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Lesson Plan 1: Introduction to Issa's Haiku and the art of Qi Baishi

Lesson Plan:

Students will explore the poetic form of haiku as seen in works of Japanese poet Kobayashi Issa (1763-1827). They will compare the humble subjects of Chinese artist Qi Baishi (1863-1957) with the simple word pictures presented in Issa's haiku. After studying both art forms, students will write haiku based on simple observations of nature in visual and written art.

Level/Class:

The class includes ninth grade students of varied abilities in a semester college preparatory English class.

Objectives:

1. Become aware of Chinese and Japanese culture as reflected in Chinese painting and Japanese haiku.
2. Observe comparisons between visual and written art.
3. Understand the form of haiku as it relates to a writer's impressions of nature.
4. Write haiku observing simple structure, form, and subject matter.
5. Gain some insight into East Asian life, history, beliefs, and art.

Time Period:

Two 90 minute class periods.

Materials Needed:

What I know about Asia: A journal exercise
Handouts on Issa and Baishi - background
Selected haiku of Issa (handout)
Selected art of Baishi (handout)
Journal
Paper
Pen/pencil
Highlighter
World map

Assessment:

Students will be evaluated informally on class/group discussion participation. Journal entries will be evaluated based on content. A finished draft of two haiku will be evaluated based on haiku form and subject matter. A paragraph discussing each haiku will be required. The first haiku will be written in response to a Baishi, and the accompanying paragraph will explain how it relates to visual art. Students will answer oral questions about Asian culture and history as it applies to Issa and Baishi (included in the handouts).

Procedure:**First class period (background) -**

- A) Introduction to lesson (20-25 minutes): Give students the journal exercise handout and have them following directions, completing the activities in the time allowed.
- B) Ask students to locate China and Japan on a world map. Allow some time for open and guided discussion using their journal exercises as prompts. (15 minutes)
- C) Hand out background information on Issa and Baishi. Have certain groups be responsible for reading, highlighting and presenting their information to the class (30 - 40 minutes). Talk briefly about some elements of Buddhism and samurai as they relate to Issa and Baishi.
- D) Lesson wrap-up: have students do a short timed journal write based on what they have learned today.
- E) Collect handouts to be used in next lesson.

Second block session (haiku and art) -

- A) Begin with a short question/answer review session on previous material.
- B) Remind students of yesterday's discussion of Baishi as pieces of his art are distributed to each group. Pass out background materials from previous class period.
- C) Have students choose one work of art and write a journal entry of first impressions.
- D) Discuss the simplicity of Baishi's subject matter and how that relates to some of his beliefs about art, using quotes from the first session materials.
- E) Transition into Issa's haiku by reading some that feature nature or natural settings. Use this time to explain the form and function of haiku. Ask for student feedback.
- F) Distribute copies of Issa's work. Have students choose two or three and write a paragraph discussing each one.
- G) During the second half of the session, students are to write their own haiku. One haiku needs to reflect something seen in one of Baishi's paintings. The other haiku can be on any subject. The students are to follow haiku form. They are also to follow each haiku with a paragraph. Peer feedback and editing are encouraged for this project.
- H) Lesson wrap up: Take a few moments to draw comparisons between the natural elements portrayed in Issa and a Western pantheistic poet such as Wordsworth.

Extra credit project: Students create a collection of haiku, illustrate it, and write reflective paragraphs.

Georgia Standards Alignment:**ELA9RL1**

The student identifies and responds to differences in style and subject matter in poems by a variety of contemporary and canonical poets; the student:

A. Identifies and responds to the aesthetic effects of subject matter, sound devices,

figurative language, and structure in a variety of poems.

B. Sorts and classifies poems by specified criteria.

ELA9RL3

The student deepens understanding of literary works by relating them to contemporary context or historical background.

ELA9RL4

The student composes essays, narratives, poems, or technical documents.

ELA9SV1

The student participates in student-to-teacher, student-to-student, and group verbal interactions.

References:

Schirokauer, Conrad, et al. A Brief History of Chinese and Japanese Civilizations. Third Edition. United States: Thomson Wadsworth. 2006.

http://www.chinese-paintings.com/images/gallery/song_wenzhi/001.JPG

<http://images.china.cn/images1/200609/360314.jpg>

<http://images.artnet.com/picture.asp>

<http://img250.imageshack.us/img250/1410/wba26anx3.jpg>

<http://www.PoemHunter.com>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qi_Bashi

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kobayashi_Issa

<http://z.about.com/d/chineseculture/1/0/t/Z/1/chicks.jpg>

What I know about Asia: A journal exercise

Part I:

On a clean page in your journal, write this title: What I know about Asia.

1. Below the title, write the word JAPAN, then list at least five things you know about Japan and Japanese people. (You do not have to use complete sentences). Use no more than 5 minutes for this exercise.
2. Now skip a line, or go to the back of your page and write the word CHINA. List five things you know about China and the Chinese people. (Again, you do not need to use complete sentences, and do this in 5 minutes or less).
3. When everyone in your group is finished, pass your journal to the person on your right. Read the Asian journal entries from the person on your left. After each group member has read the entries, discuss how they are alike or different. Is there anything you may have left off that you would like to add?

Important: group discussion should take 10 minutes or less.

At the end of the discussion, please return the journal to its owner.

Part II: (10 minutes)

Choose only one of these Asian countries and imagine that you can take an all-expense paid trip there. Answer the following questions in your journal:

1. Which country would you most want to visit, Japan or China? Why?
2. What is one important thing you would do to prepare for the trip?
3. What would you find most exciting about the trip?
4. What would make you the most nervous about a trip to Asia?
5. What is the most important thing you would take on the trip?
6. What would you most like to learn on your trip?

Your answers for parts I and II will be used for class discussion.