



Author	Creech, S. (2001). <i>Love that dog: a novel</i> . New York, NY: Harper Trophy.
Number of pages	86
Genre	Poetry
Age range	Grades 2 – 5
Brief summary	I would consider <i>Love That Dog: A Novel</i> an excellent device to be used for teaching poetry. Newberry Medal winner, Sharon Creech, cleverly presents the mechanisms of this form of writing from the point of view of a young boy and his aversion to poetry. On the first page of the book, the reader learns how Jack feels as he says, “I don’t want to/because boys/don’t write poetry...Girls do.” (1) Creech brings the reader into Jack’s class and follows him on his journey of appreciation of the poetry he is studying, especially through his excitement at writing to Walter Dean Meyers and his visit to Jack’s class. In the end, the reader sees how his writing develops, how he identifies his writing as poetry whereas in the beginning he did not consider it to be so, and how he comes to have pride in his work, allowing Miss Stretchberry to identify him with his poems. The inclusion of Jack’s work portrays how he learns to put his thoughts and emotions into words...and those words are his poetry.
Brief evaluation	15/15 <i>Love That Dog: A Novel</i> is a wonderful choice. I think poetry is a difficult topic to teach as it is often one of the first abstract concepts students encounter in their English/Language Arts lessons. Creech does a wonderful job in presentation of a story line and of the concept of poetry.
Awards	Christopher Award; Mitten Award (Michigan); Claudia Lewis Poetry Award; 2002 Beehive Award

Criteria for Evaluation	0 Does not meet curriculum standards	1 Acceptable but not a first choice	2 Satisfactory	3 Right on target!
Plot	The plot is not interesting.	The plot holds the reader's attention and engages the reader.	The plot is intriguing and enjoyable.	The plot is engaging and provides a story line that invites the reader to turn to the next page!
Issue/Theme	The issue/theme is not pertinent to and/or inappropriate for the intended age group.	The issue/theme is engaging but is not handled in an impressive manner and/or does not thoroughly address the issue/theme.	The book carefully and effectively addresses a critical issue/theme for the intended age group.	The book appropriately covers relevant matters and enables the reader to critically think about his/her position on the issue/theme.
Characters	The characters are undeveloped.	The reader gets a sense of the characters and is somewhat able to get inside their thoughts and motivation but character development could be stronger.	The characters are well-developed. The reader is able to understand their motivation and behavior.	The character development is strong. The reader is able to empathize with their situations, understand their actions and reactions, and critically think about how s/he would behave in the characters' situation.
Dialogue	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Writing Style	The writing style is poor, the story line unclear. It is difficult to follow the progression of events.	The writing style and fluency is acceptable. The reader may be confused on occasion as to sequence of events.	The writing style is enjoyable and the story flows in a natural, coherent progression.	The book is well-written, clearly relays critical information, and exemplifies exceptional mechanics of writing.
Reaction & Response	The book does not provide insight or provoke independent thought, opinions, or ideas.	The book causes the reader to think about the story, characters, and theme but may send conflicting messages that are too confusing for the intended age group.	The book effectively evokes a personal reaction to the text.	The book elicits some sort of a strong emotional reaction while provoking further contemplation of the theme and guiding the reader to independent thought.