

Leveraging Poetry for L2 Vocabulary Growth

February 2026 – Volume 29, Number 4

<https://doi.org/10.55593/ej.29116a7>

Ethan Hopkin

Universitat Internacional de Catalunya, Sant Cugat, Spain

<Ethanjhopkin99@gmail.com>

One of the most often cited benefits of studying poetry in additional language classes is its ability to enrich a learner's vocabulary. However, despite the growing interest in using poetry in language learning contexts, there remains limited empirical evidence to support this theory. To test if these benefits would appear in actual practice, thirty learners participated in an experiment comparing vocabulary acquisition through glossed definitions while studying poetry and acquisition via a more traditional word list and set of example sentences. Participants were tested on their existing knowledge of target words and then taught these words over the course of six weeks. The experimental group learned these words through a set of six poems, one poem a week. Two weeks after the experiment concluded, the learner's vocabulary knowledge was reassessed. Both groups demonstrated a meaningful increase in their vocabulary, and no significant difference was identified between the two groups, indicating that both methods are equally effective in increasing learner vocabulary. This suggests that teachers interested in integrating literary studies with language studies may do so with some assurance that learners' vocabulary will develop.

Keywords: Poetry, Vocabulary Acquisition, Literature

Poetry and the L2 classroom

The theoretical benefits of poetic texts and literary texts in general are quite expansive and thought to include motivating learners, improving linguistic and intercultural skills, and developing more general skills like critical thinking or empathizing (Alkhaleefah, 2017; Nilon, 2020; Porto & Zembylas, 2021). For instance, Elhabiri (2017) posited that studying literature explicitly can differ from using literature, for instance, using literary texts in intensive reading exercises rather than extensive reading exercises, because the study of literature can do more to encourage student noticing since the learners are directed to observe how the use of language impacted the delivery of the message. Freyn (2016) reported students claiming that poetry improved their vocabulary and caused them to have to think in English due to differences that emerge if a poem is translated. Khan (2020) recorded that the majority of participants in that study believed that reading poetry improves vocabulary, and a plurality of participants, by a large margin, believed in benefits ranging from cultural skills to reading comprehension and writing ability. It is also noteworthy that students in Khan's study were science students and had limited interest in poetry but found studying it to be a valuable experience.

Vocabulary growth is an often-highlighted benefit of studying poetry. For instance, the atomistic approach to studying poetry, thought to promote the development of various skills,

may also cause students to notice vocabulary items, which is related to Nanquil's (2019) claims that the study of literary texts can provide learners with a rich source of vocabulary. According to Joe (2010), noticing vocabulary items is vital for the acquisition of new words, and 'conscious effort to learn the semantic and conceptual aspects of words, using deep and elaborative processes, is needed to prevent attrition' (p. 120). As a result, the detail-oriented approach favoured in several lenses of the study of poetry may help learners to be more aware of the specific words in a poem, thus increasing their likelihood of retaining them.

This also links to intercultural communication benefits because learners noticing these words can be directed to contemplate how these specific words reveal the underlying assumptions that shape the theme of the poem (Porto & Zembylas, 2021). Learners may also need to notice how the connotation of these words may change across cultural boundaries and to consider why a specific word and its semantic load were included to shape the work (Khan, 2020; Santillán-Iñiguez & Rodas-Pacheco, 2022). They practice stretching their understanding of various concepts.

Joe (2010) also observed that repeated exposure to a word is necessary for learners to acquire words, especially to be able to recognize them, a belief echoed widely among researchers of vocabulary acquisition (Cho et al., 2005; Matsuoka & Hirsh, 2010; Nichols et al., 2018). This aligns with the use of poetic texts in the L2 classroom as their generally short length allows for repeated reading in a class, resulting in multiple exposures to new vocabulary. This use of multiple exposures is also advocated for regardless of its possible benefits to vocabulary on account of the role it could play in facilitating reading fluency and understanding the poem (Kuswardani et al., 2023; Nichols et al., 2018; Salarvand et al., 2021). In other words, the natural study of a poem in class is likely to align with the requirements for vocabulary acquisition.

To test some of the theories on vocabulary acquisition through poetry, Özen (2012) carried out an experiment comparing the learning outcomes of participants who acquired vocabulary through poetry-centred tasks with those who learned through traditional coursework. The study found that those learning the words through poetry measured higher on the subsequent vocabulary assessment than those using more standard methods. Özen linked this to the role poetry can play in contextualizing words and demonstrating their connotation. He claimed that the use of poetry to enhance language learning was linked in part to its difference from typical activities and the communicative tasks that could be carried out while studying a poem.

Remaining Gaps in the Literature

Özen (2012) did not make use of authentic poetry and instead used poems created for the study. This leaves a considerable gap in the literature as several of the other benefits of including literary studies in the L2 classroom have been predicated on the authenticity of the text in question (Alkhaleefah, 2017). If the poems are inauthentic, other reasons why a teacher may choose to study poetry, for instance, intercultural skills, could be neglected.

There is also the issue of pragmatism. Creating poems on top of creating activities for said poems may be beyond the capabilities or practical realities of many teachers, especially given the frequency of teacher discomfort with poetry (Khan, 2020). Additionally, there also exist concerns about quality and literary merit. Published poetry has typically been vetted on some level for issues of potential engagement and effective use of language. It is more likely to have been reviewed and edited by those experienced in literary fields and creative writing, and it is likely to have had more time spent on it.

While other studies have since performed research on the effect of poetry on vocabulary learning have used authentic texts, they have typically lacked a control group, weakening

conclusions that can be drawn (Imron & Hantari, 2021; Mardayati & Riwayatningsih, 2021; Sibuea et al., 2024). Their findings support the idea that vocabulary learning did occur, but they were not able to meaningfully compare it to vocabulary learning via other methods. Many of these studies were also not subject to peer review and provided somewhat murky descriptions of the procedures used to carry out the experimentation. As a result, while they do offer some insights into using poetry to support vocabulary growth, the evidence they provide is not robust.

Additionally, because the purpose of reading the poems in much of this research was to learn vocabulary, it is possible that the improved vocabulary acquisition outcomes would disappear if the focus of the classwork shifted, for instance, to poetic analysis. To be truly confident in recommending the use of poetic studies to enhance vocabulary learning, research needs to be conducted comparing more traditional methods, e.g. word lists and example sentences, with poetry-focused approaches using authentic texts.

This gap in the literature is part of a more widely observed trend that ‘the use of poetry in language learning has not been researched in depth’ (Santillán-Iñiguez & Rodas-Pacheco, 2022, p. 3). To be more specific, most of the benefits associated with poetry teaching in the L2 classroom are still theoretical or have limited testing. They have not been studied in depth or in practice, and experimental research is sparse. This is part of a greater pattern in the study of the use of literary studies in the L2. Alkhaleefah (2017) summarizes it well:

The argument for supporting the use of literature in ELT classrooms has not been fully validated using meticulous and rigorous methods of collecting and analysing data from EFL context in order to attest the validity and applicability of the assumptions put forward. Hence, more future research in different learning contexts involving different methodological approaches and different designs to examine the impact of using literature on language learners’ abilities is certainly needed (p. 5).

The review of the literature for this experiment provided a similar picture despite its occurrence years after. A significant number of recommendations on the inclusion of poetry in the language classroom have substantial theoretical underpinnings but lack empirical evidence. As a result, many of the discussions among interested parties can be cyclical. Arguments are based on information that is currently unconfirmed, stymying the usefulness of this discourse. Both sides can provide arguments that would likely be persuasive if they are true, but they are unable to fully support the decisions due to a lack of generalizable evidence. This makes it difficult for teachers and curriculum designers to make informed decisions about whether to include poetry in their classes. Many benefits are claimed, but they lack strong enough support for teachers to be confident that these benefits will occur for their learners. More evidence is needed to provide a clear answer.

This issue is exacerbated by the limits on what empirical evidence exists. This experiment’s literature review indicated that studies and research on the use of literary texts in language classrooms have not been carried out on representative samples. A disproportionate number focus on adult learners, especially university students. These university students are also disproportionately likely to be studying languages or education. This creates another gap in the literature: research focusing on students still in secondary or primary school, whose attendance in language classes may be involuntary, and a focus on learners in private language education.

Thus, increased empirical research, especially experimental research, is necessary to better understand the role poetry can play in L2 learning. Ideally, this research would target the most cited benefits, such as vocabulary acquisition, for learners in primary or secondary schools. This increase in evidence would help discussions around the implementation of poetry in the

classroom to progress and provide more concrete reasoning for invested parties to decide whether or not it would be beneficial to them to teach poetry.

Goal of This Paper

This paper aims to empirically test the efficacy of using poetic studies to enhance vocabulary acquisition, one of the most commonly referenced linguistic benefits of the study of literary texts. This would help assuage some of the general issues uncovered in the aforementioned papers.

There is considerable interest in the use of poetry to enhance linguistic capabilities, so it is important to determine whether it is a viable option for developing the desired competencies (Jabsheh, 2019; Khan, 2020). If it is not, then, regardless of how it relates to other literary genres, it would be inadvisable to generally recommend poetry's inclusion in the classroom. Additionally, issues of poetry's popularity and effectiveness compared to other genres are only relevant if poetry is effective in the first place. This paper aims to investigate one part of this: whether studying poetry can positively support vocabulary growth.

Specifically, this paper is concerned with determining the mechanical ability of the study of poetry as a literary genre to support vocabulary acquisition when learners are directed to notice the words. It is believed that doing so will help break the cyclical nature of debates surrounding the use of poetry and other literary genres in L2 classrooms and provide clearer information for language teachers and others involved in curriculum development. It is outside the scope of this research to determine whether it is appropriate to recommend poetic studies over other genres of literature. Additional research will also be needed in order to investigate other predicted linguistic benefits to studying poetry, such as pronunciation. Nonetheless, this paper aims to help fill the gap when it comes to vocabulary growth.

Thus, the research questions for this experiment are:

1. Does the study of poetry as exposure to vocabulary items lead to different learning outcomes for learners than traditional word lists?
2. Does the study of poetry as exposure to vocabulary lead to meaningful increases in vocabulary?

The hypothesized answer to these questions is that without a primary focus on vocabulary learning during the study of a poem, there will not be a statistically significant difference between poetry studying groups and word list studying groups, but that on average, learner vocabularies will meaningfully increase in both cases.

Context and Methodology

This experiment was carried out at a private international school in the Guanacaste province of Costa Rica on the northern Pacific coast. It took place in the first semester of the school year during the participants' regular classes. The participating students were in grade six and ranged from ten to twelve years old. There were eleven females and twenty-two males, thirty-three in total. There was a considerable range in student English levels, with some students being high beginners and others advanced. The approximate average English level was informally assessed at a B1 of the CEFR scale based on their performance on Cambridge classroom materials during the previous school year.

These students varied significantly in ethnicity and language repertoire. Recorded nationalities of the students or of their parents include Costa Rican, Brazilian, Chinese American, Canadian, Italian, French, Belgian, Chilean, Venezuelan, English, Argentinian, Slovakian, and Spanish. Several students also have mixed ancestry. Similarly, the students had a variety in their

language repertoires. They took two-thirds of their classes in Spanish, and several spoke Spanish in the home and outside of class. However, others also spoke French, Italian, Mandarin, Portuguese, or English in the home, mixing languages depending on the context.

Six lessons were created around the analysis of six different poems: ‘Washing’ by John Drinkwater, ‘Today is Very Boring’ by Jack Prelutsky, ‘Fairies’ by Rose Fyleman, ‘Spring Break’ by April Halprin Wayland, ‘Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening’ by Robert Frost, and ‘Homework stew’ by Ken Nesbitt. These poems were selected based on their perceived relevance to the experiences of the students in the class and their lexical coverage. All six poems had 95% coverage at the B1 level if students were taught fewer than ten words outside of the CEFR B1 word list (ER-Central, 2024). Those new words were then selected as the vocabulary items based on salience and the absence of familiar cognates in Spanish and put into a vocabulary assessment and vocabulary list as an addition to the school’s standard curriculum.

The assessment was piloted one year before the main experiment by the researcher, as were the poems from which it was derived, with their corresponding lessons. The vocabulary test had two sections: a definition matching section where each question had a word bank and a list of definitions that the students had to match with the word and an application section where learners had to select which word from a selection of four best fit into a sentence. The latter was designed to focus on word use that expands beyond the denotation of the target items and, when possible, to better reflect a learner’s ability to apply the word.

All the participants in the pilot then moved on to the next grade level. Adjustments were made to the number of vocabulary items and a few of the questions to make them clearer. A copy of the test is included in Appendix A.

Participating students in both groups in the actual experiment then took the vocabulary pretest, taking twenty minutes. Over the course of the next six weeks, the experimental class (Group A, fifteen participants) had one forty-minute class per week with the researcher, who was also their English teacher, where they read one of the poems, analysed it, and had the vocabulary glossed for them.

The classes followed the same general format. Participants would do an activity to activate their schema, such as brainstorming ideas related to the topic of the poem or interviewing classmates about it. Then they were shown the words and were instructed to write them and, if they did not know them, their definitions in their notebooks. When they received a copy of the poem, the participants marked the words in the poem. Students would then read the poem.

After reading the poem, they would either hear a recorded recitation of the poem or take turns reading it aloud to a partner. The class would next turn to a discussion of the themes of the poem, clarifying any questions the students had. During class discussions, if the words were relevant to the analysis of the poem, the teacher would highlight their meanings. The researcher provided sets of questions related to the main ideas of the poem and a few poetic devices used and prompted students to share their responses and how they found them. The class finished with some kind of activity specific to the poem. For instance, after reading ‘Today is Very Boring,’ students illustrated two pictures: one of something they thought the narrator would find boring and one they thought the narrator would find interesting. They then explained why they thought what they did to the teacher when showing their pictures.

In the control group, also taught by the researcher (Group B, eighteen participants), during the same week that the experimental group had the poems, they received the words as part of a list without a poem. They, too, wrote down the words and the unfamiliar definitions. They also saw a sample sentence to highlight each word and suggest its range of use. For example, the

word ‘erupt’ was linked to volcanoes but was also compared to emotional eruptions and eruptions of noise. The control group then filled the rest of their class period with different reading-focused activities based on their existing curriculum.

Two weeks after all the poems were studied and all words were taught, all students in both groups retook the vocabulary assessment, again taking twenty minutes. They also received reminders throughout the experiment that they would be tested on the words again. The differences in the scores of each participant were then compiled into Google Sheets and were used in an aligned rank transformation test on Multilingual Statistics for Linguistics and Language Teaching Studies to determine if there were significant differences in their starting points and outcomes (Spring, 2022). The software (Spring, 2022) recommended this test because while the data is continuous, one or more of the data sets is not normally distributed and their variances, ($w=4.13$; $p=.010$) as indicated by a Levene’s test, lacked sufficient similarity for other test options.

Results

The groups had slightly different starting points with the mean score for Group A being 42.2 out of 56 and the score for Group B being 36.5 out of fifty-six. While they did not know an equal portion of the words, the tested words were selected under the idea that learners were not expected to know any given number. As a result, they were still considered appropriate for the experiment. This gap persisted in the post-test. The mean post-treatment score for Group A was 49.6 out of 56, and for Group B, 43.56 out of 56. The gap was largely maintained. The groups stayed about 6 points apart.

Table 1. Pretest and Post-Test Statistics

Group and test	Mean	SD	Range
Group A Pretest	42.2	12.70	12~56
Group B Pretest	36.5	16.04	9~54
Group A Post-test	49.6	7.06	33~56
Group B Post-test	43.56	14.30	12~56

Note: Full data set available in Appendix B

The differences in both starting point and outcome were confirmed by an Aligned Rank Transformation Test which found no statistically significant difference between the groups overall ($H [1, 32] = 2.54$, $p = .11$ and small effect size $\eta=0.02$, $\eta^2 = 0.02$). Additionally, the difference between the pre and post-test scores resulted in a statistically significant difference ($H [1, 32] = 10.09$, $p < .01$) and medium effect size $\eta^2=0.09$, $\eta^2 = 0.09$, confirming that both groups experienced significant growth in their vocabularies on average.

Table 2 Aligned Rank Transformation Test Results

Group and test	H	p	η	η^2
Overall difference	2.54	.11	0.02	0.02
Pre/Post test difference	10.09	<.01	0.09	0.09
Interaction	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.02

However, the test found no significant relationship between treatment and group type ($H [3, 65] = 0.00$, $p = 1.00$), with small effects sizes in both, $\eta=0.00$, $\eta^2 = 0.02$. In other words, the treatment was similarly effective to the control.

Discussion

The results differ from some of the papers similar to this experiment. Specifically, Mardayati and Riwayatiningsih (2021) and Özen (2012) found superior vocabulary acquisition among learners' obtaining vocabulary through poetry, while this data indicated that the two practices lead to comparable outcomes. However, the differences between the designs and goals of these research projects may explain this disparity. Both the cited papers described learners studying poems for the direct purpose of acquiring vocabulary.

In contrast, the study of the poems in this experiment focused primarily on the basic understanding and thematic analysis of each poem. Vocabulary was given some focus to support learner understanding and to positively promote word learning; however, it was not the primary focus. Additionally, these poems were authentic, not made for academic purposes. They were meant to either entertain or edify. These shifts in focus, both during their creation and during the classroom experience, may have given learners less support in acquiring the vocabulary items.

Nonetheless, the results of this experiment are still important and tend to support the inclusion of poetry in the language classroom. Participants learned the words at a comparable rate to those explicitly studying a traditional word list while also performing literary analysis and using other skills necessary for the tasks involved in studying each poem. In other words, they received the same benefits as if vocabulary learning were their main focus even though they were putting forth most of their effort toward another area.

This suggests that as long as poems are at the appropriate level and unknown vocabulary items are glossed sufficiently, learners will see an improvement to their vocabulary when studying poetry even if the learning objectives focus elsewhere. Furthermore, since learners were still acquiring vocabulary via poetry in a context markedly different from most other conducted studies, it is reasonable to predict that some vocabulary learning may occur across various contexts, if not all of them, strengthening the support for existing theories on vocabulary learning through poetry (Imron & Hantari, 2021; Mardayati & Riwayatiningsih, 2021; Özen, 2012; Sibuea et al., 2024).

This study helps assuage concerns about the linguistic benefits of studying poetry and its practical implications, which are among the most common criticisms voiced about poetry in the language classroom (Santillán-Iñiguez & Rodas-Pacheco, 2022). Learners can likely be expected to acquire more words as they study poetry even while focusing on other aspects of the text based on the results of this experiment. This also reconciles linguistic learning with concerns about literary and cultural aspects of poetry because it indicates that language learning goals can be included in poetry classes while still mostly focusing on the literary merit of a poem, another common concern while studying literature in the language classroom (Elhabiri, 2017).

As for the hypothesis of this study, the evidence produced appears to support it and suggests that the answers to research question one — does the study of poetry as exposure to vocabulary items lead to different learning outcomes for learners than traditional word lists — is most likely no; participants studying poetry experienced similar growth. However, the answer for research question two — does the study of poetry as exposure to vocabulary lead to meaningful increases in vocabulary — is most likely yes. Learners showed statistically significant growth to their vocabularies while studying poetry.

The evidence produced by this experiment also favours the inclusion of poetry as a means of developing multiple learner competencies at once. For instance, paraphrasing has been found to positively benefit from studying poetry and could be a main focus while vocabulary develops

as an additional competence (Nilon, 2020). Moreover, this approach can work even with students still at the primary level of their education. It also suggests, in light of research conducted with older learners, that these benefits can extend through much of a learner's education (Alsyouf, 2020; Liao, 2017; Özen, 2012). Learners are likely to learn vocabulary even while prioritizing other skills and are likely to do so across age groups.

Limitations and Suggestions

There are, however, a few shortcomings in this experiment. It was unable to measure long-term retention of the vocabulary items due to constraints on class time. It is possible that one group might forget the words over a period of months even if they retained them over the weeks of this experiment, although this was minimised by adding two weeks between the final poem and the post-test. The differences in the groups' starting points may also have contributed to the different outcomes in the experiment. Additionally, it would be helpful to repeat the experiment to further strengthen any conclusions drawn. However, its position compared to the existing research does suggest that results are likely to be similar.

This experiment was not meant to address the development of other linguistic competencies. Whether or not to use poetry in a specific language class still depends on the goals of that class. For that reason, it would be advisable to study the effectiveness of including poetry in class for improving other aspects of language learning, such as pronunciation or reading comprehension.

Based on these findings, another area of research would be to investigate if certain types of activities or reading may have comparable outcomes or outcomes better suited for the goals of a given class as no comparisons between the vocabulary gains made while studying poetry and those that could be made during other activities were identified in the literature review for this paper.

However, in those circumstances where learners are interested in generally growing their vocabulary, the use of poetry is likely to be effective and thus recommendable. Teachers could choose to incorporate activities focusing on other skills while still developing vocabulary.

Conclusion

Poetry is not the most widely beloved literary genre. For this reason, justifying its role in the language classroom often comes down to claims of the benefits it can have. However, many of these claims are difficult to prove as they are founded in such nebulous ideas as understanding the human experience. As a result, discussions on the inclusion of poetry in language classes can turn into ideological debates rather than true scientific inquiries. For this reason, it is increasingly important to empirically test the effectiveness of the study of poetry on language acquisition. Student goals are increasingly pragmatic; requiring learners to spend time on activities that do not help them meet their goals is ethically suspect, regardless of the supposed ancillary benefits.

In contrast, these ideological arguments can be laid to rest if pragmatic goals are properly addressed by research that tests their theoretical underpinnings. Poetry has already proven an excellent tool for promoting language growth in several areas. Leaning into these validated uses, from vocabulary development to improved syntax, not only prioritizes the desires of the students but also opens the door to the less provable, but widely circulated, benefits of poetry in the language classroom.

Statement of Ethics

As all participants in the experiment were minors, their guardians were informed about the full scope of the experiment through a plain language description of the activities. Students

were informed that their answers would be recorded and anonymized and that participation was voluntary with no consequences should they choose not to participate. Students were then given informed consent forms that they could take home to their parents. Guardians were given two weeks to ask questions about the project if they, and any student whose guardians did not give their consent did not have their data included. The activities of the experiment were considered well within the confines of established activities for the school and thus suitable class work, without any meaningful risk, even for those not participating in the experiment. No conflict of interest was identified by the researcher.

About the Author

Ethan Hopkin is currently a PhD candidate at the International University of Catalonia. His primary area of interest is the use of poetry and other literary texts to advance L2 learning goals. ORCID ID: 0009-0007-0355-7110

To Cite this Article

Hopkin, A. (2026). Leveraging poetry for L2 vocabulary growth. *Teaching English as a Second Language Electronic Journal (TESL-EJ)*, 29(4). <https://doi.org/10.55593/ej.29116a7>

References

- Alkhaleefah, T. A. (2017). What is the place of English literature in ELT classrooms? A review of related studies. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 6(7), 192.
https://www.academia.edu/35040155/What_is_the_Place_of_English_Literature_in_ELT_Classrooms_A_Review_of_Related_Studies
- Alsyouf, A. (2020, September 14). Cento as a creative writing approach to language learning. *Research-publishing.net*. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED608129>
- Cho, K.-S., Ahn, K.-O., & Krashen, S. (2005). The Effects of narrow reading of authentic texts on interest and reading ability in English as a foreign language. *Reading Improvement*, 42(1), 58–64. ERIC - EJ711794 - The Effects of Narrow Reading of Authentic Texts on Interest and Reading Ability in English as a Foreign Language. *Reading Improvement*, 2005-Mar-22. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ711794>
- Elhabiri, H. (2017). People's Democratic Republic of Algeria teaching the writing skills through literary texts board of examiners. *Academia.edu*.
https://www.academia.edu/33820069/PEOPLES_DEMOCRATIC_REPUBLIC_OF_ALGERIA_Teaching_the_Writing_Skills_through_Literary_Texts_Board_of_Examiners. Accessed 12 Feb. 2023.
- ER-Central. (2024). Extensive Reading Central. <https://www.er-central.com/ogte/>
- Frey, A. L. (2016, November 30). Effects of a multimodal approach on ESL/EFL university students' attitudes towards poetry. *Journal of Education and Practice*.
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1139053>
- Imron, A., & Hantari, W. C. (2021, April 5). How poetry improves EFL Learners' vocabulary through curriculum-based dynamic assessment. *Semantic Scholar*.
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/7c73/a080156718f31458b4b8db037e1099eeaceb.pdf>
- Jabsheh, A. A. H. M. (2019). The positive relationship between teaching or using English poetry as an instructional source and the teaching--learning of different language skills and sub skills. *Online Submission*, 4(11), 726-730.
<https://doi.org/10.36348/sjhss.2019.v04i11.007>

- Joe, A. (2010, March 31). The quality and frequency of encounters with vocabulary in an English for academic purposes programme. *Reading in a Foreign Language*.
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ887883>
- Khan, S. (2020). Why and how to use a poem in ELT classroom. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching*, 7(3), 803-809.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1258429.pdf>
- Kuswardani, R., Abida, F. I. N., Fahri, & Zuhri, F. (2022). Language Style Approach to Teach Poetry in EFL Classroom. *Sang Pencerah [The Environmentalist]*, 8(4).
<https://doi.org/10.35326/pencerah.v8i4.2550>
- Liao, F.-Y. (2017, November 30). Prospective ESL/EFL teachers' perceptions towards writing poetry in a second language: Difficulty, value, emotion, and attitude. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1257351>
- Mardayati, L., & Riwayatningsih, R. (2021, November 21). The effectiveness of poetry for enhancing students' vocabularies on reading.
<https://proceeding.unpkediri.ac.id/index.php/eltt/article/view/2770/1904>
- Matsuoka, W., & Hirsh, D. (2010, March 31). Vocabulary learning through reading: Does an ELT course book provide good opportunities?. *Reading in a Foreign Language*.
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ887877>
- Nanquil, L. M. (2019, November 30). Perspectives, practices, and insights on the teaching of literature: A reflective narrative. *Perspectives, practices, and insights*.
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1311054>
- Nichols, W. D., Rasinski, T. V., Rupley, W. H., Kellog, R. A., & Paige, D. D. (2018). Why poetry for reading instruction? Because it works!. Login: CHPL Resource. <https://research-ebSCO-com.research.cincinnatiLibrary.org/c/2bkdtv/viewer/html/bntkba357v>
- Nilon, R. (2020). Poetic license: using documentary poetry to teach international law students paraphrase skills. *InSight: A Journal of Scholarly Teaching*, 15, 142-156. [EJ1261524.pdf](https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1261524.pdf).
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1261524.pdf>
- Özen, B. (2012, November 24). Teaching vocabulary through poetry in an EFL classroom. (95) teaching vocabulary through poetry in an efl classroom.
https://www.academia.edu/90821803/Teaching_Vocabulary_through_Poetry_in_an_EFL_Classroom
- Porto, M., & Zembylas, M. (2021, November 30). The role of literature in intercultural language education: Designing a higher education language course to challenge sentimental biopower. *Intercultural Communication Education*. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1372184>
- Salarvand, L., Guimaraes, N., & Balagholi, Z. (2021, November 30). Instructional strategies' impacts on efl learners reading fluency: A review. *THAITESOL Journal*.
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1340892>
- Santillán-Iñiguez, J. J., & Rodas-Pacheco, F. D. (2022). Developing academic writing skills in EFL university students through haiku composition. *Revista Electrónica Educare*, 26(1), 196-212.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357495021_Developing_Academic_Writing_Skills_in_EFL_University_Students_Through_Haiku_Composition

Sibuea, E. R., Siregar, P., & Sembiring, J. (2024, February 13). The impact of lyrical poetry on student vocabulary acquisition. View of the impact of lyrical poetry on student vocabulary acquisition. <https://jurnal.radisi.or.id/index.php/JournalETANIC/article/view/372/188>

Spring, R. (2022). Free, online, multilingual statistics for linguistics and language education researchers. Center for Culture and Language Education, Tohoku University 2021 Nenpo, 8, 32-38. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.12037.63202>

Appendix A

Name:

Part One: Write the correct word from the word bank under its definition. You can only use a word once. Only use the words in the word bank above the question.

Word Bank Erupt Waterspout Froth Downy Sponge

A soft tool that can suck up liquid and is used for washing

The thing that you turn on and off to control the water in a sink

Explode, especially upward

Very soft, often like fur

When a cloud of bubbles appears at the top of a liquid

Word Bank Gardener Convertible Feather Shed Steam

Very hot water vapor

Someone whose job is to work with plants and flowers

One of the things that covers the body of a bird

A small building, often made of wood, used especially for storing things

A car whose roof can be put away.

Word Bank Beetle Teal Doze Ogre Noxious

An insect with a round, hard back

A shade of blue that is mixed with green

Harmful or poisonous

To sleep lightly for a short time

A large imaginary creature in children's stories who eats people

Word Bank: Sneakers Lap Moss Earthquake

The upper part of your legs when you are sitting down

Shoes used for sports

A sudden shaking of the Earth

A small green plant that is very soft and often looks like fur

Word Bank Sweep Yawn Flake Sprinkle Grotesque

To scatter small pieces of something

To open your mouth wide and breathe in deeply because you are tired or bored

A small thin piece that breaks away easily from something else

To push something from a surface with a brushing movement

Extremely ugly in a strange way

Word bank Toss Harness Farmhouse Landing

A set of bands used to hold a person or animal in a place

Where a farmer lives

When something comes down to the ground after being in the air

To throw something gently

Part two: Circle the best word below the sentence to fill in the blank. You will pick only one word in each question.

It's easy for kids to learn new things because they soak them up like a _____

- a) Sponge
- b) Beetle
- c) Landing
- d) Waterspout

Nothing is coming out. I think the _____ has something in it.

- a) Shed
- b) Ogre

- c) Waterspout
- d) Downy

Kids are like young plants, and their parents are their _____

- a) Convertibles
- b) Gardeners
- c) Feathers
- d) Doze

We keep the tools in a _____ next to the greenhouse.

- a) Teal
- b) Lap
- c) Sponge
- d) Shed

Be careful. Rocks can be slippery if they have wet _____ on them.

- a) Moonbeams
- b) Moss
- c) Harnesses
- d) Ogres

Why should I be afraid of someone who is as tiny as a _____?

- a) Froth
- b) Grotesque
- c) Convertible
- d) Beetle

Our new textbook is light as a _____.

- a) Yawn
- b) Landing
- c) Feather
- d) Farmhouse

If you win this competition, you will go home with a shiny, brand new _____

- a) Convertible
- b) Toss
- c) Sprinkle
- d) Flake

The father had the child in his _____ to keep her from crying.

- a) Sprinkle
- b) Lap
- c) Steam
- d) Eruption

I decided to paint my room _____ like the ocean.

- a) Grotesque
- b) Downy
- c) Harness

d) Teal

Make sure you get a lot of sleep at night so you don't _____ off in class.

- a) Waterspout
- b) Ogre
- c) Doze
- d) Sprinkle

His beard looked like the _____ of a pot of boiling pasta.

- a) Froth
- b) Feather
- c) Landing
- d) Harness

When I get mad, sometimes I try to let off some _____ by exercising.

- a) Flakes
- b) Yawns
- c) Farmhouse
- d) Steam

If you don't need those old papers, you should _____ them out.

- a) Erupt
- b) Gardener
- c) Toss
- d) Convertible

Don't put too much cheese on the pizza. _____ it on.

- a) Toss
- b) Sprinkle
- c) Erupt
- d) Flake

It's hard to focus with the _____ smell of that perfume.

- a) Noxious
- b) Moss
- c) Yawn
- d) Farmhouse

The statues weren't supposed to be pretty. They were meant to be scary and _____.

- a) Noxious
- b) Lap
- c) Spongey
- d) Grotesque

I'd love to spend the summer working in a _____ instead of getting burnt at the beach.

- a) Landing
- b) Sneaker

- c) Farmhouse
- d) Feather

Your younger siblings are running like crazy. I think we might want to put them in a _____ to keep them under control.

- a) Steam
- b) Waterspout
- c) Grotesque
- d) Harness

She _____ all of the clutter from the table to make room for her project.

- a) Swept
- b) Harnessed
- c) Shed
- d) Sneakers

The baby was bald except for some _____ fluff on the top of his head.

- a) Downy
- b) Teal
- c) Harnessed
- d) Frothing

In the bright lights of the soccer field, the rain looked more like _____ of snow.

- a) Moss
- b) Flakes
- c) Feathers
- d) Froth

I want to skip my next class. It's so boring, just one huge _____.

- a) Farmhouse
- b) Beetle
- c) Yawn
- d) Noxious

They thought it was an alien _____ site, but it was just a chalk drawing made by some kids.

- a) Flake
- b) Sweep
- c) Waterspout
- d) Landing

After my sister snuck out last night, my mom _____ with anger.

- a) Tossed
- b) Harnessed
- c) Erupted
- d) Yawned

The room was shaking so much I thought it was an _____, but it was just my neighbors having a party.

- a) Waterspout
- b) Moss

- c) Earthquake
- d) Sneaker

Of course my shoes are quiet, that's why they're called _____.

- a) Teal
- b) Sneakers
- c) Steam
- d) Waterspout

When my sister first wakes up, she's not very nice. Honestly, she acts like a(n) _____.

- a) Ogre
- b) Yawn
- c) Landing
- d) Steam

Appendix B

There is no correspondence between the scores in Group A and the scores for Group B for any of the charts listed.

Group A Pretest	Group B Pretest
44	53
39	50
51	22
54	51
49	54
43	54
28	21
33	26
50	44
25	28
12	51
52	30
56	9
43	49
54	53
	9
	24
	29
Mean score 42.20	Mean score 36.5
SD: 12.70	SD: 16.04

Group A Post-test	Group B Post-test
54	56
53	54
53	55
56	21
56	54
51	56
52	53
41	28
41	43
48	45
42	49
33	53
55	54
56	29
53	56
	42
	12
	24
Mean score: 49.6	Mean score: 43.56
SD: 7.06	SD: 14.30

Copyright of articles rests with the authors. Please cite TESL-EJ appropriately.