



Three lessons that use emojis

Lesson 3 Poetry

Poetry can have a strong clear message or it can be more elliptical (hard to pin down, and deliberately open to different meanings.)

The four poems below are all different in the way they work. One way of seeing how open to interpretation they are is to see how far you can to pin down the feelings and mood, by using emojis. If you all come up with the same emojis, it'll be clear that the mood is quite obvious. If you all come up with quite different ones, it will suggest a more open set of possibilities, with more ambiguous messages.

1. First read the poems on your own and apply your own emojis. Use as many or as few as you want. For instance, you might only use one at the end, or you might use one at the end of each line, or you might use them only when you notice a change of feeling or mood.
2. Now get into groups and compare what you have chosen. Try justifying your choices to each other by exploring what you think the poem is doing or saying.
3. Rank order the poems, on the basis of your discussion, in terms of which is the most elliptical and which the least elliptical, 1 being the most elliptical.
4. Rank order the poems, in terms of how much the mood shifts from beginning to end or from line to line, 1 being the most static and 5 having the greatest swings of mood.

Funeral Blues

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead
Scribbling on the sky the message 'He is Dead'.
Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves,
Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.

He was my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and my Sunday rest,
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;

I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong.

The stars are not wanted now; put out every one,
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun,
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood;
For nothing now can ever come to any good.

W.H. Auden

Everyone Sang

Everyone suddenly burst out singing;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom,
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark-green fields; on - on - and out of sight.

Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted;
And beauty came like the setting sun:
My heart was shaken with tears; and horror
Drifted away ... O, but Everyone
Was a bird; and the song was wordless; the singing will never be done.

Siegfried Sassoon

The Red Wheelbarrow

so much depends
upon

a red wheel
barrow

glazed with rain
water

beside the white
chickens

William Carlos Williams

My Heart Leaps Up

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

William Wordsworth

Writing poetry using emojis

- In pairs, or a small group, try sequencing emojis without using words in a way that suggests a poem containing strong emotions.
- On your own, turn the emoji poem into a conventional word poem.
- Listen to each others' poems, all of which have tried to evoke the same emotions. Explore what you think of the way different people have conveyed the same emotions in poetry.

