

# The Power of Primary Source Poetry

## Time

1 to 2 class periods (60 minutes per period)

## Overview

In today's lesson, students will have a chance to experience the poetry of three men who at one time or another passed through the World War II Santa Fe Department of Justice (DOJ) camp. The poetry is in the form of a *tanka* poem, a traditional Japanese poem far older than its more familiar cousin, the *haiku*. The poem has five lines that follow a pattern of five syllables, seven syllables, five syllables, seven syllables, and seven syllables. The poems in this lesson were originally written in Japanese and translated into English, so the syllable patterns don't fit exactly—the translators were more concerned with the content and emotion expressed in the poem than with the syllable count.

It was not uncommon for prisoners to be transferred frequently to and from Santa Fe, whether to be reunited with their families or to be relocated according to their responses on the loyalty questionnaire. Therefore, it cannot be said with any certainty that the poems were written in or are specific to Santa Fe.

Among the poets featured, Keiho Soga found himself in the Santa Fe camp until the end of the war in November 1945. There he founded the Santa Fe-isha *Tanka* Club. Due to copyright restrictions, this lesson is structured around only five poems, though it is strongly recommended that the teacher purchase the book *Poets Behind Barbed Wire*. (Bibliographic information is included in the Resources section of this lesson.) In addition, it might be helpful to access the Web site <http://manymountains.org/> (accessed September 3, 2009), which features more poetry and exquisite calligraphy from the Santa Fe camp.

## Essential Question

- How will I make history?

## Objectives

- Students will read poetry and then identify the event being described and the emotion being expressed.
- Students will recite and present their poetry analysis to the class.
- Students will identify major themes that express the concerns and hardships faced by the men in the Santa Fe Department of Justice camp.
- Students will write and publish their own *tanka* as a character in one of the photographs from Lesson 3.

## Guiding Questions

- What can literary selections reveal about historical events?
- What can't literary selections reveal about historical events?
- What themes dominate the poetry from the Santa Fe camp?

## Assessment

Students are assessed formally through the presentation of their poetry analysis and the *tanka* that they write. Assessment of the identification of themes within the *tanka* is done informally through class discussion.

## New Mexico Content Standards

- History Strand I-D PS 1: Analyze and evaluate information by developing and applying criteria for selecting appropriate information and use it to answer critical questions.
- History Strand I-D PS 2: Demonstrate the ability to examine history from the perspectives of the participants.
- History Strand III-B PS 2: Describe ways in which different groups maintain their cultural heritage.
- Language Arts Strand I-A PS 2: Respond to informational materials that are read by making connections to related topics and drawing inferences.



- Language Arts Strand I-D PS 1: Respond to various texts and literary selections using interpretive and evaluative reading processes by reading a variety of literary and other texts for a sustained period of time.
- Language Arts Strand II-A PS 5: Express Individual perspective in response to historical issues.
- Language Arts Strand II-C PS 2: Differentiate shades of meaning and multiple meanings of words.
- Language Arts Strand II-C PS 5: Apply the steps of a writing process within a given format from pre-writing to final draft.
- Language Arts Strand III-B PS 2: Identify recurring themes in literary works.

### Materials

- *Handout 7-1: Tanka speaks of nature . . .* (handouts for students and a copy to share with the class via overhead projector)
- *Handout 7-2: Tanka Poem by Muin Ozaki* (handouts for students and a copy to share with the class via overhead projector)
- *Handout 7-3: Poetry Analysis*
- *Handouts 7-4a–d: Tanka Poetry*
- *Handout 7-5: Tanka Poetry Presentation Guide*
- Photographs from Lesson 3
- *Handout 7-6: How to Write a Tanka Poem*

### Activities and Teaching Strategies

- Tell the students that today they are going to be coming face to face with men who were imprisoned in the Santa Fe Department of Justice camp . . . through their poetry. Before trying to read the poetry, however, provide some information about *tanka*, the poetry form these men used. A brief description of *tanka* is found in the “Overview” section of this lesson.
- Explain that students will be reading some of these poems in pairs and then identifying the event upon which the author is reflecting and what emotion the author is expressing. Before expecting students to do this analysis, practice the process as a whole class.
- Distribute *Handout 7-2: Tanka Poetry by Muin Ozaki* and put a copy on the overhead project. As they read it for the first time, mention that Ozaki was in his mid-thirties when the war began.
- Distribute *Handout 7-3: Poetry Analysis* and analyze Ozaki’s poem as a class. Ask the students what event the poet is referring to (*his arrest*). Ask how they know (*the third line reads, “As I am taken prisoner”*). Next ask if they can tell what emotions the poet was feeling about that event.
  - Students often don’t know how to discuss emotions, so it is helpful to use an emotion chart. There are a variety of emotion charts available: do an image search of the Web for “emotions” or “feelings.” Students will probably understand that the poet is sad, but when you ask how they know that, it might be hard for them to answer. They might understand it if they can put themselves in his place: for example, he didn’t get to say good-bye to his children or he comments that the night rain is “cold.”
- Ask students to identify a favorite line and explain their answer. Finally, ask students to brainstorm three levels of questions for the poem, just as they did in Lesson 5. Here are some questions generated by the author’s class:
  - Level One: What time of day is it? What is happening to the poet?
  - Level Two: Is he moving quietly? Did he resist arrest?
  - Level Three: Should he have awakened his children to say good-bye? Should he have resisted arrest?
- Now, distribute *Handouts 7-4a–d: Tanka Poetry*; every two students should have one poem to interpret. If you are using the ones included here, every fourth pair will have the same poem. If *Poets Behind Barbed Wire* is available, each pair can be given a different poem.
- A number of these poems have vocabulary that may be unfamiliar. Walk around the room providing clarification where needed. Let them know that in 15 minutes, after completing their analysis worksheet, they will have to present their poems to the class

using the steps outlined in *Handout 7-5: Tanka Poetry Presentation Guide*. If you are working with only four poems, you should have the pairs who are interpreting the same poems meet together. They can distribute the questions and all participate in the presentation, especially if they have different favorite lines.

- Before students present their poems, tell the class that you want them to pay close attention to each poem as it is presented, because their job is to identify the theme of each poem. Again, the larger the number of poems, the greater the repetition of themes. Have students give their presentations and then score the student responses to each question.
- After the presentations, ask students to identify the themes that they heard (*loneliness, isolation, humiliation, boredom, death, arrest, etc.*). Choose some categories and then quickly review the poems, asking the class to place each poem into one of the categories. (If you are only using the five poems on the handouts, this step is not necessary.) Ask students to explain why they think those themes might come up again and again. After allowing the conversation to dwell on these points for a while, ask: *If many poems covered the same topics or emotions, do you think it would be safe to say historically that those issues were important to the prisoners in Santa Fe? Why or why not?* In other words, review the guiding questions for the lesson:
  - What can literary selections reveal about historical events?
  - What can't literary selections reveal about historical events?
  - What themes dominate the poetry from the Santa Fe camp?
- Now it is time for students to write a *tanka* of their own as though they were part of this historical event. If students look confused, return them to the photographs in Lesson Three. Students should choose a character in one of the photographs and then write about what those characters are thinking and experiencing. Distribute *Handout 7-6: How to Write a Tanka Poem*. Take them through the writing process. Start

with a web or an outline that has the following information:

- Which character are you?
- What event are you thinking of?
- How do you feel about it?
- Do a sample *tanka*. Here is a sample the unit's author used in her class in conjunction with *Handout 3-30*, showing the construction of Manzanar:
  - I'm the man in the background walking from the camera
  - I'm thinking about what I'm building
  - I'm too old to join the Army
  - I want to do something to support the war effort
  - The family who owns the farm next to mine is Japanese American
  - They have been great neighbors for many years
  - I don't know the man I'm working with well
  - I can't talk to him about my doubts

This was the first draft generated in the author's class:

The government says  
Everyone must do their part  
I build barracks  
For Japanese American Inmates  
But are they really a threat?

Once the first draft is completed, have the students check the poem for syllable count (5, 7, 4, 10, 7). Ask students for help adding a syllable to line 3 and reduce line 4 by 4 syllables. The author's class came up with this:

The government says  
Everyone must do their part  
I build these barracks  
For my Japanese neighbors  
But are they really a threat?

- Once the students understand the process, have them choose the photograph they want to write about and

have them follow the writing process, just as it was modeled: pre-write, write, share and revise, and write a final copy.

### **Extensions**

---

- Have students present their poems to the class.
- Have students type and publish their poems.
- Have students illustrate their poems.

### **Resources**

---

<http://manymountains.org/> (accessed September 1, 2009).

Soga, Keiho, Taisanboko Mori, Sojin Takei, and Muin Ozaki. *Poets Behind Barbed Wire: Tanka Poems*. Trans. Jiro Nakano and Kay Nakano. Honolulu: Bamboo Ridge Press, 1984.

# Tanka Speaks of Nature

Handout 7-1

74

*Tanka speaks of nature as well as human emotions and allows the reader to perceive the unsaid and the intimated.*

—*Poets Behind Barbed Wire*

# Tanka Poem

Handout 7-2

75

*I bid farewell  
To the faces of my sleeping children  
As I am taken prisoner  
Into the cold night rain*

—Mun Ozaki, *Poets Behind Barbed Wire*

# Poetry Analysis

Handout 7-3

76

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

1. Read the poem several times.

2. What event had the poet just experienced that made him think of writing? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

What clues led you to that answer? \_\_\_\_\_

---

3. How does the poet seem to feel about the event? \_\_\_\_\_

---

What key words and phrases led you to that answer? \_\_\_\_\_

---

4. Write down the line that speaks most powerfully to you, then explain why you find it powerful.

(Line) \_\_\_\_\_

What I like about it: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Generate a Level One, Level Two, and Level Three question regarding the poem.

• Level One \_\_\_\_\_

• Level Two \_\_\_\_\_

• Level Three \_\_\_\_\_

6. Practice reading the poem aloud emphasizing different words and/or lines.

# Tanka Poetry

Handout 7-4a

77

*In this desolate field  
Where only weeds have grown  
For millions of years,  
We mournfully bury  
Three comrades  
Who died in vain.*

—Sojin Takei, *Poets Behind Barbed Wire*



# Tanka Poetry

Handout 7-4b

78

*Like a dog  
I am commanded  
At a bayonet point.  
My heart is inflamed  
With burning anguish.*

—Keiho Soga, *Poets Behind Barbed Wire*

# Tanka Poetry

Handout 7-4c

79

*“Disloyal”  
With papers so stamped  
I am relocated to Tule Lake.  
But for myself,  
A clear conscience.*

—Muin Ozaki, *Poets Behind Barbed Wire*

# Tanka Poetry

Handout 7-4d

80

*My wife and children  
Live in a far away land.  
How lonely are the nights.  
Behind these  
barbed wire fences.*

—Sojin Takei, *Poets Behind Barbed Wire*

## Tanka Poetry

# Presentation Guide

Handout 7-5

81

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

1. Read the poem aloud to the class.
2. Explain what event you think prompted the poet to write the poem.
3. Explain what emotions you think the poet was feeling or describe the mood he created.
4. Identify the line that speaks to you the most and explain why you find it powerful.
5. Share the most interesting question that the poem raised for you.

# How to Write a *Tanka* Poem

Handout 7-6

82

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

*Tanka* is a traditional form of Japanese poetry that dates back to the fifth century. Although *haiku* is more widely known than *tanka* in the Western world, it did not evolve until the fifteenth century. The *tanka* poem is very similar to *haiku*, but *tanka* poems have more syllables and use simile, metaphor, and personification.

In Japanese, *tanka* poems are written using 31 Japanese syllables in 5 phrases. The form is fixed in the 5-7-5-7-7 syllable sequence.

Line one: 5 syllables  
Line two: 7 syllables  
Line three: 5 syllables  
Line four: 7 syllables  
Line five: 7 syllables

Beautiful mountains  
Rivers with cold, cold water  
White cold snow on rocks  
Trees cover the place with frost  
White sparkly snow everywhere.

*Tanka* poems are written about nature, seasons, love, sadness, and other strong emotions.

# Resource Analysis

## Time

1 to 2 class periods (60 minutes per period)

Note: If this type of work has already been done with the class, you may choose to omit this lesson as the unit introduction recommends.

## Overview

This lesson is intended to give students a chance to think critically about the resources they have looked at and the advantages and disadvantages of each as a resource. It is intended to allow the students to summarize the ways in which each source has both advantages and disadvantages. Evaluating the “best” or most useful resource is an important aspect of the National History Day program.

## Essential Question

- How will I make history?

## Objectives

- Students will review all the resources studied to date and evaluate them for their advantages and disadvantages.
- Students will generate questions that the resources have raised but not answered.

## Guiding Questions

- What advantages and disadvantages do various sources have?
- What questions remain?
- How do historians decide what details to include and exclude when writing historical accounts?

## Assessment

This lesson includes concepts and requires analysis that not every student will be able to do (or perhaps not individually). It is therefore important to complete the chart in small groups; alternately, this can be done as a whole class. Students can then write paragraphs

or brief essays about the resources, with possible topics being “best,” “worst,” “most reliable,” “most useful,” “least reliable.” The class should set the criteria for scoring the paragraph.

## New Mexico Content Standards

- History Strand I-D PS 1: Analyze and evaluate information by developing and applying criteria for selecting appropriate information and use it to answer critical questions.
- Language Arts Strand I-A PS 2: Respond to informational materials that are read by making connections to related topics and drawing inferences.

## Materials

- *Handout 8-1: Analysis Chart* (handouts for students and a copy to share with the class via overhead projector)
- *Handouts 3-3a-p: Photographs for Analysis*
- *Handout 4-1: Time-Life Article: “Heroes Abroad, Interned at Home”*
- *Handout 5-2: Selected Timeline of the Japanese American World War II Experience*
- *Handout 6-2: Memoir of Violet de Cristoforo*
- *Handouts 7-3a-d: Tanka Poetry*

## Activities and Teaching Strategies

- Start by reminding students of the four questions that have been driving the unit:
  - What is history?
  - How do we know about the past?
  - What do historians do?
  - Why become a historian?
- Today’s lesson is going to deal most closely with Lesson 1’s question *What do historians do?* Somewhere in the class’s response, it says that historians make theories about history and decide which material should be given what degree of consideration. Ask students, *How do you think historians decide what stories to tell and what information to include when they report history?* If students aren’t forthcoming, relate it to their



own lives. For example, if they have had a fight with their brother or sister and it is time to tell their parents what happened, how do they decide what details to include and what to exclude? Is the job of historians anything like that?

- Following the discussion, let students know that the purpose of this lesson is to analyze the sources that they have looked at in order to determine what those sources bring to the story they are trying to tell.
- Pass out the *Handout 8-1: Analysis Chart* and put a copy on the overhead. Beginning with *Handouts 3-3a-p: Photographs for Analysis*, fill in the chart together as a class. After gauging how well the students are doing, either continue down the chart together or have students work in groups. They should discuss each source as a group and record their answers. If they work in groups, give groups three to four minutes to discuss one source and then have the groups share out while the teacher records on the overhead the best observations the groups have made. In this way, the teacher will discover if some groups are terribly off base while still providing an opportunity for every student to be involved in the discussion.
- When the chart is completed, the students may notice that there is a final row of boxes that remain unused. If the teacher chooses to extend the lesson to include a source that they find on their own (or one that the teacher finds for them from amongst the other resources provided with this material or online), they may use the last row for that source.
- At this point, the teacher has three choices:
  - Option 1: If the discussion of resources is sufficient, Lesson 8 is done.
  - Option 2: Ask each student to complete a formal piece of writing examining one of the sources; they should justify why they think it is the best, worst, etc.
  - Option 3: Ask students to conduct independent research about the “Questions Raised” column from *Handout 8-1*. The students should summarize their findings in a paragraph. Here are some questions that were raised in the author’s classroom:
    - Were there Japanese Americans living in New Mexico before the camps? If so, what happened to them following Pearl Harbor?
    - What did the people of Santa Fe think about the camp?
    - What was it like to live in the camp at Santa Fe?
    - Was there ever any resistance or fighting at the camp in Santa Fe?

### Extensions

- Have students rank the sources in terms of “reliability” or “usefulness” and justify their rankings. Students should be prepared to explain and defend their rankings. Then conduct a living bar graph depicting students and their rankings. To make a living bar graph, put up posters with the names of the various source on them and then ask students to line up in front of the source they had ranked “1.” The clusters can be easily seen, and it provides the opportunity to engage in conversations between students who had ranked sources dramatically differently.

# Analysis Chart

Handout 8-1

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

Source	Primary or Secondary? Why?	Author	Advantages	Disadvantages	Questions Raised
WRA Photographs					
<i>Time-Life</i> Article: "Heroes Abroad, Interned at Home"					
Selected Timeline of the Japanese American World War II Experience					
Memoir of Violet de Cristoforo					
<i>Tanka</i> Poetry					



# Making History: A Recipe

## Time

1 to 2 class periods (60 minutes per period)

Note: If this type of work has already been done with the class, you may choose to omit this lesson as the unit introduction recommends.

## Overview

This is the final lesson, and it returns students full circle back to the first lesson by creatively synthesizing their work. This lesson should be seen as more of a final project than a lesson, and the teacher must carefully explain expectations to the students.

## Essential Question

- How will I make history?

## Objectives

- Students will synthesize the work done in order to understand the process of writing a complete history.
- Students will evaluate what aspects of historical investigation are most important.
- Students will write a recipe for “Making History.”

## Guiding Question

- How do historians “make history?”

## Assessment

Students are formally assessed on the recipe they write.

## New Mexico Content Standards

- History Strand I-D PS 1: Analyze and evaluate information by developing and applying criteria for selecting appropriate information and use it to answer critical questions.
- Language Arts Strand I-A PS 2: Respond to informational materials that are read by making connections to related topics and drawing inferences.

## Materials

- *Handout 9-1: Peanut Butter Cookie Recipe*
- *Handout 9-2: Prewriting Worksheet*

## Activities and Teaching Strategies

- Start by asking students if they cook. If they do, is their preference to use a recipe? Ask students to explain what a recipe is.
- Explain that since the class has been learning what historians do, it is time to see if students can express their understanding of that process.
- Introduce *Handout 9-1: Peanut Butter Cookie Recipe*, explaining how each section of the recipe relates to the whole and how that will relate to the students’ recipe for “making history.”
- Provide students with *Handout 9-2: Prewriting Worksheet* and let them get to work. You may choose to have them work in pairs, in teams, or individually. Use whatever writing process systems you like for prewriting, rough drafts, editing, and final drafts.

## Extensions

- Have students present their recipes to the class.
- Have students type and publish their recipes.
- Have students illustrate their recipes.



# Peanut Butter Cookie Recipe

Handout 9-1

87

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>Title</b> (Tell us what we are making.)</p>	<p><b>Peanut Butter Cookies</b></p>
<p><b>Introduction</b> (Give us some general information about “Making History.”)</p>	<p>Basically, while the ingredients for all cookies are the same—flour, shortening, eggs, leavening, liquid, flavorings—the proportions vary, producing the soft or stiff doughs that make possible the many delightful kinds of cookies.</p>
<p><b>Tips</b> (Give one or two tips we need to keep in mind that will help us do a better job when “Making History.”)</p>	<p>The mixer will help you whip up a batch of cookies in no time. However, if you’re using a spoon, use a wooden one with a comfortable, long handle so you can mix, stir, and beat effectively.</p> <p>To prevent overbaking, remove cookies from cookie sheets to racks as soon as they come from the oven, unless the recipe directs otherwise.</p>
<p><b>Ingredients</b> (Tell us everything we would need to do a good historical investigation and in what proportion.)</p>	<p>2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour 1 cup creamy peanut butter ⅔ cup honey ½ cup sugar 2 eggs ½ teaspoon baking powder</p>
<p><b>Directions</b> (Tell us the sequence of conducting a historical investigation and why we need to go in that order.)</p>	<p>Up to two weeks before serving: Preheat oven to 350° F. Into a large bowl, measure all ingredients. With mixer at medium speed, beat ingredients until well mixed, occasionally scraping bowl.</p> <p>With hands, shape dough into 1½-inch balls. Place balls 3 inches apart on cookie sheet. Dip a fork into flour and press deeply across top of each cookie. Repeat in opposite direction. Bake 15 minutes or until lightly browned. With pancake turner, immediately remove cookies to wire racks to cool.</p>

# Prewriting Worksheet

Handout 9-2

88

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Title</b> (Tell us what we are making.)	
<b>Introduction</b> (Give us some ideas about how history is similar to or different from other research and why we might want to make history.)	
<b>Tips</b> (Brainstorm one or two tips we need to keep in mind that will help us do a better job when “Making History.” What do we need to be careful of?)	
<b>Ingredients</b> (Tell us everything we would need to do a good historical investigation and in what proportion.)	
<b>Directions</b> (Tell us how to sequence our historical investigation and why we need to go in that order.)	