CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING POETRY IN NIGERIA SCHOOL SYSTEM

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Abstract

Poetry is an effective and reliable genre in teaching literature in English. It offers astounding opportunities for reading, writing, speaking and listening practices for English learners. Teaching English through poetry has many advantages such as source for authentic materials, source as a medium to express emotions and feelings, source as a wonderful carrier of culture, and source for improving students' linguistic knowledge and skills. Poetry is often regarded as the most abstract genre of literature, comprising a variety of contents that are narrative. It is lyrical and poetic in nature. Some of the difficulties teachers face while teaching English through poetry are the students' proficiency level, the teachers' method of teaching and the chosen poetry texts. Thus, this paper highlights the challenges and prospects of teaching poetry in senior secondary schools in Nigeria. Conclusion and recommendations were made specifically on the ideas discussed on the paper.

Keywords: *challenges, prospects, teaching, learning, poetry.*

Introduction

The term "literature," is an art which is known as an imaginative writing in the sense of fiction-writing which is not literally true. Literature has also been described as a creative work of art, involving an aesthetic reordering of experience in order to communicate it more fully or accurately. Literature is any imaginative work of art that is written, sung, spoken or charted. That has a specific message and is conveyed in beautiful and woven language with the aim of entertainment. In other words, literature is concerned with beauty, invention and the creative use of language artistically designed to give pleasure and enjoyment while passing across message.

Literature is also seen as written works which are rendered as subject for study; they are poetry, prose and poetry. In writing or study, we are going to concentrate on poetry. According to written work of Wordsworth, 'poetry is the imaginative expression of strong feeling, usually rhythmically the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquility.

Poetry is a form of literature it is a record of the writers feelings about events which could be physical or otherwise. The subject of poetry could be supernatural (Clark's Abiku) or simply natural) example Lucys

Poem). Poetry is a term that applies to many forms in which man expresses himself if rhythmically. This is why poetry is a term of literary art that is easily distinguishable from prose by the predominance of rhythm. Rhythm is an integral part of nature and consequently existence, since everything in the world responds to rhythm. Poetry is a special form of writing or composition involving in the use of imagination emotion and intellect in the communication of experiments or in the interpretation of human consciousness and existence with unique structure and technical fitnesse.

Poetry is all about life activities and deals with realities in life. It has to do with man's imaginations, feelings, his impression around him and the relationship between the world and him, it is the most personal in all aspects of literature. Poetry is more completed in the use of language than that of the prose because, it is usually short and very direct to the point.

Poetry has beauty in its language and dignity in its compressed form. It is also unique in that it contributes to the stories of human experience and many facts of life. There are main types of poetry; warmly, lyrical, poems are usually short and song like reflective lyric and descriptive lyric. Narrative poems tell stories and examples are balled epic, poetic, monologue. Poets tell their stories through the speech of their characters.

Examples, epic, static poem criticize, ridicule and correct, for example ballads and sonnet. The study of poetry is training of the emotion and poetry aims at providing aesthetic satisfaction and shaping of individuals mind through critical appreciation. But despite this aim, poetry teaching and learning have created enormous problems of poetry teaching and learning is by a complete orientation, a revision of ideas and the general attitude towards poetry. Edward (2013), ascertains that this was very important as Nigeria which is British began to interact with other British Colonies and citizens in Africa.

In Nigeria, the language that serves these communicative functions across diverse ethnic groups is the English language. Poetry in English laqnguage had access into Nigeria's linguistic history through trade and colonization. Before its adoption as the nation's second language as well official language, many indigenous languages like Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo has been in use for the consummation of the same human need of communication. However, none of these indigenous languages was spoken by the majority of the people, thus making it possible for Poetry to be used as the language for maintaining effective interaction across the linguistically divergent ethnic groups. In line with this, Ogbuehi (2011), aptly observes that the existence of many apparently unrelated languages made it imperative for English language to be adopted as the official language in Nigeria since the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorate in 1914.

From the forgoing, it is deducible that the Poetry serves to bridge the communication divided which would have been occasioned by the multi-lingual nature of the Nigerian society. Williams (2014), states that Nigeria, Poetry is used as a second language and a medium of instruction. It is the language of education, administration, commerce, politics, law, Akabogu (2012), avers that in most nations, the dominant

language is the language of government, business, education, the legal system, the learned professions, trade and commerce, the arts, culture and mobility of all kinds. In Nigeria, the only language that fits into this picture is the Poetry. Thus, Akabogu asserts that this enviable status of Poetry places it ahead of other language in its importance for purposes of communication.

Today, Poetry is the language for the international community, According to Ezugu (2015), the Poetry is the most widely spoken language in the world. It is used as either a primary or secondary language in many countries. Is is the Language of education administration, law, World trade, International diplomacy as well as that of pop culture. It is therefore, worthwhile acquiring mastery of this very important language for whoever does not, has deprived himself of access to the world's brightest of idea and modern technologies.

In Nigeria today, Poetry remains the language of pedagogy, students can hardly make commendable progress in their studies without adequate mastery of Poetry, through which most of the courses in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions are taught and examined. This calls for a system that would be both rudimentary and functional in its approach. This is important, according to Umaru (2015) as a student learns a new language, very often he does not know how to express what he wants to say in writing. Since the student uses a foreign language as a medium of communication, he has to start from the scratch to learn the rudiments of the language. It is natural then that this is the junction where the various problems arising from the teaching and learning of the language meet the need to do so properly.

Poetry teaching, according to Oluikpe (2013), the basic criteria for assessing students' proficiency in writing and speak are generally control of the basic grammatical categories such as punctuation, tense, number, gender etc. Language Teaching in Nigeria had fraught with deficiencies. The major reason for these deficiencies is our Poetry teachers who are not well-trained only but are also non- professionals. And even if they are somewhat trained, their training is not up to work. A situation where a teacher of language has no mastery of it grammatical categories, as we see today, does not mean well for the system. Also writing on these problems facing language teaching, Regneret (2011), ascertains that "many good teachers are adoptive rather than rigid in their approach to teaching children and only loosely base on their instruction on a given method. Language is the official medium of communication to humans. It is one of the things that differentiate man from animals. Signs and symbols have no International understanding and may be difficult to understand. Picture, painting and sculptures cannot be read by all. This makes language superior to all of them because it is easily understood and generally used. According to Ozohili (2017), language literally means the "tongue" a human organ used in speaking. According to Ozohili (2017), traditionally, language is defined as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by which thoughts are communicated from one being to another.

Poetry learning: Human beings have the ability to learn and to understand and think about things. He has the capacity to gain and use knowledge. He can as well explore situations, collect information, plan and execute the plan. Man's high intelligence has also enabled him to evolve a level of linguistic

communication by which life can be regulated. Theodore (2011), states that language learning requires thoroughly time, patience and practice. It cannot be done solely in school with the large class but requires few minutes' daily practice for individual students. Therefore, pupils and students should be encouraged to practice this language in their leisure time in order to master the language as required. The methodology here refers to the method by which the teachers presents his/her materials to the learners and engages them in the task at hand. Methodology is very vital in every teaching-learning situation.

For Robert (2013), for effective teaching and learning to take place, the skillful teacher needs to use the many different methods and techniques at his command. Even though there is a great diversity in teaching methods and techniques, there is no one of them that can be regarded as the best for every teaching situation. This is however assumed that a carefully designed teaching method can work wonders in making learning more effective.

Poetry in discussion

Poetry is a form of literature and a specific genre in literature. It is a record of the writer's feeling about events which could be physical or otherwise. The subject of poetry could be supernatural (e.g Clark's Abiku) or simply natural (e.g Lucys Poem). Poetry is a term that applies to many forms in which man expresses himself rhythmically. This is why poetry is a term of literary art that is easily distinguishable from prose by the predominance of rhythm. Rhythm is an integral part of nature and consequently existence, since everything in the world respond to rhythm. Poetry is a special form of writing or composition involving in the use of imagination, emotion and intellect in the communication of experiments or in the interpretation of human consciousness and existence with unique structure and technical fitness.

Poetry is life because it deals with realities it has to do with man's imagination feelings, his impression on and around him and the relationship between the world and himself it is the most personal in all aspects of literature. Poetry is more completed in the use of language than that of the prose because it is usually short and very direct to the point.

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Concept of Teaching

Teaching connotes the various processes, undertaken by people (teachers) so that some people may learn. Teaching activities have the intention of bring about learning. Therefore, we cannot describe teaching without reference to learning.

Furthermore, Herbert (2011) defines teaching as the creating or providing of opportunities from which learners can gain such experience that will enable them acquire the knowledge, skill attitude and appreciation that will serve as tool in the life. In the school setting teaching involves the determination of worthwhile object, the selection and arrangement of earning experience, guidance, and motivation as well improving upon learning. Teaching can also be reviewed as a process which involves a person influencing the attitude, behavior or skill of another individual.

To teacher who is engaged in the process of teaching performs various tasks during the teaching-learning process. These tasks according to Sotonwa (2015) include the following:

1.   Motivation the learner and obtaining his attention

2.   Ensuring that the expected outcome from the lesson are made clear to learner

3.   Presenting the stimuli that are essential to the content of the lessons

4.   Providing some means of integrating learners participation into the lesson.

5.   Providing feedback to the student on the correctness or quality o his work or   responses during participation.

Importance of teaching and learning poetry

Teaching poetry is one of the important activities in ELT classrooms. Khansir (2012, 241), states that "poetry is example of a more intense use of language". Through learning poetry, students can use the language more and express what they want to write. Teaching and learning poetry give many advantages in ELT classrooms. Hismanoglu (2003, 61), explains that there are some benefits of poetry, ELT classrooms as follows: students can appreciate the process of writing poetry, students understand about the

composition and structure in composing poetry, students are to be sensitive for new words and are able to find out the meaning to get deeper interest and to be analytic person.

Moreover, Sarah in Hismanoglu (2005, 61), also explains the educational benefits of poetry as follows: literature provides readers with a different viewpoint towards language use by going beyond the known usages and rules of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, literature triggers unmotivated readers owing to being so open to exploration and different interpretations; literature evokes feelings and thoughts in heart and in mind; literate makes students familiar with figures of speech (simile, metaphor, irony, personification, imagery) due to their being a part of daily language use. Moreover, poetry employs language to evoke and exalt special qualities of life, and suffices readers with feelings. "Poetry is one of the most effective and powerful transmitters of culture. Poems comprise so many cultural elements-allusions, vocabularies, idioms, tones that are not easy to translate into another language" (Hismanoglu, 2005).

Other advantages of teaching poetry in ELT classrooms are explained by Panaveil (2011, 177) that teaching poetry can promote cooperation and communication among students in the classrooms. In support of the view, Ward (2013), explains that "poetry is a powerful medium for building on students' knowledge and allowing for the connection to self, others, and the world because poetry encourages expression of emotions, can help to dvelop higher order thinking skills and develop ways of knowing".

More so Khansir (2012), argues that "in teaching of poetry, basically there are four factors to be considered. The pupils; the poems to be taught, the methods adopted and the personality of the teachers". Chen (2009, 56) states that it is important to point out that including poetry in the curricula of foreign language classes can help develop awareness of and sensitivity to (foreign) language and culture and at the same time introduce a cross-cultural difference to discussion.

Additionally, Ruurs in Nieuwenhuis, 2009: 4) poetry can be so satisfying and support a wide range of learning because rhythm of poetry comes naturally to children. The use of poetic language in the classroom brings along with certain energy, a joy that is hard to capture in prose.

Moreover, Harrison and Holderit in Nieuwenguis, 2009: 5), explain that "poetry helps children and adults to ponder, to observe; to ask otherwise might remain untapped". It brings balance and beauty to our increasingly complex world. Poetry can awaken our senses or bring the element of surprise into our lives. It makes us laugh, teaches us powerful lessons, and renews our souls.

Importance of Poetry

Poetry is so important because it helps us understand and appreciate the world around us. Poetry's strength lies in its ability to shed a "sideways" light on the world, so the truth sneaks up on you. No question about it. Poetry teaches us how to live. Poetry is like the Windex on a grubby car window it bares open the vulnerabilities of human beings so we can all relate to each other a little better.

Poetry is a form of expression. Writing it lets us get out feelings and thoughts on a subject while reading it encourage us to connect and find meaning in our experiences. Poetry can have a positive impact on the social and emotional learning of children. It may offer them a new way of thinking about something.

Poetry as a developmental learning tool

In child education, children's verbal and written skills are somewhat underdeveloped. Poetry helps by teaching in rhythm, stringing words together with a beat helps cognitive understanding of words and where they fit. Additionally, it teaches children the art of creative expression, which most found highly lacking in the new-age educational landscape. In essence, poetry gives them a great tool for developing one's self.

Poetry as a tool for developing language skills

Writing, speaking, and understanding can be greatly influence and nurtured by the use of poetry. Learning rules for writing, and then breaking them with poetry, can give writing alternative beauty. Speaking poetry aloud with its beat, rhythm, and rhyme can loosen the tongue and craft a firm foundation for verbal communication. Learning to understand poetry also gives the mental fortitude, as well as the drive, to understand written communication (an invaluable trait in business, from my perspective)

Poetry Helps to Improve Ideas

Have you ever sat there not knowing what to write? Picking up poetry, reading through different excerpts from classic poets can blossom ideas you never knew existed. Reading and writing makes you think of new ideas, but can also poetically change the way you perceived old ones. It is a way to process experiences, visual descriptions, and emotions.

Poetry as therapeutic for writers

Therapy is a creative arts therapy using the written word to understand, communicate feelings and thoughts. Poetry is typically short, but largely emotional. Writers get in touch with sentiments they might not have known they had until it was down on paper. Depression and anxiety are among the top two mental illnesses being treated with Biblio-therapy, and through poetry, one can start to understand the hindrances and blocks being formed around their mind. Expressing how one feels is difficult. I've found that poetry is one of the best outlets.

Poetry as therapeutic for readers

For those who have a harder time in expressing themselves, reading poetry can have a similar positive effect as writing it. Reading poetry allows one to see into the soul of another person, see what is weighting on their mind and on their hearts, and can open doors to feelings that are sometimes suppressed until that door is opened.

Reading can shine a light on all those dark and hidden crevices of the heart and mind once though permanently closed off to the world.

Poetry helps to understand the significance of words in contexts

By design, poetry is broken into short, but strategic sentences. By doing so, writing and reading poetry makes one understand the significance of every single word and their placement. Sometimes, without a single word, it can change the entire rhythm and meaning of the poem itself. Writing poetry forces the person to consider, and reconsider, each piece and length of their verse. In poetry, words are magic, moods, depth, and difficult. One gains the utmost appreciation for them when handing delicate sentence structures provided in poetry pieces.

Poetry helps to understand people of different backgrounds

One of the hardships of the current age is the ability to understand one another. Miscommunication and misunderstandings lead to mass amounts of frustration. Reading and writing poetry actually gives people the improved ability to understand others. From a writer's prospective, you have to be able to convey the true nature of you writing to an unknown reader. That means diving deep into what parts you want them to understand, what you want them to feel, and what to take home with them will resonate long after reading. For a reader of poetry, it gives you the patience to look into someone else's mind and cultivate empathy for another person. Both conveying opinion and the ability to empathize are tantamount to respectable communication.

Problems facing the learners in understanding poetry resources availability

The availability of resources in institutions varies widely. When interviewing, it is helpful to ask about teachings that are of importance to teachers' style of teaching. These may include technology, space, laboratory supplies, models, simulations, specimens, library materials. Support for writing/math/technology skills, and many others (Duff, 2011) know the budget available to support your teaching, and how to order needed materials. Look for teaching support in form of grants, equipments, mentoring, and professional development activities. If your school does not provide them, there may be community, professional or government organizations or associations that may help. Being an accomplished instructor can be a bit like being a scavenger, collecting materials over a lifetime of teaching a develop a comprehensive set of teaching support materials (Duff, 2011). He further stated that new school members should begin developing a wish list of materials and thinking about ways to go about procuring them.

Student Skills

All secondary schools face students with a wide range of skills, abilities, and experiences. Being aware of the range and how to support students to help them each learn is a characteristic of an accomplished instructor. There are external supports on each campus in the form of centers for writing, math, and

computer skills. There are counseling centers to help students address emotional issues that may interface with learning. Some skills are discipline specific and need to be explicitly taught. These are can be incorporated in to course content, or required as modules to be completed outside of class, as appropriate. Accomplishes faculty address the diverse needs of their students by becoming aware of the needs, locating resources to support students and making referrals, and teaching those skills that are critical to students learning success (Toppe, 2013).

Students' behaviour

In spite of college students being adults, their expectations for what is appreciate in a college classroom varies widely. New secondary school members need to address behavior directly. Most often appropriate behavior is addressed in the form of policies outlined in the course syllabus and discussed when going over the syllabus. If issues still arise, it is most effective to address them quickly and directly. Issues may include: plagiarism, ethical dilemmas, rudeness, disrespect, and attendance, lack of preparation for class, interruptions or inattentiveness, among others. New faculty members are most successful when they have anticipated the possible issues, and determined a response in advance (Toppe, 2013). Many issues are appropriately addressed in the syllabus, and discussed at the beginning of class.

The practice helps avoid many problems by clarifying expectations and consequences before an incident occurs.

Classroom Environment

According to Merhs (2009), collage classrooms are shared by many people and this multi-use situation can challenges. Classrooms may be occupied when class is scheduled is begin, tables and desks may be dirty, trash left behind by previous students, trash cans overflowing, whiteboards may be filled with writing from other classes, equipment broken or malfunctioning, or furniture may have been rearranged. Some class have more enrolled students than chairs, others are awkwardly arranged for the style of teaching planned. May campuses are over-crowded leaving few opinions, but new faculty members can be prepared by looking at the space assigned and finding out if there are alternative spaces available, alternative ways to arrange the room, replacement equipment or repair personal available, or alternative equipment types to support their teaching. You will never know unless you ask, and do a bit of investigation. Sometimes the squeaky wheel does get the grease.

Issues of difference

Secondary schools have noted particular challenges faced by individuals who differ from their colleagues and community in many number of ways. This may include gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion.

Urban/rural or political commitments, among others constitute writings of many poets. While typically a secondary school community better addresses these issues of difference than other settings, there remain some particular challenges for instructors, and these may be particularly acute for new faculty members.

These situations are addressed directly, openly and early on to minimize the impact on an individual's career (Merhs, 20009).

The challenges of assessment

This challenge relates to the planting and programming phrase, but takes it a step further. Teachers are constantly storing away information about the children in order to improve learning opportunities for their classes. When it comes time for report writing assessment helps teachers to give a more accurate overview of the student performance and helps to determine grades with a greater level of objectiveness. The challenges is in selecting assessment tools which allow students to bets present what allow student to best present what they know and teachers to be access this data (Merhs, 2009).

Concept of learning

Concept learning also known as category learning, concept attainment, and concept formation, is largely based on the works of the cognitive psychologist, Bruner. Bruner, Goodnow, & Austin (2007) define concept attainment (or concept learning) as "the search for and listing of attributes that can be used to distinguish exemplars from non exemplars of various categories." More simply put, concepts are the mental categories that help us classify objects, events or ideas, building on the understanding that each object, event, or ideas has a set of common relevant features. Thus, concept learning is a strategy which requires learners to compare and contrast groups or categories that contain concept-relevant features.

Concept learning also refers to a leaning task in which a human or machine learner is trained to classify objects by being shown a set of example objects along with their class label. The learner simplifies what has been observed by condensing it in the form of an example. This simplified version of what has been learned is then applied to future examples. Concept learning may be simple or complex because learning takes places over many areas. When a concept is difficult, it is likely that the learner will to able to simplify, and therefore will be less to learn.

Colloquially, he task is known as learning from examples. Most theories of concept learning are based on the storage of exemplars and avoid summarization or overt abstraction of any kind (Humg, 2014).

Techniques for teaching and learning of poetry

There are techniques that may enhance teaching of poetry in literature in junior secondary school, Nweze (2006), opines that teachers need to have clear instructions and stage the instruction carefully. Some of these strategies include: Poetry games, Choral speaking, Tableaux, Improvisation and Role playing.

Poetry games technique: Poetry games activities and exercise are often used to introduce students to poetry. These activities tend to be less intrusive and are highly participatory (E.g bang).

There are several books that have written on using poetry games can serve as excellent resources for anyone wanting to incorporate poetry games into their work. Games fro Actors and Non-Actors by Augusto Boal perhaps the best known intentionally and includes writings on this life woks as well as hundred of games. There are also smaller books however, which serve as excellent practical guides. For example, Poetry Games by Bernie Warren is an excellent pocket book for someone looking to try poetry for the first time (Tarlington and Verriour, 2001).

Choral poetrytization involves students reading by assigning parts to each group member. Choral poetrytization can use texts as rhymes, poetry, and pictures books. Students can experiment with voice, sound gesture and movement (Swartz, 1995).

There was a time when Choral Speaking was part of every primary school child's experience, though the quality of performance varied enormously depending on the skills and enthusiasm of the teacher. Interest declined because of monotonous sing-song repetition of ill-understood words too often being the mode of performance. Choral Speaking of verse and prose should be a vibrant, exciting, and valid part of any training in poetry. The experience of working with texts, orchestrating performance with the human voice as instrument, using solo and massed voices of different colour and quality. Creating vocal sound-effects with dynamic effect is one that audience or participant will forget. It is a fine option for classroom teachers of poetry who want to work with a variety of non-poetrytic texts and bring them to performance standard. Groups of students can be challenged to devise their own interpretation and staging of text (Merhs, 2009).

The choral speaking syllabus technique: The choral speaking syllabus offers opportunities for groups from Grade 8 to demonstration their skills in co-operative performance, with a contract of selections required from Grade 1. At Grades 7 and 8, a performance programme is required. The performance programme is a challenging option which some advance school, college, and adult poetry groups will enjoy.

Tableaux technique: This involves students creating visual pictures with their bodies, emphasizing key details and relationships (Wilheim, 2002). Tableaux are frozen senses and usually involve at least three levels. Students focus on a focal point, facial expression, and body language. This technique is useful for maturing participants' presentational skills as well as audience skills.

Chevrier and Jean-Francois (2006), State tableau works best when students work in small groups and collaborate to figure out how they want to represent the ideas in a text.

Similarly, the teacher gives each group a text or text excerpt, and the groups are charged with creating a frozen image that somehow captures the essence of what is going on in the reading. Teachers might choose

to assign all groups the same text, or give each group different but related texts. Students must then collaborate to decide how to represent something important in the text in the form of a tableau. They can represent people, objects or even symbols, and can create something that reproduces some aspect of the text, or do a tableau that works more as a symbol. No matter what type they do, students should carefully craft their gestures, facial expressions and physical poses. Give groups enough time to plan and rehearse and, when they are ready, have students present their scenes while the rest of the class discusses what they think is going on in the tableau. Finally, have the group that presented share the articles or excerpts that inspired their tableau with the class, and have the class discuss the choices that went into making that particular tableau (Wall and Jeff, 2008).

The tableau does not just have to be a mute frozen image. Students can be told in advance that they will be tapped during the presentation, and that they will have to say aloud a phrase, sound or sentence to prove a clue as to who or what they represent in the tableau. Alternatively, the teacher or a student could act as a reporter and conduct short interviews with individuals acting in the tableau (Wall and Jeff, 2008).

The teacher might choose to facilitate a discussion with the audience by highlighting certain tableau details through questioning. For example, the teacher could ask, "Why this character might be smiling?" or "Why do you think this character is thinking?" Tableaux can also be a series of frozen images that, together, tell a story with a beginning, middle and end. Depending on the subject, the tableau might be more effective with sound effects or music. Students can choose what sounds to play as part of the process of planning their tableau (Chevrier and Jean-Francois, 2006).

Improvisation technique: This is the practice of acting and reading, of making and creating, in the moment and in response to the stimulus of one's immediate environment. It can be great introduction to role playing. Students' focus on position, expression and creativity in their impromptu skits (Wilheim, 2002). Improvisation can add energy and originality to the students' acting if you are an acting teacher. Improvisation can be done with no materials in any reasonably sized space. As well as being great practice in them, they are great for refocusing a group that has become scattered, or for waking up one that has become jaded.

Improvisation is the spontaneous response to new and unexpected situations. Life is improvisation. We respond in new ways when spontaneous and unexpected things occur to us (Wilhein, 2002).

Role play technique: This is the basis of all poetrytic activity. The ability to suspend disbelief by stepping into another character's shoes comes quite naturally to most children. Through the structure of the poetry lesson this can be used to great effect, challenging children to develop a more sensitive understanding of a variety of viewpoints whilst sharpening their language and movement skills. By adopting a role, children can step into the past or future and travel to any location, dealing with issues on moral and intellectual levels. Thus role play can be easily utilized to illuminate themes across the curriculum (McCaslin, 2006).

Role playing allows students to play a character in a real or imaginary situation. One of the simplest forms is where "the student plays himself faced with an imaginary situation" (Wilheim, 2002). Other strategies have students playing real-life or imaginary character in a variety of contexts. Role play can be used throughout many areas of the curriculum, especially history and language arts to support and strengthen understanding of content. Below is a list of some common role-play strategies.

Reenactment: Students perform scenes from a historical time period or a scene in a history. "An enactment may be cast in the past, the present, or future, but always happens in the 'now of time'" (Wilheim, 2002). This strategy encourages students to interact with a text and challenges them to take on the perspective of a character.

Extended role play: Students may create the scene that takes place before or after a story or scene. This strategy helps students to predict and theorized about cause and effect.

Hotseat: Student is interviewed in character by putting the character from a scene, even or story on the 'stand' students can further explore their understanding of the content. Other students in the class prepare questions that explore the character and their conflicts, students' area encouraged to write open-ended questions. Teachers may wish to model hotseating first by acting as the character in the role. Also, the person in the hotseat may have a couple of students who act as their "brain". They are there to help answer questions if the person on the hotseat needs them.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Variety of methods should be adopted in teaching Poetry in secondary schools by constantly organizing seminars, conferences and workshops for teachers.

2. Variety of instructional materials should be made available in the teaching and learning of Poetry in secondary schools by the government.

3. There should be maximum utilization of instructional materials in teaching of Poetry in secondary schools though in service education and training of teachers.

4. Adequate classroom physical facilities should be provided for teaching Poetry in secondary schools by the government

Conclusion

Based on the findings presented and discussed , conclusions was made:

There are many methods used by Poetry teachers in senior secondary schools in Abakaliki metropolis. This implies that Poetry teachers often use communicative method in secondary schools for the teaching Poetry. It also means that teachers often use discussion method in secondary schools for the teaching Poetry.

There are available instructional materials used for the teaching of Poetry in secondary schools in the area. This implies that tape recorder is usually available for teaching of the Poetry in the secondary schools. It also implies that pictures are often available for teaching of the Poetry in the secondary schools.

Instructional materials are utilized in teaching Poetry in secondary schools in the area. This implies that tape recorder is usually utilized for teaching of the Poetry in the secondary schools and that Picture are often utilized for teaching of the Poetry in the secondary schools.

Poetry teachers are skilful in the use of instructional materials in teaching Poetry in secondary schools. This implies that Poetry teachers usually posses the skills of using tape recorder for teaching of the Poetry in the secondary schools. And also that Poetry teachers usually posses the skills of using Pictures for teaching of the Poetry in the secondary schools.

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