



LESSON: Awesome Alliteration!

Grades: 1-3

Subject Areas: Language Arts

Estimated Time: 60 minutes

I. Summary: WordGirl not only knows words, she enjoys them. There are many ways to play with words. One technique, commonly used by poets, is the repetition of a consonant sound at the beginning of a word. For example, "The train clacked and creaked along the crooked rails." The hard "c," repeated three times, creates a musical pattern that emphasizes the sounds the train makes. This lesson focuses on alliteration. Students will generate a list of alliterative words, and then write an original poem using those words.

II. Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate listening and identification skills
- Students will understand the concept of repetition
- Students will be introduced to the technique of alliteration
- Students will practice using alliteration in a poem
- Students will be encouraged to extend their vocabulary
- Students will exercise their creativity

III. Materials:

- Paper
- Pen/pencil
- Dictionary

IV. Procedure:

1. Write "The train clacked and creaked along the crooked rails" on the board, and invite students to discuss the use of repetition in the sounds of the words. Explain that this repetition is a literary technique that poets and writers use, and is called alliteration. Alliteration repeats a consonant sound at the beginning of a word, and helps to emphasize the word's meaning. The repetition of sounds also creates a musical pattern.

2. Explain to students that they will be writing alliterative poems on the subject of a ruckus, which means a loud, noisy mess. Before writing the poem, however, the class needs to brainstorm together a list of at least 12 words that begin with an "r," the same sound as in ruckus. Only two of the 12 words may be names of people or places. Tell students that the words on this list do not need to have anything to do with the meaning of "ruckus." In fact, the only connection needs to be the "r" sound that begins each word. Encourage students to let their minds wander from word to word,



using free-association. If possible, they should include nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs among the 12 words.

For example, a word list might include: rooster, roller coaster, rocking, ridiculous, robber, romping, Raymond, rabbit, recently, Rome, radishes, and race.

As the students offer suggestions, write their words on the board.

3. Once the class list is complete, students are ready to write their own poems about a ruckus. At this point, students should have at least 13 words in total, including the word ruckus. The challenge is for students to use all 13 words in their poems. Students are welcome to add other words that begin with "r" that they think of as they begin to write the poem, or to use a dictionary to look for additional words. Finally, tell students not to worry if the poem "makes sense." The goofier and more creative, the better the poem will be! Make sure to give the poem a title!

4. Invite students to share their completed poem with the class. Point out the variety of poems and the way the alliteration reinforces the meaning of ruckus!

V. Assessment: Students should be able to define, identify, and create their own examples of alliteration. Students should be able to practice free-association in the completion of their word lists. Students should be able to successfully complete an alliteration poem and read it aloud to the class.

VI. Extensions in Learning:

- Invite students to explore poetry anthologies to find more examples of alliteration. Students may read their favorite alliteration poem to the class.
- Encourage students to begin a classroom collection of examples of alliteration. Create a specific area with a WordGirl theme to display phrases, sentences or even whole poems that use alliteration.
- Using words that appear on WordGirl, such as: "struggle," "pizzazz," "hullabaloo," "coordination," "predicament" and "struggle," invite students to choose one and generate a new list of alliterative words, and then write a poem that uses all of those words. Share these with the class.

Related National Standards (These are established by McREL at URL: <http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>.)

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