

3–7 Grade ELA Lesson Plan

Limelight: Curtain Up on Poetry Comics! by Renée M. LaTulippe

Grade Levels

3–7

Time

45–60 minutes

Common Core State Standards (CCSS ELA)

- **RL.3–7.1:** Ask and answer questions using evidence from literary texts.
 - **RL.3–7.2:** Determine the theme or central message of poems and stories.
 - **RL.3–7.4:** Determine the meaning of words, figurative language, and poetic devices.
 - **RL.3–7.7:** Explain how illustrations contribute to meaning, mood, and tone.
 - **W.3–7.3:** Write narratives using descriptive details.
 - **W.3–7.4:** Produce clear writing appropriate to task and audience.
 - **SL.3–7.1:** Participate in collaborative discussions.
 - **L.3–7.5:** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language and word relationships.
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Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Analyze how poetry and illustrations work together to tell a story.
 - Identify poetic devices such as rhyme, rhythm, personification, and imagery.
 - Explore themes of creativity, teamwork, and perseverance.
 - Understand the stages of producing a theatrical performance.
 - Write an original poem inspired by theater or everyday objects.
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Essential Questions

- How does poetry tell a story differently than prose?
 - How do illustrations strengthen a poem's meaning?
 - Why is every role important in a performance?
 - How can ordinary objects become interesting characters?
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Materials

- *Limelight: Curtain Up on Poetry Comics!*
 - Poetry Analysis Graphic Organizer
 - Chart Paper
 - Sticky Notes
 - Writing Journals
 - Colored Pencils or Markers
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Vocabulary

- Poetry
 - Verse
 - Stanza
 - Rhythm
 - Rhyme
 - Personification
 - Imagery
 - Dialogue
 - Graphic Novel
 - Theme
 - Theater
 - Ensemble
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Before Reading (10 minutes)

Activate Prior Knowledge

Ask students:

- Have you ever been in a play, concert, or school performance?
- What jobs are needed to put on a show besides actors?
- Can an object tell a story?
- What makes poetry different from a regular story?

Students complete a **Think-Pair-Share**, then share ideas with the class.

During Reading (25 minutes)

Poetry Detective

Students choose one poem to analyze.

Encourage students to notice:

- Rhyme
- Rhythm
- Repetition
- Personification
- Facial expressions
- Comic panels
- Colors
- Stage details

Class Discussion

Discuss:

1. Which poem was your favorite and why?
2. How do the illustrations help tell each poem?
3. Why did the author give voices to objects like the script or piano?
4. What message does the book share about teamwork?
5. How does the format of poetry change the reading experience?

Mini-Lesson

Poetry + Comics = Powerful Storytelling

Explain that poetry uses:

- Rhythm
- Rhyme
- Word choice
- Figurative language
- Imagery

Graphic novels add:

- Facial expressions
- Body language
- Color
- Panel sequence
- Visual humor

Together, poetry and illustrations create meaning in unique ways.

Ask students to identify one page where the artwork adds information that the poem doesn't directly say.

Collaborative Activity (10–15 minutes)

Behind the Curtain

Divide students into small groups.

Assign each group a theater role:

- Actor
- Director
- Stage Manager
- Costume Designer
- Script
- Piano
- Spotlight
- Curtain

Groups answer:

- Why is your role important?
- What challenges does your role face?
- How does your role help the show succeed?

Groups present their role to the class.

Writing Activity (20–25 minutes)

Writing Prompt

Imagine you are an object involved in a school play, such as a microphone, stage curtain, costume, spotlight, script, or musical instrument. Write a poem from your point of view describing everything you see before, during, and after opening night. Include descriptive language, personification, and sensory details to show how your object feels about helping bring the performance to life.

Extension for Grades 5–7: Turn your poem into a one-page poetry comic with illustrations that enhance the meaning of your words.

Extension Activities

Grades 3–4

Poetry Comic

Create a four-panel comic featuring an everyday classroom object that comes to life.

Include:

- A title
 - A short poem
 - Dialogue
 - Illustrations
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Grades 5–7

Analyze a Poem

Choose one poem from the book and explain:

- Theme
- Speaker
- Mood
- Poetic devices
- How the illustrations enhance meaning

Support your analysis with examples from the text and artwork.

Drama Connection

Work in small groups to perform one of the poems using:

- Expression
- Movement
- Voice
- Simple props

Discuss how performance changes the audience's understanding of the poem.

Assessment

Formative

- Poetry Analysis Organizer
- Class discussion
- Group presentations
- Reading observations

Summative Writing Rubric

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Creativity	Original and engaging	Creative	Some originality	Limited
Poetic Devices	Effective use	Some use	Minimal use	Not evident
Organization	Clear and complete	Mostly organized	Some organization	Difficult to follow
Illustrations (if included)	Strongly support meaning	Support meaning	Some connection	Minimal connection
Conventions	Few errors	Some errors	Frequent errors	Many errors

Exit Ticket

Students answer one question:

- Which poem taught you something new?
- Which illustration added the most meaning to a poem?
- Why is every role important in a theater production?
- What object would you enjoy writing a poem about?

Differentiation

Support

- Read poems aloud together.
- Provide examples of rhyme and personification.
- Offer sentence starters and poetry frames.
- Use graphic organizers for analyzing poems.
- Pair students for collaborative reading.

Extension

- Write a collection of three poems from different theater objects' points of view.
 - Compare *Limelight* to another poetry collection or graphic novel.
 - Research a poetic form featured in the book (such as a haiku, cinquain, or free verse) and write an original example.
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Cross-Curricular Connections

Theater: Explore the roles involved in producing a play and discuss how collaboration makes performances successful.

Art: Create an illustrated poetry comic that combines visual storytelling with verse.

Music: Read selected poems aloud while experimenting with rhythm, pacing, and expression.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Connection

Students reflect on:

- Creativity
 - Teamwork
 - Self-expression
 - Confidence
 - Respect for different talents
 - Appreciating everyone's contributions
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Big Idea

Limelight: Curtain Up on Poetry Comics! celebrates the magic of theater by blending poetry and graphic storytelling. Students discover that every voice, every role, and every creative contribution matters—and that stories can be told in imaginative ways through both words and art.