Thinking about planning:
I have two Special education students who need a lot of support and encouragement. My class as a whole needs to have varied tasks throughout the lesson or else they become distracted and easily lose focus. Students have worked with a different form of poetry before namely the haiku. I hope to use their prior knowledge in order to introduce the free verse poem, “The Survivor” by Marilyn Chin. For example, students are already familiar with the use of syllables in poetry and they understand that less writing can lead to more meaning. I hope to be able to build on their knowledge as we begin to dissect and interpret “The Survivor.”

Content information:
This lesson fits with the curriculum because this month is Women’s History month and during these particular set of lessons we will be looking at poetry from various female poets such as Marilyn Chin, Gwendolyn Brooks, and Adelaide Crapsey. These lessons are a part of a bigger unit that encompasses multicultural literature. Previous assessments done in poetry have shown that students have a strong grasp on poetry especially with the haiku. Students were able to interpret complex meaning and produce their own haikus. I decided to strengthen their knowledge and add different types of poetic forms. In this particular lesson the poetic form analyzed was free verse. The standards addressed in this lesson were:

7.RL.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

7.RL.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

7.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 discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Objectives:

1) Students will determine a theme or central idea of “The Survivor” and interpret its development throughout the poem.

2) Students will determine the meaning of selected words and phrases such as: tarry, puce-pink, relinquish, and render.

3) Students will write routinely over the course of the week as they compose free writes, focus writes, and interpret poems.
Language information:

In this lesson I address interpretation. When students are able to interpret literature and support their interpretation with text and their analysis; they become active participants in literacy. When students are able to engage in a discussion and backup their interpretation of language they have a stake in the discussion and they can begin to formulate further interpretations as they receive and dissect the interpretations of peers. The vocabulary within this lesson is: stanza, verse, tarry, puce-pink, personification and imagery.

**Thinking about instruction:**

Orientation/Engagement/Motivation:

I will engage the students with a focus write that asks them to interpret Marilyn Chin’s quote, “All that blooms must fall.” I will ask them to think about the previous focus writes that they have written to see if they can link this quote to previous material. In addition, we can have a conversation about how most adults communicate their concern for young people and also the media’s obsession with youth. I think this would be an interesting springboard into the poem “The Survivor.” I will communicate our objectives for the day orally.

Presentation/Explicit Instruction:

I plan to explicitly model some interpretation with the text by displaying the poem on the Smart board and doing a Think-Aloud. I plan on illustrating the use of repetition and how that enhances the meaning of the poem. I also plan to call on students and ask them to cite evidence that supports the theme. Afterwards, I will hand out a worksheet, which scaffolds how to interpret the poem by asking specific questions.

Exploration/Expression/Practice/Feedback/Application:

After the Think Aloud and classroom discussion, I have planned to give them a worksheet that will guide them by asking questions that will help them interpret the poem. As a class we will go through each question and clarify any misunderstandings that may arise. Students will know what is expected of them because of the directions written on the worksheet and our run through about what the questions are asking. Students will have the opportunity to practice this new skill in the following two lessons where they will interpret cinquains and sonnets. I may ask a variety of questions however; one specific question I will ask is “Where is the evidence for your interpretation?” If I begin to see that there is a pattern of misunderstanding during the completion of the worksheet then I will address it immediately. I will also give special attention to my two special education students or pair them up with stronger students who can help them.

Closure

Students will be working in groups of 4 during this lesson. I will ask one student from each group to summarize what they have learned today. In addition I will be giving out exit slips, which asks students to define what they think interpretation is.
**Thinking about assessment:**

**Types of Assessment:**

I will be using formative assessment. I will be checking for participation in discussion and also the completion of the interpretation worksheet for “The Survivor” in addition to the exit slips.

**Assessment content:**

I will know whether or not students have met the objectives by observing the types of conversations held by the different groups of students. I can go around each group and ask what different themes they have found within the poem? How do the different parts of the poem support the theme? How does the development of the poem illustrate the theme?

**Data analysis:**

I will collect the worksheets and look for patterns of misunderstanding by observing if one particular question was misinterpreted and perhaps carried out wrongly by certain amount of students. I will use this opportunity to check whether or not my own phrasing of the question was badly worded or if it simply did not “fit in” with the rest of the questions. This information will help me to create better questions or tailor instruction for future lessons. For students who have not met the objectives, I may offer to stay after school for extra help or speak to them privately about how we can find a joint solution to their misunderstanding. This may include possibly changing their seat because of distractions, changing my own instruction to better fit their needs, or addressing any misconception about what the objectives are. For students who have surpassed the objectives, I think it would be interesting if they were to teach their peers. More than likely, they will excel and their peers will get to know the material through the lens of a peer.

**Thinking about practical matters:**

**Materials:**

Smart Board
Copies of “The Survivor”- Marilyn Chin
Copies of Interpretation worksheet
Exit Slips
Paper
Pens

**Script:**
(3 minutes) Free write
(3 minutes) Focus write “All that blooms must fall.”
(3-5 minutes) Sharing/End share with teacher interpretation of quote and introduce Marilyn Chin.
(5 minutes) Think Aloud /Class discussion on “The Survivor”
Emphasis on repetition
Emphasis on citing evidence for theme
(15 minutes) Group work on worksheet/Check for understanding/Time on Task
(5 minutes) One student from each group shares what was learned
( Remaining time ) Wrap up, Exit Slip
The Survivor

Don't tap your chopsticks against your bowl.
Don't throw your teacup against the wall in anger.
Don't suck on your long black braid and weep.
Don't tarry around the big red sign that says "danger!"
All the tempests will render still; seas will calm,
horses will retreat, voices to surrender.
That you have this way and not that,
that your skin is yellow, not white, not black,
that you were born not a boychild but a girl,
that this world will be forever puce-pink are just as well.
Remember, the survivor is not the strongest or
most clever;
merely, the survivor is almost always the youngest.
And you shall have to relinquish that title
before long.

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online source: www.washingtonpost.com Poet: Marilyn Chin

http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/a_f/chin/online.htm
1) Listen as I perform the poem. List (3) adjectives that describe the mood or the feeling that you get after listening to the poem.

2) Please identify one example of personification and interpret its meaning.

3) What does the word *survivor* mean to you and how do you interpret its meaning as the title of the poem?

4) Determine the theme of “The Survivor” and cite (2) phrases or lines that support the theme.

5) Beyond words: Visualize the poem and draw one example of its imagery.
How do you define interpretation?