

Unit 1: Reading and Analyzing Poetry: *Love That Dog* and Famous Poems

Common Core State Standards addressed: RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.5, RL.4.10, W.4.9a, SL.4.1a, SL.4.1b, and SL.4.1c.



Guiding Questions and Big Ideas:

- What makes a poem a poem?
 - *Poetry has characteristics that are unique and distinct from prose.*
- What inspires writers to write poetry?
 - *Writers draw inspiration from many places, including the work of other writers and their own lives.*

What will your student be doing at school?

In Unit 1, students are introduced to poetry through *Love That Dog*, a novel written in verse by Sharon Creech. As Jack, the main character in the novel, reads famous poems, students analyze what is happening in the novel and how Jack feels about it, and they also read and analyze those famous poems to identify characteristics of poetry and to determine their theme. They then use the characteristics of poetry they have identified to summarize the poems, and to compare poetry to prose. Throughout the unit, students are introduced to routines and anchor charts that will be used throughout the rest of the module, as well as the rest of the year. Students generate discussion norms and receive their independent reading journals and vocabulary logs. At the end of the unit, students participate in a text-based discussion about how Jack's feelings about poetry have changed from the beginning of the book.

Working to become ethical people is the habit of character emphasized in this unit. These are the specific skills students will focus on:

- I show empathy. This means I understand and I share or take into account the feelings, situation, or attitude of others.
- I behave with integrity. This means I am honest and do the right thing, even when it's difficult, because it is the right thing to do.
- I show respect. This means I appreciate the abilities, qualities, and achievements of others, and treat myself, others, and the environment with care.
- I show compassion. This means I notice when others are sad or upset and try to help them.

How can you support your student at home?

- Read poetry aloud with your student and invite him or her to find poems or a poet that he or she particularly likes.
- Help your student practice reading aloud fluently and accurately.
- Talk to your student about the meaning of the poems he or she is reading and what inspired the poet. Encourage your student to find evidence of that inspiration in the poems.
- Talk to your student about what inspires him or her and what is meaningful to him or her in preparation for writing poetry. Some examples might include a place, a person, an animal, a vehicle, a sport, or an event.