

LESSON PLAN: "THE ART OF 'HOW TO'"

OBJECTIVE: To have students understand the concept behind writing a "how to" poem.

<p><u>KEY TERMS:</u></p>	<p>"How To" Poem – Style of writing in a step-by-step format. Imagery – Vivid descriptive language that appeals to the senses. Diction – Choice and use of words in speech or writing. Structure - Framework of a work of literature; the organization or overall design of a work.</p>	
<p><u>STANDARDS:</u></p>	<p>Virginia 9.1 C, 10.1 D, 9.4 A, 9.4 H, 10.4 H, 11.4 E, 9.7-12.7 E</p>	<p>Common Core</p> <p><i>Reading</i> Grades 6-8: 2, 4, 6 Grades 9-12: 2, 4</p> <p><i>Writing</i> Grades 6-8: 3.b-d, 4, 5 Grades 9-12: 3.a-d, 4, 5</p> <p><i>Speaking and Listening</i> Grades 6-8: 1.b-d Grades 9-12: 1.c-d</p> <p><i>Language Standards</i> Grades 6-8: 3, 5 Grades 9-12: 3, 5</p>

<p><u>INTRODUCTION:</u></p>	<p>A “how to” poem can be a good format to guide your thoughts and writing.</p> <p>Watch or read “How to Be Alone” by Tanya Davis. Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the effect of the step-by-step format and why do you think the poet chose to use it? Point out some examples of her instructions or suggestions. • Notice how her steps are woven with descriptive sensory words, but her diction is fairly simple. How does her diction add to the poem?
<p><u>STEP ONE:</u></p>	<p>Warm Up!</p> <p>How do you make a peanut-butter and jelly sandwich? Title your page with “How to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.”</p> <p>Write step by step instructions using detailed sensory words, then share.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is everyone’s piece the same? • What are some differences?
<p><u>STEP TWO:</u></p>	<p>Plan!</p> <p>Brainstorm a list of three to five personal stories, life lessons, or simple every day actions you think you could format as a “how to” poem.</p> <p>Alternatively, you can pick a story you’ve heard before – the Three Little Pigs, Cinderella, Humpty Dumpty – and rewrite it as a “how to” poem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How to do Christmas</i> • <i>How to procrastinate</i> • <i>How to dance</i> • <i>How to destroy the wolf</i>
<p><u>STEP THREE:</u></p>	<p>Write!</p> <p>Choose one topic from Step Two and title your poem “How to ____.”</p> <p>Write for 15 to 20 minutes and share!</p>

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

“How To Be Alone” by Tanya Davis

If you are at first lonely, be patient.

If you’ve not been alone much, or if when you were, you weren’t okay with it, then just wait. You’ll find it’s fine to be alone once you’re embracing it.

We can start with the acceptable places, the bathroom, the coffee shop, the library, where you can stall and read the paper, where you can get your caffeine fix and sit and stay there. Where you can browse the stacks and smell the books; you’re not supposed to talk much anyway so it’s safe there.

There is also the gym, if you’re shy, you can hang out with yourself and mirrors, you can put headphones in.

Then there’s public transportation, because we all gotta go places.

And there’s prayer and mediation, no one will think less if your hanging with your breath seeking peace and salvation.

Start simple. Things you may have previously avoided based on your avoid being alone principles.

The lunch counter, where you will be surrounded by chow-downers□, employees who only have an hour and their spouses work across town, and they, like you, will be alone.

Resist the urge to hang out with your cell phone.

When you are comfortable with eat lunch and run, take yourself out for dinner; a restaurant with linen and Silverware. You’re no less an intriguing a person when you are eating solo dessert and cleaning the whipped cream from the dish with your finger. In fact, some people at full tables will wish they were where you were.

Go to the movies. Where it’s dark and soothing, alone in your seat amidst a fleeting community.

And then take yourself out dancing, to a club where no one knows you, stand on the outside of the floor until the lights convince you more and more and the music shows you. Dance like no one’s watching because they’re probably not. And if they are, assume it is with best human intentions. The way bodies move genuinely to beats, is after all, gorgeous and affecting. Dance until you’re sweating. And beads of perspiration remind you of life’s best things, down your back, like a book of blessings.

Go to the woods alone, and the trees and squirrels will watch for you. Go to an unfamiliar city, roam the streets, they are always statues to talk to, and benches made for sitting gives strangers a shared existence if only for a minute, and these moments can be so uplifting and the conversation you get in by sitting alone on benches, might have never happened had you not been there by yourself.

Society is afraid of alone though. Like lonely hearts are wasting away in basements. Like people must have problems if after a while nobody is dating them.

But lonely is a freedom that breathes easy and weightless, and lonely is healing if you make it.

You can stand swathed by groups and mobs or hands with your partner, look both further and farther in the endless quest for company.

But no one is in your head. And by the time you translate your thoughts an essence of them may be lost or perhaps it is just kept. Perhaps in the interest of loving oneself, perhaps all those "sappy slogans" from pre-school over to high school groaning, we're tokens for holding the lonely at bay.

Cause if you're happy in your head, then solitude is blessed, and alone is okay.

It's okay if no one believes like you, all experience is unique, no one has the same synapses, can't think like you, for this be relieved, keeps things interesting, life's magic things in reach, and it doesn't mean you aren't connected, and the community is not present, just take the perspective you get from being one person in one head and feel the effects of it.

Take silence and respect it.

If you have an art that needs a practice, stop neglecting it, if your family doesn't get you or a religious sect is not meant for you, don't obsess about it.

You could be in an instant surrounded if you need it.

If your heart is bleeding, make the best of it.

There is heat in freezing, be a testament.