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Canada : A Literary Tour

Educational Resources

Activity 1

Five Senses Colour-Coding

Introduction

Many writers evoke the five senses in their prose or poetry to provide vivid descriptions of their account. In this activity, students will explore the techniques writers use to appeal to their audience. The teacher may select a poem or passage of prose that relates to the topic of landscape, or another subject. For ideas and texts, see the virtual exhibition [Canada: A Literary Tour](http://www.collectioncanada.gc.ca/literary-tour/index-e.html) (www.collectioncanada.gc.ca/literary-tour/index-e.html) or the [Activity Resources](http://www.collectioncanada.gc.ca/literary-tour/027020-5002-e.html) (www.collectioncanada.gc.ca/literary-tour/027020-5002-e.html) section.

Materials

- A copy of a poem or passage of prose
- Different coloured pens, pencils, markers, or highlighters

Performance and Assessment

The teacher may create an assessment tool or rubric to measure the following:

- Formative: In class discussion, does the student consistently identify examples of sensory information used by the author to evoke the audience's five senses?
- Summative: Does the student consistently identify techniques correctly in his or her completed work?

Instructions

1. Students will list the five human senses (touch, taste, smell, sight, and hearing).

2. On a sheet of paper, students will create a legend with each sense represented by a different colour or symbol.
3. The teacher will distribute copies of the selected work for students to read individually. Whenever students come across a word or a group of words that they believe evokes a particular human sense, they will mark these words with the corresponding colour or symbol. Some passages may evoke more than one sense.
4. At the end, students will count how many times a sense was evoked and write it beside their legend at the top of the page.
5. The class will read the poem together aloud. Afterwards, the teacher will create a table on the blackboard with the five senses at the top. Students will then provide the words to fill in the table. Along the way, the teacher will discuss how evoking the senses draws in the reader and heightens the impact of the work being read.

Extensions

If students have produced work of their own, they may use this process to discover how they engage their audience. Alternatively, they may choose a work and rewrite it incorporating sensory words to give it additional depth.