where the students will get into peer review groups. They will review each other's works based on the peer review checklist and the six-point rubric. Responding to the rubric, tailored to our genre of poetry in the open forms, allows students to assess themselves based on the clear standards set at the beginning of the assignment. It is important for there to be multiple revisions on each poem to ensure that all confusion has been clarified within each of the student's poems. In this section I will also lead two mini lessons. The first mini lesson on craft to help the students continue to generate ideas will occur between draft one and two (See appendix E). They may have written something unauthentic and by participating in the poetry circles activity they can team up with other students and help each other through the composition and revision process. Poetry Circles also allows students to see how each feature of the genre plays an important part, by giving each person in the group a feature to bring to the collaborative poem. This mini lesson is also important because feeling comfortable with your classmates will allow more authentic peer reviews. Our second mini lesson will occur between drafts two and three. This lesson will address convention. Though, in open form, punctuation and complete sentences are an option, we will focus on an example of poetry that I have written that needs some help with convention. I will submit a poem that I have been struggling with for public revision. We will observe how revising a poem that is not enjoyable because of lack of convention, will help us view the mistakes in our peers and our own pieces to make them more clear and publishable. In our lesson we will address my poem with the correctness of convention as Ralph Fletcher states in *The Writing Workshop: an Essential Guide*. He says, "Our concern here is with the surface features that make the writing decipherable to the reader... How is the student able to apply the rules of written English? Has the student edited for spelling? Does the student routinely use correct punctuation and grammar"(107)? By addressing these concerns student work will become more approachable and easier to understand. Students will meet with the teacher for a revision through teacher conference. Once these revisions have occurred, students will once again go through the peer review checklist.

See appendix E Poetry Circles mini lesson

Reflection:

In this section we put the final revisions on our poems. At this point I want the students to begin practicing speaking what they have written aloud in their peer review groups. In this way voice, tone, and the sound of their poems can be made clearer and they can edit their performance. We should once again reflect back on our peer reviews.

I want students to evaluate their peer reviews from the first draft, second draft, and more polished draft. At this point I want us to re enter our writer's notebooks and respond focusing on these four prompts:

- Can you tell me something you did particularly well in this poem?
- How does each piece compare to the others you have written?
- Is there something you are proud about doing here?
- Is there any place you are less than fully pleased with? What can you do to address that?
- How could your teacher help? Is there any helpful mini lessons on revision that would help you polish this piece even more?

Portfolio:

The portfolio is a place outside of our writer's notebooks where the student can store safely their most polished works. By the end of the year they will contain the final products from each genre study completed for the year. Before publication is possible I ask the students to select their most prized poem, the one they believe most reflect themselves through the genre of verse poetry. I ask them to prepare a one-paragraph biography of each piece. I ask them to justify its place in the portfolio, and to reference at least two examples of where the student made exemplary use of the features of the genre. When they have done so, we have a conference and put the student on the schedule for our poetry readings in class and their opportunity to submit to the Weekly Ithaca Times featured poet section. In this meeting I will provide them with the submission form and instruct them how to fill it out.

Conclusion

Through conducting this genre study students will have immersed themselves in a topic in the same way a foreign language student immerses themselves in another language. The students will now have a new voice, a new medium, and new tools with which to execute their ideas. Within this medium they will enjoy the freedom of expression not found in other genres and will gain a lifelong skill and joy of writing.

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Literary Analysis Section

Now that you have completed a genre study on free verse poetry you will be expected to complete the following literary analysis essay. This assignment will better prepare you for the critical lens section of the New York State Regents exam. The assignment is as follows, modeled directly from the test:

-Your **task** is to discuss two poems from our free verse poetry genre study from the perspective of the statement provided. “Every American Carries in his blood stream the heritage of the malcontent and the dreamer.” From Dorothy Fuldheim. In your essay provide a valid interpretation of the quote. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement. Choose two poems we have read in this unit that you feel best support your interpretation. Support your opinions using specific literary elements from the two poems

such as theme, characterization, Imagery, symbolism, and figurative language. Organize your thoughts in a coherent manner. Specify titles and authors of the works you choose.

-Your **purpose and audience** is to be prepared to complete the regents exam successful at the end of the semester. Your audience will be your peer reviewer and myself.

-The **format** will be a standard expository essay that includes: an introduction, at least two body paragraphs, and a valid conclusion.

-The **time schedule** will be as such:

Rough draft for peer review worth (25 points), due in 2 days.

The first revised draft for teacher conference worth (35 points), due in 4 days.

The final Draft worth (40 points), due in 6 days.

The **self-evaluative checklist** is as follows:

Did the author provide a valid interpretation of the critical lens? _____

Did the author indicate whether they agree or disagree with the statement? _____

Did the author provide two poems to support their opinion? _____

Did the author provide specific literary elements to back up their claim? _____

Is the analysis coherent and organized? _____

Does the analysis follow the conventions of standard written English? _____

Here is an example of a student response to a prior critical lens, literary analysis essay. It contains mistakes that we will correct when I model revision for you:

When Antoine de Saint-Exupery says, "it is only with the heart that one can see rightly" he means that only when guided by the heart, the source of love and passion, can someone make the *right* decisions. This statement has varying degrees of truth. One can follow their heart and it will lead them down the road of love and creativity. While another may follow their heart and be lead down a path of violence, naivety, even death. The heart is not always the best judge of truth. The heart wants what it wants and will often lead the brain to ignore rational and logical signs about what is right. I disagree with the author. I believe that to see *rightly* one must use a combination of heart and head. Through this balance can one have foresight into the decisions they make, to make sure that one has weighed his options fully and been clear about the consequences of said decisions. The examples I have chosen to support this belief are, *Into the Wild and Where Men win Glory*, both by Jon Krakauer.

In the book, *Into the Wild*, Krakauer follows the path of the real life protagonist Christopher McCandles through his suburban upbringing to his eventual demise in the Arctic. His character makes all decisions with his heart and while these decisions seem right at the time they are paper-thin and end up falling apart under the weight of the harsh realities of an Alaskan Winter. His heart told him that his over privileged life style wasn't fair when there was so much suffering in the world. His heart led him to destroy his possessions and head out on the road and into the wild in search of a raw authentic experience. Throughout it all this is exactly what he found and was even relatively happy with his choices. But in the end he realized a different truth. He realized that experiences mean less when you have no one to share it with. He then decided to leave Alaska, but the weather conditions, an over saturated riverbed to cross, and the eating of a poisonous seed led to his death. The key here is that the heart has feelings while the brain has eyes. One must use both to see and feel rightly. If Christopher had used both he might have still been alive today.

In the book, *Where Men Win Glory*, Krakauer follows another real life character named Pat Tillman. In this Book we are followed through the life of Pat from professional football player to soldier in Afghanistan. His whole life he felt that decisions of the heart helped him to see rightly. It had worked with school and his professional life. It proved true with his wife. But the one place where heart has no special ability to see right is war and this exactly what fueled his decision to enlist in a wartime army. He felt that the only way to help his country in this troubled time was to give up all he had and to lay his life on the line for his country. It was this heart-based decision that causes him to leave his wife, family, and teammates and to die in the mountains of Afghanistan. He chose not to balance his decision with rational thoughts from the brain, which in hindsight would have been the smarter move, with all the facts that came to light about what truly motivated us into entering that war.

When decisions are made with the heart they are made with a narrow scope of view. With the heart people do what feels right, not necessarily what is right and there is a thin line between those two. In the two stories I chose to refute the statement from the critical lens with characters that, as result of following their hearts, found themselves dead. Often when one sees only with their heart decisions are made hastily, without an understanding of the severity of a situation. Often when seeing with the heart the ego becomes intertwined with it and decisions not based in humility often lead to disastrous results. All life is made out of a balance. And morality is a balance of heart and head. When we lack the heart we don't *feel* the whole picture and when we lack the head we don't *see* the whole picture. And, when we don't have balance of those actions then it is impossible to see *rightly*.

Rubric See NYS Regents 6 Point Rubric

266 • *Open Forms*

We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
 By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
 Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

LANGSTON HUGHES

I, Too

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
 They send me to eat in the kitchen
 When company comes,
 But I laugh,
 And eat well,
 And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
 I'll be at the table
 When company comes.
 Nobody'll dare
 Say to me,
 "Eat in the kitchen,"
 Then.

Besides,
 They'll see how beautiful I am
 And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

WALLACE STEVENS

The Idea of Order at Key West

She sang beyond the genius of the sea.
 The water never formed to mind or voice,
 Like a body wholly body, fluttering
 Its empty sleeves; and yet its mimic motion
 Made constant cry, caused constantly a cry,
 That was not ours although we understood,
 Inhuman, of the veritable ocean.

Example Of Student Work

Lunar Eclipse

Slowly,
slowly
the moon is covered by the shadow.

You look at the moon
through binoculars
like a deer
frozen
in the headlights
not with fear
but amazed at how beautiful it is.

Pink, yellow, gray, and midnight blue
all around,
you are
alone
on the top of a shed
shrouded in a deep deep, midnight blue.

And you like the blue
and you like the mystery
and you like being alone
with the Shadow.

Sarah Duggan, (Atwell p. 430)

All model texts in:

Strand, Mark, and Evan Boland. The Making of a Poem: A Norton Anthology of Poetic Forms. New York: Norton, 2001. Print.

Student Handout of Features

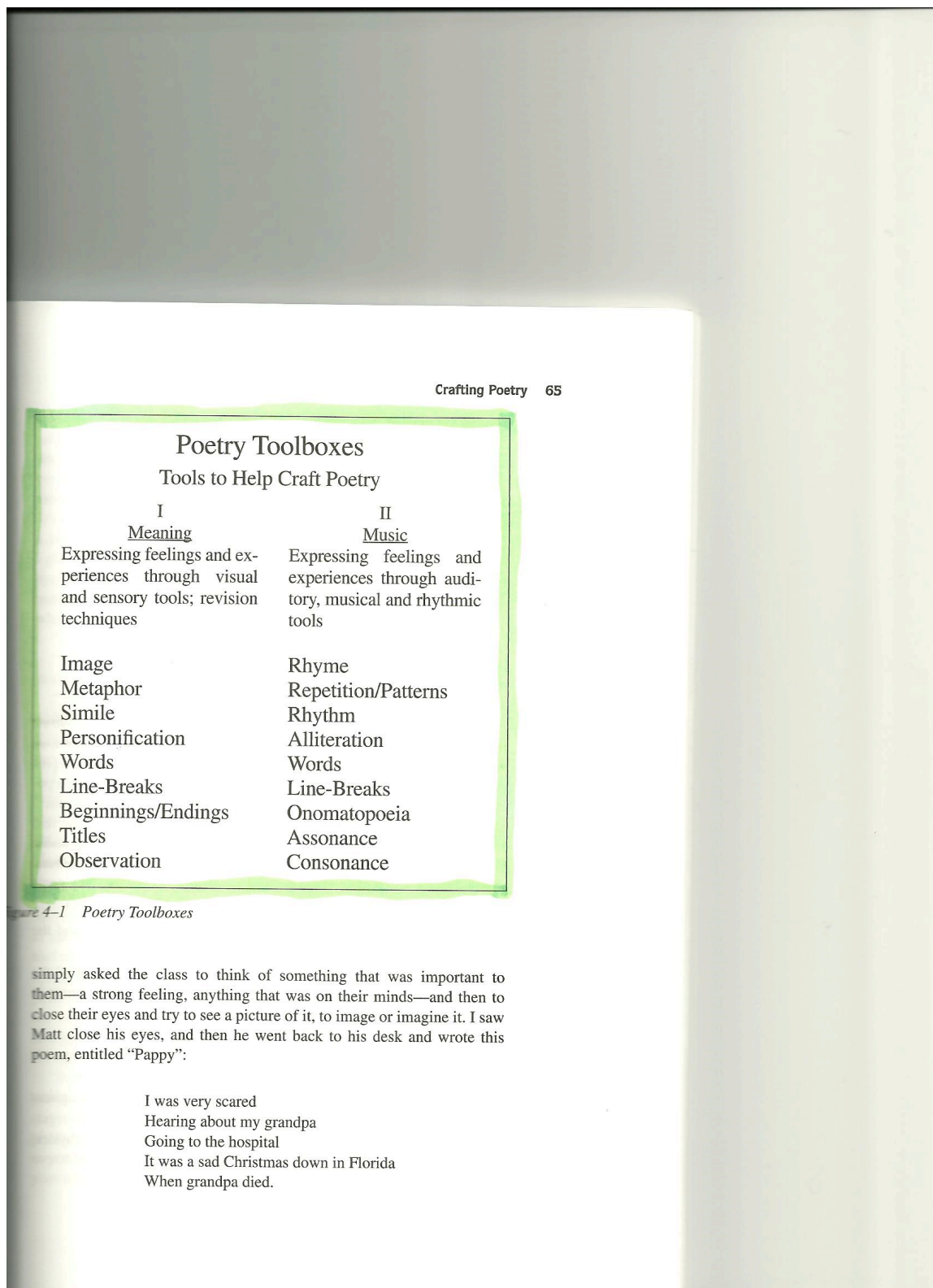
Free Verse Poetry:

Appendix B

- Theme- What is the universal idea trying to be conveyed in the poem? What is the general idea? Are there any recognizable emotions or experiences being shown?
- Diction- This applies to the author's choice of words
- Denotation vs. Connotation- Denotation is the exact meaning of a word. Connotation is the meaning suggested by the word that goes beyond its literal meaning.
- Persona- Who is speaking in the poem?
- Tone- What is the poem or speaker's attitude? Some examples of tone are sincere, solemn, joyful, reverent, sarcastic, witty, passionate, humorous, ironic, reflective, calm, bold, spirited, etc.
- Imagery- What do you see in the poem? What pictures does the author paint for you? Images are created through the use of sensory detail; sight, smell, touch, sound, and taste.
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- Simile- Making a comparison between two nouns using "like" or "as"
- Metaphor- Making direct comparison without using like or as. Example: The man was a sponge. He could soak up any information the teacher said.
- Form- This is the structure of the poem. This is the shape of the poem. Within form, there are some key ideas? Is the poem organized into verse stanzas? Where does the author choose to break lines and start new ones. The shape of the poem should always be viewed as intentional.

Peer Review Checklist

- _____ The author presents a clear theme
- _____ The author has made appropriate word choices (Diction)
- _____ A clear persona or voice is present
- _____ The author has a distinct tone
- _____ The author presents bold and vivid images through the use of figurative language
- _____ Makes use of symbolism
- _____ Uses metaphors and similes
- _____ Makes wise, effective use of the page by incorporating line breaks and stanzas where new voices and themes arise



Name _____

Is a Sentence a poem?

1. Write your descriptive sentence.

2. What imagery did you use in your sentence?

3. What other figurative language did you include?

4. Are there any other poem-like qualities in your sentence?

5. Is your sentence a poem? Why, why not, or how could it be so?

6. Rewrite your sentence as a poem, in the space provided or on the back of this sheet:

Free Verse Poetry Assignment 11/10/10

Appendix D

Task: We have now read, written, spoken, and listened to free verse poems. It is now your turn to look back into your writers notebooks at all the instruction we've had and use these tools to look out into the world and illuminate something through poems of your own. We will write a total of three poems. Make sure to use figurative language and imagery to paint the picture from your mind into the readers' mind.

Purpose: Our purpose is to create three poems that express an emotion, commentary or observation through the creative use of forms and figurative language.

Audience: Your audience will be your peers through peer review and presentation. The teacher will be your audience through revision conferences, and the opportunity to submit to the Weekly Ithaca Times featured poet section will be your final audience.

Format and Checklist for Self and Peer Review: Your free verse poems should employ multiple features of the genre and adhere to the rubric attached. Including:

_____ Present a clear Theme.

_____ Make appropriate word choices (Diction).

_____ Present a unique persona? Voice?

_____ Use of a distinct tone.

_____ Presents bold and vivid images that paint a picture in the readers mind (using figurative language).

_____ Use of symbolism.

_____ Use of metaphors and similes.

_____ Make wise effective use of the page by incorporating line breaks and stanzas where new voices and themes arise.

Deadline: Submission of pre-writes and free writes prior to draft due 11/13, 10% of grade

Submission of 1st drafts due 11/18, 25% of grade

Submission of 2nd drafts due 11/23 25% of grade

Submission of polished copies 11/28 25% of grade

Presentation 12/1 participation 15% of grade

6 Point Rubric for Free Verse Poetry Assignment**Appendix D****6 Excellent**

Content- The poet fully describes and develops an emotion, experience, image, or observation. Establishes and maintains an authentic point of view and tone.

Form- Makes intentional and most effective use of page space, incorporating shapes with line breaks and stanzas.

Language- Makes exemplary use of figurative language, imagery, and diction.

Conventions- Piece is perfectly edited and lacks any grammatical errors.

5 Very Effective/Strong

Content- Partially describes and develops and emotion, experience, image, or observation. Establishes and maintains satisfactory point of view and tone.

Form- Makes intentional and effective use of page space, incorporating shapes with line breaks and stanzas.

Language- Makes effective use of of figurative language, imagery, and diction.

Conventions- Piece effectively edited and lacks grammatical errors.

4 Satisfactory/Capable-

Content- Poet describes and minimally develops emotions, images, and observations. Establishes, but struggles to maintain authentic point of view and tone.

Form- uses the space on the page with minimal intentionality. Incorporates some use of line breaks and stanzas.

Language- Makes some use of figurative language, imagery and diction.

Conventions- Piece exhibits occasional grammatical errors that do not interfere with comprehension.

3- Developing Potential

Appendix D

Content- Poet describes a surface account of the emotion, image, or observation with little development. Minimally establishes and does not maintain point of view and tone.

Form- Unclear intention with regards to use of space. Line breaks and stanzas used with minimal effect.

Language- Makes minimal use of figurative language and imagery. Didn't put adequate thought into diction.

Conventions- Contains enough grammatical errors to inhibit comprehension

2 Limited In need of Major Revision

Content- Poem attempts to introduce surface accounts of emotions, images, and observations, but fails to develop. Does not establish a clear point of view and tone.

Form- No intention with use of space, minimal understanding of line breaks or stanzas.

Language- Makes minimal use of figurative language, imagery, and diction

Conventions- Many grammatical errors incomprehensible at points.

1 Emergent writing

Content- Poet does not establish any emotion, image, or observation, an undeveloped idea. Fails to present a point of view of tone.

Form- No intention with regards to use of page space. No use of line breaks or stanza.

Language- Inappropriate word choice, no variety, no sensory detail.

Conventions- Piece is incomprehensible throughout and requires re write and convention conference with teacher.

Mini Lesson Between Drafts 1 Generative Writing Loops Activity

Appendix E

The Roles and Instructions

The roles, described below, are designed to help you craft poems in a group. As you begin this exercise you should assign each person in the group one of the following roles:

1. **Image Weaver:** This person must provide at least two concrete images for the poem.
2. **Language Keeper:** This person must supply five exotic words for the poem and provide wordplay. The group must then incorporate the Language Keeper's words into the poem.
3. **Metaphor Generator:** This person must supply at least two fresh metaphors or similes for the poem. To create a sense of unity in the poem, the Metaphor Generator should look at the Image Weaver's images before writing the metaphors.
4. **Music Maker:** This person is responsible for creating a sense of music in the poem, without depending on overly obvious rhyme (e.g., cat, hat, that) This person must take the Language Keeper's five words and generate five more words that sound musical alongside them (e.g., if the Language Keeper has provided "eclectic", the Music Maker might choose to provide "electric"). During the writing exercise, this person will need to come up with all the major sounds of the poem. Create an A sound, a B sound, a C sound, a D sound, and an E sound.

Poetry Exercises: Once the roles are assigned, do your best to write the poems as instructed. Each person might find it easier to work separately and then come back together as a group to meld all the raw materials (your creations) together.

Exercise #1: Free verse poem

After you assign roles, do your best to brainstorm a topic for your poem. If you are stuck you could take any subject as your topic. Like Pablo Neruda, you might be inspired to write an ode to your socks. Or you might want to write about your favorite band, movie, or book. You might want to write about a favorite sport, about skateboarding, or about this class. Whatever you choose, try to pick something concrete to write about, instead of a larger abstraction like love or death, both of which may lead you into clichéd territory.

