**UWM Lesson Plan Template**  
*(adapted from PSOA Art Education Area)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Marjorie “Jorie” Struck</th>
<th>Email:</th>
<th><a href="mailto:Marjorie.struck@gmail.com">Marjorie.struck@gmail.com</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Title:</td>
<td>Illustrated Biography Poems</td>
<td># of Sessions</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level/Grade/Age:</td>
<td>7th Grade English Language Arts – ELL (Beijing, China – Fieldwork Experience)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**BIG IDEA**  
*(Describe how the big idea is important to this age group in relation to student assets and the content area):*

To give some background into my classroom this past semester, I have been placed in a middle school, in Beijing, China, working with 7th Grade English Language Learners. This experience served as my “Middle School Observation” requirement, on my path to certification. As an ELA teacher and proponent of arts education, I knew I wanted to utilize the arts (both visual and musical) to help students express themselves, as both are a form of universal communication/language. During our poetry unit, I combined several aspects from previous lessons to scaffold and present a lesson on “Biography Poems.” My students, prior to my arrival at the school, had never written any creative work in English before. The extent of their written English consisted of translating Chinese newspaper articles to English and English newspaper articles to Chinese. I wanted a way for students to express themselves and show their individuality, regardless of their English level. Therefore, I modified this lesson to include “comic” style illustrations, where students could draw the words or phrases they had written in their poem, to better illustrate the meaning. This ended up being a great cultural connection, as the majority of my students are lovers of Chinese and Japanese anime.

The objective of this lesson was to utilize words and phrases, learned from previous lessons in the semester, to construct a personal biography poem. I also wanted students to practice using descriptive language to describe themselves, their lives, and their interests/dislikes. Finally, I wanted this lesson to serve as a way for students to express themselves and feel heard/seen. Once the poems were completed/illustrated, I attempted to utilize a “Gallery Walk” so that students’ artwork/writings could be shared with their peers, thus making it a celebration of each student’s individual self.

I want to note that my resources were extremely limited, during my time teaching in China. I had to rely on materials that students already had (i.e. markers/pens) in order to incorporate artistic expression into this lesson. Given our limited resources, I’m very pleased with the work that the students were able to create. However, I know that the artistic element to this lesson could be amplified in future adaptations of the activity.

**OBJECTIVES AND NATIONAL STANDARDS:** [http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/](http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Art</th>
<th>Creating *I did not align this lesson to US standards, as I was working within the context of a Chinese</th>
<th>Other Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Producing
Responding
Connecting

However, when utilizing this lesson (especially with English Language Learners) in the US, the following standards can be applied:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.5
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.3.D

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC LANGUAGE TO BE INTRODUCED THROUGHOUT LESSON:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic language to be used:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Biography</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://edglossary.org/academic-language/">http://edglossary.org/academic-language/</a></td>
<td><strong>Poem</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptive Language</strong></td>
<td><strong>Illustration / Comic Artwork</strong> (described as “anime” for cultural tie-in)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where academic language will be practiced (i.e. through writing, speaking, art making):</strong></td>
<td><strong>This language will be incorporated in the student’s writing and illustration of their writing.</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE FUNCTION USED THROUGHOUT LESSON:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of language function:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Expressing Likes &amp; Dislikes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emphasis of language function</strong> <em>(describe the main purpose of using this language function for your lesson):</em></td>
<td>The structure of this particular biography poem was focused on each individual student’s likes/dislikes/dreams/fears/etc. I wanted students to feel a personal connection to this activity, and I wanted them to be able to create a unique piece of writing/artwork that showcased their own lives/ideas. (This is not common practice in traditional Chinese schools).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where language function will be practiced (i.e., through writing, speaking, art making):</strong></td>
<td>Students will express likes &amp; dislikes both in the writing of the actual poem and in the illustration of the poem. (Writing &amp; Art Making).</td>
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### UNIT or LESSON OVERVIEW:

- **The essential questions for this lesson are as follows:**
  - Why/how do we use language?
  - What is poetry?
  - Why do people write poetry?
  - How can we express ourselves through poetry?
  - How can we express ourselves through art?
  - How can art help us better understand poetry/language?

**Learning Task (Day 1):**

After teaching descriptive adjectives and a unit on family/personal interests, students will recall previous knowledge to construct a personal biography poem, using a structured graphic organizer and teacher guidance/intervention. While students are somewhat familiar with traditional Chinese poetry, this will be their first encounter with English poetry. Therefore, a small portion of the lesson will be used to discuss the purpose of poetry, in English, and exposing students to poetry-specific English vocab.
1. 10 Minutes: The lesson will be **front-loaded** with a song that the students began learning last week. Using song lyrics to introduce the concept of poetry will help them bridge the two ideas, hopefully resulting in more successful comprehension of the subject matter. The students learned “Three Little Birds,” by Bob Marley, and the previous week they discussed how the poem made them feel. This week, we will talk about the feelings invoked by certain songs, which will lead into a discussion on how the things we read and write can have the same effect. Ideally, I would be utilizing authentic texts in the classroom, daily. However, these students are required to learn from a Foreign Language - English instruction workbook, which limits the possibilities for some lessons. Students will be given a lyrics sheet for the song (with certain vocab words missing from the lyrics). First, **(warm up)** they will listen to the teacher sing the song and fill in the blank/missing words. Then, they will sing along, with the teacher, to the song, ensuring they have the correct word filled in. After singing, the teacher will repeat the questions for discussion from the previous week, having students recall how the song made them feel and what they liked about the song. The discussion should be steered to encompass a wider discussion of language. The questions: “why/how do we use language?” and “How does music/art help us understand one another” will be posed. Ultimately, we will discuss the use of language to tell stories, communicate, and express ourselves. This transitions into the introduction of the Lesson’s core content: Poetry.

2. (5 minutes) **Introduction of Poetry - 诗歌.** Students will use their English Notebooks to write the given definition of poetry, along with the Chinese translation of the word. The teacher will ask students to connect what they know about Chinese poetry, to their English understanding of the word.

3. (30 minutes) **Illustrated Biography Poem Workshop**
   a. (5 minutes) Teacher will introduce the definition and purpose of a biography poem. This includes the reading of the teacher exemplar. Students will be asked to pull out unique aspects of the poem (i.e. How many lines in the poem? The relevance of first line and last line, etc.).
   b. (15 minutes) As a class, the teacher and students will go through each line. For the line that requires adjectives/nouns/feelings/phrases, the teacher will lead a “brainstorm” session, transcribing student responses on the board. This works as a recall game, to provide students the opportunity to utilize words, phrases, and grammar structures learned in previous lessons from the semester. Each line should take from 3-4 minutes, allowing students time to write and re-write the lines in their own graphic organizer, until they are happy with their choices. The teacher can monitor the classroom, to ensure participation and comprehension, whilst helping students who may be struggling.
   c. (2 minutes) review the exemplar and compare it to student poems. Allow students to review the teacher’s original poem, and encourage them to review their own poem, to ensure they like the final result. At this time, students will be assigned the homework, which is to transfer their poem, in final form, to a separate paper. The final product will be illustrated with images or pictures that reinforce the student’s word choices in the poem. The poems will be brought back to school for a class-wide gallery walk, the following week.
   d. (8 minutes) Introduce the “illustration” aspect of the poetry assignment. Students will be asked to illustrate their poem, drawing “comics/anime” to depict the different things/people/places that they referenced.

**Day 2 – Students will be required to complete their illustrations and final poems at home, and bring them back to school the following week.** Part of the following class period will be devoted to hosting a “Gallery Walk” that showcases the students’ work and allows them to interact with the writings and illustrations of their peers.
**UNIT or LESSON DETAIL (provide for each lesson session):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation/introduction:</th>
<th>After introducing the writing segment of the biography poem, the teacher will show an illustrated exemplar and introduce the newest vocab word “illustration.” For this particular classroom, I introduced the word in Chinese and English, to help students understand. After showcasing several styles of illustration, via PowerPoint, the teacher can reiterate the question, “how does art/illustration help us understand what we read?” After a short discussion, the students will be asked to illustrate the final versions of their biography poems.</th>
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</table>

| Art Making: | **Supplies:**
The school I work at does not have supplies. I bought my own colored/white paper for students to use, to construct their final illustrated poems, and they will be able to use their own markers, pencils, or pens to illustrate the poem. |
| --- | --- |

|  | **Teacher instruction:**
Students will be asked to illustrate their poem, drawing “comics/anime” to depict the different things/people/places that they referenced. |
|  | **Objective:**
The objective of the illustration portion of this lesson is to have students think about the ways they can use illustrations to better comprehend English texts and to become more effective English communicators in their writing/speaking. (This topic was expanded upon with final group presentations, at the end of the semester, that utilized visual components). |
|  | **Students at work:**
The majority of the student artmaking will be done in their homes, as class time is extremely limited, due to the strict scheduling of Chinese classrooms. I was asked by my administration to have students work on their art, at home, and I had to comply. Ideally, I would devote a day to in-class creation of both the poems and the illustrated aspects. |
|  | **Closure:**
On Day 2 of this activity, students will return with completed, illustrated poems, and participate in a “Gallery Walk.” |

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<table>
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<tr>
<th>ADAPTATIONS:</th>
<th>This lesson can be adapted to include more student, in-class work time. Because the students I worked with were all ELL &amp; had a much lower comprehension level (of English) compared with native speaking 7th grade classes, this version of the lesson relied heavily on teacher-guided instruction. Depending on the age/level of student you work with, you can adjust this, accordingly. Additionally, it would be interesting to see this lesson transformed into a digital art lesson, either with digital illustration or digital video composition, to illustrate each student’s poem. Unfortunately, I did not have the resources to develop this.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELEVANT THEORIES:</td>
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<tr>
<td>The central focus and goal of this lesson plan is to engage English Language Learners in the process of writing poetry, for the purpose of self-expression. Ideally, this lesson will serve as a way to slowly introduce more authentic texts into the English classroom. Students will use a song that they are familiar with, and guided discussion from the teacher, to begin thinking about the ways that we use language, specifically as it pertains to self-expression and storytelling. This structured process approach for teaching “writing” was inspired by the “Task and Activity Analysis” in “The Dynamics of Writing Instruction,” by Smagorinsky, et. al. (2010). Because student knowledge (in English) was limited, as were resources (the students’ classrooms do not have computers or English dictionaries), it makes sense to do a heavily guided walk-through of the poem’s structure and composition.</td>
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<td>The purpose of the gallery walk is to celebrate the success of the learners, in crafting their first English poem. “For too long, students have felt that their only audience is the teacher. Having their writing accessible to a wider audience encourages students to take pride in their work and experience firsthand the transaction that occurs between the author, the text, and the reader” (Mason, 1997). Allowing students to show their work to their classmates provides not only an incentive but a sense of pride, in their own work. Many of these students believe they cannot speak English. This is, as Weaver calls it, the final part of the writing process, and the most exciting, especially for ELL” (2008).</td>
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<td>ASSESSMENTS:</td>
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<td>Initial (informal):</td>
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<td>The student’s brainstorm activity, as they recall words/phrases from previous lessons, will serve as the first/initial “informal assessment” for this lesson. The teacher will be able to determine if students are comprehending and retaining information from earlier in the unit, and if they can utilize these words/phrases effectively.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progressive/Formative (informal):</td>
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<td>The students’ graphic organizers will be collected by the teacher, in addition to the final product, so the teacher can determine if students participated in any form of self-revision. This is a great way to visualize each student’s individual writing process, as they make notes, scratch out or erase words, and work towards a final product. Especially since every student is an ELL, and I have noticed that they develop their own system for comprehension, utilizing their mother tongue to better understand the English language.</td>
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</table>
Final/Summative (formal/informal):
The formal assessment for this lesson will be the final product of the biography poem and accompanying illustration. No rubric will be assigned for the poem, rather the teacher will be able to determine student success based on completion and illustration.

The final “gallery walk” will give students the opportunity to see their peer’s work. You could also add a self-assessment to this project, although I prefer to avoid over-assessing creative works of poetry by students, as I do not want to deter them from using poetry as a means of self-expression.

EVIDENCE
- If you have implemented this lesson, please include reflections on how it went and/or samples of student work (artifacts).

TEACHER REFLECTIONS ON IMPLEMENTATION
Include student reactions, what worked/what didn’t work, how you would revise the lesson, etc.

This lesson worked surprisingly well, and was a great way to engage every student, at every level in my classroom. Even if students struggled to find the language they wanted to use in their poem, they were able to communicate their thoughts through their artwork.

Again, I want to note that in Chinese schools, there is a lack of special education programming or IEP system. To the best of my knowledge, there are no IEPs for any of my students. Therefore, this lesson is differentiated with the knowledge that there are students in the class with special learning needs. Additionally, since every student in the class is an English Language Learner, there is a strong emphasis on guided instruction, a utilization of graphic organizers, and plenty of language/vocab recall, to support their specific needs. This lesson is tailored for this particular circumstance and should be adjusted accordingly, based on the needs of your own classroom.

STUDENT WORK SAMPLES (ARTIFACTS)
May also be sent as a separate file

Please see attached photos of student work.
BIOGRAPHY POEM

First name only: Ya qing

Four adjectives that describe me: clever, easygoing, pretty ( cyl), outgoing


Lover of: family, study, home.

Feels: tired, lucky, happy

English name: Hanna

My name’s Ya qing.
I’m clever easygoing.
Lover of: family, study, home.
Feels: tired, lucky, happy.
Needs: love, food and study.

Gives: food, smile, love.

Fears: homework, dark, ghosts.
Like to see: the sun, home, parents.

Resident of: China, Beijing.

Family name only: Yang
Yue yang

kind, lovely, shy, friendly.

Daughter of Qiaofen and Wang mei

love of my family pizza and my birds.

White feels happy, excited, lucky.

Who needs love, friend milk.

Who gives pet thanks a smile.

Who fears ghosts, monsters the dark.

Who would like to see Lily, Harry Potter gift.

Resident of Beijing, China

Qiao, family name Qiao.
BIOGRAPHY POEM

Yu xi

kind, quiet, engaging, careful

zhao Wei guan and Yang Bao nian

My family, song, Emma watson

lucky, thankful, happy

food, My family, friend

thanks, a smile, gifts

homework, dark, loneliness

home, film, family

Beijing, China

Yang