

## Title: Using Poetry to Teach the Theme of Place

**Overview:** One of the big questions that geographers answer using the framework of the five themes is: What is a location like? Geographers use the theme of place to describe a location based on its human and physical features. This theme describes what sorts of work people do, what games they play, what sorts of houses they live in, and what the landscape looks like.

### Benchmarks and Standards:

Strand	Sub-Strand	Standards	Benchmarks
V. Geography	D. Essential Skills	The student will use maps, globes, geographic information systems and other sources of information to analyze the natures of places at a variety of scales.	1. Students will demonstrate the ability to obtain geographic information from a variety of print and electronic sources. 2. Students will make inferences and draw conclusions about the character of places based on analyses and comparisons of maps, aerial photos, and other images.

### Lesson Objectives:

1. The students will define the theme of place, physical features and human features.
2. The students will identify physical and human features in a photograph and a poem.
3. The students will write a poem that uses physical and human features to describe a place.

**Grade Level:** Grade 8

**Subjects:** World Geography and Language Arts

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Prerequisites:** Will have read Chapter 1 Section 1 of World Explorer: Western Hemisphere from Prentice Hall. Students must also be able to define the theme of place, human and physical features.

**Required Materials:** Overhead transparencies, paper, pencils, copy of “Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost

**Suggested Procedure:**

**Opening-** Yesterday we read our textbook and defined each of the Five Themes of Geography. Today we will use the theme of place to describe your home town.

**Development:**

1. While sitting in groups of four, the students in pairs will make word maps for theme of place, physical feature, and human feature.
2. Groups report on their word maps. The teacher will write the meanings on the overhead to build a class definition.  
“Class we have defined the theme of place, physical and human features. Now let’s use these words to look at photographs of a real location.”
3. Students make the following chart on a piece of paper.

Physical Features	Human Features

4. Put slide #1 on the overhead. Teacher models the procedure for filling out the chart for the picture. Using the prompts: What is this a picture of? What is it like? Where is it? What are the physical and human features in the picture that support your answers?
5. Put slide #2 on the overhead. This time the students in groups of four use the same prompts to fill out their own chart. After a few minutes the groups report. The lists are recorded on the overhead.
6. “Class we have identified physical and human features in photographs. Now let’s do the same thing using a poem.” Read Robert Frost’s poem, “Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening”.
7. As a whole class activity identify the human and physical features in the poem. Students enter the human and physical features from the poem onto their chart.
8. Give each group either song lyrics or a poem. Choose lyrics of songs that you have recordings for or poems that the students will be comfortable reading aloud. Some resources for materials are; [www.songlyrics.com](http://www.songlyrics.com) and [www.bartelby.com](http://www.bartelby.com)
9. Each group will be given an overhead transparency that they can use to annotate the physical and human features in their song or poem. Play the song while the whole class can see the annotated lyrics.

**Closing:**

1. Students will write an acrostic poem using the letters S-T-P-A-U-L or M-I-N-N-E-S-O-T-A. The poem must include both physical and human features. Students could also use other place names.
2. Completed poems will be submitted to the school literary magazine for publication.

**Differentiation:**

Students can use words of greater or lesser length to make their acrostic poem. Students may write other forms of poetry as long as they contain physical and human features of a place.

**Assessment:**

Rubric for Acrostic Place Poem

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
Poem contains a detailed description of both physical and human features that accurately describe a place	The poem accurately describes both physical and human features of a place	Poem does not contain accurate description of human and physical features

**Credits:**

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**WORD MAP**

Word \_\_\_\_\_

What is it?

What is it like?

What are some examples?

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Acrostic Poem Assignment  
Geographic Theme of Place

During class for the last several days we have studied the Five Themes of Geography. We have learned that geographers describe a location by its physical and human features. This description is the theme of place.

Your assignment is to write an acrostic poem. You will use the word St. Paul or Minnesota. Your poem must include specific and accurate details about the physical and human features of the location that you choose.

In an acrostic poem the title or topic is printed vertically, letter by letter. Each letter is used in the construction of phrases or sentences to describe the topic. Use physical and human features in your poem about St. Paul or Minnesota. Here is an example:

Chicago

**C**ubs make the bleacher bums cheer, afternoons, at Wrigley Field  
**H**ot dogs on every corner from Bridgeport to Evanston  
**I**nland sea called Lake Michigan  
**C**onnects the city to the waters of the wide world  
**A**sssembler, retailer, railroader, meatpacker, banker now home on the  
**G**reat street, State Street  
**O**lden place of the Pottawatomie of long ago.

Rubric for Acrostic Place Poem

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
Poem contains a detailed description of both physical and human features that accurately describe a place	The poem accurately describes both physical and human features of a place	Poem does not contain accurate description of human and physical features