

## Kindergarten Poetry Visualizing with a Quick Draw

*To lay a foundation for “close reading” in the primary grades, we can begin modeling what that process looks like with our read alouds. Poetry is a great source, because it is short, but filled with imagery and ideas that can challenge our thinking.*



*Our K students can't often verbally analyze a poem the way older students can. They lack the language and experience to appreciate the layers of meaning, word choice, structure, etc. But they can experience a poem on a deeper level if we guide them into it.*

*One way young students often explore and express their thinking is through drawing. Through drawing they often visualize the ideas of the writer, focus on certain details or aspects that are important to them, discuss their thinking as they draw; often revising or adding ideas as they draw. When they share their drawings with peers it is often accompanied with rich language for describing and explaining that would not occur without the supporting artwork.*

### **POETRY QUICK DRAW**

- Choose a short poem or stanza from a poem that young children might enjoy. Don't worry if they don't know all of the words, but the concept should be developmentally appropriate.
- Share with the students, "Poems are really wonderful pieces of writing. They are often pretty short, but they are loaded with ideas that create pictures in our heads when we read them or hear them. I'm going to read you a poem and I want you to think about what pictures you get in your heads. Then I'm going to read it more slowly and see if our pictures in our heads get more detailed. If there are words you don't know, you can ask and we can talk about what it means so you can picture it."
- Read the poem all the way through with good pace, rhythm, and expression. Then read it line by line, pausing to let gets get an image or to ask for clarification on any unknown words. If you give a kid-friendly definition, reread the line so they can hear the word in context.
- After you have read it line-by-line ask the students, "Do you have a picture in your head? Well, now you are going to take that picture in your head and put it right here on this paper!" Provide them a copy of the poem with a large space for drawing (or a blank paper). Send them off to draw for no more than 10 minutes.
- Regroup and collect the pictures. "The cool thing about reading, is no two readers will have the same exact picture in their head. Even though we read the same words, they make slightly different pictures for each of us. Let's look at how many different ways we could 'see' this poem".
- Depending on how much time you have you could simply hold up each drawing quickly for students to experience the variety or you could discuss pictures briefly to share thinking and work on listening/speaking skills.
- Teachers could create a class book for each poem, or students could keep a collection of each poem to make their own poetry anthology.
- Kids could use the poems to locate known words or letters for additional reading practice. You are only limited by your imagination!