

**Teaching Chapter 3 – Odes**

 **Intro**

This chapter is about caring out loud. About countering the automatic reflex to not let anyone know that you care about something, in case they mock you for it. It’s about practicing bravery and sharing.

**Suggested Mini Exercise**

**‘Finding Your Ode Subject’**

This mini exercise is to get the students thinking about things that they like, so it’s easier for them to choose what to write an ode to later in the lesson.

* Tell the students to write down the following four headings.
* 1. Your favourite childhood film or book
* 2. Your favourite food
* 3. An object you couldn’t live without (phone, bike, hair straighteners etc)
* 4. A person in your life that means a lot to you (this could be someone you know or someone you admire)
* Give the students five minutes to write down a few things under each of these headings.
* After the timer is up, get them to underline one or two things that they think they have a lot to say about and could write a lot about. This will be the thing they write an ode to later.

**Poem and Learning Objectives**

**“Dear Hermione” – Structure, Odes (paying tribute to), Beliefs**

**Link - https://youtu.be/Qr3gxwVombw**

**Dear Hermione**

when you first floated down the hallways of the Hogwarts Express

hair like you just licked the inside of a toaster

I knew you we’re the one for me

Robes on, spells memorised, paying no attention to

the boys, with dirty noses, broken glasses and dead parents

because you knew what was important

yes, Hermione, you knew you were there

on the Hogwarts Express

at platform nine and three quarters

because you were

Magic

1st Year;

*“Hermione Granger and the Deductive Reasoning that Saved Harry’s Ass”*

you were so small but full of sass

muggle born and GRYFFINDOR

you made your voice echo like a roar

cause bitches gotta know,

that its *Levi-Osa*, not *Levio-Sa!*

2nd Year;

*“Hermione Granger and the Art of Taking One for the Team”*

you had to deal with racists, stupid people

a big dirty Basilisk

you still solved the problem while you were petrified

3rd Year;

*“Hermione Granger and That Brief Period You Were a Time Lord”*

determined to fit all your learning into a little hourglass

with so much class, you refused to grass up Professor Lupin

just for being a werewolf

4th Year;

*“Hermione Granger and Epiphany That You Can Be Both Hot AND Smart”*

you made it clear that you are no ones after thought

only idiots leave you a last resort

5th Year;

*“Hermione Granger and the Time You Had to Do Literally Everything Because Harry Potter Is A Giant Frickin’ Emo”*

Dumbledore’s Army came to be because you

gathered a small motley crew of others who knew

the only way to do what was right was to be prepared to stand up and fight

6th Year;

*“Hermione Granger and the Danger of Copying Someone Else's Homework”*

you told him

to be fair, you told him

7th Year;

*“Hermione Granger and Longest Walk in the Woods Ever”*

*(because someone let Harry pick the route)*

followed by a fight to the death all in the name of what’s good

you gave up everything

for hope of a better world

you were always the best friend and never the girlfriend

your first love was always books

you never let anyone tell you that who you are is wrong

and in a world full of JKR’s

we all needed to hear that

Dear Hermione

you made this little girl, sitting alone with a book in her lap understand

you can sit alone with a book in your lap

and still be the hero of your story

Dear Hermione

you made this teenager understand that

the only thing more important than your education

is your bravery and your kindness

Dear Hermione

you made this woman understand that

no matter how many of them may come for you

there will always be daughters of the witches they forgot to burn

Dear Hermione

it’s been 20 years

and you still make me believe

in Magic

**Context – What’s the Poem About**

This poem is simply a love letter to one of my favourite characters in fiction, while also acknowledging all the things I learned from the Harry Potter book series. Being taught to recognise racism and classism and sexism, along with the lesson that adults are flawed and just trying their best, were all great lessons to learn. I got to talk about all of those things in the poem by addressing the narrative to a singular character.

**Group Discussion – Things to Ask the Class**

* What can you tell about the writer by what they praise in the poem?
* What real life issues are mentioned in the poem?
* What function does humour play in the poem?
* The poem is both a list and a letter. Can spoken word poetry be these things?
* Do you feel more comfortable writing a list than a poem? Why do you think that is?
* The line “you never let anyone tell you who you are is wrong, and in a world full of JKR’s, we all needed to hear that” was originally “you never had to change who you were to fit in, and in a world full of Bella Swan’s, I needed to hear that”. I changed it when JK Rowling came out with transphobic remarks, and I was adamant that ‘Dear Hermione’ could never be perceived as agreeing with JKR’s stance on Trans people. Do you think that you can redraft your own poems as your views change?
* Odes can also be used as an act of reclaiming. Imagine someone once made fun of your hair and it made you feel bad about it. If you sat down and made yourself think about all the things you like about your hair and then you wrote an ode about it, it would reverse the damage done to your self-esteem when someone made fun of you. In your spare time, try writing an ode as an act of reclaiming something.

**Suggested Main Exercise**

**‘Writing an Ode as a Letter’**

Goback to what the students wrote in the earlier exercise. Tell them to pick one thing from their mind map and that is the thing they are going to write an ode about.

* Get the students to take a fresh page and write the thing they are going to write their ode to at the top.
* Give them ten minutes of planning, just to scribble down as much information as they can about that thing. When they first met/encountered it, how it makes them feel, what it looks like (remember the five senses for this one), why they want people to know that they like this thing?
* Put ten minutes on the clock. Stress that this is not the writing stage, this is still just the planning stage.
* After the ten minutes are up, it’s time to write their ode in the form of a letter. Get them to structure it like a letter, so starting with ‘Dear….’ and ending with ‘love …..’. They can make it as short or as long as they like. Because they have a clear start and end point it should be easy for them to get to the end of this writing exercise as they have a clear view of the point they are trying to get to.
* Start the clock.
* If you have time, encourage some students to share their odes with the class.

**Some things to think about**

If you like things and never talk about them, how are you ever going to find other people who like that thing (put another way, how will you find people you have things in common with)? In school it is easier to make friends because you are all having the shared experience of attending school, which is a pretty big thing to have in common. Outside of school how will you attract a circle of people to you who you have things in common with you if you do not share your passions?