

ESL - Bio Poem Activity

Suitable for all ESL ages & levels - within an ESL class or typical classroom
Good for socialization, vocabulary (my students often look at the photos of the other ESL students - I keep the poems up all year)

At the beginning of the school year I use these Bio Poems to help my ESL students get to know one another and to assess their language ability. I take digital photos of all the students, create a file for the photos and print (4 x 6) pictures. Once the students have written their poems (good copy), the poems are mounted on construction paper and the photo is added.

Bio Poem Formula

- Line 1 - your first name
- Line 2 - four positive words that describe you
- Line 3 - Who lives with ...
- Line 4 - Lover of ... (people, things or ideas)
- Line 5 - Who wants... (minimum two items)
- Line 6 - Who fears... (minimum two items)
- Line 7 - Who hopes... (minimum two items about the world, your future)
- Line 8 - Resident of... (your city and province)
- Line 9 - Your last name only

To help the students get started, create a brainstorming sheet with boxes for each line. The students will then be able to create a good copy from the sheet. For the students who are unable to read or write, we complete the brainstorming sheet together using picture dictionaries. I use the computer to create the good copy and use different fonts for each student.

Using Photo Story 3(a free download for PC's from the Internet) - I load the photos into the program on my laptop. I then have each student type their name under their photo and read their Bio Poem into the program. For non-reading students, they repeat what I say. Once all the students have read their Bio Poems into the computer, I then burn a DVD and play it on the classroom TV. It is great to play it during parent night or during early dismissals. The students love hearing their classmates speak but always think they sound strange themselves. The DVD is a good record of the students' oral language ability at the beginning of the year.

Enjoy!

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