

Lesson Starter: Shaking Things Up

Poem by Susan Hood: “Books, Not Bullets” illustrated by Selina Alko

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- Overview

Shaking Things Up is a poetry collection about extraordinary young women. On pages 32-33, Malala Yousafzai is highlighted with a poem by Susan Hood and accompanying illustration by Selina Alko. **Content Note:** As may be clear from the title, this poem is explicit about the shooting Malala experienced; please take note of the content of the poem to determine if it is appropriate for your students. The lesson can be adapted to pair with other poem/illustration pairings in this title.

Alko uses the color red in her illustration, seemingly as a play off the word “*read*” in the poem. This lesson is an opportunity to talk to your students about “inspiration” and how we can take one thing we see in the world and use that to inspire something new.

- Resources & Preparation
 - *Shaking Things Up* by Susan Hood (or other poetry book, preferably illustrated)
 - Paper
 - Drawing/writing implements
- Instructional Plan
 - Student Objectives:
 - Connect illustrations/pictures to corresponding poems/words
 - Start to consider abstract ideas like “inspiration”
 - Create their own illustration or poem
 - 1. Read a poem to your students
 - a. This poem could be any poem in *Shaking Things Up* or another poetry book
 - b. This plan will include references to “Books, Not Bullets” but the principles can be applied to other poem/illustration pairings
 - 2. Ask your students open-ended questions such as:
 - a. What do you notice?
 - b. Do you hear any interesting words?
 - c. What does this poem sound like?
 - d. What color is this poem?
 - e. What does this poem smell like?
 - 3. Read the poem again and encourage students to draw or write while they’re listening to your reading.
 - 4. Talk to your students about what they have drawn/written; talk about “inspiration” and ask them how they are “inspired.”
- Go further with the color inspiration with this lesson from Read Write Think about Color Poems: [Color Poems Using the Five Senses](#)