

Teaching the Archive

A Journal of a Plague Year: An Archive of Covid-19



Found Poem Lesson
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Found poems

Essential Question: What feelings and experiences are people having during the COVID-19 crisis?

Student Outcomes: Students will be able to explain the purpose and process of creating a found poem. Students will be able to access and navigate searching for items in the archive. Students will answer the essential question through the creation of a found poem.

1. What does it mean to find something?
2. Describe five different items you see in the archive.
3. What feelings and experiences are being expressed by the author of the item?
4. Choose a word or phrase from one of the items that resonated with you and record it. What made that word or phrase stand out to you?

Found poems are poems created by using language “found” in another document. Using words and phrases from the archived items, you will create poems that paint the picture of COVID-19 experience.

Instructions:

1. Explore the items in the archive. Record the title of the items that resonate with you.
2. Record words and phrases you find meaningful from the items.

After you've explored the resources, look at the words and phrases you've recorded to identify a theme. This will depend on what items and words you found meaningful. For example, you may have found many phrases that discuss being alone. In this case, your theme might be "isolation." Once you have identified a theme, take the words and phrases you've recorded to create a poem. Remember that poetry comes in many forms, use your creativity in how to best structure your poem. Your completed poem should clearly illustrate your theme and the COVID-19 experience.

Write your poem, and the poem's title, below.

Reflection:

1. Were there items in the archive that surprised you? Why or why not?
2. Did your notes from the items all reflect a similar theme? If so, what was it and why do you think you were drawn to this theme? If not, what other themes were apparent and what made you focus on the theme of your poem as opposed to another theme?
3. Are there voices/experiences you feel weren't represented in the archive? If yes, what voice or experience is missing and why do you think it is important to have it as part of the archive? If not, what voice/experience did you find was well represented, and why do you think it is important to have it as part of the archive?