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Practical, purposeful poetry writing: exploring motivation and engagement levels in a comparison of the use of print and digital approaches

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Title of report: Practical, Purposeful Poetry Writing: Exploring motivation and engagement levels in a comparison of the use of print and digital approaches

Abstract

This study aimed to compare the motivation and engagement levels of six Grade 10 students when engaged in composing poetry through a conventional writing process as well as in a digital process for a writing task at a private, co-educational school in Gauteng, South Africa. The study also aimed to explore how the multimodal affordances of digital technology impacted on the learners' poetry writing and how this could affect motivation and engagement. Data were collected from self-report questionnaires, a focus group interview, observations as well as in the form of a conventional written poem and a digital poem and the presentations of the poems. An analysis tool was designed as a lens through which to view motivation and engagement in poetry tasks.

The main finding is that the participants in the study are marginally more motivated and engaged when writing poetry digitally, but also that the written and digital composing processes complement each other. Poetry writing as an activity was found to be engaging for high school learners whether in the written or digital form.

Another finding is that the use of digital technology, whilst still not without challenges, is not being drawn on substantively in the classroom, even in a well-resourced school.

Keywords: **motivation; engagement; poetry; digital literacy; multimodality; creativity**