

Teaching guide – Fallen flowers

Introduction:

This poem is aimed for an upper KS2 class, such as P7. Before introducing your poem to your class, it would be vital for them to have at least a basic knowledge of World War 1. This could include key dates, who was involved, and the type of things soldier's and the general public would have experienced. Here is a presentation to aid you in introducing your class to World War 1, and other teaching resources:

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t-t-5722-world-war-one-information-powerpoint>

<https://www.teachingideas.co.uk/subjects/world-war-1>

Main literacy focus – Activity 1, writing letter

In this first activity, the children will read the poem in unison and the teacher should encourage a class discussion.

Key questions could include: "How do you think the soldier's felt before going to war vs how did they feel during?" "Select one line where there is evidence of how they feel" and "Can you think of other reasons apart from the fighting which would make this a negative experience" (Opportunity to talk about trench conditions, missing family etc.)

Ask the children to pretend they are a soldier in the War and write a letter home to their loved ones. Encourage them to use their five senses to describe what they see, hear, smell, taste and feel, and to use good adjectives to describe. For higher level pupils, challenge them to use their own similes in their letter home. You can use blank file paper, or the letter writing resource shown below.

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t2-h-5314-write-a-letter-from-a-first-world-war-soldier-differentiated-writing-activity-sheet>

The main focus of the activity can be to allow the children to take on a different perspective and write creatively and independently. This links with the curriculum as even before the lesson, the children are "Reading aloud to the class or teacher from prepared texts...". They are also being encouraged to "express thoughts, feelings and opinions in imaginative and factual writing" through the letter writing activity (CCEA, 2007, p.56).

Activity 2, composing own poem

After reading the poem with the class, prompt them to think not only of how the soldiers felt during the war, but of how their family e.g. parents and wives felt also. Use the poem as a stepping stone to find out more about the role of women in the war. Use the presentation below to help:

https://prezi.com/m/rr_oxf73l0_c/women-in-world-war-1/



Set your class with a task: using the poem, they should write their own poem but instead of being in the point of view of the soldier, they should take on the perspective of a woman in the war. For higher level, encourage them to describe the setting e.g. a factory using similes and metaphors, as demonstrated in the original poem.

The main focus of the activity could be to allow the children to “use a variety of stylistic features to create mood and effect”, such as metaphors, similes and alliteration. Through this activity, they will also “experiment with rhymes, rhythms, verse structure and all kinds of word play and dialect”, as the children do not have to follow the rhyme or rhythm of the shown poem, but can create their own (CCEA, 2007, p.56).

Additional activities:

1. Since the poem includes a number of metaphors, this is a great opportunity to get your class more familiar with metaphors. Here are some resources and lesson ideas below:

<https://www.enchantedlearning.com/english/metaphor/>

2. The poem lends itself to be spoken aloud, so why not use this poem as an opportunity to help your class become more confident at performing in front of the class. Use the blank storyboard below and get the class to choose key moments that they imagine taking place as the poem progresses, and then challenge them to perform this to the class, using gesture, movement and facial expression to convey meaning and action.

<https://www.enchantedlearning.com/english/metaphor/>

This links to the curriculum, as pupils are “improvising a scene based on experience, imagination, literature, media and/or curricular topics” (CCEA, 2007, p.55).

Reference: Council for the Curriculum Examination and Assessment (2007), *The Northern Ireland Curriculum primary*. (Online). Available at:
http://ccea.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/curriculum/area_of_learning_fs_northern_ireland_curriculum_primary_.pdf

