



## **This is a Book of Dreams: Poetry and Bookmaking Workshop**

**Grade Level:** 3-12, depending on which book you create

**Objectives:** To enable students to express their creativity and personal hopes while helping them improve their descriptive writing, simile, and metaphor and teaching them to construct a handmade book.

**Materials:**

- Book of Dreams worksheets
- pens or pencils
- stopwatch
- bookmaking supplies
  - one sheet of 8 ½" x 11" cardstock per student
  - two sheets of 8 ½" x 11" white paper per student
  - one 24" length of thin ribbon or yarn per student

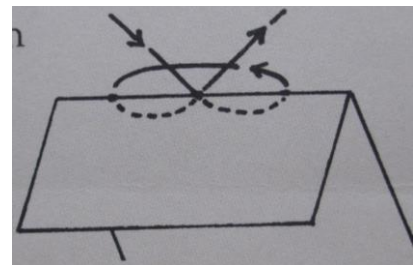
**Activities:**

Explain the project – we're making a book and writing a poem to go in it: a mini-chapbook.

**Make the Book:**

Lead students in making a ribbon-bound book that will hold their poem.

1. Fold cardstock and white paper in half "hamburger style."
2. Place folded white paper inside folded cardstock to create a book.
3. Punch three holes in the folded edge of your book. You can accomplish this by using scissors and making three small triangular cuts in the spine.
4. Feed about 2 feet of ribbon through the center hole, from the outside to the inside, leaving at least a 4" tail on the outside of the spine.
5. Feed ribbon through the top hole from the inside to the outside.
6. Feed ribbon through the bottom hole from the outside to the inside.
7. Feed ribbon back out through the center hole (where you started) to the outside. You may have to hold the "tail" to one side to get through the hole again.
8. Tie off the two tails of the ribbon on the outside of the spine, knot and trim to desired length.





## Write the Poem:

Hand out worksheets – one line at a time, have students list and describe the things (listed below) that they would like to include in a poem. Time them with the stopwatch, allowing a couple of minutes for each line. (As soon as you take out a stopwatch, it's a game, and students like to compete to beat the clock – and each other – with good responses in a short amount of time.)

After each line, ask them to share some of their responses; write their answers on the board. Ask for feedback from the class, and encourage creative responses and descriptions and unusual adjectives. For “kind of light,” for example, encourage responses that go beyond “the sun” or “a light bulb.” Think fireflies, lightning, neon signs, phosphorescent fish, etc.

- An animal - describe one of its characteristics
- A kind of light - describe its quality
- A type of food – describe its taste or smell
- Something impossible - tell about what it is or what it does
- A word you like the sound or meaning of - tell what you like about it
- An emotion - tell what might cause it

Explain that students are now going to construct a poem based on the things they've listed. Read them the following poem as an example:

This is a book of dreams. It holds...  
a tiger with fur as soft as a wish and eyes like dangerous secrets  
the happy wink of one star's light in a serious, inky sky  
the taste of an endless summer afternoon in a big, ripe peach  
a stopped clock that stops time, stops rain, stops war  
the puff and click of the sound of the word “pumpnickel”  
the grinning happiness of coming home to a big, furry, slobbering dog

Have them draft their poem on the worksheet – you can lead them through this line by line, having them read aloud, and soliciting feedback from the class. Encourage them to revise and improve their poems as they draw inspiration from their classmates' comments.

Instruct them to write their poem as a whole on a blank sheet of paper – move through the room correcting spelling and punctuation. Then have them copy the completed, polished poem into the blank book they've created.

Now they can decorate their books; this process can be as simple or as elaborate as you like.

Finally, have students participate in an Authors' Reading, standing and sharing their work aloud. Take this opportunity to talk about good reading form – holding the copy low enough so that the audience can see your face, making occasional eye contact (or at least making eye contact with the back wall of the room!), and speaking loudly enough and slowly enough to be understood. Also talk about audience

# LESSON PLAN



etiquette - showing respect for a reader and his/her work, and really listening to what is being said, especially with poetry, in which every single word is important.

If you are using this activity as part of an international collaboration, there are many ways to involve the international partners. Here are just a few examples:

- Have each group create powerpoint presentations or slide shows to accompany the other group's poems. Then film each group reading their work against a background of the powerpoint created by the other group.
- Before binding the poems into a book, have each group create illustrations for the other group's poems. Share these via internet file-sharing (such as Dropbox or Google Docs), print them, and include them in the final bound books for a truly collaborative "product."
- Exchange the poems and use them as jumping-off points for discussion and questions to ask the other group. Are the animals they described unfamiliar? What about the words whose sound they liked?



## **This is a book of dreams.**

List the following things that you'd like to include in a poem:

An animal - describe one of its characteristics:

A kind of light - describe its quality:

A type of food - describe its taste or smell:

Something impossible - tell about what it is or what it does:

A word you like the sound or meaning of - tell what you like about it:

An emotion - tell what might cause it:

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Write a draft of your poem here:

**This is a book of dreams. It holds...**

