



Unit 8

English Language Arts: Poetry

Featured athlete: Robert Powell

Lesson Plan | Suggested Grades: 4-8

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Lesson Plan



Featured Athlete:
Robert Powell

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Read about Robert Powell and his life.
2. Discuss what was important about Robert Powell and some of his major accomplishments.
3. Learn to write different types of poetry related to the information they have learned about Robert Powell.
4. Create a visual representation of your poem.

Required Materials

1. Photocopies of biography of Robert Powell (*appended at the end of this lesson plan*)
 - One copy per student
2. Writing and drawing tools
 - pencils/pens and paper
3. White 8.5x11 paper for students
4. Scrap paper for writing their poems
5. Construction paper (various colours), to frame the poem
6. An example of a poem that students will be creating

Opening (10 minutes)¹

Ask students to name a famous athlete. For each answer ask them why that athlete is famous. What is it about them that makes you remember them? Explain to the class they will be learning about an athlete who is famous in Canadian and British Columbian history: Robert Powell.

Classroom Activity (30 minutes)

Read the article "Robert Powell (tennis)" as a class having the class take turns reading it out loud. Using the "Think, Pair, Share" strategy, have students discuss reasons that he may be famous or what some of his big milestones were in his life.

- Brainstorm and write their answers on a flipchart or whiteboard where they can see them. *Examples:* He was the captain of the best ever Davis Cup Team for Canada. Fought bravely in the Battle of Vimy Ridge. Inspirational, brave, etc.
- Show the class how to create a shape poem using an example you have done. It could be a volcano, another sport or, for lower grade levels, do an example using Robert Powell himself (tennis racquet and ball, tennis course, something to do with Vimy Ridge, etc.)
- Have students begin writing their poems on a scrap piece of paper. When they feel ready they can draw the shape on the paper provided and practice filling the shape with their words. Once they have created an image with words that they are satisfied with, they can put their poems onto a construction paper border which they will glue on on a background.

¹ - NOTE: These time allocations are approximate, and have been estimated to fit into a class period of 45 minutes total. Please adjust the times to better suit your class if necessary.

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- A shape poem is a poem in which the words create a shape. The shape should have something to do with the poem you are writing about
- The poem could just be words or sentences associated with Robert Powell. If you want to challenge the class, choose a type of poem that has a rhyming sequence such as a limerick.

Conclusions and Reflections (5 minutes)

Provide plenty of time for cleanup. Reflect on how many students managed to complete the task. Some students may need another half class to finish.

Evaluation

- Did the student finish their poem in the time allotted?
- Are all of the components present in the poem?
 - Title
 - Information
 - Shape of poem relevant to topic
 - Creativity
- Peer Evaluation: "2 Aces and a Let". An "ace" is something the student has done well. eg. very creative, visually appealing. A "let" is something the student can work on for next time. *Examples:* use more descriptive language. Students will trade poems with 2 other students and provide feedback and get feedback from each using this system. If you don't want to use tennis terminology then it could be called two positives and a suggestion.

Adaptations and Extensions

Adaptations for Grades 1-3

- Students can create an acrostic poem using Robert Powell or another athlete/famous person and then draw a picture that represents their poem. (An acrostic is when you spell out a person's name and write a word that describes them for each letter of their name.)
- Have the racquet and or ball shape already cut out and just have them fill in the space with larger writing.

Adaptations for Grades 9-12

- Students can write a free verse poem with a drawing/painting to accompany it (more of a focus on his entire life ending in death in WWI and the significance of that)
- Students can have an entire poetry unit and create a book of different genres of poetry using whatever subject the teacher desires.

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Extensions (all grades)

- Students create a different style of poem
- Students create another shape poem using information of another athlete
- Students can create a poem booklet with a variety of poems and topics.

Curricular Links:

Grade 4 PLOS

English Language Arts

- **A2** Use speaking and listening to interact with others for the purposes of sharing ideas and opinions
- **B2** Read fluently and demonstrate comprehension of grade-appropriate information texts
- **B8** Respond to selections they read or view, by expressing opinion with supporting evidence.
- **C4** Create meaningful visual representations that communicate personal response, information, and ideas relevant to the topic

Grade 5 PLOS

English Language Arts

- **A2** Use speaking and listening to interact with others for the purposes of sharing ideas and opinions
- **B2** Read fluently and demonstrate comprehension of grade-appropriate information texts
- **B8** Respond to selections they read or view, by expressing opinion with supporting evidence.
- **C4** Create meaningful visual representations that communicate personal response, information, and ideas relevant to the topic.

Grade 6 PLOS

English Language Arts

- **A2** Use speaking to explore, express, and present a range of ideas, information, and feelings for different purposes and audiences
- **B2** Read fluently and demonstrate comprehension of grade-appropriate information texts with some specialized language
- **B8** Respond to selections they read or view, expressing opinions and making judgments supported by explanations and evidence
- **C4** Create meaningful visual representations for a variety of purposes and audiences that communicate personal response, information, and ideas relevant to the topic

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Grade 7 PLOS

English Language Arts

- **A2** Use speaking to explore, express, and present a range of ideas, information, and feelings for different purposes and audiences
- **B2** Read fluently and demonstrate comprehension of grade-appropriate information texts with some specialized language and some complex ideas
- **B8** Respond to selections they read or view expressing opinions and making judgments supported by explanations and evidence
- **C4** Create meaningful visual representations for a variety of purposes and audiences that communicate a personal response, information, and ideas relevant to the topic

Grade 8 PLOS

English Language Arts

- **A1** interact and collaborate in pairs and groups to support the learning of self and others
- **B2** Read fluently and demonstrate comprehension of grade-appropriate information texts with some specialized language and some complex ideas
- **B1** read, both collaboratively and independently, to comprehend a variety of literary texts
- **C4** Create thoughtful representations that communicate ideas and information to record and describe

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Appendix



Robert posing for a photo with the 1913 Davis Cup Team

Robert Powell Biography

It's remarkable and sometimes a little sad how unbelievable athletic stories slip through the cracks of time, neglected and forgotten. The unprecedented success of Canadians Eugenie Bouchard, Milos Raonic, and Vasek Pospisil at Wimbledon in 2014 opened that crack on a long-buried tennis story a little wider to the general public. If you hadn't heard of Robert 'Bobby' Powell before then, you weren't alone.

The remarkable tale of one of Canada's earliest tennis stars was known only by a scant few tennis aficionados and one man who resolutely championed Powell's cause for years: Montreal's Christopher Marks. Let us look back at the life of a true pioneer who paved the way for so many in Canadian tennis.

Born in Victoria in 1881, Bobby Powell's family settled in BC in 1862, nine years before BC joined Confederation. His father, Israel Powell, was an influential doctor, politician, and for nearly two decades Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Powell Street in Vancouver and Powell River on Vancouver Island are named after him.

Young Bobby learned to play tennis on a grass court his father built beside their Victoria home. He began playing Victoria Tennis Club tournaments in his teens, learning the game from future Davis Cup teammate J. F. Foulkes.

Beginning at age 18, Powell served four years as private secretary to BC's Lieutenant-Governor, but he never stopped playing tennis. He won the BC singles championship in 1901, 1903, and 1904, in the latter year adding both the Pacific Northwest singles and doubles titles. At the same time, he was largely responsible for the formation of the North Pacific International Lawn Tennis Association encompassing clubs from BC, Washington, and Oregon.

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Appendix



Robert in uniform, World War I

From 1904-06, Powell worked for the Governor of Fiji in the South Pacific. While there, he won the island's singles championship on two occasions.

Later in England pursuing a law degree, Powell travelled extensively and won tennis tournaments and national titles in Austria, Germany, Scotland, France, Monaco, and South Africa. He captained Canada's tennis team at the 1908 Olympics in London, finishing ninth in singles and seventh in doubles. That same year, he reached the semifinals at Wimbledon, unmatched by any Canadian male in singles until Raonic in 2014. The following two years at Wimbledon, Powell won the All England Plate and reached the final of the doubles competition.

In 1913, Powell captained Canada's Davis Cup team that featured four Victoria-based players who defeated Belgium and South Africa before losing to the US in the zone final, marking Canada's best-ever Davis Cup result before the 2013 Canadian team's semifinal finish.

When the Great War broke out, Powell enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force and served as an officer in the trenches of war-torn Europe. In the spring of 1917, Powell wrote a letter back to his mother in Victoria: "Darling Mother, please don't worry and be anxious about me. If I fall, I should like you only to feel pride in the fact that I am trying to do my highest duty and never to mourn me. But I have confidence that God will help me to come through it. But the whole thing is Hell."

Just weeks after writing this letter, Powell was killed in action at age 36 leading his platoon of fifty men in a charge across no man's land at the Battle of Vimy Ridge.