



Research Paper

Self Exploring Poetry through Graphic Organizers

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ABSTRACT: Many authentic samples of language in real-life contexts (i.e. travel timetables, city plans, forms, pamphlets, cartoons, advertisements, newspaper or magazine articles), apart from pieces of literature, are now available for the teaching of English. They are also included in the course materials. Thus, in a classroom context, learners are exposed to actual language samples of real life / real life-like settings. The teachers could adopt certain tools like Graphic Organizers to enhance the involvement of the students and inculcate the habit of self learning among them. The present study is an attempt to enable children to explore a poem on their own and thereby develop a critical approach to it with the help of Graphic Organizers.

Key Words: Literature, Self learning, Graphic Organizers, Poetic devices, Poetic appreciation.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching of language through literature is a technique beneficial for teaching both the basic language skills (i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking) and the language areas (prose, poetry, drama and novel). The genres of literature are valuable authentic materials with cultural enrichment, language enrichment and personal involvement. Of course most works of literature are not created for the purpose of teaching a language. These days, many authentic samples of language in real-life contexts (i.e. travel timetables, city plans, forms, pamphlets, cartoons, advertisements, newspaper or magazine articles) are included as the course materials. These materials, in addition to helping the learners to learn the language, provide variety in the contents of learning materials and thus sustains the interest and motivation of the learners and prepare them in using language in their real life situations.

II. POETRY

Poetry is a form of expression. Reading it encourages one to get connected with the poet and find meaning from their experiences. Poetry has an important role in our curriculum. It can be taught as a part of reading, writing, and language lessons and it fits easily into classroom themes, projects, and celebrations. It also widens children's reading sphere. The children listen to the rhythm and rhymes present in poems. Since the poems are read repeatedly the reading fluency develops. In addition poetry has an impact on the social and emotional learning of children. It also encourages children to express themselves. Though the people who read poetry is less than those who read novels, poetry reading helps students develop their aesthetic sense and augments their language ability as well.

Poetry can boost adolescents' language skills and fulfill their need for self-expression -- if presented as an art form that has relevance to their lives. - Robyn Scott

Poetry enables teachers to teach their students how to write, read, and understand any text. Poetry can give students a healthy outlet for surging emotion. - Andrew Simmons, The Atlantic

We are in the time where practical skills of a language are given more importance with the pretext of enhancing creativity. Arguably poetry, the most creative of all genres of literature gets overlooked as it is seen by many people as being 'difficult'.

Undeniably learning the poems currently present in the textbooks are hard enough without the related contemporary poems.

III. PARALLEL READING

Of the various methods of learning a foreign language, the fastest and most effective is the method of immersion in the language environment. In addition to the contemporary aspects of poetry, this parallel reading of an art form is a wonderful way for students to expand their vocabulary. It facilitates children to enjoy and appreciate the poem better and also provide an opportunity to think beyond the text. The present English text book of class IX of Tamil Nadu consists of 'Read and Enjoy' part which provides a parallel poem to relate with the main poem.

IV. SELF LEARNING

It is the language teacher's responsibility to promote self-directed learning among students and extend their learning beyond the classroom.

V. GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

A Graphic Organizer is a visual display of what is found in a passage. It also explains the relationship among the various ideas found. The children of class IX are already introduced to the Graphic Organizers by way of doing their textual exercises. Independent reading, analytical, inferential, and evaluative strategies could be developed among the learners when the use of graphic organizer is inculcated in the right way among them.

VI. TEACHING POETRY

The teacher may adopt the following traditional way of teaching a poem from the text, helping the children to

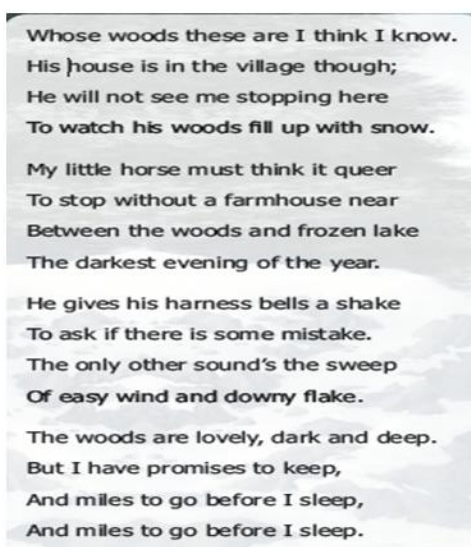
- Appreciate the title, form and shape of the poem
- Read aloud to feel the mood, tone, pace and rhythm
- Identify the sound effects such as rhymes, assonance and alliteration in the poem
- Recognize the poetic devices such as similes, metaphors, and imagery and explain how these add to the theme
- Discover the feelings, messages and ideas presented in the poem.
- Develop a personal response to the poem
- Write a short paragraph on the poem with:
 - A statement/main point
 - Textual support and evidence (quoting directly or paraphrasing the poem)
 - Elaboration and explanation.

VII. EXAMPLE

The following poem is taken for example. With all the above said elements it is dealt with in a detailed manner. The learning is ensured through reinforcement and slip tests as it is a scoring area. As poetry is for pleasure, apart from preparing the students for the examination, the teacher has to read the poem and to make them enjoy it.

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Robert Frost



Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.
My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.
He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.
The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Fig (1)

Sample 1

The Leisure is the poem given as parallel reading to suit the mood of the prescribed detailed poem *Stopping By the Woods On a Snowy Evening*.

Instead of teaching the parallel poem in a detailed manner, or skipping the same without teaching the teacher could attempt it as a group activity. By such an initiative the teacher can give her students a self exploring experience of the poem.

Step 1

A few video clippings on ‘[How to learn a Poem by one self](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DNTuJApvpJA)’ is shown to the learners. With the knowledge of the poems taught to them earlier and the newly learnt methods to explore a poem they start with their activity. The learning could be encouraged as a collaborative learning or as a ‘work in pairs’.

The supportive materials that could be accessed are:

Dictionary, Thesaurus and ICT lab.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DNTuJApvpJA> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQ8baj8O8Bo>, and

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ebd-0bjUjZk>

Step 2

The teacher gives out the gist of the poem in a few sentences. By answering the questions presented through the graphic organizer, the students are encouraged to explore, enjoy and consolidate their learning.

The **poem's** speaker claims that life moves too quickly. He regrets the fact that human beings are too "full of care" to "stand and stare." The poem teaches us what a meaningful life should be. In a meaningful life we should find time to stand like cows and sheep and look around us and enjoy the beautiful nature. We should not hurry away in life. A life that is full of cares is a poor life.

Read and Enjoy

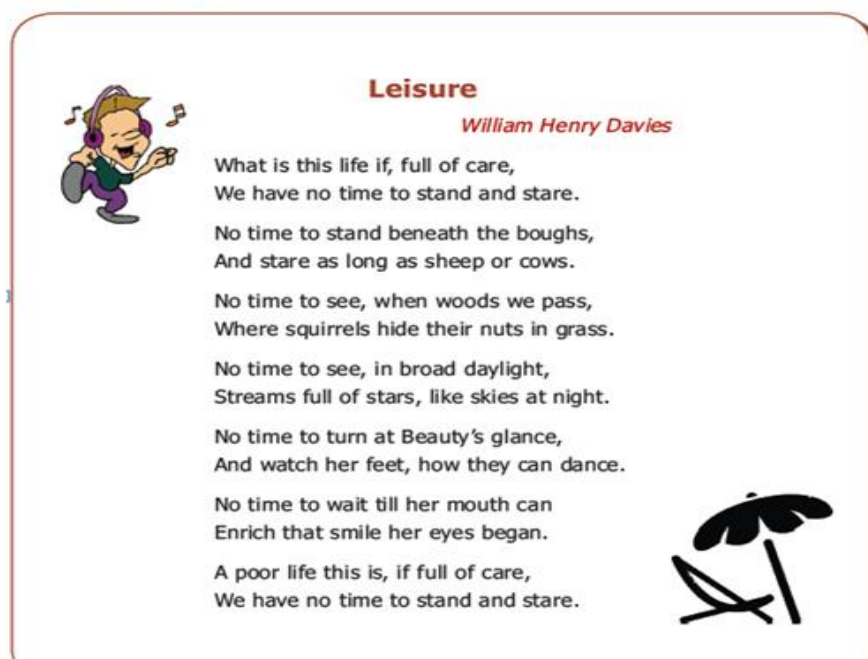


Fig (2)

Step 3

The teacher provides a graphic organizer to orient the children towards the given poem.

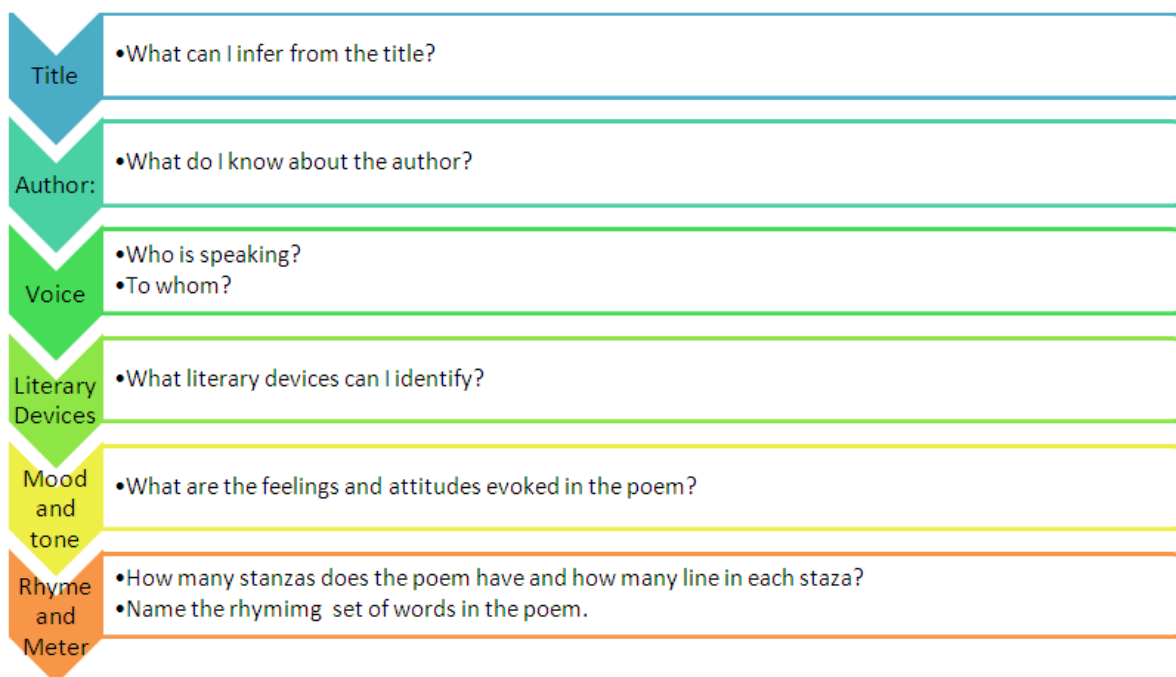


Diagram (1)

The inquiry learning is an approach towards self learning. Much has been said and proved through researches that students are naturally inquisitive and by focusing their natural curiosity learning can be enhanced. And through poetry too this can be done.

The following graphic organizer of the poem is an example of their understanding at a sublime level.

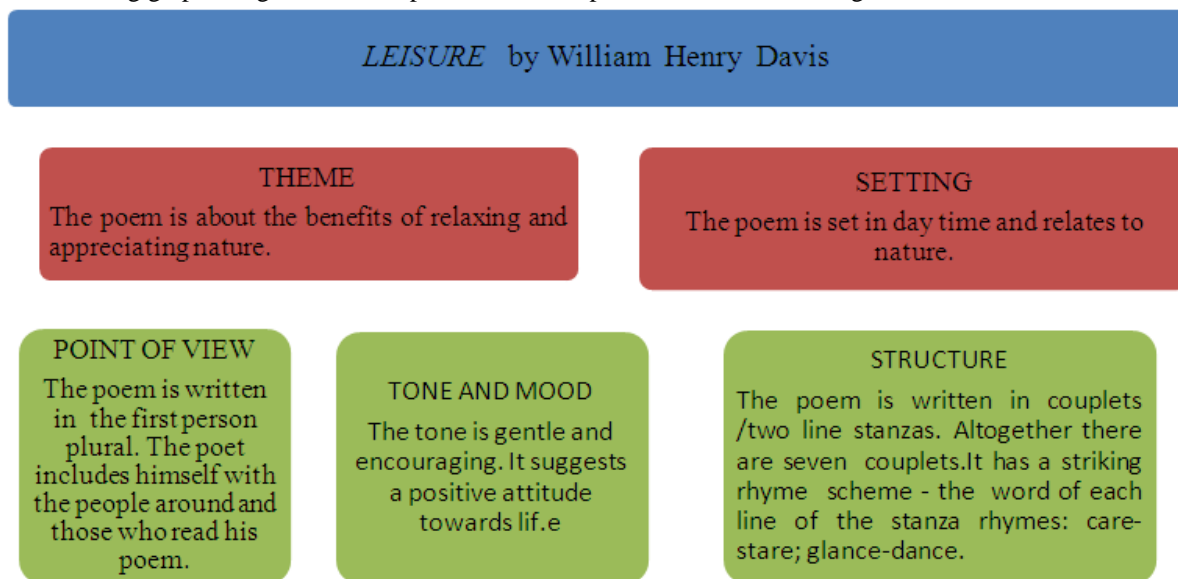


Diagram (2)

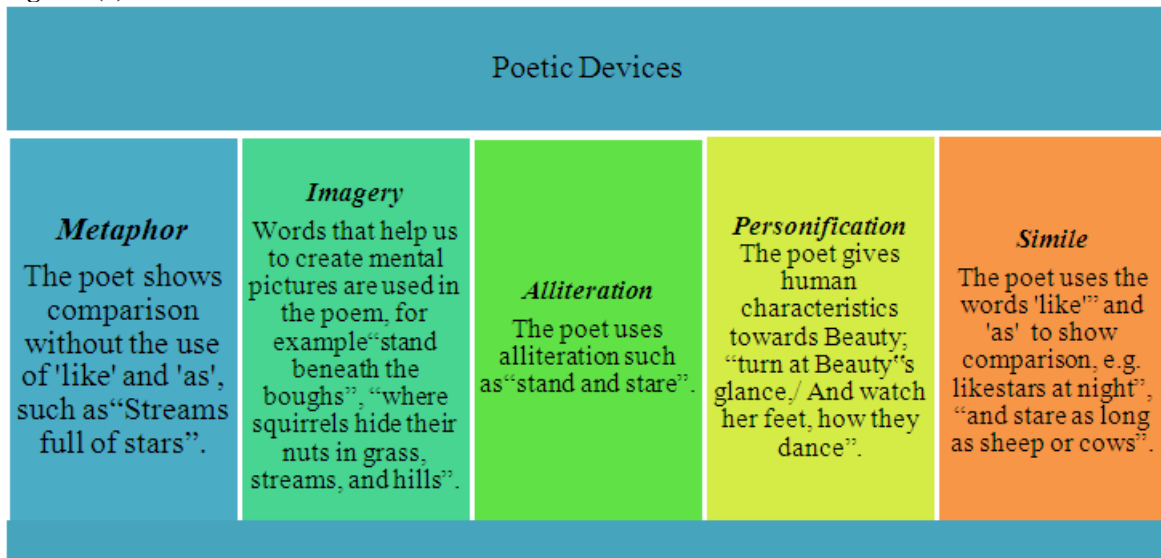


Diagram (3)

Sample II.

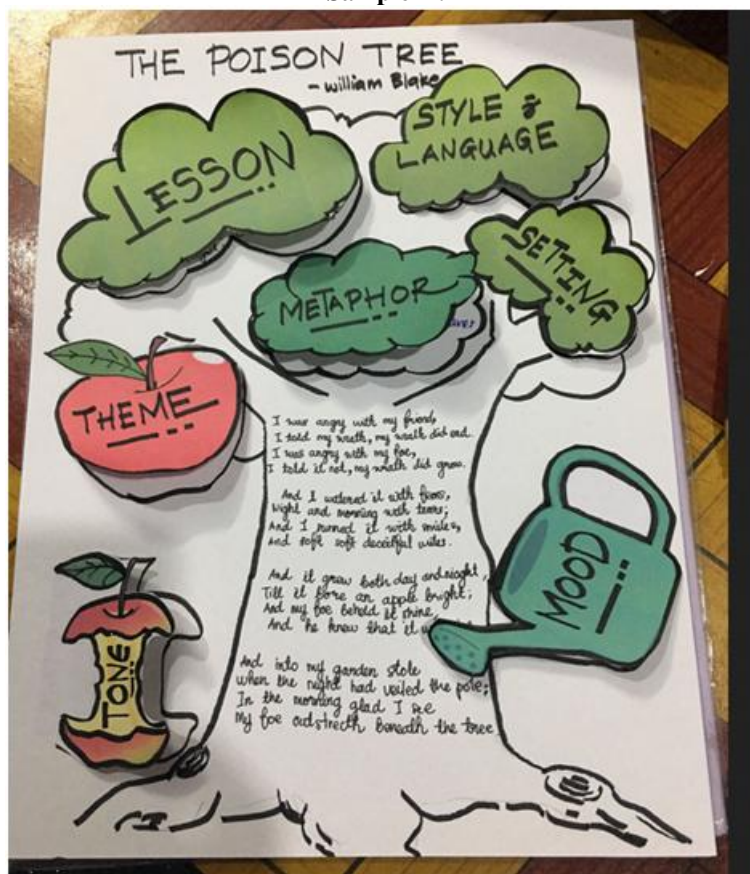


Fig (3) (Courtesy: Printerst)

- Who is the speaker of the poem?
- Who is the speaker speaking to?
- What is the poem about?
- What is the speaker's attitude towards the subject in the poem?
- Does the poem sound happy or sad when you read it aloud?

The above graphic organizer is displayed in the classroom in a chart. The students are given time to explore the same. They are given liberty to use any format of their own, with the requisite responses to the given questions. It is given as a pair/small group work and a target time to submit the same is also suggested.

VIII. EXPECTED GROUP WORK IN THE FOLLOWING GRAPHIC ORGANIZER:

Can I summarize?
Voice: Who is speaking?
To whom?
What is the effect?
Setting: Where are we?
When are we?
What is the effect?
What happens?

Rhyme and Meter:
What is the effect?

Get Inside a Poem!
Title:
What can I infer from this title?
Author:
What do I already know about this author?
Historical Context and Genre:
What do I already know about this genre or time period? What can I expect to see?

Mood and Tone:
What feelings and attitudes are evoked in this poem?

Literary Devices: What literary devices can you identify?
1.
Textual Evidence:
2.
Textual Evidence:
3.
Textual Evidence:
4.
Textual Evidence:

Fig (4) (Courtesy Printerst)

IX. CONCLUSION

Good poems had always been a combination of natural talent and learned skills. The act of reading poetry gets refined by conscious attempts to get trained. By enjoying and learning poetry, the skill of creating poetry will get tuned.

The Graphic organizers facilitate the learning process by providing scope to develop ideas and to construct knowledge. Visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners get benefit from this learning tool. This visual method helps in developing, organizing and summarizing students' learning. It also scaffolds to structure disjointed information. Enhanced learning could be achieved when this tool is applied in a group work or through collaborative learning. Additional learning outcomes could be achieved by integrating computer assisted learning.

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