



# Poetry Talks

By: Lamont Moore

Elementary school principal; Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, Gardner-Webb University, NC

Language Arts  
Grades 9-12



## Introduction

Students will participate in a Socratic seminar with peers to discuss poetry by two popular American poets. Student will examine the two works multiple times to develop discussion questions and make connections.

## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL9-10.1D](#) - Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL9-10.4](#) - Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

## Materials Needed

- [“The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost](#)
- [“Because I Could Not Stop For Death” by Emily Dickinson](#)

## Procedure

1. Prior to the lesson it will be important to introduce Socratic seminars to the students. They will need to understand the rules for how this occurs and have had some practice with this activity. You may choose do a mini-lesson using this strategy and practice with the students.
2. Allow the students a moment to read the two poems (“The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost and “Because I Could Not Stop For Death” by Emily Dickinson).
3. After the students have read the poems a first time, encourage them to read them a second time using their highlighters to highlight sections that would prompt great Socratic questions and discussion. These may be things that intrigue them or cause them to wonder.
4. The students should read the poems a third time with the purpose of notating connections between the two poems. The student should analyze the tone, concepts and moral of the poems.

Continued on page 2



# Poetry Talks

By: Lamont Moore

Elementary school principal; Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, Gardner-Webb University, NC

Language Arts  
Grades 9-12



Continued from page 1

5. Arrange the students in Socratic circles with the chairs facing each other. Allow the students to begin Socratic seminars using the question prompts that they created to guide the discussion. Facilitate these discussions by challenging the students to clarify and justify their questions and responses.
6. When the students have discussed the questions in Socratic style, challenge them to discuss connections between the two poems and how they are similar and different.

## Evaluation

You may use a Socratic seminar checklist or a participation checklist as an evaluation of this activity. It is advised to review the checklists with the students prior to starting the lesson activity.