Slam Poetry: Getting Started with Sarah Kay

Standards and Objectives:

* [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/SL/9-10/1/) Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
* [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.4](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/9-10/4/) Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Procedure:

Opening (20 min)

* Introduce Sarah Kay (who she is, what she does, etc.)
* Show Sarah Kay TedTalk video http://www.ted.com/talks/sarah\_kay\_if\_i\_should\_have\_a\_daughter.html

Writing Activity (10 min)

* Have students write a list of “10 Things I Know To Be True” (like the examples from the video)

Compare with peers (10 min)

* Students share their lists with their classmates and find 4 things from other students’ lists that fall under the following categories:
* 1 thing that is exactly the same
* 1 thing that is completely opposite
* 1 thing you’ve never heard of before
* 1 thing you know well, but that is looked at in a new way

Poetry Writing (10 min)

* Students choose 1 of the items from their narrowed list of 4 to write about
* Remaining class time is spent working on their poems

Assessment and Evaluation:

* The first standard will be measured by how well students share and discuss their lists with their peers. Discussion should be encouraged by the teacher rather than simply having students gathering the list of 4 and sitting back down. The teacher should observe and facilitate when needed. Lists will be handed in at the end of the period and assessed on effort and completion.
* The second standard will be assessed by the quality and effort put into each list to be turned in at the end of the period. Poems will also be turned in, but can be kept for further editing and performance opportunities (i.e. for the poetry slam – see the week 4 planning matrix). Final drafts/performances of poems should be assessed on effort, creativity, and appropriateness following the slam form and performing for an audience.