

Performance Task: Connections in Verse Showcase

Designated ELD • Grade 7 • Unit 4: Connections That Shape Us — Blood and Belonging • Lesson 44

Teacher Overview & Rubric

At a Glance

Administered in: Lesson 44 (built across Lessons 41–43)

Mode: Individual showcase presentation (poem read aloud + craft explanation + literary analysis + brief Q&A), 28–41 minutes total for the class

Primary ELD standard: ELD.PI.7.9 • **Also assessed:** PI.7.4, PI.7.6c, PI.7.12, PII.7.1, PII.7.2

Materials needed: Student original poem, literary analysis, and author’s note (drafted across L41–L43); Showcase Resource Toolkit from L41; Group Synthesis Notes from L42; Audience Note-Catcher; Presentation Language Support display

Anchor text: *Red, White, and Whole* by Rajani LaRocca

Short-Form Texts: *Fish Cheeks, Bicultural Identity*

Task Description

In this culminating Designated ELD performance task, students deliver an individual showcase that brings together three components produced across the showcase arc: an original poem, a literary analysis of one unit text, and an author’s note that explains the student’s own craft choices.

Students present to classmates as if their audience has not studied the unit, leaning into explanation rather than recall. The task is grounded in the unit’s communicative context: *Red, White, and Whole* by Rajani LaRocca and the unit text set (*Fish Cheeks, Bicultural Identity*). The poem may draw from the student’s own life, identity, or culture, or from a topic they know well (with teacher approval). Students take responsibility for the language choices — symbolic vocabulary, interpretive verbs, and craft moves — that make their meaning clear to an audience.

The Showcase is the payoff of the L41–L44 arc. In Lesson 41, students built a personal Showcase Resource Toolkit — collecting craft moves, symbolic vocabulary, interpretation frames, and theme directions from the unit texts. In Lesson 42, groups synthesized those resources into shared themes, named craft techniques, and committed to one specific change in their own poems. In Lesson 43,

students refined the poem, analysis, and author’s note; rehearsed delivery; and gave/received craft-focused feedback. Lesson 44 is the live performance — and this rubric is what teachers use to assess it.

What students do during the Showcase:

- Read the original poem aloud **with intentional pacing, expression, and at least one purposeful pause or emphasis**. Then explain *Red, White, and Whole* two or three craft choices — naming the choice, then naming its effect on the reader.
- Use **precise symbolic and interpretive language** (*blood, root, threshold*; suggests, conveys, reveals).
- Use **connectors** (such as *because, so, and as a result*) to link the poem, craft explanation, and literary analysis.
- Use **symbolic and craft-focused vocabulary** from the unit toolkit (*blood, root, tongue, threshold, heritage*).
- Name **two or three craft choices** in the author’s note, naming each choice and explaining how it creates meaning for the reader.
- Serve as an active **audience member** during peers’ presentations — using the note-catcher to record craft choices, symbolic moves, and interpretive language, and identifying one move that helped them understand.

Why This Task Matters

This task is the D-ELD culminating performance for Unit 4 and the assessment point for the unit-long essential question: *How do our language choices — including symbolic vocabulary, interpretive frames, and figurative language — communicate meaning and connection in both literary analysis and original creative writing?*

Students are demonstrating that they can put accumulated language to work for a real communicative purpose — not just produce isolated features in exercises. The author’s note is especially important: it is where the metalinguistic move lives. Students name their own craft choices and explain how those choices create meaning. That move surfaces the proficiency-level reasoning that the rubric assesses, and it gives multilingual learners practice in the asset-based, *can-do* framing of California’s ELD standards. The task is also the bridge to the ELA work students have done with *Red, White, and Whole* and the unit text set, treating those texts as a

communicative model for the student's own poem and analysis rather than a comprehension target.

Administration & Scoring Guidance

Setting up the Showcase

- Frame the audience as classmates who *have not* studied the unit, so students lean into explanation rather than recall.
- Distribute the audience note-catcher (Lesson 44, Learning in Action) so non-presenting students record craft moves, symbolic language, and interpretive insights, not just content.
- Keep the Lesson 43 Final Showcase Checklist (Poem / Analysis / Author's Note / Presentation) visible during delivery.
- Allow students to use outlines, note cards, or — for Emerging students — a fully written script for the analysis sentence and author's note. The poem should be read aloud either from the page or from memory.

Scoring with this rubric

- Place each student on the continuum using the **preponderance of evidence** during delivery; do not require every descriptor to be met to land at a level.
- Expect students — and even the same student across criteria — to land at different proficiency levels. That variation is informative.
- Some criteria are best assessed during the live presentation (e.g., Oral Delivery, Audience Adaptation); others are best assessed from the written portfolio (e.g., Component Completion, Craft Explanation in Author's Note). The rubric notes which lens fits each criterion.
- Do *not* penalize accented English, home-language code-switching, or non-target grammar features that do not obscure meaning.
- Use the rubric formatively as well as summatively: where the same criterion lands at *Emerging* across multiple students, return to that language feature in the next unit.

Differentiation reminders (from Lesson 44)

- **Emerging:** substantial scaffolding — speaking notes, brief oral rehearsal, partner co-presentation option, one short appreciation or question after each presentation; shorter

poem or concise craft explanation acceptable while still requiring one clear link between a language choice and meaning.

- **Expanding:** moderate scaffolding — extends each part with a reason or effect; uses at least one connector (because, so, this shows) in the craft explanation or analysis; one complete audience note plus one clarifying question or appreciation.
- **Bridging:** light scaffolding — connects the original poem and literary analysis with nuanced interpretive verbs, purposeful pacing, and a reflective statement about identity or belonging.
- **Newcomers / LTELs / Dually identified students:** see the Lesson 44 differentiation table for visual supports, register comparison moves, alternative response modes, and processing-time accommodations that preserve the language target.

Showcase Rubric: Connections in Verse

Lesson 44 D-ELD Culminating Task • Unit 4 • Grade 7

Purpose: Use this rubric to notice, name, and celebrate language growth during the Showcase. Consistent with California’s ELD framework, it is asset-based: each descriptor states what students *can do* at each proficiency level. Place each student on the continuum using the preponderance of evidence during delivery; students may land at different levels for different criteria, and that is informative.

Essential Question: How do our language choices — including symbolic vocabulary, interpretive frames, and figurative language — communicate meaning and connection in both literary analysis and original creative writing?

Guidance

- Expect different students — and even the same student across criteria — to land at different proficiency levels.
- Depending on your grouping decisions, you may decide to evaluate certain criteria for the whole group and others at the individual level.
- Do not penalize accented English, home-language code-switching, or non-target grammar features that do not obscure meaning.

Standards assessed:

- ELD.PI.7.4
- ELD.PI.7.6c
- ELD.PI.7.9 (primary)
- ELD.PI.7.12 • PI.7.4
- ELD.PII.7.1
- ELD.PII.7.2

Showcase Rubric: Connections in Verse

Criterion & Standard	Emerging	Expanding	Bridging
1. Component Completion & Coherence <i>ELD.PII.7.1 • PI.7.9</i>	Submits the original poem and one supporting piece (analysis or author’s note). Each piece is recognizable and uses familiar structures.	Submits all three components — poem, literary analysis, and author’s note. Each is recognizable and makes meaning available to the audience.	Submits a polished poem, a focused literary analysis, and an author’s note. Each component is internally coherent, and the three parts sit together as a unified showcase.
2. Symbolic & Interpretive Language Precision <i>ELD.PI.7.12</i>	Uses at least one symbolic word from the unit (e.g., blood, root, food, tongue) and at least one basic interpretive verb (shows, means) accurately.	Uses a growing set of symbolic vocabulary and interpretive verbs (suggests, conveys, reveals) with accurate meaning across the analysis and the author’s note.	Uses an expanded set of symbolic vocabulary and interpretive verbs with shades of meaning — distinguishing suggests from states, or conveys from describes — to surface layered meanings in the analysis.
3. Craft Explanation in Author’s Note (Metalinguistic Move) <i>ELD.PI.7.6c • PI.7.4</i>	Names one craft choice in the author’s note (e.g., “I used repetition”) and gives a basic reason.	Names two or more craft choices in the author’s note and explains how each conveys meaning to the reader.	Names two or more craft choices, justifies them in terms of the meaning they create, and shows audience awareness (e.g., “I used the line break here so the reader pauses with the speaker”).
4. Oral Presentation Delivery <i>ELD.PI.7.9 (Primary)</i>	Reads the poem aloud audibly using the script. Speaks in complete phrases or sentences. Audience can follow most of the explanation.	Reads the poem with discernible pacing and expression. Delivers a multi-part presentation (poem + at least one of analysis/author’s note) using notes, with details from the work supporting ideas.	Reads the poem with intentional pacing, emphasis, and at least one purposeful pause. Delivers a unified multi-part presentation with reasoning and textual evidence, and adjusts register for an

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Criterion & Standard	Emerging	Expanding	Bridging
			audience unfamiliar with the unit.
5. Audience Adaptation & Register <i>ELD.PI.7.4 • PII.7.2</i>	Uses an appropriate register for the showcase context. Names the topic so listeners can follow.	Adjusts language for an audience unfamiliar with the unit — frames the poem’s context briefly, defines symbolic terms when needed, and uses interpretive verbs to introduce craft.	Adjusts pace, word choice, and explanation in the moment when the audience needs more context. Treats Q&A as part of the audience-adaptation work, responding to questions with precise interpretive language.