Introduction to Poetry Editing for Littles

By: Kristen E. Nelson

Grade Level: 2nd & 3rd grade

Time Frame: 1 hour

Objective: To introduce the concept of editing poetry to second and third graders in order to make sure their poems look and sound exactly how they want them to look and sound.

Prior Knowledge & Skills: This lesson plan is best used after students have read and discussed several poems, as well as written a few poems of their own. They should be familiar with some basic poetry writing concepts such as imagery, line breaks, and rhythm.

Required Materials: A draft poem, pen and paper (if done in person) or the ability to edit the poem electronically (if done online).

Literary Model: None

Sequence of Activities:

Welcome (5 mins)

1. Welcome students and review your class agreements.

2. Introduce students to the concept of editing poetry. Editing makes sure that the people who read your poem understand what you want them to understand. One good metaphor is to ask students to think about road signs. When you are in a car and driving, you need road signs to point you in the right direction. Similarly, when you are reading a poem, you need signs from the writer.

Editing Questions (50 minutes)

Guide students through the following questions one at a time. Students should work independently:

1. Choose one poem you have already written to work with today. Have this poem in front of you, so you can look at it throughout this lesson.

2. Look at your poems and ask yourself: Does it look right? If it doesn't look right, what do you need to change to make it look right?

3. Read your poem out loud to yourself. Does it sound right? If it doesn't sound right, what do you need to change to make it sound right?

4. Does your poem make sense? Is there anything you want to change in your poem so that it makes more sense to someone who is reading it?

5. Are there any words you would like to add to your poem?

6. Are there any words you would like to take away from your poem?

7. Check your Capitalization: Are there any names of people or places, holidays, product names, or the word "I"? If so, they should be capitalized

8. Check your Spelling: Are there any words that are misspelled? Be sure to correct the spelling, so your reader understands what you are trying to say. Ask for help if you need it!

9. Check your Punctuation: Would you like to add a comma or a period at the end of each line of poetry? Would you like to add a line break? A comma creates a short pause, a period creates a longer pause, and a line break creates the longest pause.

10. Take a look at your poem title. Would you like to make any changes to it?

Sharing (5 mins)

If there is time, call on 2-3 students to share their poem out loud and tell us about one thing that they have changed in their work during this lesson.