

Peshtigo 8th graders showcase their writing

PESHTIGO — In honor of poetry month, eighth-grade English teacher Laura Finger taught a poetry unit in April, culminating in a cafe-style poetry performance for peers in the library called Poetry Cafe.

"Poetry really allowed me to get to know the kids more personally," Finger said. "It also got their creative juices flowing."

After teaching students figurative language skills like imagery, symbolism, allusion and juxtaposition, students wrote a variety of poems in varied forms and styles.

"Our Poetry Cafe turned out to be a cultural sharing session," Fingers said, adding that "many students chose to share poems highlighting childhood memories."

Finger said she enjoys teaching English. "Teaching students literature, vocabulary, and grammar allows them to communicate in all facets of life," she said. "English skills give students a

voice. It's my passion. I love reading and writing myself, so teaching it to my students comes with ease."

Finger said she loves teaching eighth graders to appreciate literature and properly use the English language to convey their thoughts and ideas. "I support, inspire and teach what I love every day; and what I love most is the bonds I've created with my students. We are like a family here. I build relationships with my students and hope it has a lasting impact on their future."

She said poetry especially, allows students to express themselves without restrictions, explaining that it's easier to explore different topics and make connections to the student's lives.

She said she loves the freedom that poetry supports.

"Whenever you make an assignment personal, they care about it and take it more seriously," Finger said, adding that she was impressed with the growth and maturity she witnessed as students

Poetry Cafe provides an outlet for students' 'creative juices'



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Peshtigo 8th grade classmates enjoy humor expressed through poetry by Gracie Bickel in the school's Poetry Cafe.

wrote about more personal topics.

The "Where I'm From" poems were the most popular type of poetry students chose to read to the Poetry Cafe audience. Lots of snaps were heard after each poem was shared.

"When you connect to their personal life experiences, learning becomes more meaningful," Finger explained. "It

was like taking a walk down memory lane. It was very nostalgic. This poetry type gave students the perspective that we aren't all from the same background. It taught students to be conscious of others' feelings and to have greater compassion for one another."

This article was submitted by the Peshtigo School District.