# Speak your truth

## Background

This unit of work uses the modern performance form of slam poetry to allow students to express themselves. It draws equally from the NSW Drama and English syllabus documents and could be taught in either classroom or in a combination of the two. This unit would ideally be taught towards the end of the school year or semester, once a sense of trust and openness has been developed in the class. Students will be asked to share candidly with their class and this will be difficult without strong connections first.

This unit follows a consistent pattern. Students are introduced to a performance and then a literacy feature of slam poetry and then asked to put this knowledge into practice. This pattern continues until students create their own slam poem to share with the class.

All supporting resources, including the Slam poetry resource booklet, can be downloaded and printed from our website.(add page link from our website)

## Unit outline

Module 1 – What is slam poetry?

Module 2 – Voice

Module 3 – Active voice

Module 4 – Somebody else’s words

Module 5 – Using your whole body

Module 6 – Juxtaposition

Module 7 – our words

Module 8 – how to speak your truth!

Module 9 – what I know to be true

Module 10 – hear me!

Please note that the recommended poetry list is a suggestion only and implies no endorsement, by the New South Wales Department of Education, of any author, publisher or book title.

#### Cross curriculum content and key competencies

| Cross Curriculum Content | Key Competencies |
| --- | --- |
| Information & Communication TechnologiesAboriginal and IndigenousDifference & DiversityGenderEnvironment | LiteracyMulticultural |

#### Outcomes covered

##### Objective – Making (Drama)

| Outcomes | Indicators/Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.1.1 – A student identifies and explores the elements of drama to develop belief and clarity in character, role, situation and action. | To – develop fundamental vocal and physicalisation techniques appropriate to conveying role/character To – recognise, create and develop elements of drama to produce dramatic action and meaningTo – explore basic movement techniques in relation to roles/charactersTo – develop a range of created and imagined situations which explore the familiar and unfamiliar About – using elements of drama to enhance a range of created and imagined situations About – the processes of developing and sustaining a role/character through voice, stance, gesture and statusAbout – ways in which movements assist character developmentAbout – the role of the individual in the collaborative process of drama |
| 4.1.3 – A student devises and enacts drama using scripted and unscripted material. | To – experiment with voice and movement activities that develop their understanding of the script or text in actionTo – explore and/or devise and enact scripts and texts in different dramatic forms or performance styles, written by themselves or others To – analyse and interpret scripts and textsTo – explore techniques used for refinement during the rehearsal processTo – contribute ideas, collaborate and support the collective process to create effective dramaTo – write, draft and edit scripts or textsTo – use drama elements when creating or enacting scripts or textsAbout – the transformation of the words of a text into a dynamic and active experience About – the use of appropriate language and literacy in script and text makingAbout - the process of preparing and recording the rehearsal process |
| 4.1.4 - A student explores a range of ways to structure dramatic work in collaboration with others. | To - refine work in collaboration with others About - the conventions applicable to various dramatic forms and performance styles About - the flexibility of approaches available to create works by drawing on established dramatic forms and their conventions. |

##### Performing (Drama)

| Outcomes | Indicators/Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.2.1 – A student uses performance skills to communicate dramatic meaning. | To - use vocal skills to communicate dramatic meaningTo - use movement skills to enhance performanceTo - create and maintain clarity of focus in dramatic actionTo - use body language and physicalisation to help an audience to read performanceAbout - the function of the actor/audience relationshipAbout - the importance of breath, voice and expression in performanceAbout - the contribution of timing to the creation of impact and dramatic tension in dramatic worksAbout - maintaining clarity of focus as action advances using languageAbout - aspects of body language and physicalisation such as posture, gesture and facial expression |
| 4.2.2 - A student experiments with performance spaces and production elements appropriate to purpose and audience. | About - the relationship between performers and audience according to the type of production and the chosen theatre space |
| 4.2.3 - A student explores and uses aspects of dramatic forms, performance styles, theatrical conventions and technologies to create dramatic meaning. | To – actively demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding of chosen dramatic forms or performance stylesAbout - the specific conventions associated with various dramatic formsAbout - devising and performing work in a particular performance style |

##### Appreciating (Drama)

| Outcomes | Indicators/Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.3.1 - A student identifies and describes elements of drama, dramatic forms, performance styles, techniques and conventions in drama. | To - describe and respond to the conventions, dramatic techniques and technologies used in different performances. To – respond appropriately to their work and the dramatic work of others About – conventions, techniques and technologies applicable to various forms and styles About – recording their ideas in a drama workbook or in other forms such as oral/aural, visual representation, discursive, written or word-processed formsAbout – the identification and importance of the elements of drama that together create dramatic meaning and audience engagement |
| 4.3.2 – A student recognises the function of drama and theatre in reflecting social and cultural aspects of human experience. | To – inquire into the nature of various contemporary and historical dramatic forms and performance styles To – investigate, discuss and debate the representation of gender-based, racial and cultural stereotypes in various dramatic forms or performance styles About – the ways in which writers and practitioners present social and cultural issues through drama texts and performances |
| 4.3.3 – A student describes the contribution of individuals and groups in drama using relevant drama terminology. | About – the value of a shared terminologyAbout – the ways drama and theatre can provide enriching experiences for young people. |

[Drama 7-10 Syllabus](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/drama-7-10-syllabus) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2003.

##### A (English)

| Outcomes | Indicators/Content |
| --- | --- |
| EN4-1A – responds to and composes texts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure | * explore and explain the ways authors combine different modes and media in creating texts, and the impact of these choices on the viewer/listener
* explore and appreciate the aesthetic qualities in their own and other texts and the power of language to communicate information, ideas, feelings and viewpoints
* identify and discuss main ideas, concepts and points of view in spoken texts to evaluate qualities, for example the strength of an argument or the lyrical power of a poetic rendition
* recognise that vocabulary choices contribute to the specificity, abstraction and style of texts
* compare the ways that language and images are used to create character, and to influence emotions and opinions in different types of texts
* use increasingly sophisticated verbal, aural, visual and/or written techniques, eg imagery, figures of speech, selective choice of vocabulary, rhythm, sound effects, colour and design, to compose imaginative texts for pleasure
* respond to and compose imaginative, informative and persuasive texts for different audiences, purposes and contexts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure
 |
| EN4-2A – effectively uses a widening range of processes, skills, strategies and knowledge for responding to and composing texts in different media and technologies | * edit for meaning by removing repetition, refining ideas, reordering sentences and adding or substituting words for impact
 |

##### B (English)

| Outcomes | Indicators/Content |
| --- | --- |
| EN4-3B – uses and describes language forms, features and structures of texts appropriate to a range of purposes, audiences and contexts | engage with the language and structures of texts in meaningful, contextualised and authentic ways identify, discuss and reflect on the ideas and information in a range of textsuses interaction skills for identified purposes, using voice and language conventions to suit different situations, including modulating voiceunderstand how modality is achieved through discriminating choices in modal verbs, adverbs, adjectives and nounsunderstand how rhetorical devices are used to persuade and how different layers of meaning are developed through the use of metaphor, irony and parody |
| EN4-4B – makes effective language choices to creatively shape meaning with accuracy, clarity and coherence | experiment with particular language features drawn from different types of texts, including combinations of language and visual choices to create new textsplan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content, including multimodal elements, to reflect a diversity of viewpoints |

##### C (English)

| Outcomes | Indicators/Content |
| --- | --- |
| EN4-6C – identifies and explains connections between and among texts | explain the similarities and differences in meaning and language between texts created for different purposes or audiences compare the text structures and language features of multimodal texts, explaining how they combine to influence audiences |

##### D (English)

| Outcomes | Indicators/Content |
| --- | --- |
| EN4-7D – demonstrates understanding of how texts can express aspects of their broadening world and their relationships within it | analyse how combinations of words, sound and images can create particular perspectives of the same event or issue such as environmental sustainability |
| EN4-8D – identifies, considers and appreciates cultural expression in texts | explore the interconnectedness of Country and Place, People, Identity and Culture in texts including those by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authorsconsider the ways culture and personal experience position readers and viewers and influence responses to and composition of texts  |

[English K-10 Syllabus](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/english-year-10) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2012.

## Module 1

### What is slam poetry?

This module is an introduction to the world of Slam Poetry. Students will be engaged in this modern performance poetry genre, which draws upon the language of various protest movements and the world of rap music. Students will use comprehension strategies to analyse written and performed poetry and have an understanding of the basic conventions of slam poetry. Two poems will be used in this module, which highlight the purpose and form of slam poetry.

| Outcome | Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.1.4 | the conventions applicable to various dramatic forms and performance styles |
|  | the flexibility of approaches available to create works by drawing on established dramatic forms and their conventions |
| 4.2.1 | the function of the actor/audience relationship |
| 4.2.2 | the relationship between performers and audience according to the type of production and the chosen theatre space |
| 4.2.3 | the specific conventions associated with various dramatic forms |
| 4.3.1 | describe and respond to the conventions, dramatic techniques and technologies used in different performances. |
|  | conventions, techniques and technologies applicable to various forms and styles |
| 4.3.2 | inquire into the nature of various contemporary and historical dramatic forms and performance styles |
| EN4-1A | explore and explain the ways authors combine different modes and media in creating texts, and the impact of these choices on the viewer/listener |
| EN4-3B | engage with the language and structures of texts in meaningful, contextualised and authentic ways |
|  | identify, discuss and reflect on the ideas and information in a range of texts |
| EN4-6C | explain the similarities and differences in meaning and language between texts created for different purposes or audiences |
|  | compare the text structures and language features of multimodal texts, explaining how they combine to influence audiences |

| Drama Objective | Suggested Activities | Assessment | Resources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| PerformingAppreciating | As soon as the students are sitting and ready, play the video [I Wanna Hear A Poem](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRsITgjBsLs). Discuss afterwards, what did you just see? What was that a performance? How does that text fit into a drama lesson? | Discussion | I Wanna Hear A Poem video |
| Making | Introduce the concept of Slam Poetry. Read through the fact sheet together, with students highlighting the key points. | - | What Is Slam Poetry Fact SheetLogbooks |
| Appreciating | Using an enlarged Venn diagram on the board or wall, brainstorm what slam poetry is. What does a performance need to make it a slam poem? Then brainstorm what poetry is. What does a piece of writing need to have to make it ‘poetic’. What are the similarities? Students copy the Venn diagram into their log books. | Discussion | Enlarged Venn DiagramLogbooks |
| - | Hand out the poem This Is My Voice by Shayne Koyczan. Read through with students and discuss whether this is a poem? Why or why not? Students move into small groups and complete the Super Six worksheet, analysing this poem. Discuss answers as a class. | DiscussionWorksheets | This Is My Voice Lyrics SheetSuper Six – This Is My Voice – WorksheetLogbooks |
| PerformingAppreciating | Watch [Shayne Koyczan perform his poem](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHczVzGfyqQ). Discuss how his performance changed the way that the students saw/read the poem. | - | This Is My Voice video |
| - | Discuss the main idea of the poem – This Is My Voice. Do students believe that your voice, or your words can make meaningful change in the world? Explain that in this unit, the students will be using their voice to speak their own truth and make meaningful change. | Discussion | - |

## Module 2

### Performance - Voice

During this module, students investigate the use of voice in slam poetry. Students learn about some of the conventions associated with the slam poetry genre and recognise the use of these conventions in two performances and one written poem. Students also analyse the meaning in a poem and how cultural experiences have been represented. Two poems will be used in this module which highlight the use of vocal techniques to convey meaning and emotion.

| Outcome | Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.1.1 | develop fundamental vocal and physicalisation techniques appropriate to conveying role/character |
| 4.1.3 | experiment with voice and movement activities that develop their understanding of the script or text in action |
|  | the transformation of the words of a text into a dynamic and active experience |
| 4.1.4 | the conventions applicable to various dramatic forms and performance styles |
| 4.2.1 | use vocal skills to communicate dramatic meaning |
|  | the contribution of timing to the creation of impact and dramatic tension in dramatic works |
| 4.3.1 | recognise and discuss the techniques, conventions and technologies of various dramatic forms and performance styles |
| 4.3.2 | investigate, discuss and debate the representation of gender-based, racial and cultural stereotypes in various dramatic forms or performance styles |
| EN4-1A | explore and appreciate the aesthetic qualities in their own and other texts and the power of language to communicate information, ideas, feelings and viewpointsidentify and discuss main ideas, concepts and points of view in spoken texts to evaluate qualities, for example the strength of an argument or the lyrical power of a poetic rendition |
| EN4-3B | uses interaction skills for identified purposes, using voice and language conventions to suit different situations, including modulating voice |
| EN4-8D | explore the interconnectedness of Country and Place, People, Identity and Culture in texts including those by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authorsconsider the ways culture and personal experience position readers and viewers and influence responses to and composition of texts |

| Drama Objective | Suggested Activities | Assessment | Resources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Appreciating | Review the previous lesson and poem – This Is My Voice. Discuss, what does it mean to ‘have a voice’? Why is that important? | Discussion | - |
| AppreciatingMaking | Explain that in slam poetry, the performer uses their voice to convey meaning. They want their audience to engage emotionally, and so they go to extremes to highlight the emotions that are being felt. Hand out the Voice Observation worksheet. Read through the four techniques that you are going to focus on. Watch the performance of [Stuck In The Middle’ by Laurie May](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQxpgdQVJxE) and have students take notes on their worksheets. Discuss answers about voice. | Logbooks | LogbooksVoice Observation Worksheet‘Stuck In The Middle’ video |
| Appreciating | Explain that you are going to watch the poem again, but this time, students are to pay attention to the overall message of the poem. Watch again. Ask students to break into pairs to discuss what the poem and performance were all about and write a paragraph in their logbooks about the message that Laurie May wanted to convey. | DiscussionLogbooks | Logbooks‘Stuck In The Middle’ video |
| Making | Discuss as a class, how you would be able to hear the poet’s ‘voice’ if you just read their poem? What techniques could a poet still use? Explain that you are going to hand out another poem, called ‘Poet Breathe Now’ by Adam Gottlieb. Students are to work in small groups, reading the entire poem and marking on their copy where they think the poet would use the four techniques on the voice observation worksheet. Circulate amongst the groups to observe discussions and notes taken. | DiscussionLogbooks | LogbooksA copy of ‘Poet Breathe Now’ for each student or group |
| Performing | In their groups, students perform the poem, either the whole poem or sections, using the voice techniques that they noted on their sheets. Circulate amongst the groups to observe. As a class, discuss differences between each group’s interpretations. Why did they have different ideas about how the poet would read the poem? | Observation of performancesDiscussion | - |
| AppreciatingMaking | Watch [Adam Gottlieb’s performance of ‘Poet Breathe Now’](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lXIjF0ERvYY&t=120s) as a class. Discuss afterwards, how the use of his voice affected the way they interpreted the poem.  | Discussion | - |

## Module 3

### Literacy – active voice

This module investigates the use of active voice and precise action verbs in slam poetry. Students learn the difference between active and passive voice and the power of using interesting verbs. Students also use the reading strategy of Prediction to create their own precise active sentences about Australia. One poem is used in this module, to analyse the use of active voice.

| Outcome | Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.1.3 | the use of appropriate language and literacy in script and text making. |
| 4.2.1 | create and maintain clarity of focus in dramatic action |
|  | maintaining clarity of focus as action advances using language |
| 4.3.1 | recording their ideas in a drama workbook or in other forms such as oral/aural, visual representation, discursive, written or word-processed forms |
| EN4-1A | recognise that vocabulary choices contribute to the specificity, abstraction and style of texts |
|  | compare the ways that language and images are used to create character, and to influence emotions and opinions in different types of texts |
| EN4-2A | edit for meaning by removing repetition, refining ideas, reordering sentences and adding or substituting words for impact |
| EN4-3B | understand how modality is achieved through discriminating choices in modal verbs, adverbs, adjectives and nouns |

| Drama Objective | Suggested Activities | Assessment | Resources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| - | Review what the students last learnt about the use of voice in slam poetry. Focus on the connection that slam poets have with their audience, how is it done? The actual voice is one way, but so are the words that they use. Explain that in this lesson you are going to look at the way slam poets use ‘active voice’ to engage their audience. | - | - |
| Making | Hand out the Active Voice worksheet. Work through with students. One difference between active and passive voice is that active puts the subject before the verb. Active voice sentences are also usually shorter and pack more of a ‘punch’. They also give more energy and life to the poem. | Logbooks | Active Voice WorksheetLogbooks |
| Appreciating | Ensure that students understand what active, precise verbs are, after completing the worksheet.Place verb cards around the room, on the floor or on the wall. Split students into small groups, with one group at each verb card. They have 2 minutes to come up with as many precise, active verbs as they can, to replace the verb card. The students take turns saying their new verb in the sentence, using an appropriate voice and/or actions to support it. One student in each group acts as a scribe, writing the suggested verbs on a large piece of paper. Every 2 minutes, rotate the groups. At the end of the rotations, discuss with the class the effect of using more precise verbs. | ObservationBrainstorm sheets | Verb CardsLarge sheets of paperTextasTimer |
| Performing | Explain that the students are now going to watch a piece of performance poetry called ‘My Australia’. Ask the students to predict what the poem might be about. Discuss the fact that everybody’s experience of Australia is different. Take it in turns for students to finish this sentence: In my Australia, I see …. using an active and precise verb. | DiscussionObservation | - |
| Appreciating | As students watch the [performance of ‘My Australia’](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q77yakmwgM8), have them write down any active and precise verbs that they hear in their logbooks.  | Logbooks | LogbooksMy Australia video |

Module 4

## Group performance – somebody else’s words

In this module, students use what they have learnt so far, about the conventions of slam poetry – specifically the use of modulated voice, pauses, active voice and precise action verbs, to perform a poem that has been written by somebody else, in small groups.

| Outcome | Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.1.1 | recognise, create and develop elements of drama to produce dramatic action and meaning |
|  | using elements of drama to enhance a range of created and imagined situations |
| 4.1.3 | explore and/or devise and enact scripts and texts in different dramatic forms or performance styles, written by themselves or others |
|  | analyse and interpret scripts and texts |
|  | explore techniques used for refinement during the rehearsal process |
|  | the process of preparing and recording the rehearsal process |
| 4.1.4 | refine work in collaboration with others |
| 4.2.1 | use vocal skills to communicate dramatic meaning |
|  | the importance of breath, voice and expression in performance |
| 4.2.3 | actively demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding of chosen dramatic forms or performance styles |
|  | devising and performing work in a particular performance style |
| 4.3.1 | respond appropriately to their work and the dramatic work of others  |
| EN4-1A | respond to and compose imaginative, informative and persuasive texts for different audiences, purposes and contexts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure |
| EN4-3B | use interaction skills for identified purposes, using voice and language conventions to suit different situations, selecting vocabulary, modulating voice and using elements such as music, images and sound for specific effects |

| Drama Objective | Suggested Activities | Assessment | Resources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| - | Review what students already know about slam poetry. What does a slam poetry performance need to be effective (expression, changes in voice, pauses, active voice and precise verbs). | - | - |
| Appreciating | Explain to the students that they are going to be working in small groups to analyse and perform a poem that has been written by somebody else. Give each group a different poem. Four different poems are included in the resources, but teachers could choose different poems. In their groups, students read their poem and fill in the Super Six – Group Performance worksheet. | Worksheets | Still I Rise poemPut Something In poemMother To Son poemA Dream Within A Dream poemSuper Six – Group Performance worksheet |
| Making | Groups work together to create a group performance of their poem. They may divide the poem into sections or speak in unison or any combination of these. All students must participate in the poetry reading in some form. Groups need to ensure that they include some modulation of their voices and use short and long pauses. Each group creates a requirement list in their logbooks to ensure they understand the task. Give students time to prepare and then rehearse their presentation. Each group records their rehearsal to watch back and make improvements. | ObservationLogbooks | Recording devicesLogbooks |
| PerformingAppreciating | Groups present their poems to the class, with each poem followed by a discussion about whether they met the criteria and opportunities for improvement. | PerformancesDiscussion | - |

## Module 5

### Performance – using your whole body

This module analyses the use of facial expressions, eye contact and hand gestures in performance poetry. Students practice using these techniques in game situations before analysing their use by slam poets. Students then work in pairs to perform a previous poem that they have encountered, with these added performance techniques. Two poems are used in this module to examine the use of the whole body in slam poetry.

| Outcome | Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.1.1 | explore basic movement techniques in relation to roles/characters |
|  | the processes of developing and sustaining a role/character through voice, stance, gesture and status |
|  | ways in which movements assist character development |
| 4.1.3 | the transformation of the words of a text into a dynamic and active experience |
| 4.2.1 | use body language and physicalisation to help an audience to read performance |
|  | aspects of body language and physicalisation such as posture, gesture and facial expression |
| 4.3.1 | the identification and importance of the elements of drama that together create dramatic meaning and audience engagement |
| EN4-1A | explore and appreciate the aesthetic qualities in their own and other texts and the power of language to communicate information, ideas, feelings and viewpoints |
|  | explore and explain the ways authors combine different modes and media in creating texts, and the impact of these choices on the viewer/listener |

| Drama Objective | Suggested Activities | Assessment | Resources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Appreciating | As soon as students are seated, walk to the front of the room, with shoulders hunched over and not making much eye contact. Hold onto a poem on a piece of paper and read it without much expression. Go and sit down. Discuss with the class, was that a piece of slam poetry? Why or why not? What was missing? What was wrong? Brainstorm a list of things that you need to do as a performance poet (eye contact, confidence, volume, engage your audience etc…) | Discussion | A poem for the teacher |
| - | Explain that in this module, the students are going to look at how to use their whole body to engage with the audience when presenting a slam poem. In their logbooks, have students draw up a table with three columns – eye contact, facial expressions, use of hand gestures. | - | Logbooks |
| Making | Maintaining eye contact can be a hard thing to do for many students and adults. Play a game, where the students are standing in two circles, one inside of the other. Choose a simple nursery rhyme that the whole class has to sing, over and over (for example; Row, Row, Row Your Boat). Students face each other, paired off and have to sing a verse, without losing eye contact with their partner. The outer circle moves clockwise and the inner circle anti-clockwise. Repeat for another verse. Change the nursery rhyme as often as needed. Observe whether students are keeping eye contact. Discuss after the game, how it made them feel to keep that eye contact. Why is it difficult to do? How can a poet keep eye contact without making their audience feel uncomfortable (move the eye contact around the room), break it every now and then. Smile. | ObservationDiscussion |  |
| Making | Sit the students in a circle and explain that they are going to have to convey an emotion to the group, without using any words at all. All that they will be allowed to use are their hands and their faces. Call out words such as anger, frustration, joy, bliss etc… Point out interesting and effective hand gestures and facial expressions as they appear. | Observation | - |
| AppreciatingMaking | Watch [‘Split Tongue’ by Franny Choi](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BuQNwlecYdk) and have students write notes in the three columns, about her use of eye contact, facial expressions and use of hand gestures. Discuss, whether these were effective in helping to get across her message. | LogbooksDiscussion | LogbooksSplit Tongue video |
| AppreciatingMaking | Watch [‘Touchscreen’ by Marshall Davis Jones](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GAx845QaOck) and students write notes in the three columns again. Discuss the differences between Jones and Choi. Was one more effective than the other? What similarities were there? | LogbooksDiscussion | LogbooksTouchscreen video |
| MakingPerforming | Students work in pairs and choose one of the previous poems that they already have a printed copy of in their logbooks. In their pairs, the students work together to develop a performance of one of the poems, or one small section of a poem, deliberately using eye contact, facial expressions and hand gestures to enhance their performances. Pairs can perform these in larger groups or as a whole class.  | ObservationPerformances | Logbooks |

## Module 6

### Literacy juxtaposition

This module guides students in how to include creative connections in their writing, using juxtaposition to avoid clichés. Students reflect on similes and metaphors and how these can be used to add flavour to their writing. They also look at examples of juxtaposition in visual and vocal mediums. Students experiment with creating juxtaposition in their own texts.

| Outcome | Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.1.3 | contribute ideas, collaborate and support the collective process to create effective drama |
|  | the use of appropriate language and literacy in script and text making. |
| 4.3.1 | the identification and importance of the elements of drama that together create dramatic meaning and audience engagement |
| 4.3.3 | the value of a shared terminology |
| EN4-1A | use increasingly sophisticated verbal, aural, visual and/or written techniques, eg imagery, figures of speech, selective choice of vocabulary, rhythm, sound effects, colour and design, to compose imaginative texts for pleasure |
|  | explore and appreciate the aesthetic qualities in their own and other texts and the power of language to communicate information, ideas, feelings and viewpoints |
| EN4-3B | understand how rhetorical devices are used to persuade and how different layers of meaning are developed through the use of metaphor, irony and parody |
|  | engage with the language and structures of texts in meaningful, contextualised and authentic ways |
| EN4-7D | analyse how combinations of words, sound and images can create particular perspectives of the same event or issue such as environmental sustainability |

| Drama Objective | Suggested Activities | Assessment | Resources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Making | When students are seated, have them call out random nouns that you write on the board. Keep going until you have at least 20 random and unrelated nouns. Ask two students to come up and circle a noun each. Ask the class to answer this question – “How is a (first noun) like a (second noun). Encourage ideas relating the two unrelated words (eg. A ball is like a horse because they can both bring happiness to people). Continue with other pairings. Write a couple of these answers on the board. Ask students what figurative device they have just created (simile). Discuss the use of similes in poetry and why we use them (to create interest and rich descriptions). Students write a definition and example of simile in their logbooks. | ObservationDiscussionLogbooks | Logbooks |
| Making | Continue the activity, but this time ask the students to come up with metaphors using the two nouns (for example; A ball is a horse, galloping across the playground). Write a couple of these answers on the board and discuss the use of metaphor in poetry. Students write a definition and example of metaphor in their logbooks. | ObservationLogbooks | Logbooks |
| Making | Introduce the word Juxtaposition and write the following description on the board and students into their logbooks – The placement of two or more ideas, characters, actions, settings, phrases or words side-by-side for a particular purpose. Explain that in this module we are going to look at how slam poets use juxtaposition to create interest in their poems and make their audience stop and think. | - | Logbooks |
| AppreciatingMaking | Hand out copies of the poem ‘Sorry’ by Prince EA to each student. Working in pairs, they read the poem and highlight examples of juxtaposition or contrast in the poem. Discuss as a class some of the examples found, and what effect that has on the reader. | LogbooksDiscussion | Copies of ‘Sorry’Logbooks |
| AppreciatingMaking | Watch the [video of Prince EA performing ‘Sorry’](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRLJscAlk1M). The first time, watch the video throughout without the worksheet. Watch the video again, but this time, students look for and write down examples of how the poet has also used visual and oral examples of juxtaposition. Discuss.  | LogbooksDiscussion | ‘Sorry’ videoLogbook |
| Making | Ask one confident student to come to the front of the room with you. Give them one Concept Card to hold in front of them and you hold another. Explain that you are going to take turns, saying a sentence that reflects your concept, showing the juxtaposition between the two. For example (Light – light fills the room with glowing warmth. Dark – the shadow behind the door is calling me). Have a few turns each and then ask two other students to come forward and use two different Concept Cards. Split students into pairs and give them a pile of Concept Cards to complete the activity themselves. Circulate in the room to observe the juxtapositions. | Observation | Concept Cards |

## Module 7

### Paired performance – our words

In this module, students work in pairs to create a slam poem about something that makes them angry. They review and draw on all of the techniques that they have been learning about throughout the unit to strengthen their own performance. The paired poems are performed in front of the class.

| Outcome | Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.1.1 | develop a range of created and imagined situations which explore the familiar and unfamiliar |
|  | the role of the individual in the collaborative process of drama |
| 4.1.3 | write, draft and edit scripts or texts |
|  | use drama elements when creating or enacting scripts or texts |
|  | the process of preparing and recording the rehearsal process |
| 4.1.4 | refine work in collaboration with others |
| 4.2.1 | use vocal skills to communicate dramatic meaning |
|  | use movement skills to enhance performance |
|  | use body language and physicalisation to help an audience to read performance |
| 4.2.3 | actively demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding of chosen dramatic forms or performance styles |
| 4.3.2 | the ways in which writers and practitioners present social and cultural issues through drama texts and performances |
| 4.3.3 | the ways drama and theatre can provide enriching experiences for young people. |
| EN4-1A | respond to and compose imaginative, informative and persuasive texts for different audiences, purposes and contexts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure |
| EN4-3B | use interaction skills for identified purposes, using voice and language conventions to suit different situations, selecting vocabulary, modulating voice and using elements such as music, images and sound for specific effects |
| EN4-4B | experiment with particular language features drawn from different types of texts, including combinations of language and visual choices to create new texts |
|  | plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content, including multimodal elements, to reflect a diversity of viewpoints |
| EN4-5C | compose texts using alternative, creative and imaginative ways of expressing ideas, recognising, valuing and celebrating originality and inventiveness |

| Drama Objective | Suggested Activities | Assessment | Resources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| - | Explain that in this module, students are going to be working together in pairs, and will be given permission to really let loose (in a school appropriate manner) about something that really ‘ticks them off’. They are going to get (or act) really angry! | - | - |
| Making | Demonstrate the activity for students. Stand at the front of the class and ask students to call out suggestions of things that might make you angry. When somebody says one that ‘strikes a chord’, raise both of your hands in the air and say, “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ drives me crazy!!” Then spend 30-60 seconds ranting about the issue. Have a couple of students demonstrate for the class as well. You could continue doing this as a whole class, or split into smaller groups. Once completed, come back as a class and talk about how the students felt expressing their anger. Discuss, why don’t we do this more often? Discuss how drama and theatre can provide an opportunity to express your frustrations. Explain that this is one of the main goals of slam poetry. | ObservationDiscussion | - |
| Making | Explain to students that they are going to form pairs, to create a slam poem now. They will be writing a poem about something that makes them both angry. Review on the board the elements of a slam poem that have already been focused on in this unit, and will need to be evident in the poems that are created (fast, loud vocal sections; lower and slower vocal sections; short pauses; long pauses; active voice; precise action verbs; eye contact; hand gestures; facial expressions; juxtaposition). Have students create their own checklist in their logbooks, to ensure that they include all of the elements needed. The poems will be between 1 and 2 minutes long. The poems will be performed in front of the class and both students must take part in some part of the reading, either solo or in unison or both. | ChecklistsLogbooks | Logbooks |
| Making | Allow students as much time as you deem necessary to write their poems. Circulate to ensure that they are on task. Each student is to document the changing poem/script in their logbook. Ensure that each pair is using their checklist to include all elements. Encourage each pair to record their rehearsal performances to critique and improve. Each student is to write the final copy of their poem in their logbook. | ObservationLogbooksPoems | Logbooks |
| PerformingAppreciating | Once completed, poems are performed for the entire class. The audience is reminded that in slam poetry, the audience is allowed to cheer and call out to some degree during the performances. | PerformancesObservation of Audience | - |

## Module 8

### How to speak your truth!

In this module, the students start to prepare for their own poetry slam. They review the techniques that have been taught throughout the unit and create visual aids for the classroom. Students prepare invitations and posters for their poetry slam and start to think about their own slam poems. Students watch one last slam poem, which they analyse using the Super Six reading strategies.

| Outcome | Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.1.1 | the processes of developing and sustaining a role/character through voice, stance, gesture and status |
|  | using elements of drama to enhance a range of created and imagined situations |
| 4.2.3 | devising and performing work in a particular performance style |
| 4.3.1 | describe and respond to the conventions, dramatic techniques and technologies used in different performances. |
| - | the identification and importance of the elements of drama that together create dramatic meaning and audience engagement |
| EN4-1A | explore and appreciate the aesthetic qualities in their own and other texts and the power of language to communicate information, ideas, feelings and viewpoints |
| - | respond to and compose imaginative, informative and persuasive texts for different audiences, purposes and contexts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure |
| EN4-3B | identify, discuss and reflect on the ideas and information in a range of texts |

| Drama Objective | Suggested Activities | Assessment | Resources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Appreciating | Remind students about the slam poems that they have already watched during this unit. Write the names of the poems on the board. Students write in their logbooks, which of the poems they enjoyed the most and why. Discuss their answers. What was it about the poem that made it so engaging? What elements of performance poetry did they use? | LogbooksDiscussion | Logbooks |
| Making | Split the class into eight groups. Have each group create a poster, highlighting the importance of one of the following techniques of slam poetry, to be displayed around the room. The posters should include images and words that explain the importance of that technique, as well as what to actually do. Techniques – varying the voice – use of pause – active voice – precise action verbs – eye contact – facial expressions – hand gestures – juxtaposition. | Posters | LogbooksCardboardTextasBlue Tak |
| Making | Decide, as a class, whether you want to have your poetry slam just in class, or on an assembly or as a concert or lunchtime performance. Have students create digital invitations, posters, newsletter articles or social media posts to advertise the event. | Advertising materials | Computers |
| Appreciating | Explain to the students that you are going to watch one last slam poem, and that afterwards, you are going to ask them to answer some questions about what they saw. Show the students [‘History Is An Ocean’ by Arielle Cottingham.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtF3kXRYW_0)  | - | History Is An Ocean video |
| Appreciating | Have the students sit in pairs, in concentric circles, on chairs facing each other. Explain that you are going to ask a question about the poem, and that they have exactly 2 minutes to discuss their answers with their partner. Use the Super Six Questions in the resources. Ask one question. Allow the students exactly 2 minutes to answer. Ask the students in the inner circle to move one spot to the right. Ask the next question. Repeat. | Observation | ChairsSuper Six Questions sheet |
| - | Gather back together as a class. Explain that for the rest of this unit, the students will be writing their own poems, about something that they care about. They are going to be asked to draw on all that they have learnt to write a 1-2 minute poem. They should have a think at home about what they might like to express. | - | - |

## Module 9

### What I know to be true

This module is where students write their own slam poem, reflecting something that they know to be true. They listen to the advice of slam poet Sarah Kay, about finding your voice and your style, before experimenting with ideas. Students write their own individual slam poem and rehearse its performance. Students gain feedback from the teacher and their peers, as they prepare for the class poetry slam.

| Outcome | Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.1.1 | using elements of drama to enhance a range of created and imagined situations |
| 4.1.3 | explore and/or devise and enact scripts and texts in different dramatic forms or performance styles, written by themselves or others |
|  | explore techniques used for refinement during the rehearsal process |
|  | use drama elements when creating or enacting scripts or texts |
|  | write, draft and edit scripts or texts |
| 4.3.1 | the identification and importance of the elements of drama that together create dramatic meaning and audience engagement |
| EN4-1A | use increasingly sophisticated verbal, aural, visual and/or written techniques, for example; imagery, figures of speech, selective choice of vocabulary, rhythm, sound effects, colour and design, to compose imaginative texts for pleasure |
| EN4-2A | edit for meaning by removing repetition, refining ideas, reordering sentences and adding or substituting words for impact |
| EN4-4B | experiment with particular language features drawn from different types of texts, including combinations of language and visual choices to create new texts |

| Drama Objective | Suggested Activities | Assessment | Resources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Making | Watch [‘If I Should Have A Daughter’ by Sarah Kay](https://www.ted.com/talks/sarah_kay_if_i_should_have_a_daughter#t-1074193). The first 3:20 minutes are a poem, you may choose to show this, but it is not needed. Start the video at 3:50. In the first minute, Kay asks you to write down three things you know to be true. Pause the video and allow students the chance to do this in their logbooks. Kay spends the rest of the video giving ideas on how to write a slam poem.  | Logbooks | Logbooks |
| Making | Have students look back at the 3 truths that they wrote in their logbook. Get them to write each of these truths again, one at the top of each of the next three pages in their logbook. Ask the students to think about how they feel about each of those truths and write some thoughts on the page underneath. | Logbooks | Logbooks |
| Making | Hand out the criteria for this poem. Read through with the class. Give students a chance to ask questions about what they need to do. | - | Slam Poetry Criteria |
| Making | Provide students with ample time to write their poems. Circulate and check regularly to see that they are on task. If students are stuck for ideas, brainstorm with them. If students are too scared to perform on their own, perhaps allow a group or paired performance. Every now and then, ask students to come together to hear each other’s poems in progress and provide feedback. | Observation | Logbooks |
| MakingAppreciating | For students who finish writing their poem early, give them access to other spoken word poetry videos for inspiration. If there are multiple students finished early, they could create a group slam poem to begin or end the poetry slam. | - | Computers |

## Module 10

### Performance – hear me!

This final module, is the poetry slam. All students (and ideally the teacher as well), perform their slam poem. The audience and location for this slam is up to the teacher and class, but could include the classroom itself, an assembly, a special poetry reading for parents and friends or any variation of the slam. It should be conducted like a regular slam, with five audience members as judges. Each judge gives the poem a score out of 10. The top and bottom scores are removed and the combined total of the other three is the final score. The highest score wins the slam. It is up to the teacher to decide whether the scores are made public to the class.

| Outcome | Content |
| --- | --- |
| 4.2.1 | Use vocal skills to communicate meaning |
|  | Use movement skills to enhance performance |
|  | Create and maintain clarity of focus in dramatic action |
|  | Use body language and physicalisation to help an audience to read performance |
| 4.2.3 | actively demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding of chosen dramatic forms or performance styles |
| 4.3.1 | respond appropriately to their work and the dramatic work of others  |
| EN4-1A | explore and appreciate the aesthetic qualities in their own and other texts and the power of language to communicate information, ideas, feelings and viewpoints |
| EN4-3B | uses interaction skills for identified purposes, using voice and language conventions to suit different situations, including modulating voice |
| EN4-4B | plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content, including multimodal elements, to reflect a diversity of viewpoints |

| Drama Objective | Suggested Activities | Assessment | Resources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Appreciating | Remind the students and audience about the rules and conventions of a poetry slam. The audience is generally allowed to cheer throughout the poem or call out supportive words. It is up to the teacher how much of this they encourage. Explain the scoring system. Remind the students and audience that this is a fun event, where the points are not the point – poetry is the point! | - | An audienceA stage |
| PerformingAppreciating | Gradually work through the slam poems, following the slam conventions. At the end of the slam, you can award the winner. | Performances | Microphone and stand |
| - | At the end of the slam, congratulate all of the students for their efforts throughout the unit and encourage them to keep speaking their truth – in whatever form that takes. | - | - |