

Teaching Grammar with Playful Poems

Dr. R. S. A. Susikaran,

Assistant Professor,
Department of English,
Oxford Engineering College,
Tiruchirapalli, Tamilnadu, India,
Susikaran.r.s.a.@gmail.com,

Abstract: *The reading and writing of poetry, classified as a literary activity, has helped to keep this form of linguistic expression out of the typical EFL classroom. While many teachers agree that poetry promotes language acquisition, they will also add that poetic concepts and cultural assumptions are usually too difficult for EFL learners to take on.*

This article will discuss a blended approach, and the use of simple poems to teach and reinforce grammar points as well as language structure. Engaging lessons with model poems by favorite poets will motivate students to learn grammar interestingly.

Keywords: *Question word, Auxiliary verb, Linkers, Main verb, Prepositions.*

1. INTRODUCTION

A poem is a piece of writing in which the words are chosen for their beauty and sound and are carefully arranged, often in short lines which rhyme. A collaborative approach with interaction in pairs or other small groupings and creating ideas together. Poetry can become an integral part of the ELT classroom promoting grammar to the students with enjoyment, involvement and interest.

The use of poetry in the grammar class can provide an effective and collaborative means of language learning and of personal expression. This paper focuses the simple forms of grammar which can give students a framework for expressing ideas that are meaningful to them.

2. CHOSEN POEM FOR PRESENTATION

Daffodils

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed---and gazed---but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

- William Wordsworth

3. RULES TO BE FOLLOWED IN FRAMING QUESTIONS

- Find the subject
NOTE: Subject answers the questions **Who, What**
- Find the verb.
Split the main verb as: If it is
 - WRITES>DOES+WRITE
 - WRITE-> DO+WRITE
 - WROTE->DID+WRITE
- Change the first persons **I** and **We** into second person **You** in framing questions.
- Make column as
Subject - Verb - Question Word
- Split the sentence as shown above.
- Omit the answer of the question.
- After splitting as above,
 - put 1 to question word
 - put 2 to auxiliary verb
 - put 3 to main verb
 - put 4 to the other rest of the sentence
- Arrange the numbers in order as 1,2,3,4
- Put question mark at the end.

3.1 How to teach “framing questions”

“I Wandered Lonely As A Cloud”

Here “I” refers to the poet

To make the children understand the meaning of the first line of the stanza, you can ask the following questions:

- Who did wander lonely as a cloud?
Ans: **The Poet** wandered lonely as a cloud.
- How did the poet wander as a cloud?
Ans: The poet wandered **LONELY** as a cloud.
- Did the poet wander lonely as a cloud?
Ans: **Yes** the poet wandered lonely as a cloud.

Thus the pupils would have understood the meaning of the first line.

4. FIGURES AND TABLES

How to Frame Questions to the Above Answers

The poet wandered lonely as a cloud.

- Remember the question you asked is **Who.....?**
- So the QUESTION WORD is **Who**
- Here the **Subject** is the **Answer**

Answer is omitted in framing questions.

Subject	Verb	Question Word
-----	2 3 4 Did +wander lonely as a cloud	1 Who

Now order the numbers as 1,2,3,4.

Who did wander lonely as a cloud?

The poet wandered lonely as a cloud.

- The next question you asked is **How**.....?
- So the question word is, **How?**
- Here **Lonely** is the answer.
- So the word **Lonely** should be omitted.

Subject	Verb	Questionword
3 The poet	2 4 Did+ wander as a cloud	1 How

Now order the numbers as 1,2,3,4

How did the poet wander as a cloud?

YES. The poet wandered lonely as a cloud.

- The question you asked is **Did**.....?
- It is a question that begins with **Verb**.
- It is also called as **Yes** or **No** type.
- **Yes** or **No** should be removed while framing question.

Subject	Verb
2 The Poet	1 3 4 Did+ Wander Lonely As A Cloud

Now order the numbers as 1,2,3,4

Did the poet wander lonely as a cloud?

As we are teaching poem, we can point out,

Linkers

That, when, and, but, what, or, as, then, at once For the **past verbs** in the poem, we may ask the present form, present participle and past participle

(Example)

Past	Present	Present participle	Past participle
Wandered	wander	wandering	wandered
Saw	See	Seeing	seen

Adverbs

Lonely, little thought, golden daffodils, pensive mood.

Articles

A cloud, a crowd, a host, a glance, a poet, a bay.

The lake, the trees, the breeze, the stars, the Milky Way, the margin, the waves, the daffodils.

While teaching articles, teach them when and where to pronounce “**The**”.

Prepositions

On, over, beside, beneath, along, at, in, to, for, upon, off, with.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to indicate how simple poems and related activities might enhance grammar learning at school level. It is suggested that while focusing on the beauty of the words students are simultaneously trained the usage of grammatical contexts also. By using these methods of framing questions students can get a clear knowledge of the poem and the grammatical terms used in it.

Thus poem is an effective tool for practicing a specific grammatical structure. One can attain a major success to break the traditional view of grammar classes as dull and immensely boring.

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AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY



Dr.R.S.A.Susikaran.An articulate qualified English Professor and Language trainer for students from diverse backgrounds or varying degrees of ability. Committed and dedicated professional with a proven ability to teach, motivate and direct students to maximum performance by encouraging a positive and energetic environment. Graduated from St.Joseph's College, Trichy and later higher education from Madurai Kamaraj University and Doctoral Degree in Philosophy at Bharathidasan University, Trichy.

At present working for Oxford Engineering College, Trichy, Tamil Nadu. Specialization areas of interest are Indian Writings in English, African Literature, and English Language Teaching. Attended a score of International Conferences on both Language and Literature and presented quite many Research papers. Has a ripen experience of 15 years of teaching English language to students especially for the socially disadvantaged.