



ILA CHAPTER AFFILIATE

April 2018 - Literacy Strategy Spotlight

Adam Whitaker, who presented this year at TALE, wanted to share Vocabulary Cinquains in honor of National Poetry Month. Adam Whitaker is pursuing an Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction at Texas A&M University at College Station. His research interests include culturally relevant pedagogy, vocabulary instruction, gifted and talented pedagogy, and curriculum mapping. In his spare time, he enjoys working out, traveling, the arts, and spending quality time with friends and family.

Vocabulary Cinquains

For those who do not know, a cinquain is a form of poetry that is typically used to describe a subject or topic. Each line of the poem follows certain patterns to describe the subject or topic in new ways. The fifth and final line is then an example of the subject or topic.

The structure of a cinquain requires students to think about topic in different ways, which in part strengthens their understanding of a topic while helping them form associations with the topic.

Structure

Line 1: one-word subject or topic

Line 2: two vivid adjectives that describe the subject or topic

Line 3: three -ing participle that fit the topic

Line 4: four-word phrase that captures an aspect about the topic

Line 5: a very specific example of Line 1

Example

Poets

melodic, expressive

scribbling, speaking, snapping

words that touch hearts

Maya Angelou

If you're interested in using this in your classroom, Adam has provided a handout which can be found on the [TALE Exemplary Reading Program award page](#). These handouts include a sample lesson plan with considerations for differentiation and a student handout.

For additional cinquain examples and a graphic organizer, check out [Read | Write | Think](#).

For more information on vocabulary instruction, Adam Whitaker recommends:

Ford-Connors, E., & Paratore, J. R. (2015). Vocabulary Instruction in Fifth Grade and Beyond Sources of Word Learning and Productive Contexts for Development. *Review of Educational Research*, 85(1), 50-91.

Frey, N., & Fisher, D. (2008). *Teaching visual literacy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Kelley, J. G., Lesaux, N. K., Kieffer, M. J., & Faller, S. E. (2010). Effective academic vocabulary instruction in the urban middle school. *The Reading Teacher*, 5-14.

Marzano, R. J., & Pickering, D. J. (2005). *Building academic vocabulary: Teacher's manual*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Sadoski, M. (2005). A dual coding view of vocabulary learning. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 21(3), 221-238.

For more information, contact Adam Whitaker at leadyouthupward@gmail.com

If you would like to share a literacy strategy or highlight something your school is doing, please email Matthew Panozzo, the Community Involvement Committee Director, at talecommunityinvolvement@gmail.com

If your school is interested in applying for the International Literacy Association's Exemplary Reading Program Award, please visit their online [application](#) for more information.