



THE BWL POETRY INITIATIVE

BWL's Poetry Initiative is meant to promote and enhance BWL's STEAM Program and create learning opportunities throughout the school that normalize poetry and poetic theory through interdisciplinary practices. BWL's Poetry Initiative accomplishes this in three ways; through a Global Poetry Consortium, a Global Poetry Festival, and educational technology designed, coded and experimented with by BWL students. What ties these three projects together is the Global Poetry Consortium, a group of prestigious independent schools from around the world committed to the interdisciplinary use of poetry and the literary arts. The consortium comes together each year for BWL's Global Poetry Festival to workshop with famous writers from around the world and to present student projects. At BWL we see poetry as a way for students to strengthen their critical thinking by studying the meaning of form in all of its disciplines.

Lower School students study poetic form, publish work as a class, and discuss what makes poetry exciting. Each student has the opportunity to show a poem to the community via BWL's Poetry Calendar and works to refine his or her craft through ample time spent writing in class.

In the K-2nd grades, students work on a class song using skills learned while writing poetry with Assistant Headmaster Ryan Clinesmith. These songs are presented at the Global Poetry Festival and at assemblies and concerts throughout the year. The goal in these grades is to teach students that poetry can be written through dictation. The craft of Poetry is an oral tradition as well as a written one.

In the 3rd-5th grades students study one poetic form or concept each week for a month. Their work culminates in a class publication and publishing party. Completed work emphasizes interdisciplinary connection, a practice of writing and editing, with a focus on collaboration.

In the Middle School, students have the opportunity to write poems and set them to music in the Electronic Music course. Students also create projects in science classes that use poetry as a way to study order of operations and chemistry. For example, a middle school science class, as part of their curriculum, might create invisible ink then write poems in the ink as a presentation for the Global Poetry Festival.

In the Upper School, students have the opportunity to take an Honors English course focused on the study of poetic theory. The course endeavors to teach what it takes to build a practice of writing. Honors English culminates in interdisciplinary and multimodal student projects that are displayed at the Global Poetry Festival. In addition, students have the opportunity to edit a journal, take online writing courses with prestigious poets, and engage with students from around the world.