

Phillis Wheatley Lesson Plan: “On Imagination”

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Suggested Grade-levels: 6-12, but adaptable for all ages/levels

Lesson Focus: Interpret Line/s about “On Imagination” by Phillis Wheatley”

One copy of the poem: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/52632/on-imagination>

Copy as it appeared in Wheatley’s book:

<https://archive.org/details/poemsonvarioussu00whea/page/64/mode/2up?q=imagination>

Learning objectives:

Interpret figurative language including personification in context.

In literary text, identify point of view and explain how it is developed and conveys meaning.

Procedure: The teacher will read or play a version of “On Imagination” on “You Tube.” The teacher and the students will discuss the point of view of Phillis Wheatley, and images that are covered in the poetry relating to imagination.

Discussion Questions:

What do you notice about the first few lines in the poem?

What types of specific images are connected with imagination to “soaring like a bird?”

How are Fancy and Aurora connected to Imagination in the poem?

Activities: Students will select a line/s from the poem and draw an image that connects with it. The students will also write a paragraph explaining why they chose the line/s and how the image they designed relates to the chosen line.

Before students begin the image-making, the teacher could model selection and image creation or share the example below of image-making inspired by the poem.

Extension Activities: Write a poem in a small group or with the whole class. The students can also create a 4 Square Mini Storyboard referencing “On Imagination.”

