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Data Driven Instruction in Teaching Poetry Analysis to Advanced Placement Literature and Composition Seniors

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**Data Driven Instruction in Teaching Poetry Analysis to Advanced Placement Literature
and Composition Seniors**

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University Honors Capstone

College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences

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TED 4600: University Honors Capstone

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Abstract

The goal of the poetry unit was to enhance students' written ability by analyzing a variety of poetic literature to answer advanced placements practice prompts. I used the following research-based instructional strategies: homework and practice, nonlinguistic representations, and cooperative learning. I used the following research-based assessment strategies: essay writing, Quizizz, exit ticket, and topic, evidence, and analysis responses. The standards that the unit addressed are: LA.12.RP.2 Analyze the development and interaction of literary elements such as characterization, setting, and plot, and how they contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole, LA.12.V.2 Interpret an author's use of figurative, connotative, and technical language in grade-level literary and informational text and LA.12.V.2 Interpret an author's use of figurative, connotative, and technical language in grade-level literary and informational text. The unit assessments prepared students for the advanced placement test. For example, one of the summative assessments is their eighth timed write that used last year's advanced placement poetry prompt. Students also had a unit long summative project called the curated poetry portfolio in which they selected their own poems that connect to the poems read in class. The formative assessments are the pre-test and post-test literary element vocabulary Quizizz, topic sentence, evidence, and analysis (TEA) responses to the poems read in class, and whole group and small group discussions. Overall, students demonstrated a deeper comprehension of poetry literary terms, as the average of accuracy increased from the pre-test, 75% to 87% in the post-test. Some limitations of the study include but are not limited to: Student attendance as more students were present for the post-test than the pretest. Additionally, I was more lenient on the post-test Quizizz than the pre-test Quizizz as I allowed retries for wrong answers and no timed response.

Background

The poetry unit took place over the course of two weeks with an alternating schedule of “A” and “B” days. This study was researched during my clinical practice placement – at an urban 9-12 grade high school within a large metropolitan city. The high school serves 1,545 students in grades 9-12. The approximate number of students in each grade are as follows: 374 in 9th grade, 400 in 10th grade, 396 in 11th grade, and 375 in 12th grade. The student to teacher ratio is 17:1. The demographics of students at this high school are: 34% Black, 22% Asian, 19% Latine, 17% White, 7% two or more races, 1% Indigenous. 74% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. The ratio of male and female students is 50:50. In the 2020-2021 school year the percentage of students achieving proficiency in English is 12% which is lower than Nebraska’s state average of 48%.

The advanced placement poetry unit was created for the purpose of preparing students for the poetry section of the advanced placement literature test. This test grades students over their literary analysis skills. Students typically fall between the average (letter grade C) or above average (letter grades A or B). Students who fall below the average (letter grade D or F) are students who do not submit their work. Students are expected to engage with a variety of literature including short stories, long fiction, and more. After engaging with the content students use literary analysis to craft written interpretations of the work and answer advanced placement prompts.

Introduction

The importance of the poetry unit was to prepare students for the advanced placement test where there will be at least one poem that students will need to read and analyze. The goal of the unit was to hone students’ skills in articulating their writing to answer advanced

placement prompts, which was one weakness noted by the cooperating teacher. I used the following research-based instructional strategies: homework and practice, nonlinguistic representations, and cooperative learning. I used the following research-based assessment strategies: Essay Writing, Quizizz, and topic, evidence, and analysis responses. The unit began with a pre-test Quizizz where students had to answer 25 poetry and literary vocabulary questions. The questions matched the word to the definition as students needed to understand the meaning of the literary elements to incorporate them into their poetry analysis. The results showed that all three sections of the classes I taught had an average understanding of the terms such as end-stop-line, stanzas and enjambment.

The research-based instructional strategy homework and practice were used through two components of the unit: topic, evidence, and analysis; and used as an exit ticket where students had time in class to complete and the curated poetry portfolio. The importance of creating a portfolio on (student success, etc.) is supported by a study by Liu & Yuan (2004) that showed that portfolios foster personal ownership, pride, responsibility, and dedication and allow students to showcase their accomplishments across diverse subjects.

The second researched instructional strategy Non-linguistic representations I used were PowerPoint presentations and using a Promethean board to guide students through the lesson. A study done by Kelly (2020) found that visual representations are a powerful tool in teaching, providing students with deeper and enduring understanding of content. Direct verbal instruction is the most common method, but research shows that incorporating nonlinguistic and linguistic visual representations can enhance learning. PowerPoint and promethean enhances learning as during instruction students can follow along on their devices as I go over

the lesson on the board. Resources like PowerPoint and word documents were accessible through a poetry unit specific Teams channel that was curated for each section.

The third research-based instructional strategy I used was cooperative learning used in the unit was small group discussions and whole group discussions. A study done by Teng (2022) revealed that metacognitive regulation was a more significant predictor of writing outcomes, emphasizing the importance of incorporating metacognitive prompts in collaborative writing settings. Cooperative learning allows students to develop insights about the text by collaborating with their peers in a small group discussion before having a group discussion. The small group discussion was led by students which developed their metacognitive regulation which then transferred over to their writing skills. Students were given specific prompts about the theme of the poetry read in class to which they had to use their critical analysis skills to answer the prompt simulating the same way they must do on the Advanced Placement test.

The use of a researched based assessment strategy essay writing is supported by the study done by Ogunyemi (2022) indicated that class size significantly affected student achievement in essay writing but not attitude towards it. Additionally, self-esteem did not significantly impact student achievement or attitude towards essay writing. I used a summative assessment called the curated poetry portfolio where students found three of their own poems to connect to the poetry and ideas discussed in class. This portfolio was then used in class as students lead their own discussions using one of the poems they selected and reading it with their group. They then shared insights and analyzed the poems they chose. I wanted students to have more agency over their writing, so the writing requirements were for students to write two

to three sentences reflecting on why they chose to poem and how they connected it to the ideas spoken about in class over the four poems read in class.

The second researched based assessment strategy Quizizz is supported by a study done by Ahmed, et al. (2022) whose results suggests that game-based learning tools can yield better results than traditional methods, motivating students to practice and learn outside of the classroom. The rise of game-based learning has led for students to develop a culture surrounding games such as Quizizz. The shared customs (like using pop-culture references for nicknames, among students) allow for them to interact with the content in a low-pressure way so students are making distinct connections to the vocabulary words. Quizizz motivated students to practice in class and gave them a chance to memorize their vocabulary words.

The third researched based assessment strategy topic, evidence, and analysis is supported by a study done by Zumbunn et al. (2020). The results of the study showed that self-efficacy for writing conventions was statistically significantly related to writing/ELA grades and teacher-reported student writing self-regulation for both elementary and high school students, while self-efficacy for ideation and self-regulation were not significantly related to either outcome. In this study self-efficacy was defined as, “the beliefs individuals have for performing successfully in a given domain” (Bandura). In my unit students had low self-efficacy in their thesis writing skills so in the unit I wanted to ensure students had multiple chances for practice before the Advanced Placement test.

The usage of these research-based assessments strategies elevates the level of instruction given during this unit. Students had better self-efficacy over their thesis writing skills, students were able to collaborate with each other to use metacognitive regulation and the gamification of vocabulary review allowed for students to create deeper connections with those

words. This unit was to prepare students for their Advanced literature placement test which tests students over their literary analysis skills. Thus, using these strategies were intentional in this unit to facilitate enhanced writing skills over poetry literary analysis.

Participants

The participants of this study were three different sections of Advanced placement literature and composition. The sections rotate each day following a 5 block “A” and “B” schedule. On “A” days there is one section of advanced placement literature and composition to which it will be referred to as “4A”. On “B” days there are two sections of advanced literature and composition, “1B” and “4B”. The demographics for each section are as follows:

Table 1

Demographics:	4A	1B	4B
Total # of Students	26	29	30
Male	3	14	15
Female	23	15	15
IEP/504	0/0	1/0	1/0
ELL	0	0	0

Methods and Materials

The curriculum I used is the Advanced Placement test preparatory book. I made the text selection with the intention of shedding light on marginalized groups. For instance, the first poems read in the unit were written by authors who were black. There were five lessons total for the poetry unit which were accessible through my unit plan. The unit materials I used are the Poetry Foundation website for poems read in class which were linked on a Word document, Quizizz for the pre and posttest, Microsoft Word for unit assignments, Microsoft PowerPoint

for unit assessments, YouTube poem readings, Promethean board and a whiteboard to guide discussions.

All technology related resources were accessible through Microsoft Teams which students accessed through their school issued iPad. Students had an established routine where everything for the unit can be accessed on Microsoft teams, therefore I created a specific channel which had all the materials for each class. Students found materials and submitted assignments on Teams.

The unit began with a formative pre-test Quizizz created using literary element vocabulary from the prior short story unit and poetry structure vocabulary to reintroduce terms like stanzas, so students were able to use the correct terms when analyzing the poems read in class. Students read the assigned poems on their own. However, for longer poems and to keep students engaged specific poems were read to them by a YouTube video on the Promethean board like Mending Wall by Robert Frost and read by Robert Frost (long and difficult) or Still I Rise by Maya Angelou (short but extra impactful to hear the author read their own work). One formative which was due after each class called the topic sentence, evidence, and analysis response in which students used one of the poems read in class to answer a prompt crafted by ChatGPT that relates to the theme of the poetry read in class. Students were given at least ten minutes in class to complete the assignment. Students also collaborated in small group discussions where they came back together to discuss each poem as a class. One summative assessment takes place throughout the unit, it is called curated poetry portfolio. Each week, after reading assigned reading, students engaged with another poem that connected to the poems read in class. They then submitted the poem and a one-paragraph (2-4 sentences) analysis connecting them to the readings or ideas spoken about in class. Students also had their

eighth summative timed write that used the most recent advanced placement poetry analysis prompt.

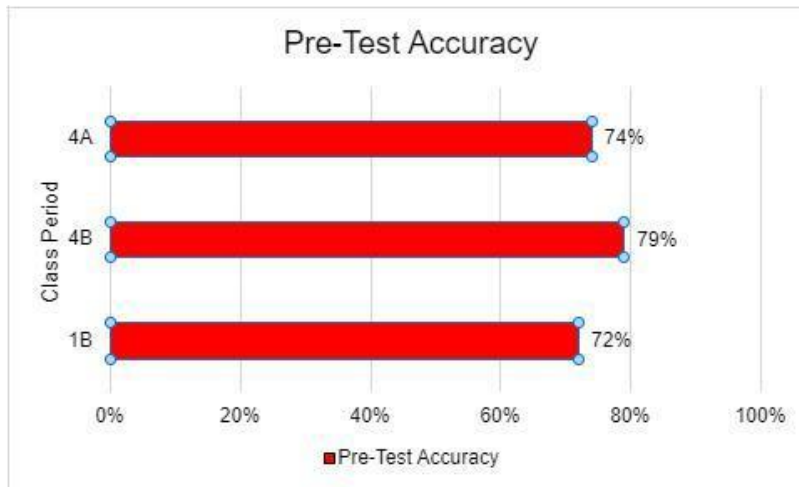
Results

Data Analysis

Figures 1 and 2 represent the results of the literary elements vocabulary pre-test and post-test given as a Quizizz. Figure 1 shows the accuracy of each class section for the pre-test. Figure 2 is the post-test accuracy of each class given at the end of the unit. The graphs represent three different classes and their accuracy. Accuracy was generated based on the number of questions students got correct, wrong, and questions left unanswered. Section 4B is the largest class. Section 1B is the first class of the day on "B" days. The Quizizz was given at the beginning of class for each section and test. Students had access to a word document vocabulary graphic organizer with the same definitions and words that were on the Quizizz. In the pre-test students were given a 20 second answer time to answer 25 questions, there were no retries for incorrect answers and students had time after the Quizizz to look over the graphic organizer and their results. In the post-test students were given the same Quizizz however there was no time limit and there was retries for incorrect answers. This led to the average of the Quizizz accuracy of poetry literary terms to increase from the pre-test, 75% to 87% in the post-test.

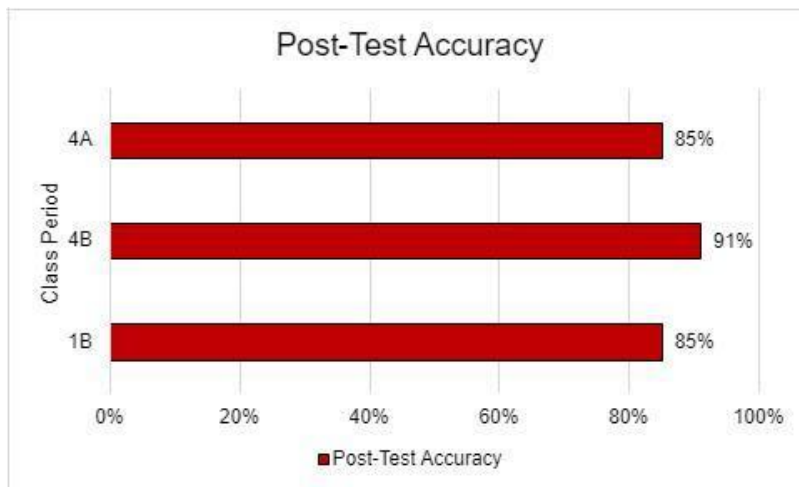
Figure 1

Pre-Test Accuracy Results



Note. Pre-Test: 74% (4A), 79% (4B), 72% (1B)

Figure 2
Post-Test Accuracy Results



Note. Post-Test: 85% (4A), 91% (4B), 85% (1B)

Conclusion

Overall, students demonstrated a deeper comprehension of poetry literary terms as the average of poetry literary terms increased from the pre-test, 75% to 87% in the post-test. This data tells me that the learners were able to enhance skills like metacognitive regulation and thesis writing during my unit. The data also shows the strategies I used worked as students met

the objective of enhancing their written ability by analyzing a variety of different poetic literature to answer advanced placements practice prompts. I used the following research-based instructional strategies: homework and practice, nonlinguistic representations, and cooperative learning. I used the following research-based assessment strategies: Essay Writing, Quizizz, Exit, and topic, evidence, and analysis responses which led to better self-efficacy over their thesis writing skills, meaningful collaboration with each other to use metacognitive regulation and the gamification of vocabulary review to create deeper understandings.

Some limitations of the study include but are not limited to: Student attendance: more students were present for the post-test than the pretest, Post-test Quizizz was more lenient as I allowed retries for wrong answers and no timed response. There was not a comparison group and statistical analysis was not conducted on the data to ensure results would be greater than what is expected by chance.

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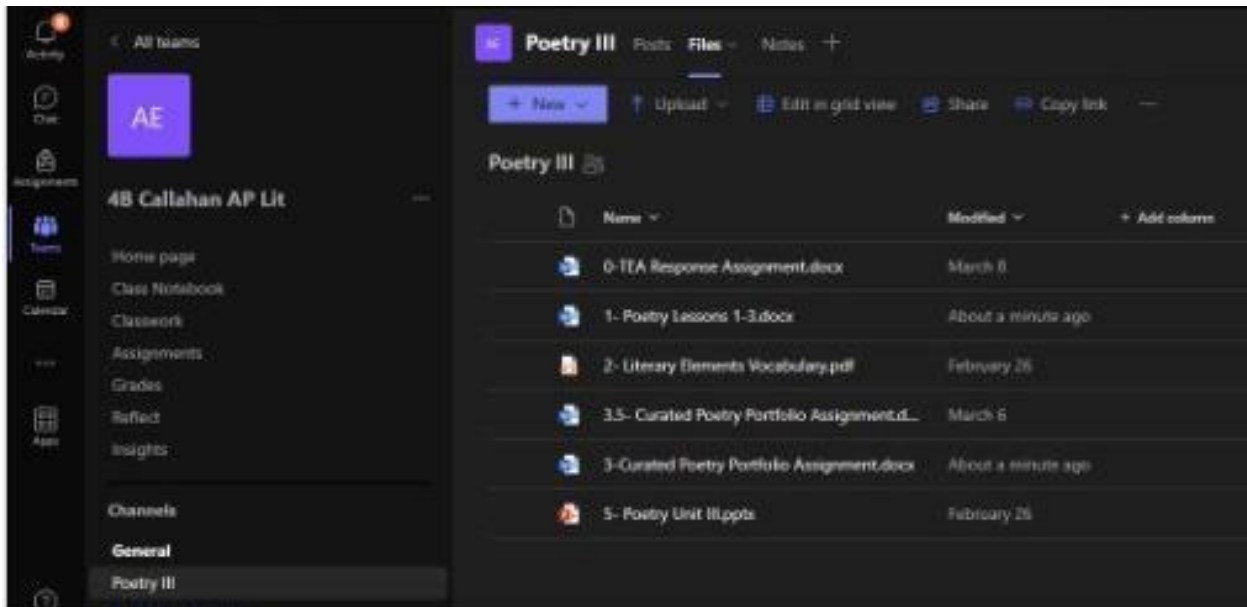
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Appendix A: Poetry Unit Teams Channel



Appendix B: TEA Response assignment sheet

Figure 1:

Assignment Instructions

TEA Response

T = Topic Sentence: A claim or assertion that can be explained, proven, illustrated, supported, developed and tied into the thesis.

E = Evidence: The information that supports the point and can be any of the following: specific text, quotations, quotes, illustrations, facts, supporting texts and/or other formal material.

A = Analysis: TDCP explanation, elaboration or evaluation of the information/evidence provided to support the main idea/topic sentence.

Remember: Every piece of information/evidence MUST be analyzed.
Remember, information/evidence cannot stand alone because different people can interpret the significance of that information differently.

If your paragraphs lack any of the above elements, you may encounter the following problems in your writing:

1. No **TOPIC SENTENCE**
 - can lead to a lack of **CLARITY**
 - Your reader may not quite understand what idea you're trying to prove or how the information/evidence you provide relates to the overall thesis.
 - Without a **POINT** to prove, you will also have a hard time developing meaningful, original **ANALYSIS**, which makes your writing unhelpful.
2. No **EVIDENCE**. This can lead to a lack of **CREDIBILITY**.
 - If you're trying to prove an idea, but you don't have any concrete examples or external support, then your reader will wonder who you're making the claim you're making.
 - Your reader will likely dismiss your perspective because your writing does not appear to have substantial **TDCP** that supports the overall statement.
3. No **ANALYSIS**
 - A paragraph without analysis is equivalent to **NOT** the evidence connects to your point and does not relate to your thesis.
 - It will leave the reader asking, "so what?"
 - The reader might read your **2-PURPOSE ANALYSIS** and question the relevance of this support and be the way you understand how exactly this connects with your main idea.

Figure 2:

ChatGPT generated poetry prompts with structured

TEA 1: Consider the historical and cultural context in which these poems were written, and the impact they have had on readers and society. In what ways does poetry serve as a powerful tool for black authors to express their experiences, challenge dominant narratives, and advocate for social change?

T: choose one of the poems we talked about to answer the prompt aka your claim

E: cite/summarize from poem

A: your "interpretation"

TEA 2: Consider the ways in which women poets have contributed to literary movements, challenged societal norms, and reshaped the landscape of poetry. How have women poets navigated issues of gender, identity, and representation through their work?

T: choose one of the poems we talked about to answer the prompt aka your claim

E: cite/summarize from poem

A: your "interpretation"

TEA 3: Choose one of Frost's poems and analyze how he uses language, imagery, and symbolism to explore themes such as the ambiguity of choice, the beauty and harshness of nature, or the inevitability of change.

T: choose one of the poems we talked about to answer the prompt aka your claim

E: cite/summarize from poem

A: your "interpretation"

TEA 4: Analyze how poets use figurative language, sound devices, and structure to convey meaning and evoke emotion in their poetry. Consider how the poets' choices in language, form, and style shape the reader's interpretation of the poems and contribute to their lasting significance.

responses

Appendix C: TEA Response student example

TEA 1: Consider the historical and cultural context in which these poems were written, and the impact they have had on readers and society. In what ways does poetry serve as a powerful tool for black authors to express their experiences, challenge dominant narratives, and advocate for social change?

The “Afterimages” by Lorde serves as a powerful tool for black authors where personification intensifies how strongly the corpse of Emmet Till symbolizes radical racism and injustice for blacks.

“My eyes are always hungry and remembering, however the image enters its force remains” (Section 1).|

The pain and anger can be felt through *my eyes are always hungry and remembering*. For the image to be carved forever into the eyes and therefore through the mind, Emmet Till’s death was beyond humane or brutal. He was fourteen, black, and lynched for false accusations. There was no justice served thus *remembering* serves as a way to express justice for him. Also, to give the eyes humanity instead of talking about the body related to the phrase “seeing is believing”. Racism prevails where no action is done and most refuse to acknowledge the violence until they see it for themselves.

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Appendix D: Curated Poetry Portfolio student example

Curated Poetry Portfolio

- After reading 3-4 poems in class, students will find ONE poem on their own after each lesson.
- Students will link or insert the poem they chose.
- With their chosen poem, students will compare and reflect on the poems and ideas discussed in class in 2-3 sentences.

Lesson 1: Black History Month

Poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/48989/caged-bird> (Caged Bird)

Reflection: This poem is like the other poems relating the topic because its focus is to represent the black community, showing hope. Unlike other poems, this poem focuses back on day when black people were still slaves, caged and singing of when they'll be free.

Lesson 2: Women's History Month

Poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/52196/they-shut-me-up-in-prose-445> (They shut me up in Prose)

Reflection: This poem talks about being constrained by society's conventions and expectations. Its purpose is to show what is putting women down, but the poem has a strong tone that fights and stand up for woman, much like the poem "Still I Rise by Maya Angelou.

Lesson 3: Robert Frost:

Poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44262/dust-of-snow> (Dust of Snow)

Reflection: This poem reflects the power of small, everyday occurrences that alter our entire day or mood. It tells us to appreciate the small things we take for granted. Unlike his other poems I've read so far, about the inevitability of change or natural selection, this poem talks about what could be changed