

Title: Context across Time

by John A. Nieves

Lesson Plan focus: [Catherine Pierce/Ira Joel Haber “Dear Atom Bomb,”](#)

Audience: High School, College or Continuing Education Creative Writing Class

Objectives:

1. To generate new work using the thinking model set forth in Pierce’s poem.
2. To use Haber’s artwork to inform image choices.
3. To have students think about their lives in new terms both internal and external.
4. To have students consider the craft choices in the broadside.

Lesson Suggestion:

1. Have the class read and carefully look at the Pierce/Haber broadside, ideally as homework, but on the spot can work also.
2. Ask the class to describe how Pierce and Haber use the atom bomb in their art (these answers will not be the same).
3. Discuss how Pierce uses a current event (atom bomb drills during the cold war) from her youth to frame her present.
4. Ask the students to choose a current event from their youth to try to make a poem commenting on their own life. Suggest using colors or images from Haber’s artwork to inform their work and keep it concrete.
5. After giving time (20-30 minutes suggested) for research and drafting, ask the students to talk about their process and what choices they made. What event did they choose? How were they trying to make it applicable to their lives now? What images/colors/shapes were they using from the art and how?
6. If anyone is very proud of what they have drafted, let them share their work with the class.

Other Broadside That Could Work for This Activity:

- [Lynch/Benning “Canned Food Drive”](#)
- [Gross/Franklin “November”](#)
- [Franklin/Bernardy “Shreveport”](#)