

Poetry of the Bighorn

Objectives:

Students will be able to express their knowledge of bighorn sheep through poetry.

Grade level:

2-high school

Duration:

An hour or more

Group Size:

Individually, or projects could be completed by teams of students

Background:

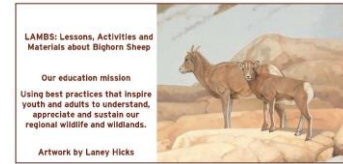
Throughout time, poetry has been a medium for expressing ideas, emotions, and beliefs. History has been told, legends passed down, and faith strengthened by simple poems written by passionate people. A literal definition of poetry is “the art of rhythmical composition, written or spoken, for exciting pleasure by beautiful, imaginative, or elevated thoughts.” Poetry can be the expression of a heart filled passion and love, whether that is a passion for justice, or faith; or a love of nature or family. Poetry is a means of expressing our hopes and dreams, emotions and beliefs.

Materials:

- Journal
 - Ideas for making a simple journal:
 - https://www.ehow.com/how_7780239_make-book-construction-paper-kids.html
 - <https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Paper-Book>
- Pen or pencil
- Colored pencils, markers or crayons
- Photos or videos of bighorn sheep to help students visualize
 - www.bighorn.org

Procedures:

1. On the front cover of the journal, have students draw and color a picture of a bighorn sheep in its habitat.
2. On page one of the journal, have students describe a bighorn sheep.
3. On page two of the journal, have students list as many facts as they can about bighorn sheep.
4. On page three of the journal, have students write about a personal experience with a bighorn sheep or use their imagination if they haven't had a personal experience.
5. On page four of the journal, have the students write a poem about a bighorn sheep.
 - Everyone can be a poet, at least to some extent. This activity is designed to take knowledge about bighorn sheep that students have and apply it using a means of expression with fewer rules.



- There are many ways to go about this. Photos of bighorn sheep and their habitat could be placed on students' desks to initiate conversations and ideas about these sheep. Perhaps giving time to allow students to imagine they are a bighorn sheep and what that might feel like, how it lives, where it travels, and how plants and other animals look from its perspective.
- Using these thoughts, students could write free verse or rhyming poetry. Cinquain and haiku are interesting forms, which include more structure. Even a poem written as a group could be fun.

Examples of Types of Poetry:

Haiku: Haiku (*high-koo*) are short three- line poems with a 5-7-5 syllable structure that use sensory language to capture a feeling or image. They are often inspired by an element of nature, a moment of beauty, or another poignant experience. Haiku poetry was originally developed by Japanese poets, and the form was adopted (and adapted) by virtually every modern language, including English. The secret to writing great haiku is to be observant and appreciate nature.

Example:

*Tall cliffs abound it
Yet it glides from rock to rock
The desert bighorn.*

Cinquain: A cinquain poem has five lines. The word comes from the French *cinq*, which means five. Cinquain poems have the following pattern:

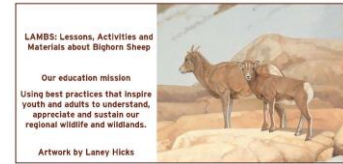
- Line 1 = 2 syllables
- Line 2 = 4 syllables
- Line 3 = 6 syllables
- Line 4 = 8 syllables
- Line 5 = 2 syllables

There are no specific rules about writing a cinquain other than it must have five lines and the correct syllable count. However, most poets feel that it is better to stick with concrete objects than with abstract ideas ("My Dog" rather than "Happiness"). It is also true that mixing the emphasis of the syllables (or words) will create a stronger effect than writing a string of words with similar lengths and emphasis. Other poetic devices such as assonance and alliteration can be used to help make your cinquain poem memorable. Organizing the ideas in your cinquain to follow the order below is another suggestion:

- Title
- Description of the title
- Some action about the title
- Feeling about the title
- Synonym (similar word) for the title

Example:

*Bighorn
Curved horns on head
Jumping from rock to rock
The magnificent beast stands high
Wild sheep*



Diamante: A diamante is a poem shaped like a diamond. It can be used to show that words are related through shades of meaning from one extreme to an opposite extreme, following a pattern of parts of speech like this:

noun
 adjective adjective
 participle participle participle
 noun noun noun noun
 participle participle participle
 adjective adjective
 noun

Another way of thinking about it is:

- Line 1: Beginning subject
- Line 2: Two describing words about line 1
- Line 3: Three doing words about line 1 (each word ends in “-ing”)
- Line 4: A short phrase about line 1, a short phrase about line 7
- Line 5: Three doing words about line 7
- Line 6: Two describing words about line 7
- Line 7: End subject

The key element is that the first noun and the last noun are unlike, almost like opposites.

Example:

Lamb
 Small, White
 Growing, Jumping, Playing
 Hoof, Hair, Wing, Feather
 Soaring, Looking, Gliding
 Brown, Large
 Golden Eagle

Acrostic: The first letter in each line, when read vertically, spells out the name of something or conveys a message.

Example:

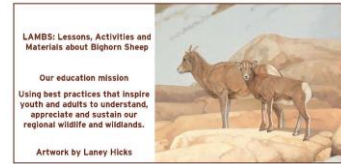
Towering
 Reaching
 Extending
 Embracing the sky.

Windspark: Five lines:

1. “I dreamed”
2. “I was. . .”(something or someone)
3. where
4. an action
5. how

Example:

I dreamed
 I was a tree
 On a hillside
 Playing with the wind
 Joyfully.



Picture: The words form a picture of what is happening in the poem.

Example:

branches
shade rubber
fruit clothes
paper wind barrier fuel
furniture resource nuts
tree houses maple syrup parks
multiple uses seeds oxygen
lumber habitat energy
building materials
baseball bats leaves
photosynthesis
roots
gum
cork
books
paint
cocoa
sponge

Free Verse: Follows no set formula or style.

Example:

I am
the tree
that overcomes
all.
I am
the one
that laughs
at the wind.
I am
one with
the wilderness.

Assessment:

Through their poems, a teacher could assess elements learned from several lessons taught about bighorn sheep. For example, the above diamante would demonstrate that the student understood that a young sheep, the lamb, is part of a food chain also belonging to the golden eagle, which often times preys upon lambs. The descriptions of the lamb also would demonstrate an understanding of what a lamb looks like and actions associated with a young sheep.