Week 2: Poetry

Context: Act 2

The second act starts with a prologue, in which the chorus tells us that ‘Romeo is beloved and loves again’. Act 2 Scene 1 starts with Benvolio and Mercutio looking for Romeo, who has jumped over the orchard wall into the Capulet’s garden. They can’t find him and decide to leave, saying that there is no point looking for someone who does not wish to be found.

Benvolio: **Go, then, for ’tis in vain**

 **To seek him here that means not to be found.**

Romeo appears and soon spots Juliet standing by a window in her house.

Romeo: **But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?**

 **It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.**

Soon they begin to speak to each other and declare their love for one another. They decide to get married the next day, in secret.

Juliet: **If that thy bent of love be honourable,**

 **Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow**

In the next scene (3), we are introduced to a new character, Friar Laurence. Romeo asks Friar Laurence to marry him and Juliet.

Romeo: **I’ll tell thee as we pass, but this I pray:**

 **That thou consent to marry us today.**

Friar Laurence says that he will conduct the marriage, believing it might help to end the feud between the Montagues and Capulets.

In scene 4, Benvolio and Mercutio are still looking for Romeo. When he arrives, he seems to be very happy about his newfound love. The nurse soon arrives in search of Romeo.

Nurse: **Pray you, sir, a word. And as I told you,**

 **My young lady bid me inquire you out.**

Romeo tells the nurse that he is in love with Juliet and wishes to marry her that afternoon.

Romeo: **Bid her devise**

**Some means to come to shrift this afternoon. And there she shall at Friar Lawrence' cell**

**Be shrived and married.**

The nurse relays this to an anxious Juliet, who has been waiting at home for news. The lovers reunite in Father Laurence’s room and are married.

Lesson 1

LI: To pick out examples of figurative language used by Shakespeare.

**National Curriculum Links**

**Reading**

**Pupils should be taught to:**

* **apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words that they meet**
* **read and discuss a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks**
* **discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader**

Starter:

Draw some circles on the board and write the following prompt above them.

**The sun is like…**

See how many things they can think of that are round like the sun.

*Activity idea taken from ‘Jumpstart Literacy’ by Pie Corbett (p49*)

Main Teaching:

Ask children what different types of figurative language they can think of (encourage them to think back to the lesson’s starter if they are struggling).

Hopefully the children will remember that similes, metaphor and personification are all examples of figurative language (remind children of definitions if necessary).

Then show the children the following extract from Act 2 Scene 2:

Romeo:

**But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?**

**It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.**

**Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,**

**Who is already sick and pale with grief.**

Ask the class the following questions:

* What type of figurative language is being used in this extract?
* What is Juliet being compared to?
* How do you know this is a metaphor and not a simile?
* Why is it an effective metaphor?
* What does it tell us about Romeo’s feelings towards Juliet?

Split the class into groups of four. Give each group one of the following extracts from this scene and ask them to identify the figurative language being used (simile or metaphor):

1) Romeo:

**O, speak again, bright angel! For thou art**

**As glorious to this night…**

**As is a winged messenger of heaven**

**Unto the white, upturned, wondering eyes**

**Of mortals**

thou = you art = are o’er = over mortals = humans

2) Juliet:

**This love, by summer’s ripening breath,**

**May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.**

3) Juliet:

**But to be frank, and give it thee again.**

**And yet I wish but for the thing I have.**

**My bounty is as boundless as the sea,**

**My love as deep.**

bounty = generosity boundless = limitless

4) Romeo:

**The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars**

**As daylight doth a lamp.**

doth = does

Once the groups have identified whether their extract has a simile or metaphor (or both), they should discuss what is being compared to what (see below for answers):

*1) Metaphor and simile – Juliet is being compared to an angel/messenger of heaven*

*2) Metaphor – Their love is being compared to a flower*

*3) Simile – Generosity and love are being compared to the sea*

*4) Simile – Romeo says that the beauty of Juliet shames stars like daylight shaming a lamp.*

Display each extract on the IWB in turn. Ask each group feedback to the class by answering the following questions:

* Did your extract have a simile, metaphor or both?
* How do you know?
* What is being compared to what?
* Is it effective?

Plenary:

Children pick their favourite example of figurative language discussed in the lesson and explain why they like it.



Lesson 2 (drama activity)

*Before starting the drama session, show the children the poem ‘A Red, Red Rose’ by Robert Burns. Focus on the first verse and ask them to identify the figurative language that is being used by Burns.*

*What is being compared to what?*

*Explain to children that they are going to be writing poetry in role as Romeo or Juliet that is inspired by Robert Burn’s poem, as well as the language Shakespeare uses in Act 2 Scene 2. The drama lesson today is their opportunity to develop powerful language and work with a partner to come up with the first 2 lines (couplet) of their poem.*

LI: To generate ideas and vocabulary for my poem.

**National Curriculum Links**

**Writing**

**Plan their writing by:**

* **noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary**

**Spoken Language**

* **Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas**

Warm up:

Children walk around the space, making sure they don’t walk too closely to anyone else.

They imagine they are Romeo at the beginning of the play, when he is upset about Rosaline.

How would he be feeling/walking round/greeting people?

Repeat with different parts of the play:

**- On his way to the Capulet’s ball**

**- When he sees Juliet for the first time**

**- Walking to find Juliet on her balcony**

Main Drama Activity:

Put children into pairs (mixed ability). Ask them to make the following pictures using their whole bodies.

- Flower

- Sun

- Angel

Ask some pairs to demonstrate to the rest of the class.

Then ask the children what they notice about the pictures they have made. *Answer: They are used as similes and metaphors used in the play.*

Ask the class to think of other things that you might compare someone to if you loved them and record on a flipchart e.g. jewel, beautiful song, star

In their partners, the children pick ONE thing from the class list that they are going to use to write a simile.

They should write this in the middle of the piece of A4 paper (landscape).

On the left of the page, ask the children to think of as many adjectives they can think of to describe the thing they have chosen.

After about five minutes, ask some children to share the adjectives they have chosen and record on the flipchart. Praise those groups who have picked powerful adjectives and push children to improve weak choices.

The children now think of as many verbs related to the thing they have chosen on the right side of the page. Again, after five minutes, ask the children to share and record.

Now show the children your own version of the activity they have just completed.

precious **jewel** sparkles

expensive shines

ruby-red glistens

beautiful

shiny

Model circling the most powerful adjectives and verbs and using these ideas to develop a couplet similar to Robert Burn’s poem, extending the verb with more detail:

O my love is like a….

That…

For example:

**O my love is like a precious jewel,**

**That glistens among damp earth.**

Children then work in their pairs to write their own couplet like the one above (making sure to write their couplet on the back of their named piece of paper). **Make sure they understand that it is not necessary for the couplet to rhyme.**

They should perform their couplet to the class, using expression and adding actions for emphasis.



Lesson 3

LI: To write couplets using similes.

**National Curriculum Links**

**Writing**

**Plan their writing by:**

* **identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing, selecting the appropriate form and using other similar writing as models for their own**
* **noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary**

**Perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear.**

Starter:

Show some examples of the children’s couplets from the drama session.

* Which one is your favourite? Why?
* How could we improve this couplet?
* Could we use a better word here?

Main Teaching:

Hand out the children’s work from the drama session yesterday and ask them to copy their first couplet into their writing books (making sure to start ‘that’ on a second line).

Explain that the children are going to be writing four more couplets today using the same technique as they did yesterday, continuing to work with the same partner.

1) Think of something to compare your ‘love’ to

2) Think of some adjectives to describe your chosen thing

3) Think of some verbs linked with your chosen thing

4) Use your ideas to write couplets with the following template:

O my love is like a….

That…

*You might like to use a template below to support the children complete this activity.*

Plenary:

Ask pairs to pick their favourite couplet and memorise it so they can perform it to the class with expression and actions. Pick a few pairs to perform their couplet in front of the class and ask the children to explain what they liked about it and why.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| First idea | Adjectives | Verbs |
|  |  |  |
| First Couplet:O my love is likeThat |
| Second idea | Adjectives | Verbs |
|  |  |  |
| Second Couplet:O my love is likeThat |
| Third idea | Adjectives | Verbs |
|  |  |  |
| Third Couplet:O my love is likeThat |
| Fourth idea | Adjectives | Verbs |
|  |  |  |
| Fourth Couplet:O my love is likeThat |



Lesson 4

LI: To write a love poem in role.

**National Curriculum Links**

**Writing**

**Plan their writing by:**

* **noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary**

**Draft and write by:**

* **selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning**

**Perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear.**

Starter:

Ask each child to look over their work from the last few days and pick their favourite adjective. Each child will share their chosen adjective as the teacher records on a whiteboard. Encourage the class to use this word bank to help them when writing their poem today.

Main Teaching:

Children will be using ideas from the last two lessons to write a poem in role, as either Romeo or Juliet.

Explain that they are going to take each of their couplets and extend them by adding two more lines, to make a verse of four lines.

Model this process explicitly, either using your own example or the one below.

**O my love is like a precious jewel,**

**That glistens among damp earth.**

Ask:

* How could we extend this idea?
* What other words are linked with jewels that we could use?

Record the children’s ideas and then model linking words associated with jewels to the person you are writing the poem about (either Romeo or Juliet):

**His whole face sparkles when he smiles,**

**Blue eyes like shimmering sapphires.**

So, the whole verse would be:

**O my love is like a precious jewel,**

**That glistens among damp earth.**

**His whole face sparkles when he smiles,**

**Blue eyes like shimmering sapphires.**

Ask children to pick out the words relating to jewels i.e. glistens, sparkles, shimmering, sapphires. Emphasise the importance of extending the simile using related words throughout the whole verse.

Do another example with the children, this time asking the children to work with a partner, with you guiding them by following the same system:

1) Choose a couplet

2) Brainstorm words related to the simile

3) Write 2 more lines of poetry

E.g.

**O my love is like a fragrant flower,**

**That grows in rolling fields.**

**With cheeks as soft as petals,**

**And cherry-blossom lips.**

Take feedback from the children and highlight verses where the simile has been extended successfully. Support pairs who have found this tricky.

Share the following **success criteria** with the children before they start work on their own poems, working either independently or in pairs.

* **Similes**
* **Adjectives**
* **Carefully chosen verbs**
* **Short, poetic lines**

Plenary:

Ask some children to share their poems by reading them out to the rest of the class.



Lesson 5

LI: To edit and perform.

**National Curriculum Links**

**Writing**

**Evaluate and edit by:**

* **assessing the effectiveness of their own and others’ writing**
* **proposing changes to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation to enhance effects and clarify meaning**

**Perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear.**

Starter:

Put 6 words up on the board that children in the class misspelt in their work in the previous lesson. Remind children how to look up the correct spelling in a dictionary, using the first 3 letters. Children work in pairs to find the correct spelling.

Main Teaching:

Before the lesson, pick three different verses that were written by children in the previous lesson.

Ask the children to share what they like about the first example, explaining their reasons.

Then ask the children to consider if they could be improved in anyway – focusing on the following three things:

* **Word choice**
* **Spelling**
* **Unnecessary words**

Repeat with other 2 examples and then ask children to work in partners (different to who they wrote the poem with) to improve their work.

Children name themselves Child A and Child B. Child A reads out their work to Child B, who then says two things they really liked about the poem, and one way it could be improved (this must be specific e.g. ‘spell this word correctly’ or ‘think of a more interesting word than shiny’). Child A then responds to this feedback.

The children swap roles and repeat.

Publishing and Performing

When they have finished editing, children publish their poems, making sure to leave a line after each verse. They also need to think of an appropriate title for their poem. They should also perform their finished poems. You might like to record them once they have had time to practise.