

Understanding Plagiarism in Poetry

Lesson Plan (30 minutes)

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Define plagiarism in the context of writing poetry.
- Understand that plagiarism is breaking the 8th Commandment: "Thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbor."
- Understand that plagiarism is breaking the-7th Commandment: "Thou shall not steal."
- Identify the consequences of plagiarism.
- Identify the positive effects of avoiding sin and being virtuous, and how to apply that in tempting situations

Materials

- Whiteboard/Markers or Digital Presentation Platform
- PowerPoint Slides (optional)
- Computer with Browser shown on Digital Presentation Platform (optional)
- Printed copies of examples of original poetry (optional)
- Scenarios for students to read after partnering up, then discuss how they would handle the scenarios and apply their Catholic values

Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Begin with a discussion about what plagiarism means. Ask students to turn and talk to their neighbors for 2 minutes and discuss if they've heard the term plagiarism before and if they know what it means. Use simple examples to ensure students understand the concept.
2. Define plagiarism in the context of poetry. Explain that it involves presenting unique words, phrases, or sentences from another person or a machine as written by you without giving proper credit to the author.
3. Explain that the class will explore the consequences of plagiarism from a moral and ethical framework.
[Perhaps begin with a turn-and-talk that poses a question: "Have you ever experienced someone being dishonest with you? How did it make you feel? Turn and talk with your neighbor about a time this happened to you." Then move on to discovering what plagiarism is and give students another quick opportunity to turn and talk about the definition..]

Understanding Plagiarism in Poetry (10 minutes)

1. Provide examples of widely varying samples of short poems. Discuss the unique vision and voice of each poet, then point out God's generous gift of creativity to encourage mankind's participation in making the world better.
2. Ask students to brainstorm reasons why someone might be tempted to plagiarize in poetry. Encourage discussion on the pressures of creativity, deadlines, or the desire for recognition. Discuss the temptation to sin and why it is the duty of Christians to resist temptation. Teacher should list these on the board or on a chart as they are mentioned.
3. Ask students to alternatively brainstorm virtuous and honest responses to the temptation to plagiarize in poetry, post on the same chart or on a new one

Plagiarizing Is Breaking the 7th and 8th Commandments (5 minutes):

1. Using the Catechism of the Catholic Church, introduce the Seventh and Eighth Commandments and their explanations. Discuss how these commandments apply to creative works like poems and stress the moral implications of stealing someone else's work and presenting falsely as your own.
2. Ask students to turn and talk to their neighbors for 2 minutes and answer this question: *How does plagiarism violate the spirit of the Seventh Commandment; how does it violate the spirit of the Eighth Commandment?*

Consequences of Plagiarism (8 minutes): (Balance this discussion with what is gained by avoiding plagiarism)

1. Show students a list of potential consequences of plagiarism in the context of poetry, including damage to one's reputation, loss of credibility, and legal ramifications.

2. Emphasize that the consequences go beyond academic penalties and can have long-term effects on a person's career, standing in the community, and damage to one's soul and relationship with Christ; mentally carrying a guilty conscience that will wear on your well-being
3. Positive Consequences: what is gained when one is honest and hardworking and does not steal the work of others: clear conscience; modest amount of pride in your work, knowing you used your God-given talents properly and for His glory.

Application:

Assign students partners and provide scenarios that depict plagiarism or dishonesty in the context of poetry and competition. Students should discuss and share what steps should be taken for individuals to demonstrate an appropriate and honest Catholic response to the scenario. OR do the extension activity below.

Conclusion (2 minutes):

1. Summarize the key points discussed in this lesson.
2. Reiterate the importance of understanding plagiarism in poetry, understanding plagiarism is breaking the Seventh and Eighth commandments, and recognizing the consequences of plagiarism.
3. Encourage students to reflect on how they can avoid plagiarism in their own creative endeavors and the importance of fostering a culture of respect for intellectual property.