



Then I gave each student a copy of “Ducks on a Winter’s Night” from my collection *Creatures of Earth, Sea and Sky: Animal Poems*. At the bottom of the poem, I had drawn two boxes and numbered them. I asked students to follow along as I read the poem aloud, and to pay particular attention to the mind pictures the words made them see. I did not do any prereading discussion on vocabulary or background knowledge.

After the first reading, I asked the first graders to draw their mind pictures in box #1 at the bottom of the poem. Then I asked students to follow along again as I reread the poem and to pay attention to any details they might not have noticed on the first reading and to draw a second picture, including those new details in box #2. One student’s work is shown at the right.

The difference between the first and second drawing, the first time reading the poem and the second, is distinct. In the first reading, the student drew several of the poem’s details in pencil: the zzzz’s show that the duck is sleeping; the moon and a star show that it’s night. But this student’s understanding of the poem, as shown in his drawing, is tentative and sparse.

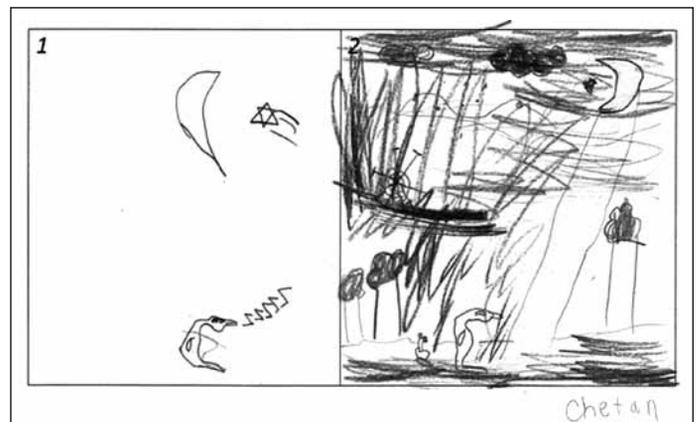
After the second reading of the poem, the drawing in box #2 comes to life through color and detail: he drew several ducks instead of one (Ducks asleep); he drew the blue wind blowing to show that it’s cold because it’s winter time (“Ducks on a Winter’s Night”); and the quarter moon shines a yellow column of light down next to the ducks.

The stark contrast between this reader’s first and second reading of the poem is visual evidence of how essential rereading a poem is to understanding details more accurately and developing a more complete understanding of the whole poem.

:: Ducks on a Winter’s Night ::

by Georgia Heard

Ducks asleep
on the banks of the pond
tuck their bills
into feathery quills,
making their own beds
to keep warm in.



Living With a Poem for One Week

Rereading one poem for a week invites readers to slowly climb deeper inside its meaning. Subsequent readings will support students in asking and answering questions about key details, and over the week, they will come to a deeper understanding of a poem, such as determining the theme. In *Climb Inside a Poem: Reading and Writing Poetry Across the School Day* (2007), my co-author, Lester Laminack, and I write about how to slow down and savor a poem for one week. It only takes 5–15 minutes a day (depending on the poem and the grade) to read and discuss the poem. You can live with a poem for one week periodically throughout the school year—for example, every other week, or once a month—to build students’ knowledge of poetry.



Read the poem aloud, or have students read it with a partner or in small groups, and as the week progresses, they will gradually unfold details and features that they didn't notice the first time they read. Students can also read independently, or for homework, and record their changing responses to the poem in their poetry response journals and then share these responses in class.

Below is a sample template for living with a poem for one week, along with a variety of ways to guide students in close reading of a poem. Each day for a week, or less, depending on the grade and the type and complexity of the poem, read aloud or have students read the same poem independently or in small groups. After reading, model how readers gradually draw evidence from a text and glean meaning from it.

When you introduce Living With a Poem for a Week, be sure to tell your students that getting at the heart of some poems might take weeks, months, or in some instances, even a lifetime. Exploring a poem and finding its meaning can be a slow process. It includes not just determining what the poem is about but also what we, as readers, bring to that understanding: our own images and experiences, and knowledge of the genre.

Monday: Introducing the Poem

On the first day, read the poem aloud and have students follow along. In discussing the poem, begin with an open-ended response, focus on what the poem says, associations and feelings students have about the poem, and any special features it has.

A menu follows, listing possible questions to model in a think-aloud as you discuss a poem with students. You can model your own thoughts before, during, and after you read by writing on a chart next to the poem or on a sticky note. (Be sure not to overwhelm students by asking or exploring all of the questions; instead, select the questions that are most appropriate to the type of poem and the students you're teaching.)

Before Reading

- *Let's take a quick glance at the poem. What do you notice?*
Long or short lines?
Does it have any stanzas? (See Chapter 11 for a demonstration lesson on stanzas.)
What kind of stanzas?
Is the poem long or short?
- *Read the title: What clues does the title give us about the poem?*
When you hear (or read) the title, what pictures do you see in your mind?
Can you predict what the poem is about from the title?
What do you already know about this topic?
- *Read the poet's name: Do you know the poet?*
If you do, what kind of poem do you expect? A funny poem? A rhyming poem?
A nature poem?

During and After Reading

Read the poem all the way through first for students to get the gist. Then reread line-by-line



and pause at preselected stopping points (after each stanza or after a complete image or thought) to ask and answer questions.

I'm going to stop here and ask:

- *What picture is the poet painting in your mind?*
- *What do you understand from what we just read?*
- *What does the poem make you feel?*
- *Are there any words that stand out to you?*
- *Do you have any questions about the poem?*
- *What do you think the structure of the poem is?*
- *What type of poem is it? Free verse? Traditional with rhyme and stanzas?*

The next day's reading and discussion will depend on what students noticed and discussed the previous day.

Tuesday and Wednesday: Reading Deeper: What Does the Poem Say?

Now that students have read the poem once and discussed what they noticed, model what readers do when rereading a poem:

- *In my mind, I see a picture of a _____. These are the words/lines that give me a picture in my head.*
- *I'm wondering about this word and why the author chose to use this particular word.*
- *I want to think about what the main idea of the poem is. I think it is _____ because _____. Any thoughts about this?*
- *I noticed that the poet repeats these words _____. I'm wondering why the poet did this.*

RL. 2.1 states: "Ask and answer such questions as *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text." To fulfill this standard, you can also focus Tuesday and Wednesday on the *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* of the poem. Exploring these types of questions gives students ways to climb deeper into the details and eventually the meaning of a poem.

Answering *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* questions is a doorway toward understanding the heart of a poem. We can ask students, for example, how does knowing the *what* and *where* of a poem help us understand its message? How does exploring the *why* help us understand its theme? If answering questions becomes rote and seems like just another assignment, it will not enlighten students' understanding of the poem.

It's helpful to think of these questions in two categories: closed questions and open questions. Closed questions (*who*, *what*, *where*) usually require short responses that are found directly in the text (*Where does the poem take place? What happens in the poem?')* Open questions (*why*, *how*, *what if*) demand more in-depth answers that are not explicitly stated in the text and require

The CCSS states that:

Surprisingly, what chiefly distinguished the performance of those students who had earned the benchmark score or better from those who had not was not their relative ability in making inferences while reading or answering questions related to particular cognitive processes, such as determining main ideas or determining the meaning of words and phrases in context. Instead, the clearest differentiator was students' ability to answer questions associated with complex texts.



the reader to voice an opinion (*Why did the poet write this poem? How is the poem made? What if . . . ?*).

As students reflect on these questions, they can write down evidence and details to support their thinking in their poetry response journals. Or they can record the information on a 5W and H Thinking Map (see the sample on p. 27) to use as evidence in a discussion about a poem. (A reproducible is on p. 116.)

Closed Questions

Who?

The who in a poem can be interpreted in two ways: as the person(s) named in the poem or the person who is speaking the poem. They could be one and the same.

Here are some questions to think about when exploring the speaker of a poem. (Remember, the speaker of the poem is not necessarily the poet.)

- *Who is speaking? Can you tell the gender, age, or anything else about the speaker?*
- *Does the speaker have a distinctive voice?*
- *What attitude does the speaker have toward the subject of the poem?*
- *Are any words written in dialect?*
- *What is the speaker's voice like—familiar, conversational, formal?*
- *Is the poem a **dramatic monologue**?*
- *What point of view is the poem written in—first, second, or third person?*
- *Why does knowing who the speaker is matter? How does knowing about the speaker help us understand the poem's message?*

What?

- *What's happening in the poem? Is there action? A story? Or does the poem express a feeling, an observation, or a thought?*
- *Can you retell or summarize the poem?*
- *Why does knowing the "what" matter? How does knowing the what of the poem help us understand its message?*

Where?

- *Where does the poem, or the events in the poem, take place? In an actual place, such as a baseball stadium or the beach, or in a more universal place?*
- *Identify which details tell us where the poem takes place. Which words or lines tell you where it takes place?*

The Reading Literature Standards for grade 5 requires students to understand how the speaker of the poem reflects upon a topic:

RL.5.2 Determine the theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

The Language Standard for that grade states:

L.5.3 Compare and contrast the varieties of English (e.g., dialects, registers) used in stories, dramas, or poems.



- Why does knowing the “where” of the poem matter? How does knowing the where of the poem help us understand its message?

When?

- When is the poem taking place? In an unspecified or universal time, or in a specific time or era? A particular season or time of year?
- How do you know when the poem takes place?
- Why does knowing the “when” of the poem matter? How does knowing the when of the poem help us understand its message?

Open Questions

Why?

- Why did the poet write the poem? What’s the purpose of the poem? To tell a story; to express a feeling; to give an observation of the world; to persuade, give courage, make us laugh, share a beautiful image? The why of a poem can relate to the theme of the poem—the purpose or the main idea.
- Why does knowing the “why” of the poem matter? How does knowing the why of the poem help us understand its message?

How?

- How is the poem made? What is the poetic structure of the poem?
- Does it use figurative language?
- Is it free verse?
- Does it have rhymes and a rhyme scheme?
- What tools did the poet use?
- Why does knowing the how of the poem matter? How does knowing the “how” of the poem help us understand its message?

What If?

Sometimes imagining a different point of view, or a different version of the events of a poem, can help enlighten its meaning.

At the right is an example of a 5W and H Thinking Map for “Ducks on a Winter’s Night.”

Finding the Theme of a Poem

Finally, gathering all we’ve learned, what’s the theme or message of the poem?

Name: _____ Date: _____

5W and H Thinking Map

Title: Ducks on a Winter’s Night Author: Georgia Heard

WHO? • speaker or person named in poem • point of view • tone • speaker’s voice <i>invisible speaker 3rd person point of view</i>	WHAT? • What’s happening in the poem? • Does the poem express a feeling, action, observation, thought, etc.? <i>Ducks are sleeping on a winter’s night. They tuck their bills into their feathers to keep warm.</i>
WHERE? • Where does the poem or its events take place? <i>by the banks of a pond</i>	WHEN? • When does the poem or its events take place? <i>on a winter’s night</i>
WHY? • Why do you think the poet wrote this poem? • What’s the purpose of the poem? <i>Possible: an observation. To see the world in a new way. Seeing ducks sleeping in a new way.</i>	HOW? • How is the poem made? • What craft tools does the poet use? <i>Use of figurative language (metaphor): Making their own beds/to keep warm in. Lines and line breaks. Specific words: feathery quills, banks of the pond</i>
QUESTIONS <i>What are quills?</i>	PERSONAL CONNECTIONS <i>I cover my nose with the blanket when I go to sleep to keep it warm.</i>

Poetry Lessons to Meet the Common Core State Standards © 2012 by Georgia Heard, Scholastic Teaching Resources



The theme of a poem can be described in the following ways:

- the main idea
- the poet's vision
- the poet's message
- the purpose of the poem

Theme also refers to the emotion and personal connections we bring to the reading of a poem. One poem can have many different themes, and there is no one “right way” of interpreting a poem, but students should show evidence from the details in the poem, as well as their own personal experiences, to support their interpretation.

Close Reading Strategies

Invite students to reread a poem by encouraging them to engage in what Billy Collins calls “spooling back” rereading activities. In the Living With One Poem for a Week model, these close reading strategies will most likely take place on the second and third days; if you're reading a poem on Poetry Fridays, have students engage in a few of these strategies on Fridays.

Illustrating a Poem

Visualizing a poem, and illustrating that imagery, is a comprehension strategy that I use frequently with students in responding to poetry. I tell them that the purpose of visualizing and drawing the images is not to make a perfect drawing but to make visible the mind pictures and sensory imagery that can help clarify the poem's overall meaning and our understanding of it.

After hearing or reading a poem, ask students to draw pictures of what they see in their minds. They may work together or independently. If the poem summons more than one image, then students can use multiple pages to illustrate them. I remind my students that most of the time our quick drawings will not accurately reflect the richness of a poem's sensory and emotional experience, but drawing will slow our reading down and clarify the poem's images and message.

Use some of the following questions to guide students:

- *Draw the what of the poem. What's happening in the poem?*
- *Is the poem a story, an action, or multiple events?*
- *Is the poem an observation?*
- *Draw the where and the when of the poem. What's the setting? Where does the poem take place? When does the poem take place? What are the details in the poem that tell us the where?*

Students can also draw their own personal associations with the poem. If the poem has a figurative meaning, if there is a central metaphor or simile, they can illustrate the fusion of the literal and the figurative.

After illustrating, students can discuss their drawings with partners and have a conversation about what they think the poet's message is. They can also identify and write down evidence and details—words, phrases, and lines—from the text that prompted the images and then share and discuss their illustrations.

Samples: Illustrating and Interpreting a Poem

In a fifth-grade classroom, students read Joanne Ryder's poem “Enchantment” and drew the imagery they pictured in their minds as a way to interpret the poem. (We did not discuss background knowledge or scaffold vocabulary prior to reading or illustrating it.) Students only



heard the poem read once prior to illustrating, and we had no discussion about it. As expected, every student's illustration was different, and so were their interpretations of the poem.

Strong readers make pictures in their minds to understand the meaning of a poem.

Enchantment
Joanne Ryder

On warm summer nights
the porch becomes our living room
where Mama takes her reading
and Dad and I play games
in the patch of brightness
the lamp scatters on the floor.
From the darkness, others come –
small round bodies
clinging to the screens
which separate us
from the yard beyond.
Drawn to our light,
the June bugs watch our games
and listen to our talk till bedtime
when Mama darkens the porch
and breaks the spell
that holds them close to us.

Draw your mind pictures in this space:

I wonder if the small round bodies are people or June bugs

After reading and illustrating the poem I think that the poet's message is:
That being with your friends and family is magical and people should be closer to nature

:: Enchantment ::
by Joanne Ryder

On warm summer nights
the porch becomes our living room
where Mama takes her reading
and Dad and I play games
in the patch of brightness
the lamp scatters on the floor.
From the darkness, others come –
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and listen to our talk till bedtime
when Mama darkens the porch
and breaks the spell
that holds them close to us.

Draw your mind pictures in this space:

After reading and illustrating the poem I think that the poet's message is:
when you spend time with your family it is like almost an enchantment.

Strong readers make pictures in their minds to understand the meaning of a poem.

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Joanne Ryder

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which separate us
from the yard beyond.
Drawn to our light,
the June bugs watch our games
and listen to our talk till bedtime
when Mama darkens the porch
and breaks the spell
that holds them close to us.

Draw your mind pictures in this space:

After reading and illustrating the poem I think that the poet's message is:
I think the poet's message is to enjoy people & the energy that they add to your life.



All three of the drawings show an understanding of the details of the poem, and all of their interpretations bring an understanding of the theme of the poem as filtered through the students' personal associations and memories.

All three readers brought their memories and feelings of family into their reading of the poem. I noticed the unusual illustration in the third example—a face, labeled “Dad” with an arrow pointing to it, looking out from a brick wall and a construction site surrounding him. Later, in a conference, the student’s teacher helped me understand the drawing. She told me that this student’s father had passed away several weeks earlier in a tragic construction accident. I reread this boy’s interpretation of the poem, “I think the poet’s message is to enjoy people and the energy that they add to your life,” and realized that, of course, he read the poem with his dad’s life and tragic death in his heart. I understood that when he put brackets around the last five lines of the poem about breaking the spell, it gave the poem a new deeply moving meaning for me.

When we read, we can’t help but bring our whole selves and our lives to what we read, and this is precisely what we want our students to do when they read and interpret a poem’s meaning.

In a discussion of the poem afterward, I asked students to think about the title “Enchantment” and how it figured in their interpretation. This led to a discussion about what the word *enchantment* referred to: the bugs, the family, or perhaps both. On another day, we also could discuss June bugs, and how and why they’re attracted to light and what that means for the interpretation of the poem. Or we could discuss the poet, Joanne Ryder, who also writes informational books about science for children, and how knowing about her as a writer influences our reading of the poem. Or we could discuss the speaker’s diction and word choice.

Rereading a poem over several days a week, sometimes even a year, is essential in coming to a complete understanding of it and its theme.

Acting Out a Poem

Performing a poem as a whole class, or in small groups, can help students answer the *what* and *where* of a poem. They can act out the *what* in the poem: *What’s going on in the poem? What’s the story or action?* They can also act out the *where* of the poem: *Where does the poem take place?* In their performances, students highlight the details of the poem that give us this information.

When they perform, students will need to decide who is going to read the poem aloud as they act it out. After performing, the performers discuss which words and details helped them come to an understanding of how to act the poem out. Some poems are better suited for choral reading than acting out (see the section on choral reading in Chapter 3).

Quick-Writes and Writing About a Poem in Poetry Response Journals

Students can free write a response to the poem in their poetry response journals: they can write how the poem made them feel or what it made them think of. They can write based on a line or an image, or write what they think the poem is about. Writing in response to a poem can also help students understand the why of the poem: *Why do you think the poet wrote the poem? What’s the purpose of the poem?*

Rereading a Poem With Different Lenses

In my book *The Revision Toolbox: Teaching Techniques That Work* (2002), I wrote how students sometimes find it helpful as a writing revision strategy to reread their writing using different lenses (such as rereading for clarity, focus, and sound). Similarly, students can also



reread a poem with a specific lens to clarify their understanding of it. They could reread a poem with a different lens Monday through Friday, independently or in small groups, and then report back to the class what they learned about the poem.

First, you need to model reading a poem with a particular lens; you can't expect students to understand how to read with, for example, the craft lens if they know nothing about the craft of poetry. Introduce one lens at a time to the whole class Monday through Friday, then model how to read with each lens. Depending on the content and type of poem, you can assign some of these reading lenses.

* *Literal Lens*

Students read a poem on the literal level.

- *What does the poem actually say?*
- *What are the concrete and key details?*
- *Can you summarize the poem?*
- *Can you retell the narrative progression of a poem, stanza by stanza?*

* *Figurative Lens*

As students read, they ask themselves if the poem has another meaning beside the literal.

- *Does the poem use figurative language, such as metaphors or similes?*
- *Is the poem an extended metaphor, or does it use several similes and metaphors?*
- *Which parts of the poem are similes and which parts are metaphors? What is being compared?*

* *Sound Lens*

Students read a poem with their ears. In other words, they read a poem by listening to the sounds and music: rhythm, repetition, rhyme, alliteration, or other sound patterns.

- *What's the rhythm of the poem? Does it change anywhere in the poem? Why?*
- *Does the poem use any sound patterns (such as repetition or alliteration)?*
- *Is there a rhyme scheme?*
- *Does the poem have a set meter or rhythm?*
- *How do the sounds of the poem reinforce the sense or the meaning?*

* *Sensory Imagery Lens*

Students read a poem, paying particular attention to the imagery and the sensory words.

- *What mind pictures do you see?* (Students can highlight any words, phrases, and lines that use sensory images or express a feeling. They can draw their mind pictures next to the poem.)
- *Are there any places in the poem where the imagery is not clear because it seems murky or abstract?*
- *Which words, phrases, or lines make you see, taste, touch, hear, and smell?*

* *Personal Connection Lens*

Students read a poem, paying attention to which feelings, memories, and thoughts the poem evokes.



* *Theme Lens*

Students read a poem with the lens of finding its theme. One strategy to help students find the theme is to supply one keyword or possible theme and ask them to read the poem with the keyword in mind. The following are some common themes of poems: *courage, beauty, strength, love*. Students can then come up with their own keyword by which to read a poem.

* *Craft Lens*

Students read a poem with the lens of craft.

- *How did the poet construct the poem?*
- *How do these craft tools help convey the poem's message?* (See the list of craft tools below).

* *Compare-and-Contrast Lens*

Students read two poems, or a poem and another text such as a nonfiction text, on the same topic and compare and contrast structure, content, and theme.

* *Historical Lens*

Students read a poem and apply their knowledge of the historical time and events taking place when the poem was written or the time the poet lived.

- *How does historical knowledge give you insights into the poem?*

Thursday: How Does the Poem Say It?

On Thursday, students discuss the how of the poem: *How is the poem built? What is its poetic structure? Is the poem free verse? Is the poem written in meter or rhyming pattern? What are the craft tools the poet uses to bring the meaning of the poem to us?* In the English Language Arts Reading: Literature CCSS, the Craft and Structure section includes a toolbox of poetic devices students are required to know, such as rhythm, rhyme, meter, and stanzas.

Below is a list of some poetic devices poets use to build a poem, many of which I will explain in more detail in later chapters.

- Figurative language (Chapters 6, 7)
- Metaphor (Chapter 7)
- Simile (Chapter 7)
- Imagery (Chapters 4, 6, 7)
- Sensory words (Chapter 4)
- Feeling words (Chapter 4)
- Lines (Verse) and line breaks (Chapters 9, 10)
- Stanzas and stanza breaks (Chapter 9)
- Personification (Chapter 7)
- Point of View
- Rhythm (Chapter 5)
- Rhyme (Chapter 5)
- Meter (Chapter 10)
- Alliteration (Chapter 5)
- Repetition (Chapter 5)
- Genre of poetry: lyric, narrative, dramatic (Chapter 13)
- Formal Poetry: limerick, haiku, blank verse, and so on
- Punctuation

As you discuss these poetic devices, explore the question, *How does this poetic tool help express the meaning and experience of the poem?*



Guided Craft Question Sheet

Students can use the Guided Craft Question Sheet to guide their thinking of the how of the poem. After reading a poem, students choose one or several craft questions to answer and write their thoughts on sticky notes, as well as on the poem, and attach the notes to the appropriate box.

After working independently or collaborating with a partner, group, or entire class, students come together to share, compare, and discuss their craft findings. Support for this larger discussion of the poem comes from their notes and completed Guided Craft Question Sheet.

Once students have identified several key craft tools in a poem, we must guide them to a deeper understanding of how craft supports and adds to a poem's meaning. I always tell my students that craft is at the service of the heart—meaning that the purpose of all the poetic devices and craft in a poem is to help the poet express his or her feelings, experiences, and observations.

Using the Guided Craft Question Sheet will help students get into the habit of writing down the evidence of their growing knowledge of the craft of poetry—and will help you in assessing their knowledge and understanding of poetic craft.

Friday: Who Is the Poet?

Understanding a poet's life may give students insight into the why of the poem. Sometimes it's helpful to know something about the poet, about his or her life, about the time or era in which he or she lived.

Discuss the poet's key biographical information, or read quotes by the poet to see if knowledge of his or her life or process can deepen students' understanding of the poem. Encourage students to ask themselves how the poet's life experiences inspired or affected his or her poetry. Most poets have their own Web sites that give information about their lives.

Gather several poems by the same poet. Ask students to notice what they recognize about the poet's subject matter, style, or craft choices.

- *Does the poet always write about or locate the poem in the natural world?*
- *Does the poet write about similar themes in other poems?*
- *Does the poet always rhyme?*

Putting It All Together

After five days of living with a poem, be sure to leave time for the whole class to discuss their thoughts and explorations. You may want to ask students:

- how they feel about the poem now as compared to when they first read or heard it.
- how their understanding of the poem has changed over the five days.
- what they now think the theme or main idea of the poem is as compared to when they first heard or read it.
- whether they would like to read more poems by the same poet.

Finally, to help you assess your teaching, ask students to identify what is most helpful in growing their understanding of the poem.

The point of living with a poem for five days is to slow down the reading of a poem and to model a variety of strategies that will help students in reading any text critically. After



modeling living with a poem for five days with several poems, you might try asking students to read a poem closely using some of the strategies they've learned to see which strategies they've internalized. Also, you'll want to increase the complexity of the poems as students begin to understand how to closely read a poem.

Having Conversations to Grow Ideas

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner. (College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening)

Most of us who are in a book club understand that reading is social. It's natural and enjoyable to want to talk with other people about our reading, and it also helps us grow our ideas about a book.

Our first reading of a poem may be private, but having discussions about it is one of the best ways of deepening our understanding of it. Research shows that having engaged conversations with peers improved standardized test scores no matter what students' reading levels were. In the CCSS, students are required to demonstrate a range of interactive oral connections, including working collaboratively, sharing findings, and listening carefully to others' ideas. To accomplish this in your classroom, pair each student with a partner with whom they will develop their ideas before, during, and after reading. Encourage readers to talk about their interpretations; this will require them to go back to the text for support of their explanations and to attend to words or phrases brought up by others. In this way, interpretations can grow through social interactions. It's important to give students time to talk and reflect on their learning with the whole class, a partner, and in small groups. The conversation time can be brief and may be introduced as a regular part of your reading workshop routine.

Begin with a focused discussion about the poem. Ask partners to think about something specific, to compare mental or written notes, and then have them share their thoughts and responses with the whole class. Model how to use open comments such as the following to unfold a poem:

- *I noticed . . .*
- *It reminds me of . . .*
- *It made me think of . . .*
- *It made me feel . . .*
- *What I didn't understand . . .*

Students can express their responses in the following ways:

- Share understandings
- Share parts or words they don't understand
- Share details of the poem that stand out or answer a specific question
- Share observations about craft and poetic structure
- Share what they envisioned
- Share memorable words, lines, or parts
- Ask questions
- Share ideas when reading a poem with a particular lens

Make sure the discussion remains grounded in the text as much as possible. You can model what a productive conversation looks like through modeling in a fishbowl, whereby you have a conversation with a student while the rest of the class observes, and by modeling your own conversation about a poem with students.