



VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION GUIDE

Workshop: *My Feeling Is An Animal*

Teaching Artist: Eric Elshtain

Learn how to use metaphor, stanzas, and line breaks as you create an original poem inspired by colorful, emotional animals. You will also learn how cultural differences shape the way humans demonstrate emotion.



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OBJECTIVES:

You will learn:

- How to use metaphor and alliteration in poetry
- About the use of stanzas in poetry
- How to create line breaks in poetry
- How to create rhythm in a poem by paying attention to how words look and sound
- How to draw connections between your knowledge and experience of human emotion and animal behaviors
- How cultural differences shape the way humans demonstrate emotion

MATERIALS:

- a piece of paper
- a writing utensil

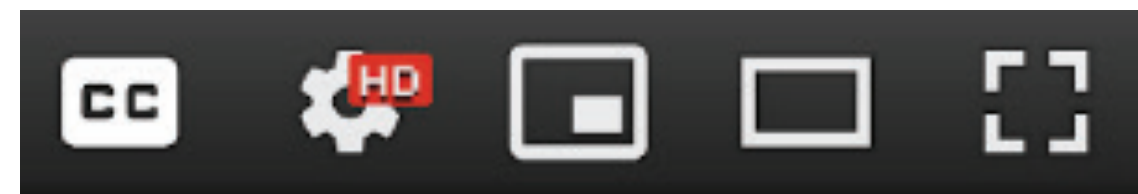


DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING Methods

Instruction is provided in text and video formats, available in both Spanish and English.

You may also work by printing this art-making guide.

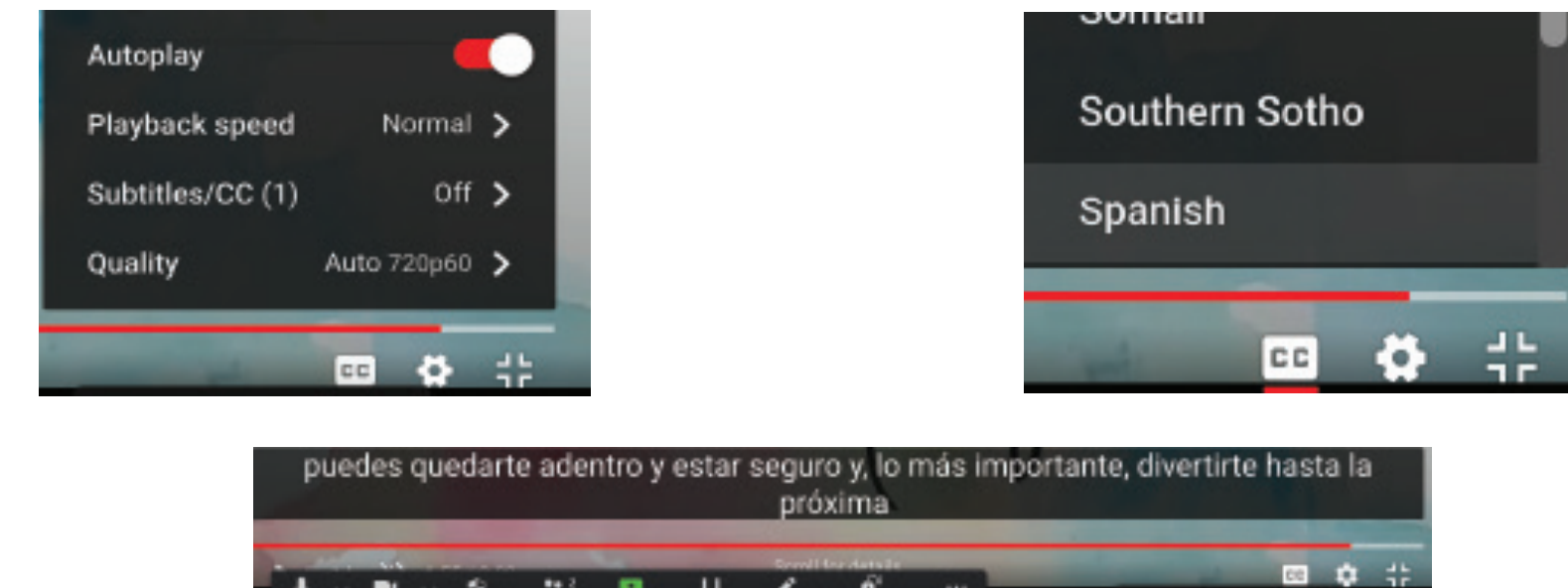
YouTube can automatically create closed captions.



Click the [CC] button near the lower right corner of the viewer frame.

Please note: captions are generated by algorithms, so their quality may vary.

A variety of language subtitles are available for each video.



- **Instructions and expectations for this project can be modified or simplified as needed.** The exercise can also be limited to three examples or fewer.
- **This project has instructions that can be given orally.** If you need help writing down your answers, you can ask a friend or family member to assist you.



BACKGROUND/RESOURCES

You will be introduced to these artists, art histories, movements and/or concepts:

Alliteration: The repetition of sounds in two or more words or syllables that are close to each other in a line of text or a sentence (usually the consonant sounds at the beginning of words).

Line break: The point at which two lines of text in a poem are split; the end of a line.

Metaphor: A figure of speech that describes an object or action in a way that isn't literally true, but helps explain an idea or make a comparison.

Stanza: A set of lines in a poem grouped together and set apart from other groups of lines in a poem, usually by a double space or by different indentations. A two-line stanza is called a ***couplet***.



INSTRUCTION:



Today, we will work together to compose a short poem. You'll be able to do it even if you have never written a poem before.

Step 1:

Write down a feeling or emotion.



So first, write down the name of a feeling or emotion. Any feeling or emotion that someone might have.



All you need is any piece of paper and a writing utensil. If you need to have somebody else write down your ideas for you, that is totally fine.

Step 2:

Transform the feeling into an animal.



Next, imagine that somehow that feeling or emotion can magically transform into an animal. What animal does that feeling become? Write it down.



In this exercise, you will compose a five-stanza poem, each stanza containing two to four lines. A **stanza** is any group of lines in a poem. My daughter is here to help me.

Step 3:

What color is that animal?



Now, what color is that animal? You can stick with real-life colors. Or you can be more fanciful like a pink zebra, or a rainbow-colored tortoise. Write it down.



INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:

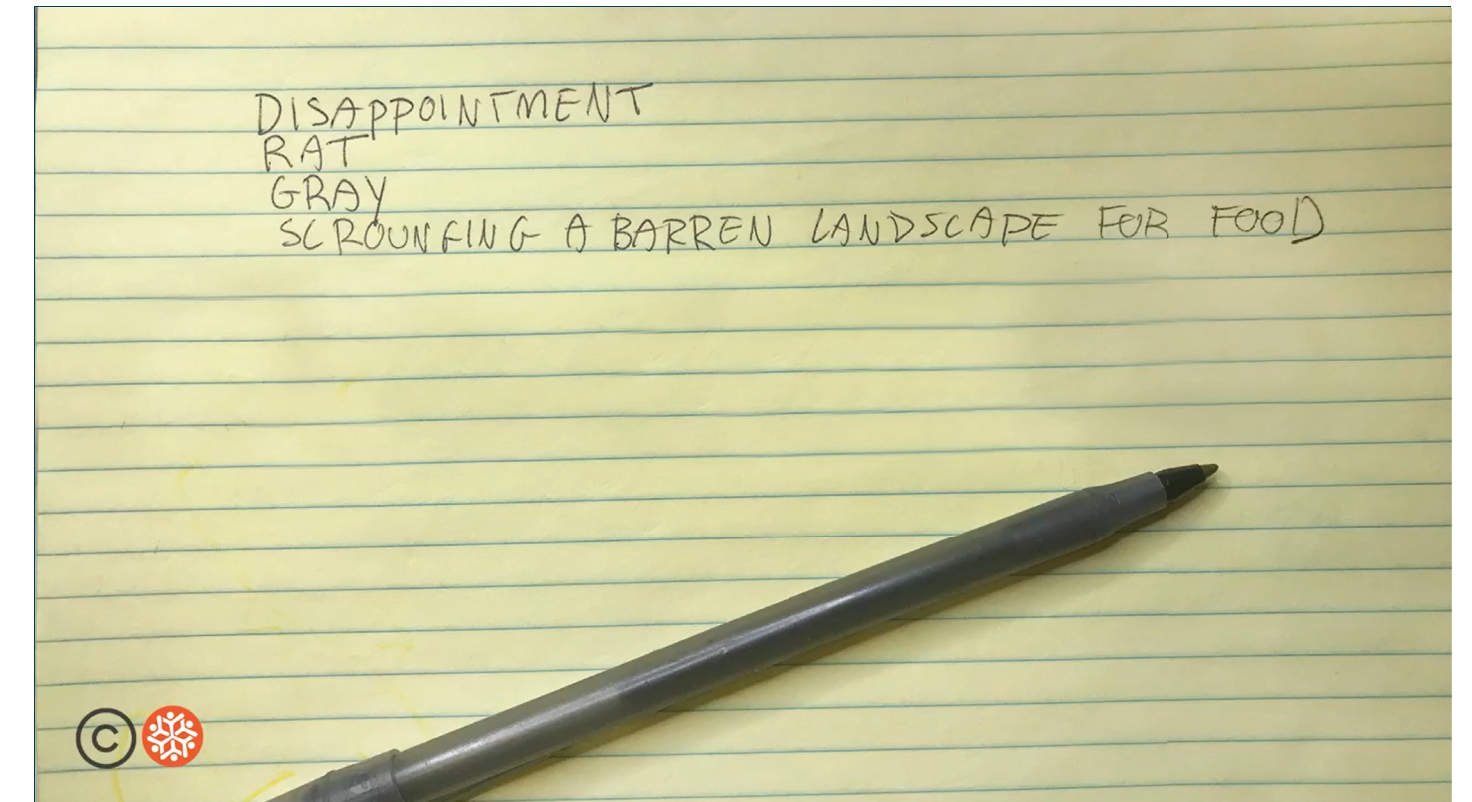
Step 4:
What is the animal doing?



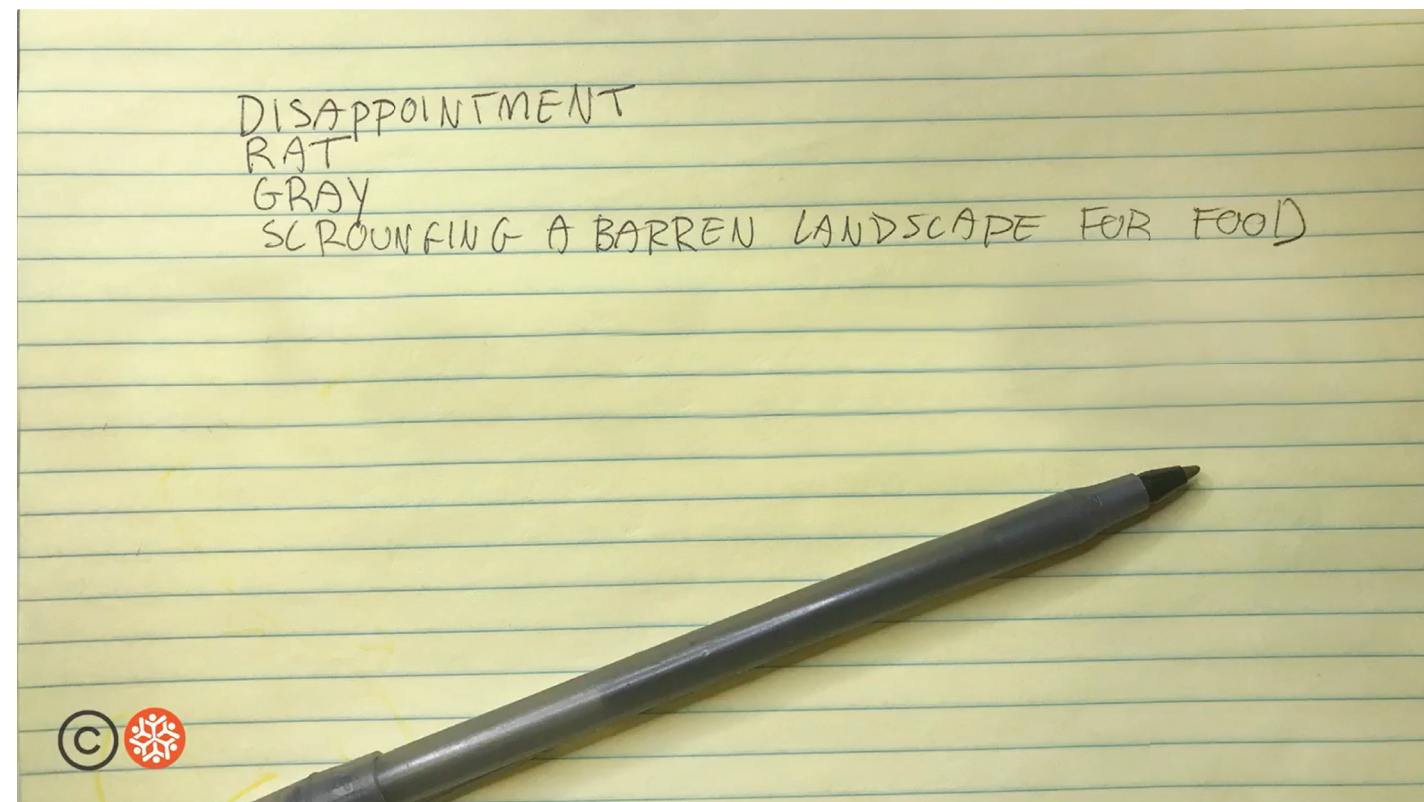
Now finally, what is this animal doing? Try not to give the animal any human behavior. For example, if your emotion was sadness, don't describe the animal as crying.



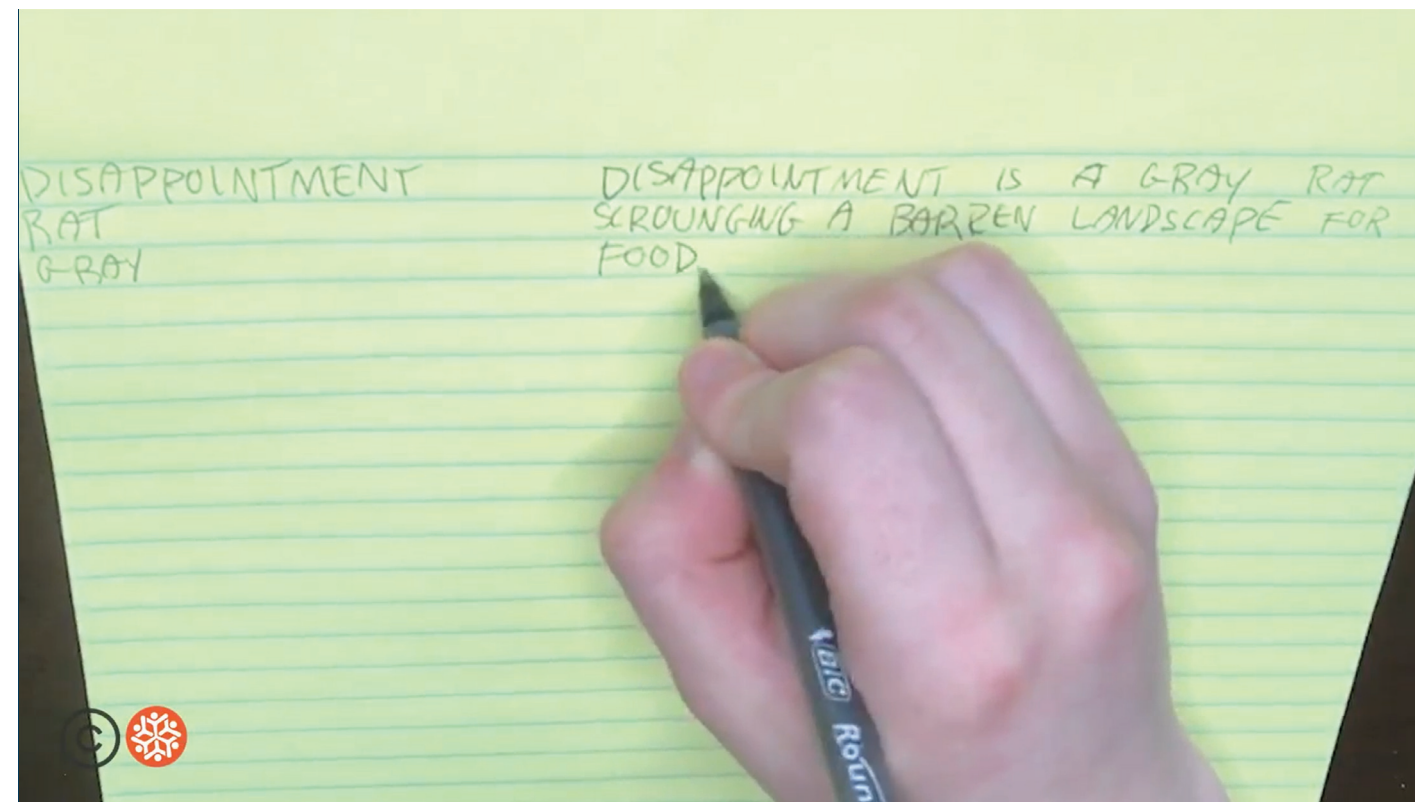
How would that particular animal show sadness? Imagine, looking at what the animal is doing and being able to say that animal is showing sadness.



My daughter Christie will now read her answers as an example.



“The emotion is disappointment. The animal is a gray rat, and it is scrounging a barren landscape for food.”



Now we will write it in a sentence, like so: “Disappointment is a gray rat, scrounging a barren landscape for food.”

Step 7:
Transforming sentences into poetic lines




Using two of the sentences, let's walk through how we can break these sentences into shorter lines creating lines of poetry.



INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:


Disappointment is a grey rat scrounging a barren landscape for food.

Sadness is a blue elephant drinking alone from a muddy watering hole.




Disappointment is a grey rat scrounging a barren landscape for food.

Sadness is a blue elephant drinking alone from a muddy watering hole.



Disappointment is a grey rat scrounging a barren landscape for food.

Sadness is a blue elephant drinking alone from a muddy watering hole.



Let's separate the emotion and the animal from the behavior that's being described, creating two two-line stanzas, which are called **couplets**. And I'm parsing out the information by just choosing two pieces of information to put on each line.


Now I can show how to use **line breaks** to create sections that help highlight certain sounds by isolating them on the ends of lines and within lines.

And so we have: *Disappointment / is a gray rat / scrounging a barren / landscape for food.*

Disappointment is a grey rat scrounging a barren landscape for food.

Sadness is a blue elephant drinking alone from a muddy watering hole.


* Alliteration - when a series of words begin with the same consonant sound.



Disappointment is a grey rat scrounging a barren landscape for food.

Sadness is a blue elephant drinking alone from a muddy watering hole.


* For example: "She sells seashells by the sea-shore."



Disappointment is a grey rat scrounging a barren landscape for food.

Sadness is a blue elephant drinking alone from a muddy watering hole.

* For example: "She sells seashells by the sea-shore."



Putting those "T" sounds at the end helps highlight those. "Scrounging a barren": I like those "R" sounds together. And "for food" highlights those "F" sounds. That's **alliteration**.

And then: *Sadness is a blue elephant / drinking alone / from a muddy watering hole.*

What I noticed is "alone" and "hole"—putting those at the ends of lines helps highlight those "O" sounds, and then I end up with one four-line stanza and one three-line stanza.



INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:

Step 9: Title your poem



Now, give your poem a title. We are going to call ours “Emotional Animals.”

Let’s review!



Think about those times when someone mistook your expression for a feeling that you were not experiencing.

Emotional Animals

Sadness is a blue elephant drinking alone from a muddy watering hole.

Glumness is a ghost-white tortoise who’s stuck on its back.

Glee is a pink hen brooding on its eggs.

Excitement is a yellow squirrel that found a nut tree.



In your poem, you’ve used animal imagery to describe emotions through **metaphor**. And if you think about it, every day we use images to communicate emotions through our facial expressions.

Let’s review!



And now consider the fact that like different languages, different cultures, and societies have different ways to express and to understand certain emotions. For example, one culture might find one emotion positive, while another culture views that same emotion negatively.

Let’s review!



But has anyone ever looked at your face and asked you if you were feeling a certain way when you were not experiencing that feeling?

Let’s review!



Sometimes this can lead to misunderstandings between people from different cultures and traditions.



INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:

Let's review!



There are also different ideas about emotion, depending on your gender, unwritten "rules" about who can feel a certain way or express an emotion. Think of the old phrase "boys don't cry."

Let's review!



And think of how a woman who isn't smiling may be asked if she is angry or sad. Has that ever happened to you?



Thank you for working with me today. I hope you will choose to work with Snow City Arts soon.

LEARNING STANDARDS

This workshop is aligned to the following state and national anchor standards. It can be differentiated for learners at every grade level. (For arts performance standard alignments at specific grade levels, feel free to email programs@snowcityarts.org.)

ILLINOIS ARTS LEARNING STANDARDS

Anchor Standards: Creating

- **CR1.** Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- **CR2.** Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standards: Connecting

- **CN10.** Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- **CN11.** Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

English Language Arts: College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards

Reading

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4.** Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5.** Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

Language

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.3.** Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.5.** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.6.** Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

Writing

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3.** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.5.** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.10.** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.





If you are interested in **receiving school credit** for the work you have completed in this workshop or if you would like to **have your artwork displayed** in a Snow City Arts exhibition space or virtual gallery, please visit <https://snowcityarts.org/consent-releases/>

Contact us at programs@snowcityarts.org if you have questions, would like to offer feedback, or would like to continue working with us virtually.





Workshop Duration: 25-45 Minutes | ALL LEVELS



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Snow City Arts inspires and educates children and youth in hospitals through the arts.

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