

Korean Sijo and Slam Poetry

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Objective: Students will first acquire an understanding and appreciation of the History and Style of the Korean poetic form Sijo. Students will ultimately create their own Sijo and perform it applying the methods and techniques used in the performance of Slam Poetry.

Essential Questions:

- What are the essential elements of a traditional Sijo?
- How does Sijo compare and contrast with other well documented poetic styles/forms?(Slam Poetry)
- How can poetry help bridge language and cultural barriers?
- Can the theme or message of a Sijo be amplified by using methods and techniques used in modern American Slam Poetry?

Standards:

- **SL.7.6** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 7 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)
- **W.7.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade- specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- **RI.7.7** Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium’s portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).
- **RL.7.5** Analyze how a drama’s or poem’s form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

Lesson 1: Students will complete a webquest to identify the history of Korean Sijo, the structural components, and some famous/favorite examples.

*Directions: Have students work in partners or on their own to complete the following webquest questions:

Webquest: What is Korean Sijo Poetry?

1. How old is Korean Sijo? What year does it date back to?
2. What does the word Sijo mean?
3. What are the common themes of Sijo Poems?
4. How was Sijo typically experienced?
5. What social class/es was Sijo intended for?
6. How many lines does a traditional Korean Sijo have?
7. How many syllables and syllable groupings are in each line as well as in the entire poem?
8. When written in English, how do the number of lines and syllable groupings change?
9. Find a traditionally famous Sijo and paste it here:
10. Find a modern Sijo that you enjoy and paste it here:

Lesson 2: Students will review the form and structure of Korean Sijo in order to create their own Sijo.

*Directions: Have students watch Professor Mark Peterson's YouTube Lecture Series #1 on Writing Sijo:

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hLZoK-ra7M>)

After watching, have students use Jeong Mong-ju's poem as a Template to write their own Sijo.

이몸이 죽고 죽어 일백 번 고쳐 죽어
백골이 진토되어 넋이라도 있고 없고
님 향한 일편 단심이야 가실 줄이 있으랴.

Though I die, and die again;
though I die one hundred deaths,
After my bones have turned to dust,
whether my soul exists or not,
My red heart, forever loyal to my Lord,
will never fade away.

Jeong Mong-ju (1392)



Students may also use the following link as a valuable resource when creating their own Sijo:

<https://www.sejongculturalsociety.org/resources/resources.php>

Lesson 3: Students will compare and contrast the traditional delivery methods and techniques of Sijo Poetry and American Slam Poetry. Students will implement these strategies to create a unique and engaging experience for the audience when they perform their Sijo in front of the class.

*Directions:

Step 1: Have students watch Mark Peterson's 4th lecture series on writing Sijo:

<https://ruvid.net/video/professor-mark-peterson-sijo-lecture-series-no-4-creating-sijo-from-other-texts-EDLxHkcOGol.html>

Step 2: Have students watch Slam Poetry Performances and analyze the way in which each performer adds meaning and emphasis to their poem with body language, pitch, intonation, and pronunciation. After watching and taking notes, have each student practice performing their poems with a partner. Encourage them to use the techniques that were used by the Slam Poetry Artists. They may also choose to sing their Sijo if they wish.

- Taylor Mali- "What Teachers Make"
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RGKm201n-U4>>
- Sarah Kay- "Hands"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqCMHcdYR_E>
- Group Slam at the Southwest Shootout 2010
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XozUGgcKfBc>>

Assessment: Each student will write and perform a Sijo. The students will be assessed based on how well they are able to adhere to the traditional Sijo poetic form, how creative they are with their use of language, and how powerful/effective their performance is.