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USING POETRY TO ENCOURAGE CREATIVE WRITING

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Using poetry is an effective and reliable way in teaching English language. Poetic creativity offers an excellent chance for students to learn the four basic language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. It also helps students to develop areas within their linguistic knowledge, including grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Teaching English through poetry has many advantages such as it being of authentic material, being a medium to express emotions and feelings, being a wonderful carrier of culture, and being able to help improve students' linguistic knowledge and skills. Poetry is often regarded as the most sophisticated genre of literature, comprising a variety of contents that are narrative, lyrical and dramatic in nature. In addition, poetic creativity aids language development at all levels: grammar, vocabulary, phonology and discourse. It requires learners to manipulate the language in interesting and demanding ways in attempting to express uniquely personal meanings.

There have also been positive remarks by scholars who consider poetry an effective tool in teaching English language. According to Hess (2003), through its drama and emotional context, a good poem is suitable for a close "reading", with much good language practice. Hedge (2000) also believes poems as authentic materials can be used to develop especially the receptive skill of reading. In addition, authentic texts make teaching more enjoyable and keep the students closer to the target language culture. Another claim is that reproduction of poetry – memorizing, rewriting, reporting and translating – can exercise the productive skill of "writing", which is not an easy task to teach (Alber-Morgan Sheila; Hessler, & Konrad, 2007). When considered in terms of the skill of "speaking", as the themes of poetry (e.g. love, death, nature, beliefs, despair etc.) are universal among all human beings (Maley & Duff, 1989), and because each person's perception is different, poems can initiate a fund of interactive discussion and create the atmosphere for a genuine exchange of ideas.

Here are some effective strategies for teaching poetry writing that teachers can use in their classrooms.

➤ *Reading and analyzing poems:* before writing their own poems, students need to read and analyze different types of poems, from classic to contemporary, from formal to free verse, from rhyming to non-rhyming. Reading and analyzing poems can help students understand the elements of poetry, such as imagery, metaphor, rhythm, sound, tone, and theme. Teachers can use questions, prompts, or activities to guide students to explore the meaning, structure, and style of the poems. For example, teachers can ask learners to identify the speaker, the audience, the mood, the message, or the poetic devices used in the poems or can also encourage students to compare and contrast different poems or to relate the poems to their own experiences or opinions.

➤ *Providing models and examples:* another way to help students write poetry is to provide them with models and examples of poems that they can use as inspiration or reference. Teachers can choose poems that are relevant to students' interests, backgrounds, or goals, or poems that illustrate a specific form, technique, or topic that teachers want them to learn. Teachers can show their students how to use the models and examples as sources of ideas, vocabulary, or structure, but not as templates to copy or imitate or asking students to explain how they used the models and examples in their own poems.

➤ *Encouraging creativity and experimentation:* poetry writing is a creative and experimental process that allows students to express their individuality and originality. Teachers should encourage students to be creative and experiment with different forms, techniques, and topics of poetry writing or by giving learners choices, challenges, or prompts that stimulate their imagination and curiosity. For example, they write a poem based on a picture, a word, a phrase, a question, a sound, a feeling, or a situation or they are encouraged to write a poem in a specific form, such as a haiku, a sonnet, a limerick, or a concrete poem. Teachers also ask students to experiment with different aspects of poetry, such as rhyme, rhythm, meter, alliteration, assonance, or repetition.

➤ *Providing feedback and support:* feedback and support are essential for students' poetry writing development and confidence. Teachers should provide students with constructive and specific feedback that highlights their strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers can also provide students with support that helps them overcome their challenges and difficulties by giving them suggestions, resources, or tools that can help them improve their poetry writing skills. For example, teachers can give learners feedback on their use of imagery, metaphor, sound, or structure or by providing them with support such as dictionaries, thesauruses, rhyming dictionaries, or online poetry generators.

➤ *Facilitating peer review and collaboration:* peer review and collaboration are beneficial for students' poetry writing learning and enjoyment. Teachers should facilitate peer review and collaboration among students by creating opportunities for them to share, discuss, and critique their poems with each other by organizing groups, pairs, or online forums where students can exchange their poems and give each other feedback or by arranging activities, such as poetry circles, workshops, or slam sessions, where students can present, perform, or publish their poems. Peer review and collaboration can help students improve their poetry writing skills, gain new perspectives and insights, and build a sense of community and belonging.

The following classroom techniques and activities given below are based on the use of some particular grammatical structures and lexical items. An example is “**I**” poems, which can be used to enable students to write about themselves in a controlled way and practice especially adjectives and stative verbs. Its rules are as follows:

- I **am** (two special characteristics you have)*
- I **wonder** (something you are actually curious about)*
- I **hear** (an imaginary sound)*
- I **see** (an imaginary sight)*
- I **want** (an actual desire)*
- I **am** (the first line of the poem repeated)*
- I **pretend** (something you actually pretend to do)*
- I **feel** (a feeling about something imaginary)*
- I **touch** (an imaginary touch)*
- I **worry** (something that really bothers you)*
- I **cry** (something that makes you very sad)*
- I **am** (the first line of the poem repeated)*
- I **understand** (something you know is true)*
- I **say** (something you believe in)*
- I **dream** (something you actually dream about)*
- I **try** (something you really make an effort about)*
- I **hope** (something you actually hope for)*
- I **am** (the first line of the poem repeated)*

The next example deals with the structure ‘**If I were** ____, **I would**’. When we introduce ‘language play’ and allow ourselves to ‘be’ inanimate as well as animate, abstract as well as concrete, this sentence structure yields all kinds of interesting metaphors. You can read these in the poem *If I were, I would*.

- If I were a flower, I’d spread fragrance.***
- If I were spring, I wouldn’t let people down.***

*If I were a man, I'd hunt deer.
If I were a cat, I'd sleep all day long.*

*If I were music, I'd play for you.
If I were the sun, I'd warm you.*

Our next activity looks at the way words collate – or do not naturally collate – with one another. So, for example, if we compare someone human to something inanimate, we have immediately generated a metaphor. We list people in our lives, then objects in the natural world, and join the two with the verb form 'is like', creating metaphors about mothers, wives and husbands, sons and daughters.

*My teacher is like a river
always flowing with new ideas*

*My friend is like a shell
with treasure inside*

*My son is like an angel
he helps me flow peacefully through life*

To sum up, using poetry to encourage creative writing in the classroom can pave the way for innovation. By sharing their works, students can inspire each other, stretch their imagination and try to bring something new and unexplored. At the same time, by using creative writing exercises, teachers can add a sense of production, excitement, and performance to the language classroom, to give students the opportunity to say something surprising and original, even while they practice new aspects of language.

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UNRAVELING THE IMPACT OF COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION ON STUDENTS' WRITING AND SPEAKING ABILITIES

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The prevalence of CMC platforms has undeniably altered the landscape of communication, particularly among younger generations who are immersed in digital technology from an early age. As students increasingly engage in online discussions, chat rooms, and social media interactions, there is growing concern about the potential impact of these mediums on their linguistic skills.

One of the most notable effects of CMC on students' writing abilities is the phenomenon of "text speak" or "internet slang." In informal online environments, individuals often resort to