Teaching Resources
www.lauracandler.com

Easy and Engaging
Intro to Writing Poetry!

Collaborative COMPARISON POEMS

Laura Candler

Collaborative
COMPARISON POEMS

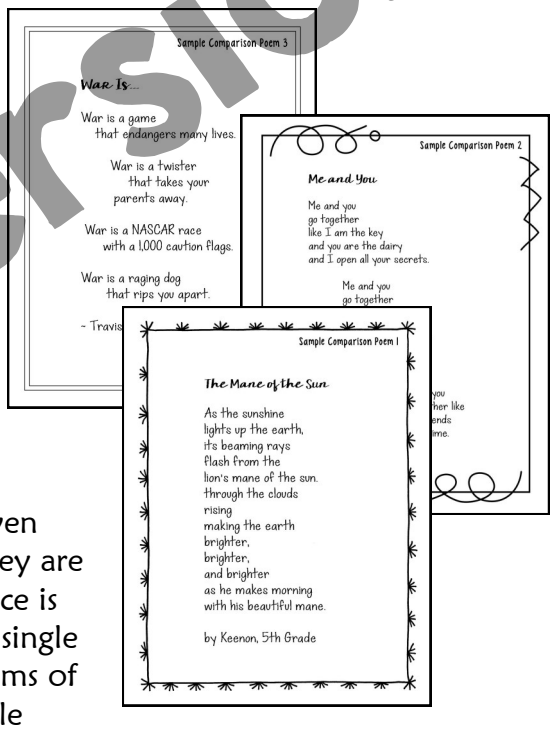
By Laura Candler

What are Collaborative Poems?

Collaborative Poems are poems written by more than one person. This might be an entire class, a team, or pairs of students. Collaborative poems could even be written through the use of live, online chat or video conferencing. In the collaborative model, groups of writers choose a topic and brainstorm their ideas together. Then each person writes one stanza of the poem and the group decides on the final order of the stanzas. Finally, the group chooses a presentation method and prepares their poem to be shared with others.

What are Comparison Poems?

Comparison poems are focused on a single topic, and they consist of extended similes and/or metaphors that represent the writer's thoughts and feelings about that topic. One object or idea is compared to something completely different; the poem could be based on a single extended metaphor or several smaller similes and metaphors. You can find student examples of comparison poems on pages 6-8. These were all written by my students several years ago.



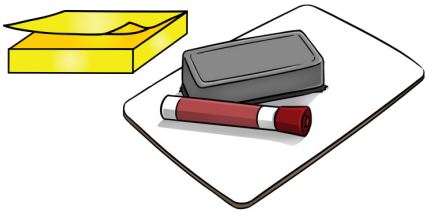
Collaborative Comparison Poem Lesson Overview

Before the lesson, study the comparison poem examples. Even though these poems were written by individual students, they are excellent examples of comparison poems. The only difference is that team poems have several stanzas that each consist of a single comparison. To create them, students will brainstorm in teams of three or four, and then each team member will select a single extended simile or metaphor to contribute to the final poem.

This lesson will be most effective if you model it by creating a class poem on the first day and have teams create their collaborative poems on the second day. In the last step, which is optional, students can prepare a multimedia presentation of their poem for the class. You could also extend the lesson by allowing time for individual students to write comparison poems.

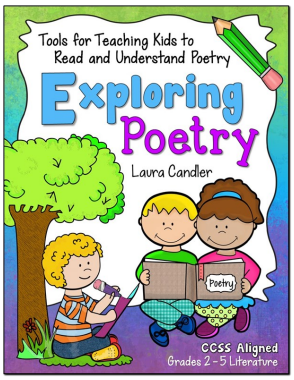
Materials Needed

The following materials will be helpful in this lesson: individual dry erase boards, sticky notes, copies of the activity pages, and a method of displaying the examples and student work.



Draft Version

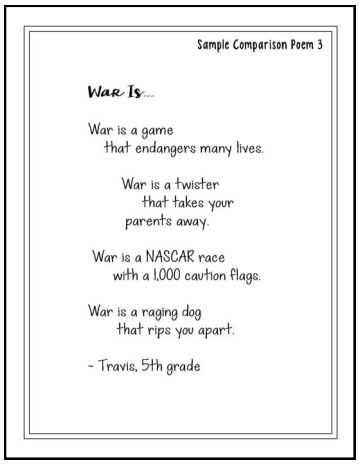
Creating Class Collaborative Poems



1. **Review Similes and Metaphors**
   Your students need prior experience reading and distinguishing between similes and metaphors before they begin this lesson. To review those terms, write the two examples below on the board and ask your students to discuss how similes are alike and different. (These cards are included in *Exploring Poetry: Tools for Teaching Kids to Read and Understand Poetry*.)

2. **Introduce Comparison Poems**
   One at a time, share the first two student examples of comparison poems with your class. Ask them what they notice about the poems. During the class discussion point out that each poem is based on one topic and it consists of metaphors that compare the topic to objects that aren't related to the topic. Make sure your students notice that the poems don't rhyme or have rhythm.

   Next, show a comparison poem made of three or four different metaphors all based on one topic. For the purposes of this example, I'll use the third sample poem, "*War Is*," but if this one is not appropriate for your class, you can create another example to use with this lesson. Show students the poem and ask them to identify the four metaphors.


Sample Comparison Poem 3

War Is...

War is a game
that endangers many lives.

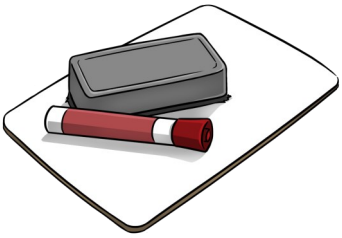
War is a twister
that takes your
parents away.

War is a NASCAR race
with a 1,000 caution flags.

War is a raging dog
that rips you apart.

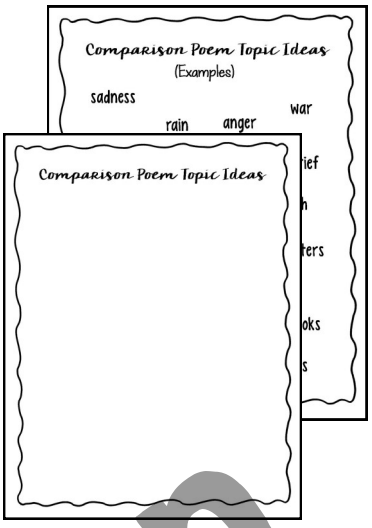
~ Travis, 5th grade

   Now ask if anyone can think of a different metaphor for war, and give them time to generate a few ideas. If they have dry erase boards, they can work alone or with a partner to come up with an alternate image. Let students share their images with the class and discuss whether each image is a simile or a metaphor. Some images may not be examples of either one, so this part of the lesson will give you the opportunity to clarify what types of images are appropriate for this type of poem. Ask your students if they think similes or metaphors create more powerful images. After they compare examples of similes and metaphors, they will find that metaphors work best for comparison poems. Writing that one thing IS another creates a vivid image in the reader's mind.



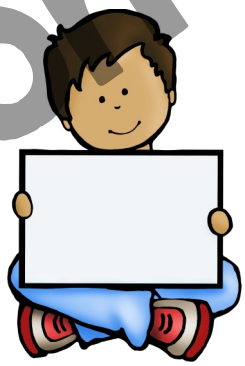
Draft Version

3. **Brainstorm Poem Topics**
Now display page x or write the words "Comparison Poem Topics" on the board. Ask students to think of other topics besides war that would work as the subject of a comparison poem. If they have trouble thinking of topics, share some of the ideas on page x.



4. **Vote on a Class Topic**
When you have at least 10 items on the chart, tell your students that you are going to write a class poem together you need to choose just one topic . Conduct a secret ballot or "heads down" vote to select a that topic. Before they vote, you may want to eliminate any topics that you feel will be too challenging for the first poetry-writing lesson.

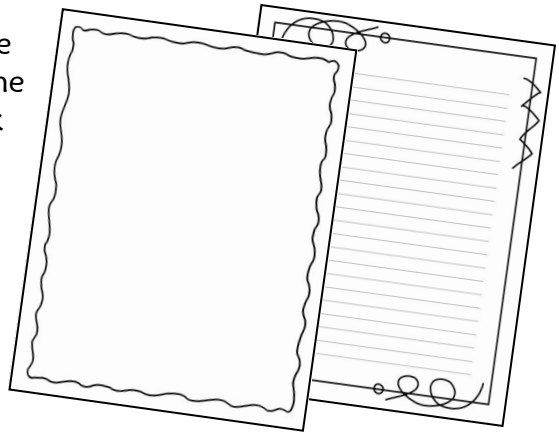
5. **Students Brainstorm Metaphors**
Now ask your students to think of metaphors for that topic and record them on dry erase boards. If this task is too challenging to do on their own, have them turn and talk to a partner before writing. In addition to naming the metaphor, they need to show how the two things being compared are similar. For example, if the topic is "Fear" and the metaphor is "ghost," writing "fear is a ghost" does not provide enough information about how a ghost is like fear. A better comparison might be, "Fear is a ghost that haunts my dreams and chases me through a graveyard." As students begin to come up with suitable images, have them share their images with the class. This step will activate the imaginations of the other students, and soon they will all be writing metaphors.



6. **Select Four Metaphors**
After the class has generated at least 6 or 7 images, choose four to use in class poem. You can do this with another secret vote, or you can select the images you feel are the strongest.

7. **Edit and Revise Imagery**
Sometimes the images will need a little work to make them stronger, so this would be a good time to introduce the editing and revision process. Show students how to replace weak adjectives and nouns with strong words that have more impact. Then ask students to decide the order of the stanzas so that they are presented in a logical sequence, usually with the strongest image last.

8. **Model How to Write a Poem**
Model how to turn the four metaphors into a poem with four stanzas. As you record each metaphor, explain that the poet may decide where to end each line. They often break lines where the reader would pause naturally in speech, but sometimes they break them in other place to achieve a certain effect. Show them how to arrange the stanzas so that there's plenty of white space on the page and the poem flows well. Point out that the poem doesn't rhyme, and that sometimes poems break accepted rules of grammar and punctuation.



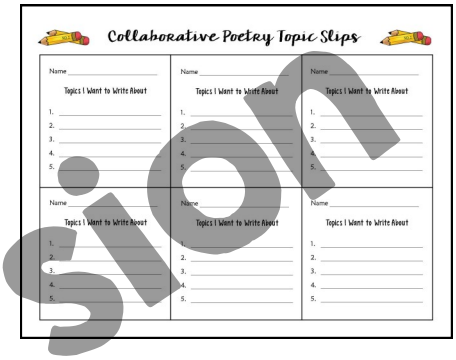
9. **Students Record Class Poem**
Ask your students to copy the final class poem into a journal or on one of the blank or lined poetry pages (x-x) to use as a reference later.

Draft Version

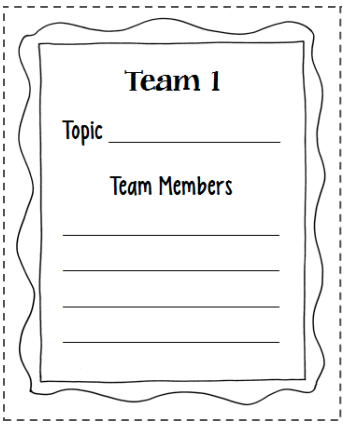
Writing Team Collaborative Poems

1. **Review Comparison Poems and Brainstorm New Topics**
   Start by reviewing the steps you followed to create a Class Collaborative Poem. Show the page of comparison poem topics you brainstormed earlier. Ask students if they want to add any more topics and give them a few minutes to make suggestions.

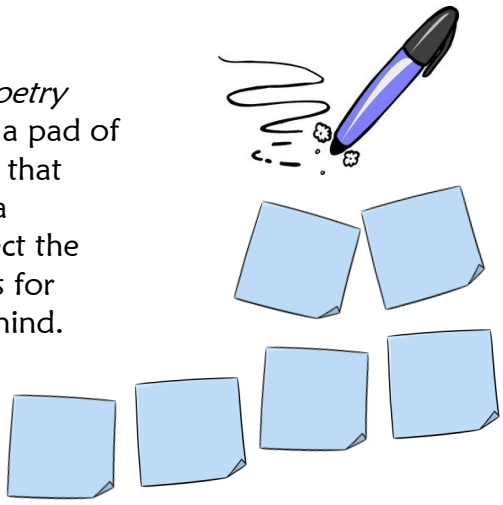
2. **Students Request Topics**
   Tell students that they are going to work in teams of three of four to write a poem together on one topic. First they will list the topics they want to write about, and then you will form teams of students who want to write on the same topic. Give each student one of the Collaborative Poetry Topic Slips found on page x. Ask them to write down their 5 favorite topics from the class chart, and collect the slips.



3. **Form Poetry Teams**
   Sort the student topic slips into categories according to their topic choices. Then select enough topics so that each team will be able to write on a different topic. Write each topic in one *Team Poetry Assignments* box from page x and x. (Note: If a topic is extremely popular, you could allow two different teams to write a poem on the same topic.) Then divide the class into teams of three or four students according to the topics they selected. List the names of the team members under the topic for that team. Not every student will be able to get his or her first choice, but using the topic request slips will make it more likely that your students are able to write about something that interests them. Be sure to consider personalities as you make your teams. It's perfectly fine to create teams of all boys or all girls for this activity; boys and girls are often more comfortable writing poetry in gender-alike teams. After you list all the names on the slips, make a copy of those pages for yourself before cutting them apart.



4. **Team Members Brainstorm Metaphors**
   Seat students on each team together, and place the *Team Poetry Assignment* slip in the middle of the group. Give each team a pad of sticky notes. Then ask students to brainstorm metaphors for that topic, calling out their metaphors and writing each one on a different sticky note as they work. They don't have to perfect the metaphors at this point; they are simply brainstorming ideas for comparisons and writing down the thoughts that come to mind. They should place the sticky notes with their ideas around the topic and brainstorm until they have at least six or seven ideas for metaphors.



Draft version

5. **Team Members Choose a Metaphor**
After the team has generated a sufficient number of metaphors, it's time to choose the ones that will be used in the team poem. Each team member will select ONE image to use for the team poem. If two people want to use the same metaphor, the one who thought of the idea has priority. Students may use an image that they didn't contribute to the brainstorming session as long as the author of the metaphor doesn't want to use it.

6. **Add Detail to Each Metaphor**
Ask your students to work alone for this part of the activity. Tell them to think about how the two things being compared are similar and add details to develop their metaphors. Having them work on individual dry erase boards can be effective at this stage. When it's time to share, it will be easy for team members to see each metaphor, and it will also be easy for them to make revisions on the fly.

7. **Edit and Revise Metaphors**
After they work alone, ask your students to take turns reading their metaphors aloud to the teams. Usually the images will need a little work to make them stronger, so ask students to spend time revising them to improve them. Encourage them to work together to make sure all four images are equally powerful. They should also check each other's spelling.

8. **Determine the Stanza Order**
After all images have been edited and revised, students should determine the order of the stanzas. Sometimes there will be a natural beginning and ending metaphor, but other times they may have to decide randomly. If students become overly focused on this issue, have them write the metaphors on index cards, shuffle them, and arrange them in random order.

9. **Record Team Comparison Poems**
Ask each person to record the entire team poem in a journal or on paper. They should also record the date as well as the full names of all team members as contributing poets.

10. **Publish and/or Present Team Poems**
After the poems are finished, your students will want to share them with the class. You can create a class booklet of them or publish them on a class website, but it's also fun to have students stand up and share their written work. Here are some suggestions for team presentations:

- **Display and Read** - The simplest method is to display each team's poem while the team members take turns reading their own stanzas.
- **PowerPoint** - Another method is to let the team prepare a PowerPoint presentation of the poem with one stanza per slide. Students read aloud their own stanzas as they appear on the screen.
- **Prezi Presentations** - Prezi is like PowerPoint on steroids! Go to Prezi.com and watch the tutorial to learn a fun method of presenting content. Your students can create their own Prezi presentations of their poems to share with the class.

Draft Version

The Mane of the Sun

As the sunshine
lights up the earth,
its beaming rays
flash from the
lion's mane of the sun.
through the clouds
rising
making the earth
brighter,
brighter,
and brighter
as he makes morning
with his beautiful mane.

by Keenon, 5th Grade

Draft Version

Me and You

Me and you
go together
like I am the key
and you are the dairy
and I open all your secrets.

Me and you
go together
like socks.
I am the right
and you are the left
walking together
like friends.

Me and you
go together like
best friends
all the time.

Keyera, 5th Grade

Draft Version

War Is...

War is a game
that endangers many lives.

War is a twister
that takes your
parents away.

War is a NASCAR race
with a 1,000 caution flags.

War is a raging dog
that rips you apart.

~ Travis, 5th grade

Draft Version

Comparison Poem Topic Ideas

Draft Version

Comparison Poem Topic Ideas

(Examples)

sadness

war

rain

anger

joy

grief

love

friends

death

video games

TV

computers

music

cell phones

internet

books

hope

gossip

forgiveness

Draft Version

Draft Version

Draft Version

Draft Version

Draft Version

Collaborative Poetry Topic Slips

Draft Version

Name _____

Topics I Want to Write About

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Name _____

Topics I Want to Write About

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Name _____

Topics I Want to Write About

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Name _____

Topics I Want to Write About

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Name _____

Topics I Want to Write About

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Name _____

Topics I Want to Write About

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

©2015 ~ Created by Laura Candler ~ Teaching Resources ~ www.lauracandler.com

Team Poetry Assignments (1-4)

Team 1

Topic _____

Team Members

_____

_____

_____

_____

Team 2

Topic _____

Team Members

_____

_____

_____

_____

Team 3

Topic _____

Team Members

_____

_____

_____

_____

Team 4

Topic _____

Team Members

_____

_____

_____

_____

Draft Version

Team Poetry Assignments (5-8)

Team 5

Topic _____

Team Members

_____

_____

_____

_____

Team 6

Topic _____

Team Members

_____

_____

_____

_____

Team 7

Topic _____

Team Members

_____

_____

_____

_____

Team 8

Topic _____

Team Members

_____

_____

_____

_____

Draft Version

Copyright Info

Collaborative Comparison Poems is protected by copyright. Unless your school has purchased multiple licenses, your single user purchase entitles you to make copies for your classroom only. You may not distribute this ebook in any form without permission. Email me at contact@lauracandler.com with inquiries. Thanks for valuing my hard work by respecting the copyright on this book! Thanks! ~ Laura Candler

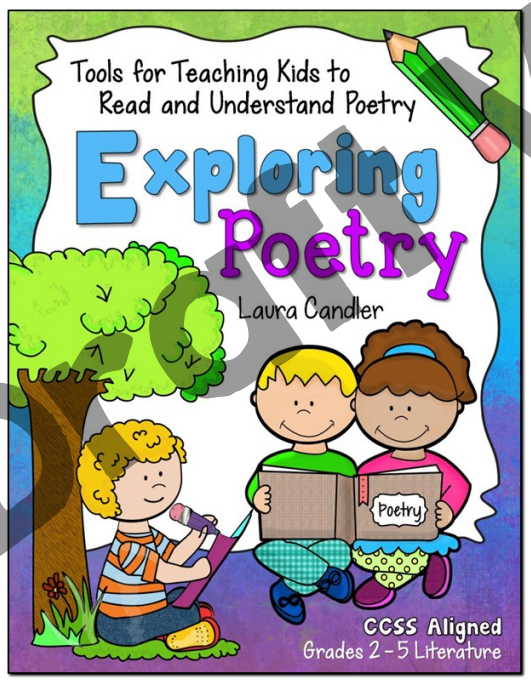
Website: www.lauracandler.com
Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/lauracandler
Facebook: www.facebook.com/teachingresources
TpT Store: www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Laura-Candler
Corkboard Connections Blog: www.corkboardconnections.com
Candler's Classroom Connections: www.lauracandler.com/signup.php

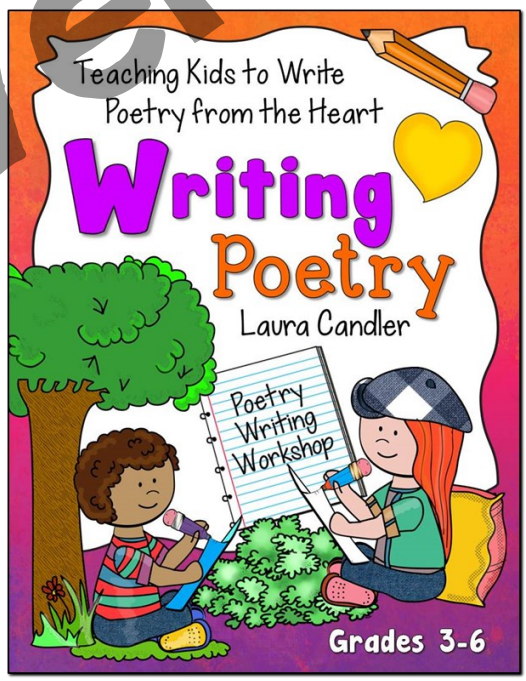
Connect with me!

Draft Version

More Poetry Resources from Laura Candler

Click each cover below to find the item on TeachersPayTeachers.





Artwork and Font Credits

Artifex www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Artifex
Pink Pueblo www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Pinkpueblo
Digital Classroom Clipart www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Digital-Classroom-Clipart
Whimsy Clips www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Whimsy-Clips
Whimsy Workshop Teaching www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Whimsy-Workshop-Teaching
Mad Clips Factory www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Mad-Clips-Factory
Kimberly Geswein Fonts www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Kimberly-Geswein-Fonts
The Painted Crow www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/The-Painted-Crow