

LESSON 4

“DOING IT YOUR WAY”

When free of pressure, it is natural for young people to interact with their environments in novel and productive ways. In this lesson they are gently led to places where it is not too scary or uncomfortable to express their individuality. They shouldn't feel self-conscious as they express their ideas in these activities.

Thinking skills emphasized

- being original
- combining and synthesizing
- producing alternatives
- analyzing
- making judgments

Originality is the hallmark of creativity. Something that's not original is, by its nature, not very creative. Teaching someone to be creative, however, is another matter entirely. It's almost a contradiction in terms. In this lesson we want to give your students the opportunity to be creative. There is no guarantee that all of them will produce something original, but we hope that many of your students will be stimulated to do so by responding to the ideas in the activities.

Activity Writing Cinquains (35-45 minutes)

Materials pencils, crayons, felt pens, colored chalk

Activity Sheet “Thoughts”

Introducing the Activity

The original cinquain was written in a syllable pattern of 2-4-6-8-2, but it is easier for most teachers to use the simpler 1-2-3-4-1 word pattern for the five lines. Even though the purist pronounces cinquain as a French word, it is quite all right to say “Sin-kwayne.” You can introduce the activity by letting your students know that they'll be writing some very short verses. (Avoid the term “poem.”) They don't take long, and they are fun to do.

Administering the Activity and Following Through

When your students have written their cinquains, you might engage them in one or more of the following activities: