



THE CPITS RESIDENCY

The purpose of a CPITS residency is to encourage students to write. Our poets focus on the basics of experiential creative writing; working with critical thinking and language as tools for self-expression and discovery. The emphasis is on exploration of the creative process rather than the product—though students will usually produce poems in each session. The poet-teacher presents model poems along with his or her own work and published student work. This is accessible and exciting poetry presented in an enthusiastic manner. The poet-teacher leads students in discussion of poetic tools, including image, metaphor, rhythm, line, stanza, alliteration, and wordplay. Most of the workshop is devoted to a writing exercise that follows from examples and discussion.



photo: Greg Pantages



photo: Justin Lewis

A part of each session is devoted to reading aloud and discussing students' work. Students are encouraged to respond to each other's creative efforts in thoughtful and positive ways, to learn from each other's work, and to approach literature with an insider's—a writer's—appreciation and understanding. Our program meets and enriches California state standards for writing and language arts. Individual sessions usually last fifty minutes to one hour. Typically, the poet meets with each class once a week for the length of the residency.

PRODUCING AN ANTHOLOGY OF STUDENTS' POEMS

Longer residencies (fifteen sessions or more) may be designed to include the production of printed anthologies of students' poems. Public poetry readings and performances by students may also be arranged, usually as a culmination of a residency or to celebrate the publication of an anthology.

THE ROLE OF THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

Classroom teachers are an integral part of the CPITS program and are expected to remain in the classroom during the poetry sessions. In collaboration with the classroom teacher, visiting poet-teachers can tie poetry workshops into other curricular areas, including science, ecology, watershed study, art, performance, history, and math. Teachers who share in discussions and writing often inspire their students to take greater risks and learn from the lessons. CPITS also offers separate in-services and creative writing workshops for teachers.



photo: Justin