

Slender Means - The Making of Small World Poems Inspired by the art of Georgia O’Keeffe

Memorial Art Gallery
Teacher In-Service
Wednesday, October 11, 2006, 4:30-7 p.m.
Workshop Leader: M.J. Iuppa

Materials:
A Selection of Georgia O’Keeffe’s art postcards
A word spill page
Paper and pencils

Directions for creating a Small World Poem:

Select an O’Keeffe art postcard
Look carefully at the painting (postcard).
On your brainstorming page, you will see six categories:

Images Emotions Sound/Smell Action Verbs Month/Season Colors

Look carefully at your painting and write down a word under each category.

Example:

apple hunger wet leaves rustling October russet

You will have six or more words. Once you have those words, write words in response to those words. This is free association. Write it quickly, let the words spill.

Now you will have at least 12 or more words. You’ve doubled your vocabulary.

Using the words from your word spill, I want you to write a Small World Poem, which is no longer than six lines. Of course, you may use any other word in your vocabulary. So your poem makes sense.

Think of the elegance of the Japanese forms such as haiku or senryu (three line poems) which are based on “image equals thought.” The opportunity to focus solely on the image/object leads us to everything else. How true the adage “less is more.”

M.J. Iuppa, poet, essayist, short storyteller, is the Writer-in-Residence and Director of the Arts Minor Program at St. John Fisher College.

Word Spill Page:

Images

Emotions

Sound/Smell

Action Verbs

Month/Season

Colors