

Picking the Right Words: Nursery Rhymes — Grade Five

Ohio Standards Connections

Writing Process

Benchmark E

Select more effective vocabulary when editing by using a variety of resources and reference materials.
(Grades 5 - 7)

Indicator 14

Use resources and reference materials (e.g., dictionaries and thesauruses) to select more effective vocabulary.
(Grade 5)

Lesson Summary:

Students will use dictionaries and thesauruses to find words to substitute into familiar nursery rhymes.

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes.

Commentary:

This lesson was written with fifth graders in mind, but as one reviewer of the lesson noted, the lesson could easily be adapted for use with students before or after fifth grade. A Blackline Master accompanies this lesson and serves as a model for the teacher and students who use this lesson.

Pre-Assessment:

Students create a list of tools and ways to select vocabulary when writing.

Scoring Guidelines:

Review the list to determine if each student has an understanding of the uses of a dictionary, thesaurus and other reference resources.

Post-Assessment:

Students rewrite a nursery rhyme using different words for the verbs and adjectives in the rhyme and indicate the source(s) used.

Scoring Guidelines:

Evaluate the rewritten nursery rhyme to determine if the new words were used correctly and the source(s) was identified. The scoring rubric will be created by the teacher and students prior to the post-assessment administration.

Instructional Procedures:

1. Show students a copy of the nursery rhyme "Humpty Dumpty" on the overhead.
2. Explain that there are many ways to say the same thing, and today they are going to change a nursery rhyme by finding synonyms for the words in the nursery rhyme.
3. Model with "Humpty Dumpty," going word by word. For example, *Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall* could become *Humpty Dumpty perched on a brick structure*. (See attachment.) When you get stuck finding a word, model how to use the dictionary or thesaurus to find an appropriate word.
4. Divide students into groups of two-four. Give each group a different nursery rhyme to translate.
5. Allow groups about 15 minutes to write a new version of the nursery rhyme.
6. Have each group share its original nursery rhyme along with its newer version.

Differentiated Instructional Support:



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Other Related Ohio Standards

Acquisition of Vocabulary

Benchmark F

Use multiple resources to enhance comprehension of vocabulary.

(Grades 4 - 7)

Indicator 8

Determine the meanings and pronunciations of unknown words by using dictionaries, thesauruses, glossaries, technology and textual features, such as definitional footnotes or sidebars.

(Grade 5)

Instruction is differentiated according to learner needs, to help all learners either meet the intent of the specified indicator(s) or, if the indicator is already met, to advance beyond the specified indicator(s).

- Extend readings to include props and dramatization.
- Review synonym definitions.
- Identify words/phrases in all poems that you want students to replace/translate.
- Discuss which version of the poem is more effective. Each group needs to define what "effective" means. Develop the criteria for a rubric.

Materials/Resources Needed:

For the teacher: Copies of a variety of nursery rhymes and an overhead transparency copy of "*Humpty Dumpty*".

For the students: Paper, pencil, dictionaries and thesauruses.

Attachments:

- Humpty Dumpty