

TE 848  
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Off the Charts Web Karaoke

### Supportive Technology Project, Writer's Memo:

The ability to read and write on different forms of media is increasingly important for 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners as technology continues to advance. There are many resources that encourage teachers to take a multi-media approach which will help increase students literacy skills on different forms of media. One online resource that is available for free is the Off the Charts Web Karaoke website. I happened upon this amazing resource through my class on Desire 2 Learn, and I'm so glad I did!

It was my first time using this resource, as well as my students. I found it incredibly motivating for my students because of their love for technology, and the creative process it requires. Students were able to write a sixteen line poem by typing into the previously made lines and stanzas. This mode of writing was "malleable, enabling writers to continuously revise content" (Graham, MacArthur, & Fitzgerald, 2013, p. 311). We also used this resource as a whole class which allowed for meaningful collaboration. Then they took their poem and were able to put it to music, and we all sang it together. They were so proud of their poem after being a bit skeptical at first, and they encouraged me to use it with future classes. Every teacher loves to hear this positive feedback as "young people...might determine their life's work...based on how much writing will be involved." (Bomer, 2010, p.19).

In the future, even though this time I lead my class as a whole group, I could see myself making this a literacy center. The whole group practice is the first important part of the scaffolding process. However, it would not take much more modeling for my third

graders to be successful in using the website on their own on the classroom lpads.

Although you are stuck to one rhythm which is important to discuss, I could have my students write poems about different subjects that correspond with a different book or subject that we're learning about. I could also teach more about poems that rhyme or don't rhyme. In my example, I didn't rhyme, but I thought it was interesting that my kids did end up having their Baseball poem rhyme.

Furthermore, for my struggling or reluctant writers, I could offer them sentence starters or give them three choices of topics to write about. Then they will at least have a sense of direction for where to take their poem. I could also make this a partner project for those who will have a harder time either writing or handling the technology. Ultimately, I believe this resource will be more intrinsically motivating than not because it goes against strict writing processes, and I would not attach a rubric for fear of the "grade defining [their] writing identities" (Bomer, 2010, p. 26). This project allows for development of voice which is of utmost importance for developing writers.

Although I think this resource is already very engaging, I would like to offer the advice to let the poet choose from a few different rhythms instead of being stuck with the one. I would also like to be able to save these poems in an organized way on the website itself. This may require making an account for the classroom. One last suggestion I have is that the creator should make an option to choose how many lines and stanzas the poet wants to use. This way their creativity can flow and isn't confined to just the sixteen lines.

Finally, this resource could be easily used at home or at school. It has a simple web address, but the creative thinking that goes into this task goes far beyond a normal

poem. The poet has the freedom to choose the topic unless the teacher creates a specific assignment. The poet also has to think wisely about their word choice, rhyming words (if you want it to rhyme), the rhythm of the poem and eventually the song, and the structure of a poem. Parents, teachers, and administrators can have fun being creative along the side of the poet by brainstorming creative, colorful language, and then singing the poem together!

### References

Bomer, K. (2010). *Hidden gems: Naming and teaching from the brilliance in every student's writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graham, S., MacArthur, C. & Fitzgerald, J. (2013, second edition). *Best practices in writing instruction*. New York: The Guilford Press.

### My 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Class' Poem- Baseball

Baseball is fun

You can get a homerun

Run the bases

And tie your laces

You're up to bat

Wear your hat

As we run

We have fun

We get dirty

And accidentally hit a birdy

Get up get clean

We're gonna beat this team!

You're in the outfield

When the ball comes, yield

Catch it and throw it in the infield

And come down to Wrigley Field!