

Desdamona – MC, Poet, and Teaching Artist

Objectives: Desdamona writes poems that are not just meaningful to her, but are also important issues to many. She also teaches young women to become poets like her by having them practice creating their own poems using the foundation of well-known nursery rhymes to help them get started. In this activity, poems will be created using a nursery rhyme you know from your own childhood about something important to you (ex: bullying, pollution, identity, etc).

Standards (Suggested 5+):

ELA:

- 5.1.2.2. – Determine the theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges, or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic.
- 5.1.4.4. – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes
- 5.1.5.5. – Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem
- 5.6.3.3. – Write narratives and other creative texts to develop real or imagined experiences or events
- 5.6.4.4. – Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience
- 5.8.2.2. – Summarize a written text read aloud
- 5.8.6.6. – Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks

Tools/Resources:

MN Original video clip, 4 well-known nursery rhymes (audio reading helps), pen/pencil and paper.



Video Clip: <http://www.tpt.org/mn-original/episode/desdamona/>

Activity

- 1) Watch the segment and discuss:
 - a. How does poetry tell a deeper story?
 - b. Why would using poems be a more meaningful way of talking about an important topic?
 - c. Desdama recommends that when writing poetry, the writer should “not be afraid to get something on the page”. What does she mean by this? Why is it important to remember this when writing poetry?
- 2) Brainstorm:
 - a. Think of songs or rhymes you are familiar with – what are they?
 - b. What are some important issues to you in your community and lives?
 - c. Working with a partner or alone, pick a nursery rhyme or song, then write poetry that would match the pacing of the original song/nursery rhyme.
- 3) Create:
 - a. Create your own nursery rhyme/song about a problem/issue in your community/life.
 - b. Once completed, practice reading aloud to perform in front of class (optional).