

## Lesson Plan: How to Read and Analyze Poetry

As a **High School English Language** teacher, you can use this lesson plan to teach your students **how to read and analyze poetry** and to use these techniques to examine climate related poems.

In this lesson plan, students will be taught how to read poetry and identify elements such as **theme, structure, and tone**. Through this lesson plan your students will also be introduced to one of the most significant issues of our times- **Climate Change**.

Thus, the use of this lesson plan allows you to integrate the teaching of a climate science topic with a core topic in **English Language**.

Use this lesson plan to help your students find answers to:

1. How is poetry read?
2. What are the essential components of poetry?
3. How is a poetry analysis done?
4. How is climate change portrayed in modern poetry?

### About the Lesson Plan

**Grade Level:** High School

**Discipline:** Humanities, English

**Topic(s) in Discipline:** Reading Poetry; Poetry Elements- Structure, Tone, Theme; Poetry Analysis; Climate related Poetry

**Climate Topic:** Introduction to Climate Change

**Location:** Global

**Access:** Online, Offline

**Language(s):** English

**Approximate Time Required:** 60-80 min

## 1 Contents

### 1. Teaching Module (30-40 min)

A teaching module that provides a step-by-step guide to reading poetry and analyzing its various components such as tone, structure, and theme. It includes several links to teaching resources and a worksheet for poetry analysis.

This can be accessed at:

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/preparing-poetry-readers-first-steps>

## 2. Classroom Activity (30-40 min)

A curated list of climate change related poetry for analysis using techniques learnt from the previous resource. This list of poems is also available as audio recordings in the voices of celebrities.

This can be accessed at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/ng-interactive/2015/nov/20/our-melting-shifting-liquid-world-celebrities-read-poems-on-climate-change>

## 3. Suggested questions/assignments for learning evaluation

- How is poetry read?
- What are the essential components of poetry?
- How is a poetry analysis done?
- How is climate change portrayed in modern poetry?

## 2 Step-by-step User Guide

Here is a step-by-step guide to using this lesson plan in the classroom/laboratory. We have suggested these steps as a possible plan of action. You may customize the lesson plan according to your preferences and requirements.

### 1. Topic introduction and discussion

Use the module, '[Preparing for Poetry: A Reader's First Steps](#)' by Jason Rhody, published by EDSITEment, National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), to take your students through a step-by-step guide to reading poetry. Follow the instructions to facilitate the students' understanding of the techniques involved in reading and analyzing poetry. Use this teaching resource to also enable your students to learn how to prepare an essay about a poem.

This can be accessed at:

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/preparing-poetry-readers-first-steps>

### 2. Apply the understanding in written and spoken discussions

Choose one or more poems from the list of 21 poems, '[Our melting, shifting, liquid world': celebrities read poems on climate change](#)' curated by UK poet laureate Carol Ann Duffy and published by the Guardian, to read in class. The poems can be downloaded, and copies prepared beforehand for classroom reading. You can also choose to engage your students further by playing audio files (mp3 format) of the chosen poems read out by celebrities- James Franco, Jeremy Irons, Ruth Wilson, Gabriel Byrne, Michael Sheen, Kelly Macdonald, Maxine Peake, Tamsin Greig, Ian Glen, and Iwan Rheon. Use the worksheet (from the first resource), '[Preparing for Poetry](#)' by NEH to ask your students to analyze the chosen poems. Use the completed worksheets to facilitate a classroom discussion on the theme of climate change poetry. Further, encourage your students to employ the techniques learnt to prepare an essay on the chosen poem/s.

Note: In order to improve your students' understanding of the climate change theme beforehand, you can give a brief overview using this [educators' resource](#) by CLEAN Foundation, Canada.

The curated list of climate change poems can be accessed at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/ng-interactive/2015/nov/20/our-melting-shifting-liquid-world-celebrities-read-poems-on-climate-change>

### 3. Questions/Assignments

Use the tools and the concepts learned so far to discuss and determine answers to the following questions:

- How is poetry read?
- What are the essential components of poetry?
- How is a poetry analysis done?
- How is climate change portrayed in modern poetry?

## 3 Learning Outcomes

The tools in this lesson plan will enable students to:

- learn how to read poetry
- identify different elements of poetry
- analyze poetry and prepare an essay on it
- draw comparisons between poetry from different times and themes
- learn about climate change through poetry

## 4 Additional Resources

If you or your students would like to explore the topic further, these additional resources will be useful.

### 1. Classroom Activity

Teaching resources by Poetry Society, UK, to encourage your students to create poetry related to change climate.

These can be accessed at:

<http://poetryclass.poetrysociety.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Tackling-climate-change-Karen-McCarthy-Woolf.pdf>

<http://poetryclass.poetrysociety.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Vanishing-Acts-Poetry-and-Climate-Change-Helen-Mort-2.pdf>

### 2. Website

NASA's website to explore and encourage your students to gain an understanding of the theme of climate change.

This can be accessed at:

<https://climate.nasa.gov/>

### 3. Reading

A collection of poems related to climate change commissioned by the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA).

This can be accessed at:

<https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/pdfs/events/climate-change-poetry-anthology.pdf>

## 5 Credits/Copyrights

All the teaching tools in our collated list are owned by the corresponding creators/authors/organizations as listed on their websites. Please view the individual copyright and ownership details for each tool by following the individual links provided. We have selected and analyzed the tools that align with the overall objective of our project and have provided the corresponding links. We do not claim ownership of or responsibility/liability for any of the listed tools.

### 1. Reading; 'Preparing for Poetry: A Reader's First Steps'

By Jason Rhody, published by [EDSITEment, National Endowment for the Humanities \(NEH\)](#).

### 2. Reading; 'Our melting, shifting, liquid world': celebrities read poems on climate change'

Curated by UK poet laureate [Carol Ann Duffy](#), published in [the Guardian, UK](#).

### 3. Reading; 'Climate Change background info'

By [CLEAN Foundation](#), Canada.

### 4. Additional Resources

[The Poetry Society](#), UK.

[Global Climate Change, NASA](#).

[Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce \(RSA\)](#)