



PROTEST

THEME
Embodiment

LENGTH
40 min

GRADE LEVEL
9-12

SUBJECT
Theater /
Performing Arts

By Jessa Brie Moreno

Students read and reflect on Ella Wheeler Wilcox's poem, Protest, with special attention to how its rhythm can be embodied and the interplay with the poem's rhythm and content.

Students are called to perform different spoken word poems, exploring rhythm, and to use creative writing and spoken word strategies to tell authentic, personal counter-narratives.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

CREATIVE INQUIRIES

How can we more deeply engage students in telling authentic, personal counter-narratives using creative writing and spoken word strategies?

How can we create moments of critical reflection and analysis of American culture and society, in which students can articulate individual narratives as part of a larger American Story?

How can students understand and articulate the significance of belonging and cultural “otherness” through personal letter-writing?

EQUIPMENT

Required for session...

- Projector, laptop, wifi
- Speakers

MATERIALS

Resources and readings...

- “Protest” poem by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, [read by Amanda Palmer](#)
- “Protest” poem: [Background, context, and poem text](#)

OUTLINE

Activity #1: Listen & Explore the Rhythm of Protest Poem
Critical Reflection

HAMILTON HOOK

Hamilton Mixtape: My Shot



DIVE DEEPER

In this Hamilton Mixtape performance, contemporary hip hop artists remix the original soundtrack through their own lens and artistry. Identify rhythms and forms used, as well as the disruptions and personalizations that make this work distinct from the original.

SESSION 1 OF 1

LISTEN & EXPLORE THE RHYTHM OF PROTEST POEM

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OVERVIEW
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INTRODUCTION

Students read and reflect on Ella Wheeler Wilcox's poem, Protest, with special attention to how its rhythm can be embodied and the interplay with the poem's rhythm and content. Students are also called to perform different spoken word poems, exploring rhythm.

SESSION 1 OF 1
*Listen & Explore the
Rhythm of Protest Poem*

ACTIVITY #1 OF 1

SET-UP

Listen to [Protest Poem](#) by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, read by Amanda Palmer.

INTRO

From [Brainpickings](#): "Protest" by Ella Wheeler Wilcox (November 5, 1850–October 30, 1919), from her 1914 book Poems of Problems (public domain public library), written at the peak of the Women's Suffrage movement and just as WWI was about to erupt. Background, context, and poem text.

PROMPT

Heartbeat:

- 1) Invite students to hear the rhythm of the text by placing their hand on their chest and tapping out the words.

The sound pattern is: Unstressed Syllable followed by a Stressed/Emphasised Syllable.

TASK

Try listening to the poem through the heartbeat as prompted above, with the whole class.

Note the lines which do not adhere to the rhythm and discuss:

- Why might the author have chosen to switch it up in these particular places?
- How might these lines be read?

REMIX!

How would you rephrase this poem for today, using your own words and perspective... while keeping the 10-syllable-per-line rhythm?

CRITICAL REFLECTION

Reflection Prompts

- What moved you?
- How did rhythm, form, and embodying language help you understand the meaning of the poem and the author's intent?
- How does this poem or the "remixed" work of your classmates relate to issues facing the U.S. today?