

Total time

60
minutes

Age group

8-14



Voices of the Earth

Lesson Plan

LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson, *Voices of the Earth*, uses performance poetry to bridge the gap between environmental science and creative writing. By analysing the poem: [Hope by Salome Agbaroji](#) students explore how personification (giving nature a human voice) can create an emotional connection that facts and figures often miss. Students will move from being passive listeners to active advocates, craft their own "voice for the voiceless," and perform their work in class.

MATERIALS

- Video Link: [Hope by Salome Agbaroji](#) and a screen/projector for viewing.
- Writing Tools: Paper, pens, or journals.
- Atmosphere: A Bluetooth speaker for nature soundscapes (rain, wind, birds) during the writing and showcase phases.
- Optional: Recycled materials (cardboard scraps, smooth stones) if choosing to write poems on "natural" surfaces.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Think:

- About how personification makes us care for the earth
- About which poetic style (Haiku, Acrostic, or Free Verse) best fits a message

Feel:

- Empathy for living things that cannot speak
- Responsible for protecting the natural world
- Confident sharing creative ideas in a safe space

Do:

- Write an original poem from nature's perspective
- Perform a poem using tone and pace to create impact
- Listen actively and give supportive feedback to peers

LESSON PLAN

1. Introduction & Listening | 10 minutes

- Students read the poem, *Hope* by Salome Agbaroji (You can choose to display this or handout the poem to the class. A copy of the poem is included on page 4 of this lesson plan)
- Play the video: [Hope by Salome Agbaroji](#)
 - Encourage students to identify one sound or image that stuck, and pay attention to the speaker's tone and the rhythm.
 - Feel free to play the recording twice to give students enough time to write what they notice.
- Reflection: Discuss how the poem uses "personification" (giving nature human traits). Why is a poem more powerful than a list of facts?

LESSON PLAN

2. Review Styles of Poetry | 10 minutes

- Introduce three ways to speak for nature:
 - **Haiku Structure:** 3 lines with a 5-7-5 syllable count.
 - Goal: Capture a "snapshot" of a single moment, like a bee on a flower.
 - Example:
Small wings hum a song,
Landing on a bright petal,
Dusty gold with life.
 - **Acrostic Structure:** The first letter of each line spells a word vertically.
 - Goal: Focus on a specific subject.
 - Example: using O-C-E-A-N: Overflowing with secrets, Crashing against the stone, Every wave is a heartbeat, Always moving, Now, please keep me clean.
 - **Free Verse Structure:** No set rhyme or rhythm.
 - Goal: Tell a longer story or express big emotions without being restricted by rules.
 - Example: Hope by Salome Agbaroji (poem can be found on page 4 of the lesson plan)

3. Writing Your Nature Story through Poetry | 25 minutes

- The Mission: Write a poem that gives a "voice" to something in nature that cannot speak for itself.
- Step 1: Choose a Subject
 - Pick something specific. You can go as big or small as you would like. Examples include: a single raindrop, a palm tree, an elephant, the Amazon Rainforest etc.
- Step 2: Perspective Shift
 - Instead of writing about the object, write as the object. If you are the raindrop, what do you see? What are you afraid of? What do you want to tell the humans walking past you?
- Step 3: Drafting Prompts
 - For Haiku: Capture one "snapshot" moment or one tiny, beautiful detail.
 - For Acrostic: Use the name of your subject to list its hidden strengths, actions, attributes or lived experience.
 - For Free Verse: Tell a story. Start at the beginning of your life and describe how things have changed.

4. Poetry Showcase and Closing Message | 15 minutes

- Transform the room into a performance space.
- The Atmosphere: Dim the lights and/or play soft forest sounds.
- The Presentation: Students stand to read. Before starting, they say: "I chose to speak for [subject] because..."
 - Note: Instead of clapping, classmates "snap" their fingers when they hear a line they love to keep the mood focused.
- **Closing message:** Close by reminding the class that while nature may not have a human voice, their words have the power to protect the world around them. Encourage them to carry this new perspective out of the classroom, looking at every living thing with its own important story to tell.

***HOPE* BY SALOME AGBAROJI**

**WHEN I WAS YE HIGH,
MY HOPES WERE WAY HIGHER.
INSPIRED BY THE FAIRYTALES
AND PRINCESS DRESS ATTIRE.**

**IF YOU JUST BELIEVE, THEY SAID,
EVERYTHING BLEAK BECOMES BEAUTIFUL,**

**BUT THEN I REMEMBER
THE HERO'S JOURNEY IS LONG AND HARD
AND ALWAYS ONLY WON IN THE FINAL ACT.
AND THE VALIANT PROTAGONIST OF THIS EPIC CALLED "EARTH"
IS NAMED HOPE.**

**ALL OF A SUDDEN I'M THAT CHILD AGAIN
TUGGING AT THE PANT LEG OF HISTORY
ASKING, "IS THERE MORE TO THE STORY
OR IS HAPPILY EVER AFTER ONLY A THING OF FICTION?"**

**BUT THIS HOPE ISN'T THE IDLE OPTIMIST
THAT SITS ON STUMPS PICKING PETALS.
INSTEAD, WE ARE GETTING OUR HANDS DIRTY
AND PLANTING THE SEEDS OURSELVES.**

**THIS HOPE IS NOT WISHING ON LUCKY STARS.
IT IS IMAGINING A FUTURE WHERE THE STARS ARE VISIBLE IN THE FIRST PLACE**

**HOPE IS A CALL TO THE UNSEEN
AND A CLAIM TO WHAT'S YET TO BE.**

**HOPE IS NOT THE WAY THAT WE COPE,
BUT THE WAY THAT WE CONQUER.**

HOPE IS THE HERO WE NEED!



Be Hope artwork created by Yinka Ilori