World War One Poetry Analysis Activity

Purpose: Students will analyze primary sources for their inspiration & then create poetry based on primary sources.

TEKs Correlation

(1) History. The student understands traditional historical points of reference in world history. The student is expected to:

(F) identify major causes and describe the major effects of the following important turning points in world history from 1914 to the present: the world wars and their impact on political, economic, and social systems;

(10) History. The student understands the causes and impact of World War I. The student is expected to:

(B) identify major characteristics of World War I, including total war, trench warfare, modern military technology, and high casualty rates;

(26) Culture. The student understands the relationship between the arts and the times during which they were created. The student is expected to:

(B) analyze examples of how art, architecture, literature, music, and drama reflect the history of the cultures in which they are produced; and

(29) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:

(C) explain the differences between primary and secondary sources and examine those sources to analyze frame of reference, historical context, and point of view;

(E) identify bias in written, oral, and visual material;

(30) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:

(B) use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation;

(C) interpret and create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information; and

(D) transfer information from one medium to another.

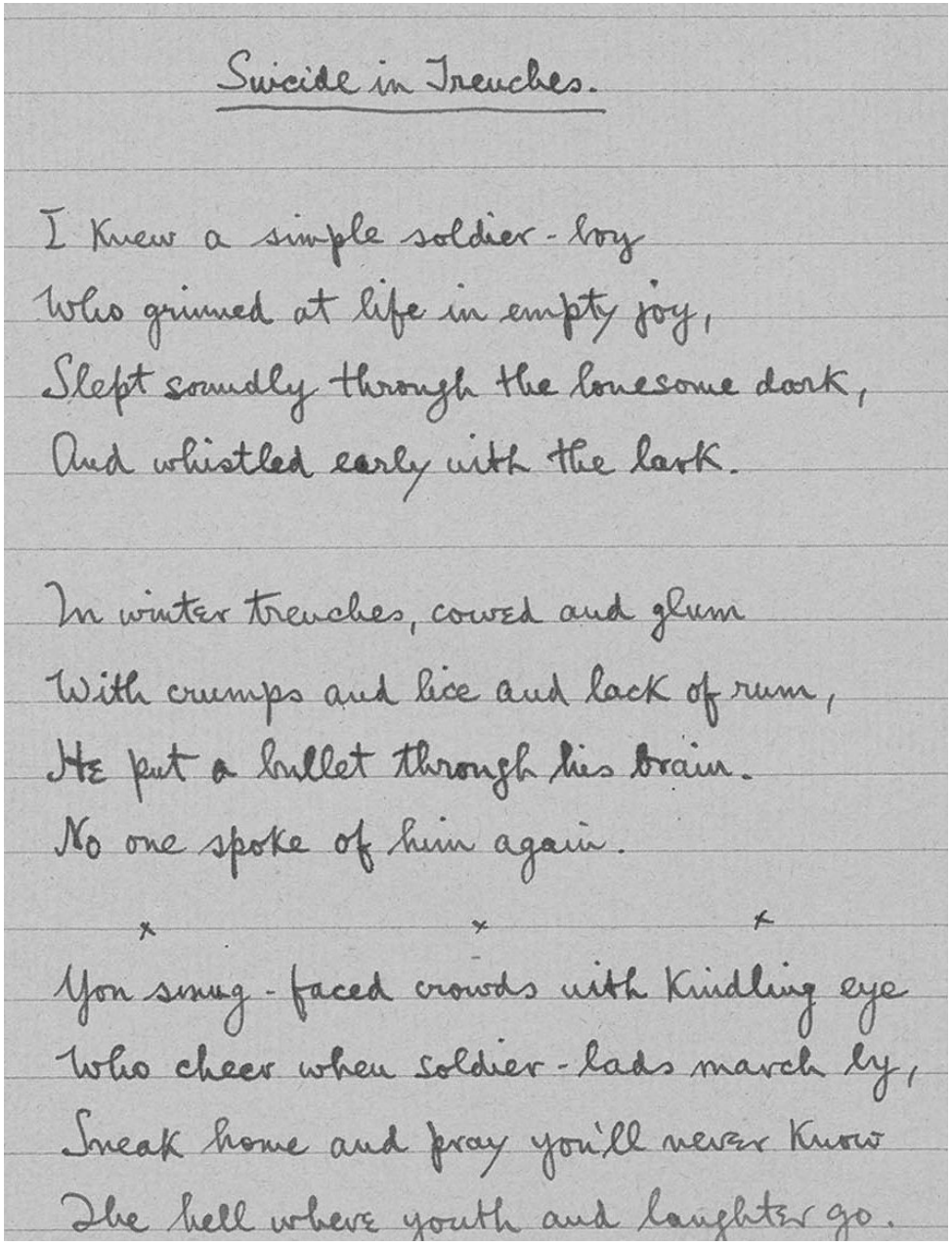
Materials Included:

3A - Poem – Suicide in the Trenches by Siegfried Sassoon
3A - Poem -- The Song of the Mud by Mary Borden-Turner
3B - A.P.P.L.E. Document Analysis Tool
3C - Renga Poetry Student Instructions
3C - Renga Poetry Writing Sheet
3D – Photographs (set of 5)

Instructions

1. Pair students together.
2. Hand out copies of "Suicide in the Trenches" and "The Song of the Mud" **(documents 3A)** to each pair.
3. Have the students complete the A.P.P.L.E. analysis for each poem.
    a. Once the students have done this, have them brainstorm what types of images come to mind from these poems.
    b. Have the students "illustrate" the poems in the boxes at the bottom of the A.P.P.L.E. sheet.
4. Put students into groups of four. Arrange the desks so that all students are facing each other.
5. Hand out the instruction sheet & go over it with the students. Stress to the students that renga poetry is about collaboration and reactions – not about historical accuracy.

6. Give students the packet of photographs.
7. Have the students take out the photographs, choose the one they prefer, and place it in the center of the desks so that all students can see it.
8. Give the students two minutes to look at the photograph without speaking.
9. Once the minute is up, give the students 1 minute to write **one** line of poetry on their paper inspired by the photograph.
10. When the minute is up, have the students rotate papers clockwise and add a second line of poetry onto the paper – it can be a response to the first line or a continuation.
11. Students will rotate papers until they have four 8 line poems.
12. Students will then stop and vote on which poem they will present to class. Students will elect one reader to share with the class.
13. Repeat the process.



3A

SUICIDE IN THE TRENCHES

By Siegfried Sassoon, 1917

I knew a simple soldier boy
Who grinned at life in empty joy,
Slept soundly through the lonesome dark,
And whistled early with the lark.

In winter trenches, cowed and glum,
With crumps and lice and lack of rum,
He put a bullet through his brain.
No one spoke of him again.

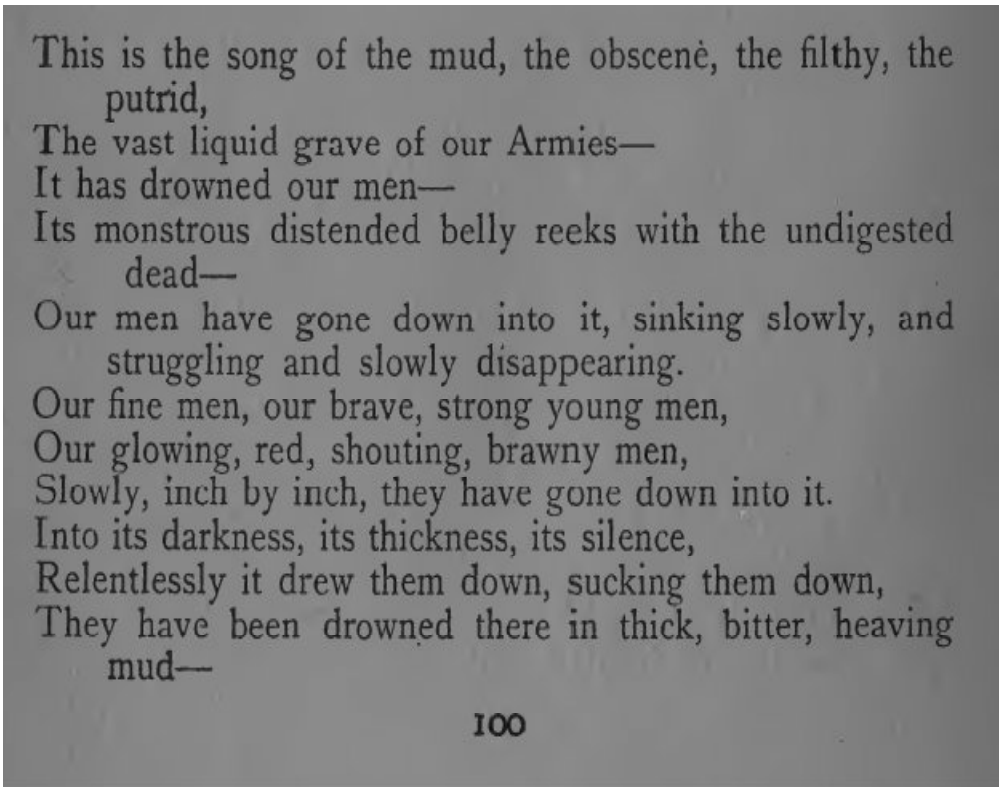
You smug-faced crowds with kindling eye
Who cheer when soldier lads march by,
Sneak home and pray you'll never know
The hell where youth and laughter go.

Sassoon, Siegfried. "Suicide in the Trenches." *Counter Attack and Other Poems*. 1919. 28 of 47. Retrieved from http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/ww1lit/collections/document/9855/9721

THE SONG OF THE MUD (FROM AT THE SOMME) 3A

Mary Borden-Turner, 1917

This is the song of the mud, the obscene, the filthy, the putrid,
The vast liquid graves of our Armies –
It has drowned our men –
Its monstrous distended belly reeks with the undigested dead –
Our men have gone down into it, sinking slowly, and struggling and slowly disappearing.
Our fine men, our brave, strong young men,
Our glowing, red, shouting, brawny men,
Slowly, inch by inch, they have gone down into it.
Into its darkness, its thickness, its silence,
Relentlessly it drew them down, sucking them down,
They have been drowned there in thick, bitter, heaving mud --



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Borden-Turner, Mary. "At the Somme." *English Review* 25.2 (1917): 97 – 102. Web. 29 Aug. 2013. http://archive.org/details/2englishreview25londuoft

APPLE Primary Source Analysis

Author:

Who created the source? What do you know about the author? What is the author's point of view?

Place and Time:

Where and when was the source produced? How might this affect the meaning of the source?

Prior Knowledge:

What do you already know that helps you understand the source? For example, do you recognize any symbols, people, terms, or other ideas?

Listeners (or "Lookers"):

Who is the audience? Who was the primary source created for? How might this affect the reliability of the source?

Effect:

Why is this source important? How does this primary source change history? Ask yourself, "So what?"

Suicide in the Trenches	The Song of the Mud

Names of Group Members: _____ **3C**

Date: _____

Renga Poetry Student Instructions

There are five images in each packet. Place all the images on the desk in front of your group. Each person should look at the photos. Pick one for the group.

1. As you gaze at your selected image, compose a line of poetry about your picture.
2. **Once everyone has written their first lines on their own pieces of paper group members exchange papers clockwise.**
3. Add a line of poetry to the poem you have just received. It should complement the line already written. (Do not repeat the line you wrote on your piece of paper!)
4. Follow the tone set by your group mate.
5. Be creative, use figurative language and rich imagery.
6. Exchange papers until you have added two lines to everyone's poem.
7. Share the poems.
8. Revise and edit. You may work with one poem or all of them. You may add lines from other poems to make a longer poem. You can work to improve the language of a poem.
9. Be sure to site on your paper which image you used as inspiration.

Names of Group Members: _____
Date: _____

3C

Renga Poetry –
Trench Warfare

3D



drakegoodman. *Defenders from Infanterie-Regiment Prinz Friedrich Der Niederlande (2.Westfälisches) Nr.15 Prepare to Repel an Attack on Côte 304, March 1917*. 1917. Web. 29 Aug. 2013.
http://www.flickr.com/photos/drakegoodman/6463180139/

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drakegoodman. *2 Durch Gas GefalleneEngländerBeiKemmel*. 1918. Web. 29 Aug. 2013.
http://www.flickr.com/photos/drakegoodman/8192809242/

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Otis Historical Archives National Museum of Health and Medicine. 2007. Web. 30 Aug. 2013. http://www.flickr.com/photos/7438870@N04/2104949841/

CC BY

3D



Otis Historical Archives National Museum of Health and Medicine. *WW1 Amputee with Pilons*. 2007. Web. 30 Aug. 2013. http://www.flickr.com/photos/7438870@N04/2090495963/



drakegoodman. *An Extraordinary Photograph Depicting an Eastern Front Battlefield, Littered with the Bodies of Soldiers (possibly Russian or Serbian), Killed in Their Shallow Shell-scrapes*. 1916. Web. 29 Aug. 2013. http://www.flickr.com/photos/drakegoodman/8599653636/in/pool-greatwararchive

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