

Close Reading: Where the Sidewalk Ends

Step 1

Choose the right text ¹

Selected text? "Where the Sidewalk Ends" by Shel Silverstein

Source? <https://www.madisonpubliclibrary.org/engagement/poetry/poem-a-day/where-sidewalk-ends>

Age? 12/13

What kind of text is it?

<input type="radio"/> Fiction	<input type="radio"/> Prescriptive
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Non Fiction	<input type="radio"/> informative
	<input type="radio"/> persuasive
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> narrative
	<input type="radio"/> opinionated
	<input type="radio"/> other:

Does the text match the level of your students?

It's a classic poem that explores themes of decision-making, individuality, and the choices we make in life. The language is accessible yet rich in imagery, making it suitable for young readers to contemplate and discuss. Plus, it's short enough to hold their attention while still offering depth for reflection.

Does the text match the students' world of experience and interests?

"Where the Sidewalk Ends" talks about a place where the regular rules of life don't apply, where you can imagine anything you want. It's a bit like stepping into a world of adventure and fun, where your imagination can roam free. So, for kids this age, it's like a friendly reminder to keep dreaming and exploring new ideas.

Step 2

Goal ²

What learning outcomes do you want to link to your reading lesson?

- Develop students' ability to analyse and interpret poetry.
- Enhance students' understanding of figurative language and its impact on meaning.
- Cultivate students' appreciation for different forms of expression and creativity.

What end-terms do you want to cover during the lesson?

- Imagery: Students will identify and discuss the vivid imagery used in the poem, such as the visual depiction of a place "where the sidewalk ends."

¹ Chapter 4.1

² Chapter 4.2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Metaphor: Students will explore the metaphorical meaning of "where the sidewalk ends" and its implications for the theme of imagination and exploration. - Interpretation: Students will formulate their own interpretations of the poem's meaning and discuss how it relates to their own experiences and emotions.
Step 3	<p>Pre-reading ³</p> <p>To get students excited about "Where the Sidewalk Ends," we would utilise a variety of engaging methods, including:</p> <p>Image: Displaying a visually stimulating illustration from the book alongside the poem to capture students' attention and spark their imagination.</p> <p>Video clip: Showing a short animated adaptation of the poem or a video featuring Shel Silverstein reading the poem aloud to bring it to life and appeal to different learning styles.</p> <p>Discussion: Facilitating a group discussion to explore students' initial thoughts and reactions to the poem, encouraging them to share their interpretations and connections to the themes of imagination and adventure.</p> <p>Brainstorming: Prompting students to brainstorm ideas about what they think might be found "where the sidewalk ends," encouraging creative thinking and speculation.</p> <p>Incorporating interactive elements such as a dramatic reading of the poem, a mini writing activity where students create their own endings to the poem, or a brief exploration of Shel Silverstein's life and other works.</p> <p>By using a combination of these methods, we aim to create a dynamic and immersive learning experience that captures students' interest and enthusiasm for the text.</p>
Step 4	<p>First Reading ⁴</p> <p>General Questions for Students' First Impressions of the Text:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the text about? 2. What do you think is the theme of the text? 3. What do you believe is the main idea conveyed by the text? 4. How did the text make you feel? 5. What aspects of the text stood out to you the most? <p>Method:</p> <p>Use a combination of oral review and written responses to gather students' first impressions of the text. Initially, facilitate a class discussion where students can share their thoughts and reactions orally. Then, provide opportunities for students</p>

³ Chapter 6

⁴ Chapter 7

	<p>to reflect on and articulate their responses in writing, allowing them to delve deeper into their initial impressions.</p> <p>Reading Strategies Covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making inferences: Students will draw conclusions about the meaning and themes of the text based on their initial impressions. - Activating prior knowledge: Students will connect their own experiences and emotions to their understanding of the text. - Monitoring comprehension: Students will reflect on their own reactions to the text and consider how it aligns with their expectations and understanding. - Identifying main ideas and themes: Students will analyse the text to determine its central themes and messages.
Step 5	<p>Second reading ⁵</p> <p>How does the text say it? ⁶</p> <p>Dig deeper into the text. What do you want to focus on? Choose at least one of the following suggestions: <i>language and style, sentence structure, literal and figurative language, imagery, patterns, others...</i></p> <p>Use the space below to describe your focus and how you will handle this.</p> <p>The text, "Where the Sidewalk Ends" by Shel Silverstein, communicates its message through a combination of imaginative language, vivid imagery, and playful rhythm and rhyme. To dig deeper into the text, I want to focus on the use of figurative language and imagery.</p> <p>Figurative Language and Imagery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I will guide students to identify and analyse the figurative language used throughout the poem, such as metaphors and personification. - We will explore how Silverstein uses figurative language to create vivid imagery that transports readers to the fantastical world "where the sidewalk ends." - Students will examine specific examples of figurative language and imagery in the text, such as "the grass grows soft and white" and "the moon-bird rests from his flight." <p>Handling this Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin by introducing the concept of figurative language and explaining its purpose in poetry. - Provide examples of different types of figurative language, such as similes, metaphors, and personification, using excerpts from the poem. - Engage students in a close reading of the poem, encouraging them to identify instances of figurative language and imagery and discuss their impact on the reader. - Facilitate discussions and activities that prompt students to interpret the deeper meanings conveyed through the imagery and figurative language in the text.

⁵ Chapter 8

⁶ Chapter 8.1

	<p>- Encourage students to create their own visual representations of the poem's imagery through drawings or collages, reinforcing their understanding of the text's descriptive elements.</p> <p>By focusing on figurative language and imagery, students will deepen their appreciation for the poet's craft and gain insight into how these literary devices contribute to the overall meaning and impact of the poem.</p>
Step 6	<p>Third reading ⁷</p> <p>Focus: Theme</p> <p>How will you discuss the above? I would conduct a guided discussion followed by a written reflection to explore the theme of the poem, "Where the Sidewalk Ends" by Shel Silverstein.</p> <p>Discussion Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you think is the main theme or message of the poem? 2. How does the idea of "where the sidewalk ends" connect to broader themes in life? 3. How does the poem explore the theme of imagination and creativity? 4. Can you identify any symbolic elements in the poem that contribute to its theme? 5. How do you think the theme of the poem relates to the experiences and emotions of the readers, particularly children? 6. What do you think the poet is trying to convey about the importance of embracing imagination and exploring new possibilities? <p>Written Reflection: After the guided discussion, I would ask students to individually write a reflection on the theme of the poem. They could explore how the theme resonates with their own experiences and beliefs, providing specific examples from the text to support their analysis. Additionally, students could discuss the significance of the theme in the context of the poem's language and imagery, considering how these elements contribute to the overall message conveyed by the poet.</p>
Step 7	<p>Post reading ⁸</p> <p>Come up with a playful assignment that has a clear link to the text (write a letter, find a song, write a poem, re-enact a scene ...)</p> <p>Which assignment will you choose and how will you tackle it? ⁹</p> <p>Assignment: Create a Poetic Adventure Map</p> <p>How to Tackle It:</p>

⁷ Chapter 9

⁸ Chapter 10

⁹ Chapter 10.1

	<p>1. Introduction: Begin by discussing the concept of a journey or adventure, linking it to the theme of exploration in "Where the Sidewalk Ends." Explain that students will be creating their own poetic adventure maps inspired by the poem.</p> <p>2. Instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide students with a large sheet of paper or cardstock to serve as the base for their maps. - Encourage students to think about the imaginative world described in the poem and how they can represent it visually. - Instruct students to divide their map into different sections, each representing a unique location or aspect of the imaginary world "where the sidewalk ends." - For each section, students will write a short descriptive poem inspired by the imagery and themes of the poem. The poem should capture the essence of the location and evoke a sense of wonder and adventure. - Encourage students to incorporate colourful illustrations, symbols, and decorative elements to enhance the visual appeal of their maps. <p>3. Exploration and Creativity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allow students ample time to brainstorm and draft their poems, exploring different ideas and experimenting with language and imagery. - Encourage students to collaborate and share their ideas with peers, providing feedback and support to one another. <p>4. Presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once the maps are complete, students will have the opportunity to share their creations with the class. - Each student will present their map, explaining the inspiration behind their design and reading aloud the poems they have written for each section. - Encourage classmates to ask questions and provide positive feedback on their peers' work. <p>By engaging in this playful assignment, students will have the opportunity to exercise their creativity, language skills, and imagination while deepening their understanding of the themes and imagery present in "Where the Sidewalk Ends."</p>
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Extra: