Aimee Nezhukumatathil on Poetry  Aimee Nezhukumatathil (neh ZOO KOO mah tah tihl) was born in Chicago to a Filipina mother and a South Indian father. This interesting heritage has found its way into her poetry along with themes of love and loss. She currently teaches creative writing at the State University of New York, Fredonia.

“ You should have seen the look of confusion and even disgust on my friends’ faces when I told them we would be having fish for breakfast. Fried fish: the size of our pinky fingers and with heads and eyeballs still intact! This was the morning after a
slumber party during my junior high years—wasn’t there supposed to be ‘fun’ foods like jelly-filled donuts or fresh baked muffins? Clean, sweet foods. Nothing with *eye*balls. It was hard for me to explain to my friends that this was considered normal in the Philippines (where my mother is from) and in fact, a sign of great respect for your guests to be served hot crispy fish and rice for breakfast. Seeing my friends’ faces twisted in disapproval made me, at first, disappointed that they wouldn’t try something new, but second, mad at *myself* for not describing the delicious fish in such a way as to make it more appetizing and exciting.

Poetry is like one of those bullion/chicken broth cubes that you use to make a giant pot of soup. If you’ve ever unwrapped the cube and tasted it, you know that it is extremely concentrated with flavor and salt. These pungent cubes can color and flavor the description of something ordinary (water) into the most vibrant and alive way of communicating (a tasty soup). Poetry writing fills in the gaps of understanding an event, a place, a relationship, and even unusual foods. By just *talking* to my friends in junior high, I was not able to describe the delicious and savory fish breakfast. But years later, with *poetry*, I could highlight the sharp-tasty crunch of each bite, the warm and satisfying fullness of the rice—all washed down with a glass of ice cold mango juice: the taste of sunrise.

Even now, when I try to describe, for example, a recent trip to India—how magical it was to shop for saris (the South Indian women’s dress) with my grandmother—all the luminous bolts of glossy silks and sateen fabrics from the stacks of cloth on the store’s shelves thrown at our feet—I know I can’t possibly do it justice. But in a *poem*, when I am compacting/concentrating an experience into thin lines and stanzas, I can be choosy and select all the ‘important’ and sensory details like the sly winking eye of the shop owner: an asterisk on his face. Or I could describe the gold threads and glass beadwork on silken fabric colored like a robin’s egg. These rich details bring that sari shopping experience alive—even to people who have never seen that type of dress before.

If your writing is seasoned with concrete and specific details, no matter how different you think your experience is from someone else’s, you will find your way to a tasty connection. And ultimately for me, connection, communicating—that’s what writing poetry is all about."

Nezhukumatathil says that poetry allows her to connect and communicate with others. How do you make that kind of connection?
“The poetry and the songs that you are supposed to write, I believe are in your heart. You just have to open up your heart and not be afraid to get them out.”

—Judy Collins

How important is it that we express our feelings?

Learn It Online
Compare poetry to other types of writing.
See the "Poetry: Sound and Sense" video:
go.hrwc.com L8-669 Go
What Do You Need to Know About Poetry?

Did you ever read the song lyrics before playing a new CD? Sometimes the words don’t seem all that special. It takes music to bring them to life. Poetry is different. Poets use words to create music. To learn how poets do this, read on!

Sounds of Poetry

**Word Choice** One way poets create music in their poems is through the words they choose. The English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge once defined poetry as “the best words in their best order.” Listen to these opening lines from a famous poem:

Listen my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

from “Paul Revere’s Ride”
by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

All Longfellow gave us were words on a page, and yet more than a century after he wrote them down, the music still comes through.

**Rhythm** If words can create the haunting music of a poem, rhythm—the repetition of stressed and unstressed syllables—provides the poem’s beat. Like many other languages, English is accented. Certain syllables get a stronger beat than other syllables. The beat of a poem comes from the patterns made by the stressed and unstressed syllables. If you say a few English words aloud, you’ll hear the beat built into them: MOUN-tain, be-CAUSE, Cin-cin-NAT-i.

Read aloud this little *elegy*—a poem for someone who has died. Listen to the way your voice rises and falls as you read.

This lovely flower fell to seed;
Work gently, sun and rain;
She held it as her dying creed
That she would grow again.

“For My Grandmother”
by Countee Cullen

A regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables is called meter. Cullen’s simple meter, along with the short, plain words and few, short lines, helps us share the simple loveliness and faith Cullen saw in his grandmother.
Rhyme  The chiming effect of rhyme adds to the music of a poem. Most rhymes in poetry are end rhymes. In “For My Grandmother” the end rhymes are seed and creed, and rain and again (pronounced the old-fashioned way: uh GAYN). When the two rhyming lines are consecutive, they’re called a couplet. Here is a couplet with end rhymes that are spelled differently—moan and bone—but they rhyme:

Well, he seemed so low that I couldn’t say no; then he says with a sort of moan:
“It’s the cursed cold, and it’s got right hold
till I’m chilled clean through to the bone.”

from “The Cremation of Sam McGee” by Robert W. Service

Rhymes can also occur within lines; these are called internal rhymes. In the two lines above, low and no, and cold and hold are internal rhymes.

These rhymes are all exact rhymes. Many modern poets prefer approximate rhymes (also called near rhymes, off rhymes, imperfect rhymes, or slant rhymes). Approximate rhymes are sounds that are similar but not exactly the same, like follow and follow or cat and catch. In this example, staff and scarf are approximate rhymes:

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

from “Barbara Frietchie” by John Greenleaf Whittier

Some people think approximate rhymes sound less artificial than exact rhymes, more like everyday speech. Some poets use approximate rhymes because they feel that all the good exact rhymes have already been used too many times.

Repetition  Poets also make music in their poems by using repetition. The repeated beginnings and structures of the lines create the rhythm in the following example.

oh mother you plunged me sobbing and
laughing
into our past
into the river crossing at five
into the spinach fields
into the plainview cotton rows
into tuberculosis wards
into braids and muslin dresses

from “My Mother Pieced Quilts” by Teresa Palomo Acosta

Poets also use repetition of sounds. Note all the s sounds as you read aloud these lines:

and weightless suspended on a line
in space

from “The Word” by Manuel Ulacia

This is alliteration (uh lit uhr AY shun), the repetition of consonant sounds in several words that are close together. Repeated vowel sounds, as in weightless and space, are called assonance (AS uh nuhns).

Onomatopoeia  The line from Service’s poem, quoted in the first column, also includes an example of onomatopoeia (ahn oh maht oh PEE uh), which is the use of words with sounds that imitate or suggest their meaning—such as moan. Doesn’t sizzle sound like bacon frying on the grill? How about snap, crackle, pop? Words like these help poets bring sound and sense together.
Poetic Devices

Poems appeal to our emotions and imagination as well as to our sense of reason. Very often, poets use poetic devices such as these:

**Imagery** We are drawn into the experience of the poem through the poet’s use of imagery, or language that appeals to our senses. The following example appeals to our senses of touch, sight, and hearing:

> If our eyes we’d close, then the lashes froze till sometimes we couldn’t see; It wasn’t much fun, but the only one to whimper was Sam McGee.
> from “The Cremation of Sam McGee” by Robert W. Service

**Symbols** A symbol is something that has meaning in itself and also stands for something else. In “For My Grandmother,” the flower has meaning as a plant that blooms and produces seed, but it also represents Countee Cullen’s grandmother. Some symbols in literature are obvious, and some are fresh and subtle. Here are some common, or universal, symbols you will probably recognize:

- flag
- dove
- clover
- country
- peace
- good luck

**Figures of Speech** Figures of speech are words or phrases that describe one thing in terms of another and are not meant literally. Similes compare two unlike things using words such as like, as, than, and resembles. When you say, “He is as stubborn as a mule,” you are using a simile. In this simile, the cold weather is compared to a nail:

> Talk of your cold! through the parka’s fold it stabbed like a driven nail.
> from “The Cremation of Sam McGee” by Robert W. Service

A metaphor makes a comparison without using a connecting word. If you said, “He is such a stubborn mule,” you’d be using a metaphor. When poets carry a metaphor over several lines, it is called an extended metaphor. Here’s an example:

> A word is dead
> When it is said,
> Some say.
> I say it just
> Begins to live
> That day.
> by Emily Dickinson

A special kind of metaphor in which a nonhuman or inanimate thing is described as if it had human or lifelike qualities is called personification. In this example, grim melancholy, or sadness, sits on a large group of people watching a ballgame.

> So upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,
> from “Casey at the Bat” by Ernest Lawrence Thayer
Types of Poetry

Most people can recognize a poem when they see it. Poems usually come in lines instead of sentences and present ideas in stanzas instead of paragraphs. But there are exceptions to every rule, and poems come in many varieties.

Narrative Poems  Simply put, narrative poems tell stories. “Paul Revere’s Ride” tells of a famous incident that took place during the American Revolution. “Barbara Frietchie” tells of a woman’s courageous actions during the Civil War.

Ballads  A ballad is a song or songlike poem that tells a story. The story is often about love, betrayal, or death. Ballads usually have a regular, steady rhythm, a simple rhyme pattern, and a refrain, all of which make them easy to memorize. “The Dying Cowboy” is a traditional ballad.

Epics  Epics are long narrative poems, originally passed down by word of mouth, that tell about heroes who embody the values of the culture recounting the tale. “Beowulf” is an ancient epic from England. “Casey at the Bat” is a humorous poem that imitates the epic form.

Lyric Poems  Lyric poems usually do not tell a story. Instead, they express personal thoughts and feelings of the poet or the speaker (the poem’s narrator). “Birdfoot’s Grampa” expresses feelings about people and nature.

Sonnets  A sonnet is a specific type of lyric poem that is always fourteen lines long and usually has a particular type of meter. There are two main forms of sonnets: Elizabethan and Italian. “On the Grasshopper and the Cricket” is written in the Italian form by a famous English poet.

Odes  Odes are long, lyric poems that were traditionally written to celebrate a famous person or a lofty idea. Today many odes, such as “Ode to Thanks,” are written to celebrate ordinary things.

Elegies  An elegy is a poem of mourning, usually for someone who has died. “O Captain! My Captain!” is an elegy for the slain president Abraham Lincoln.

Free-Verse Poems  Free-verse poems do not follow a regular meter or rhyme scheme, but they do include other elements of poetry, such as rhythm, imagery, figures of speech, and alliteration. The free-verse poem “I Hear America Singing” is answered by another free-verse poem, “I, Too.”

Your Turn  Analyze Poetry

Read this little poem by W. S. Merwin, and answer the questions below.

Your absence has gone through me
Like thread through a needle.
Everything I do is stitched with its color.

“Separation” by W. S. Merwin

1. What type of poem is “Separation”?
2. What figures of speech does it contain?
3. What examples of alliteration can you find in the poem?
How Can You Find Poetic Elements in a Painting?

You have just learned some of the elements that go into creating a poem. While poetry and painting are very different media, they use some of the same elements, although in different ways. Poems create imagery through words, while paintings use color, line, shape, and perspective. Both may include symbols—things that have meaning in themselves but also stand for something else beyond—and repetition. They both also use these elements to present their subject in an original way.

Analyzing a Painting

Use these guidelines to analyze poetic elements in a painting.

1. Focus on the subject of the painting. Is the representation realistic or fanciful? somber or cheerful? What is the artist trying to convey by showing the subject in this way?

2. Consider the “language” of the painting—that is, its color, line, imagery, and perspective. What tone and mood are suggested by this “language”?

3. What details does the artist include or repeat? Are any details in the painting symbolic of something else?

4. How do the artist’s visual choices relate to the subject? How do visual and poetic elements combine to create a fresh idea about the painting’s subject?

Your Turn  Write About Poetic Elements in Art

Find a piece of art in this textbook that appeals to you. Then, write a description of the artwork’s poetic elements. Do you find any symbolism in its subject matter? What senses do its images appeal to? How does repetition of color, shape, line, or pattern contribute to the work’s mood? How do all these elements contribute to the message of the piece?
1. Malcah Zeldis has painted historic subjects as well as domestic scenes. What might this painting be saying about daily life?

2. What does Zeldis’s use of repetition of color, shape, and other details add to the meaning of this painting?

3. Think of the size and placement of the cat. What do you think this cat may symbolize?

Which Reading Skills Help You Understand Poetry?

Robert Frost said that a poem “begins in delight and ends in wisdom.” As we read a poem, we delight in its rhythms, rhymes, images, and comparisons and in the story or experience it shares. Yet by the end we often find wisdom that touches us.

**Reading a Poem**

Poems are meant to be enjoyed as well as analyzed. Here are some tips for reading poems.

**Read the poem for pleasure.** Then, ask yourself why you liked it. Perhaps you liked the story or the feelings expressed. If you enjoyed the sounds, you’ve probably picked up on rhyme. If you liked the beat of the lines, you responded to the rhythm. If you liked the poet’s unusual comparisons, you’ve noticed figures of speech. These elements of the poem help you enjoy the poem.

Notice the rhymes, rhythm, and rich imagery—language that appeals to the senses—in these opening lines from “Barbara Frietchie.”

> Up from the meadows rich with corn,  
> Clear in the cool September morn,  
> The clustered spires of Frederick stand  
> Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,  
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,  
from “Barbara Frietchie”  
by John Greenleaf Whittier

**Read the poem aloud.** After you’ve read the poem silently a few times, read it aloud. Each poem has its own sound, which you can hear more distinctly by reading it aloud. Pay special attention to punctuation. Don’t stop just because you’ve come to the end of a line. Stop only when there is a punctuation mark. Pause briefly at commas and dashes, and a little longer at periods.

**Pay attention to each word.** Poets often use few words, so each word is important. Look up any unfamiliar words. The shorter the poem, the more important each word is likely to be—like in this short poem by Alberto Forcada:

> Grandmother,  
> I’m cold;  
> can you knit me some wrinkles?  
> “Sweater” by Alberto Forcada

**Pay attention to the title.** Did you notice how important the title “Sweater” is to understanding that poem? Sometimes the meaning of the poem is stated or hinted at in the title.
Re-reading

One of the most important strategies for understanding—and enjoying—a poem is **re-reading**. You will understand some poems right away, but you will want to re-read them to enjoy their music. You will probably have no trouble following the story of “Paul Revere’s Ride,” but reading it over a few times, especially out loud, will help you enjoy its rhymes and rollicking rhythm.

When you re-read a poem that confuses you, think about each word and the feelings they bring up. They will be important clues to the poem’s meaning.

Paraphrasing

Another useful strategy for understanding a poem is paraphrasing. You restate a line, sentence, or stanza in your own words. You also explain the figures of speech. Poets sometimes use **inversion**—that is, they put parts of their sentences in reverse order from what you are used to. When you paraphrase, you put the sentence into a familiar order. For instance, in “On the Grasshopper and the Cricket,” John Keats writes

> The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
from “On the Grasshopper and the Cricket” by John Keats

You might paraphrase the line as “The earth’s poetry never ends.” But you’ll have to read the poem to understand what “the poetry of earth” is.

Using Form to Find Meaning

A poem’s form can help you understand its meaning. A sonnet, like “On the Grasshopper and the Cricket,” has a strict form. When you have learned the rules (as you will see on page 737), you will have a clue to figuring out the sonnet’s meaning.

Other aspects of form can also help you understand a poem’s meaning. In free verse poems, such as “Ode to Thanks,” the poet may use long lines as well as lines of only one word. Ask yourself why. It could be for the rhythm or the meaning—or, most likely, for both.

Your Turn  Apply Reading Skills

Read this opening stanza from “Ode to Thanks”:

> Thanks to the word
> that says thanks!
> Thanks to thanks,
> word
> that melts
> iron and snow!
from “Ode to Thanks”
by Pablo Neruda

1. Read the stanza aloud several times. Then, paraphrase it.
2. What does the figure of speech “word that melts iron and snow” mean?
3. Why do you think the poet puts the word *word* on its own line?
Re-read the riding instructor’s comment to the speaker, and think about what broader lesson, or message, the poet might intend.

### Forms of Poetry

Because the poem does not rhyme or have a regular meter, it is a free-verse poem. Because it expresses an idea rather than tells a story, it is a lyric poem.

### Literary Focus

#### Forms of Poetry

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**Read with a Purpose**

Read these two poems to discover the writers’ messages.

### Riding Lesson

by **Henry Taylor**

I learned two things from an early riding teacher. He held a nervous filly in one hand and gestured with the other, saying, “Listen. Keep one leg on one side, the other leg on the other side, and your mind in the middle.”

He turned and mounted.

She took two steps, then left the ground, I thought for good. But she came down hard, humped her back, swallowed her neck, and threw her rider as you’d throw a rock. He rose, brushed his pants and caught his breath, and said, “See that’s the way to do it. When you see they’re gonna throw you, get off.”

3. filly: young female horse.
Introduction to Poetry

by Billy Collins

Reading a Poem  The title and first line will give you clues that the speaker is giving a lesson on poetry.

Figures of Speech  The poet uses a simile to compare reading a poem to examining a color slide. In later lines, the poem is also compared, through metaphor, to a hive, a maze, a room, and a body of water.

I ask them to take a poem and hold it up to the light like a color slide

or press an ear against its hive.

5 I say drop a mouse into a poem and watch him probe his way out,

or walk inside the poem’s room and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want them to water-ski across the surface of a poem waving at the author’s name on the shore.

But all they want to do is tie the poem to a chair with rope and torture a confession out of it.

15 They begin beating it with a hose to find out what it really means.

Read with a Purpose  What might each author want you to learn from his poem?
MEET THE WRITERS

Henry Taylor
(1942–    )

A Lover of Horses

A Pulitzer-Prize–winning poet, Henry Taylor grew up in rural Virginia, where his father was a dairy farmer. Although Taylor decided at an early age not to follow in his father’s footsteps, he was strongly influenced by his surroundings. He says,

“Horses, in fact, were central to my life until I was in my early twenties; my sisters and I had various ponies and horses around the place, showing in small local horse and pony shows, and generally being as horsy as we could be. . . . Many of my poems draw heavily on that experience.”

Billy Collins
(1941–    )

A “Lifter of Chalk”

When Billy Collins was named poet laureate of the United States in 2001, he said,

“It came completely out of the blue, like a soft-wrecking ball from outer space.”

Surprising and playful images are typical of Collins’s poetry. Collins was born in New York City. For more than thirty years, he has been a professor of English at the City University of New York—or, as he modestly puts it, a “lifter of chalk in the Bronx.” His poetry has brought him many awards as well as wide popularity. Some have called him the most popular poet in America.

Think About the Writers
How have the poets’ interests in real life been translated into their poems?
Into Action: Reading a Poem

Choose either “Riding Lesson” or “Introduction to Poetry.” Fill in a chart like the one below to demonstrate your skills at reading a poem. Describe in the right-hand column what the items in the left-hand column contributed to your understanding or enjoyment of the poem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Poem:</th>
<th>My Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Re-reading/reading aloud</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using form to find meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Talk About . . .**

1. With a partner who has chosen the same poem as you, talk about what you learned from the poem. Refer to the chart you filled in above for ideas, and try to use the Academic Vocabulary words listed at the right in your discussion.

**Write About . . .**

Use the underlined Academic Vocabulary words in your answers to the following questions. Definitions of the terms appear to the right.

2. What associations are evoked in your mind when the speaker in “Riding Lesson” says that the horse “threw her rider as you’d / throw a rock”?

3. What do you think is Billy Collins’s intent in suggesting that his students “walk inside the poem’s room / and feel the walls for a light switch”?

4. What is your interpretation of the meaning of each poem?

**Writing Focus**

**Think as a Reader/Writer**

You will find many types of poems in Collection 7. The Writing Focus activities on the Preparing to Read pages will guide you in understanding each poet’s techniques. On the Applying Your Skills pages, you will have opportunities to practice these techniques in your own writing.

**Academic Vocabulary for Collection 7**

**Talking and Writing About Poetry**

Academic Vocabulary is the language you use to write and talk about literature. Use these words to discuss the poetry in this collection. The words are underlined throughout the collection.

- **intent** (ihn TEHNT) n.: purpose; plan; aim. *The intent of a lyric poem is to share an idea or emotion.*
- **evoke** (ih VOHK) v.: draw out; elicit. *A good poem will often evoke strong feelings in a reader.*
- **associations** (uh soh see AY shuhtnz) n.: connections in the mind between different things. *To understand a poem, you may have to consider your own associations to the words and images.*
- **interpretation** (ihn tur pruh TAY shuhtnz) n.: explanation of the meaning. *Each reader may have a different interpretation of a poem.*

**Your Turn**

Copy these Academic Vocabulary words into your *Reader/Writer Notebook. Now, think of one of your favorite songs. Use each Academic Vocabulary word in a sentence that explains why the song appeals to you.*
What makes something beautiful? meaningful? important?

Blue Riot (detail) by TAFA. Oil on canvas (30” x 40”). Courtesy of the artist.

QuickWrite
What do you find beautiful? Is there something that gives special meaning to your life? Is there an object that is especially important to you? Write down your ideas.
Lyric Poems  Some poems tell stories, while others vividly express the thoughts and feelings of the speaker. Poems that express thoughts and feelings are called **lyric poems**. Lyric poems are usually short, and they evoke—rather than state directly—a single, strong emotion.

**Reading a Poem**  The first time you read a poem, don’t worry about identifying literary elements; just enjoy! Then, read the poem again, paying closer attention to its individual parts, such as its title, the writer’s word choice, and punctuation.

**Into Action**  As you read the poem, keep track of what you get out of the poem each time you read it by filling in a chart like this one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birdfoot’s Grampa</th>
<th>Valentine for Ernest Mann</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First reading:</strong></td>
<td><strong>First reading:</strong> I like the way the speaker talks directly to me. I think the part about the skunks is funny.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second reading:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Second reading:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Think as a Reader/Writer**

**Find It in Your Reading**  Both of these poems use imagery to help the reader see ordinary things in a new light. **Images** appeal to the reader’s sense of sight, smell, touch, hearing, or taste. As you read these poems, list at least three sensory images from each poem in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
**Joseph Bruchac**  
(1942—    )

*When You Least Expect Them*

Joseph Bruchac was born in Saratoga Springs, New York, and raised there by his grandmother and grandfather, who was a member of the Abenaki people. Bruchac studied wildlife conservation in college. Today he is a well-known editor, publisher, poet, and collector of folk tales. He says that “Birdfoot’s Grampa” describes a lesson he was taught “in the way most good lessons come to you—when you least expect them.”

**Naomi Shihab Nye**  
(1952—    )

*Finding Poetry in the Familiar*

Naomi Shihab Nye often runs workshops in schools to help students find the poetry hidden in their imagination. She is inspired by everyday activities and tasks. In her poems, Nye makes the tiniest, most mundane details exceptional and wonderful. She once said:

“Familiar sights, sounds, smells have always been my necessities. Let someone else think about future goals and professional lives! I will keep track of the bucket and the hoe . . . and clouds drifting in from the horizon.”

For more information about Naomi Shihab Nye, see page 164.

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**Think About the Writers**

What do each of the poets believe poetry can express?

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**Preview the Selections**

The speaker of “Birdfoot’s Grampa” is frustrated when his grandfather stops their car again and again to move small toads out of the way.

In “Valentine for Ernest Mann,” the speaker responds to someone who has asked for a poem.
Read with a Purpose  Read this poem to find out what is important to the speaker’s grandfather.

**BIRDFOOT’S GRAMPA**

by Joseph Bruchac

The old man
must have stopped our car
two dozen times to climb out
and gather into his hands
the small toads blinded
by our lights and leaping,
live drops of rain.

The rain was falling,
a mist about his white hair
and I kept saying
you can’t save them all
accept it, get back in
we’ve got places to go.

But, leathery hands full
of wet brown life,
knee deep in the summer
roadside grass,
he just smiled and said
*they have places to go to*

**A** Read and Discuss  What is Grampa doing?

**B** Literary Focus  Lyric Poem  The speaker and Grampa have different ideas about what is important. What idea do you think the poem is expressing?
You can’t order a poem like you order a taco. Walk up to the counter, say, “I’ll take two” and expect it to be handed back to you on a shiny plate.

Still, I like your spirit. Anyone who says, “Here’s my address, write me a poem,” deserves something in reply. So I’ll tell a secret instead: poems hide. In the bottoms of our shoes, they are sleeping. They are the shadows drifting across our ceilings the moment before we wake up. What we have to do is live in a way that lets us find them.

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**Literary Focus**  
Lyric Poem  
What idea is the poet exploring?

**Vocabulary**  
spirit (SPIHR iht) n.: courage; liveliness.  
drifting (DRIHF thihng) v. used as adj.: being carried along as if by a current of air or water.
Once I knew a man who gave his wife
two skunks for a valentine.
He couldn’t understand why she was crying.
“I thought they had such beautiful eyes.”
And he was serious. He was a serious man
who lived in a serious way. Nothing was ugly
just because the world said so. He really
liked those skunks. So, he re-invented them
as valentines and they became beautiful.
At least, to him. And the poems that had been hiding
in the eyes of skunks for centuries
crawled out and curled up at his feet.

Maybe if we re-invent whatever our lives give us
we find poems. Check your garage, the odd sock
in your drawer, the person you almost like, but not quite.
And let me know.

Read and Discuss | How does the skunk story connect to the way the poet views
the origins and development of poetry?

Vocabulary | reinvented (ree ihn VEHN tihd) v.: created again, or made new.
Respond and Think Critically

**Reading Focus**

**Read with a Purpose**

1. What is important to Birdfoot’s Grampa? What does “Valentine for Ernest Mann” say about where poems hide? What do both poems suggest is important in life?

**Reading Skills: Reading a Poem**

2. Complete the chart below if you haven’t done so already. Then, describe what you noticed about each poem the second time you read it that you hadn’t noticed in the first reading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birdfoot’s Grampa</th>
<th>Valentine for Ernest Mann</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First reading:</td>
<td>First reading:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second reading:</td>
<td>Second reading:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vocabulary Check**

Match each Vocabulary word with its definition.

3. spirit a. floating
4. drifting b. created again
5. reinvented c. liveliness

**Literary Skills: Lyric Poems**

12. **Classify** How do these poems fit the definition of lyric poetry? (See page 685.) Support your answer with details from the poem.

**Think as a Reader/Writer**

**Use It in Your Writing** Follow Nye’s advice, and try to find a lyric poem in your life. Write a lyric poem that uses sensory images to help readers view something apparently ordinary in a new way.

**Literary Analysis**

6. **Analyze** To what is the speaker comparing the toads in the poem’s first stanza? What figure of speech does Bruchac use to create that comparison?

7. **Interpret** What point is Grampa trying to convey to his passenger concerning the toads?

8. **Interpret** In the second stanza of “Valentine for Ernest Mann,” what human things does the poet say poems do? What is the poet telling us by using this figure of speech?

9. **Analyze** What comparison is Nye making in the first stanza? the second stanza? What is she saying about poems by using these comparisons?

10. **Analyze** Why does the speaker tell us about the man and the skunks? (What do skunks have to do with poetry?)

11. **Extend** Many people, like Birdfoot’s Grampa, believe that their actions can make a difference. Think of someone who has acted on that belief. What was the intent of the person’s actions? Were the actions worth doing? Explain.

**What Do You Think Now?** Have the poems changed your idea of beauty? Do you see skunks and toads in the same way? Why, or why not?
Symbolism A symbol is a person, a place, a thing, or an event that stands for something beyond itself. Some symbols are traditional and common to a culture. We understand them because people have agreed on their meaning. For example, in this country a blindfolded woman holding scales has come to symbolize justice. In literature, however, symbols are created by the writers, and the meanings of the symbols are open to interpretation by readers.

Reading Poetry Poetry is written in lines—some long and some very short. Some poets use punctuation in their lines, while others do not. When you read a poem that does not use punctuation, you have to look for the thought units. That means that you do not come to a stop at the end of every line. You have to see if the sense of the line carries over to the next line.

Into Action As you read each poem, fill in a chart like the one below with thought units. Add rows to your charts as needed.

My Mother Pieced Quilts

1st thought unit they were meant as covers in winter

2nd thought unit

Vocabulary

My Mother Pieced Quilts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>frayed</td>
<td>adj.: worn away; unraveled. Frayed pieces of fabric are finished into a quilt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>somber</td>
<td>adj. dark; melancholy. She grew somber, thinking about the funeral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taut</td>
<td>adj.: pulled tight. The taut thread holds the quilt together.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Language Coach

Language Conventions Proper nouns name specific people, places, and things. In English, proper nouns are capitalized. Teresa Palomo Acosta, however, deliberately begins proper nouns, such as January, October, Michigan, Santa Fe, and Easter, with lowercase letters in her poem. After you’ve read the poem, stop to think why she made that choice.

Writing Focus

Think as a Reader/Writer

Find It in Your Reading Teresa Palomo Acosta, the writer of “My Mother Pieced Quilts,” includes lists of things—especially types of fabrics—in her poem. As you read the poem, note in your Reader/Writer Notebook the lists of objects or images that are grouped together.

Learn It Online

To hear professional actors read these poems go to:

go.hrw.com L8-689 Go
Teresa Palomo Acosta
(1949–    )

A Love of Poetry
Teresa Acosta grew up in McGregor, Texas, and began writing poetry when she was just sixteen. As a teenager she enjoyed European and Early American poetry. Later she was inspired by African American and Mexican American poetry, when it became available to her. She has been involved in various projects to promote Latino literature and is the co-author of the book Las Tejanas: 300 Years of History.

Alberto Forcada
(1969–    )

The Dreams of Children
The poems of Alberto Forcada that appear in Despertar (Awaking)—“Suéter” is one of them—describe the dreams and fantasies of children. Forcada has a degree in philosophy from the National University of Mexico. His poems have been collected in three books and have been published in magazines such as De Polanco para Polanco, which serves a neighborhood in Mexico City.

Think About the Writers
Based on the information above, what do you think Teresa Palomo Acosta and Alberto Forcado find important?
they were just meant as covers
in winters
as weapons
against pounding january winds

5 but it was just that every morning I awoke to these
october ripened canvases
passed my hand across their cloth faces
and began to wonder how you pieced
all these together
these strips of gentle communion cotton and flannel

10 nightgowns
wedding organdies
dime store velvets

A **Literary Focus** Symbolism  What might the different types of fabric listed here symbolize?
how you shaped patterns square and oblong and round
positioned
balanced
then cemented them
with your thread
a steel needle
a thimble
how the thread darted in and out
galloping along the frayed edges, tucking them in
as you did us at night
oh how you stretched and turned and rearranged
your michigan spring faded curtain pieces
my father’s santa fe work shirt
the summer denims, the tweeds of fall

Read and Discuss
What is Acosta illustrating for us as she lists different fabrics, shapes, and clothing types?

Vocabulary frayed (frayd) adj.: worn away; unraveled.
in the evening you sat at your canvas
—our cracked linoleum floor the drawing board
me lounging on your arm

and you staking out the plan:
whether to put the lilac purple of easter against the red
plaid of winter-going-
into-spring
whether to mix a yellow with blue and white and
paint the
corpus christi noon when my father held your hand

whether to shape a five-point star from the

somber black silk you wore to grandmother’s funeral

Vocabulary somber (SAHM buhr) adj.: dark; melancholy.
you were the river current
carrying the roaring notes . . .
forming them into pictures of a little boy reclining
a swallow flying
you were the caravan master at the reins
driving your threaded needle artillery across the
mosaic cloth bridges
delivering yourself in separate testimonies°

oh mother you plunged me sobbing and laughing
45 into our past
into the river crossing at five
into the spinach fields
into the plainview cotton rows
into tuberculosis wards
50 into braids and muslin dresses
sewn hard and taut to withstand the thrashing of
twenty-five years

stretched out they lay
armed/ready/shouting/celebrating

knotted with love
the quilts sing on

43. testimonies: declarations. For example, people make
testimonies of faith or of love.

[C] Read and Discuss Acosta uses phrases such as “river current,” “caravan master,” “driving your needle,” to describe her mother’s quilting activities. What do these phrases tell us about the mother and the way Acosta views her?

Vocabulary taut (tawt) adj.: pulled tight.
Sweater

by Alberto Forcada
translated by Judith Infante

Grandmother,
I'm cold;
can you knit me
some wrinkles?

Suéter

por Alberto Forcada

Abuela,
tengo frío;
téjeme a mí también
unas arrugas.

A Read and Discuss  What is the speaker really saying here?

Play Audio
Read with a Purpose

1. Why are the quilts in “My Mother Pieced Quilts” more than just “covers”? Why does the speaker of “Sweater” want wrinkles?

Reading Skills: Reading Poetry

2. Review your charts, and think about the ideas each poem expresses. Then, decide what theme, or insight about life, comes through in each poem. Add a theme statement to each chart.

My Mother Pieced Quilts

1st thought unit  
they were meant as covers in winter

2nd thought unit

Poem’s theme:

7. Hypothesize To what does the speaker of “Sweater” compare the sweater? Would he have used this comparison if the poem had been addressed to his sister? Why or why not?

8. Compare In line 6 of “My Mother Pieced Quilts,” the speaker refers to the quilts as “ripened canvases.” What associations can you make between what her mother does and what a painter of pictures might do?

Literary Skills: Symbolism

9. Interpret What do you think the quilts symbolize for the speaker of “My Mother Pieced Quilts”?

10. Interpret Why do you think Forcado titled his poem “Sweater”? What might the sweater symbolize?

Literary Skills Review: Diction

11. Analyze A writer’s choice of words is called diction. In “Sweater,” how is the writer’s choice of very simple words appropriate?

Vocabulary Check

Match each Vocabulary word with its definition.

3. frayed a. pulled tight
4. somber b. worn away; unravelled
5. taut c. dark; melancholy

Writing Focus

Think as a Reader/Writer

Use It in Your Writing  Look back at your lists in your RWN. Now, write a paragraph about an object that is significant to you. Like Acosta, use the form of a list to create a rich description.

What Do You Think Now

Why do some ordinary objects, such as quilts and sweaters, evoke strong meanings?

Literary Analysis

6. Identify A figure of speech that gives something nonhuman human qualities is called personification. List three or more examples of personification in Acosta’s poem.
A word is dead / The Word/La palabra

**Literary Focus**

**Figures of Speech** Important elements of poetry, *figures of speech* are comparisons that are not literally true.

- **Simile** compares two things using a word such as *like, as, or than*. *The moon looked like a golden coin high in the sky.*
- **Metaphor** directly compares two very different things. *The moon was a golden coin high in the sky.*
- **Personification** describes a nonhuman thing as if it were human. *The moon smiled down from high in the sky.*

**TechFocus** As you read, think about sounds and images to use for a multimedia presentation of a similar poem of your own.

**Reading Focus**

**Re-reading** Almost no one can read a poem once and understand it fully. Read poems several times to understand and appreciate the artistry that went into writing them.

**Into Action** As you read each poem, use a chart like the one below to track what you discover on each reading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st reading (for pleasure)</td>
<td>This is a simple poem about words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd reading (study word choices)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd reading (my analysis)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Writing Focus**

**Think as a Reader/Writer**

**Find It in Your Reading** As you read the poems, note in your *Reader/Writer Notebook* the figures of speech the poets use.
EMEET THE WRITERS

Emily Dickinson
(1830–1886)

“Letter to the World”
Although today Emily Dickinson is one of the most respected poets in the world, her work was almost completely unknown during her lifetime. Dickinson led an extremely private life in her family home in Amherst, Massachusetts. After she died, her sister Lavinia discovered the poems—almost eighteen hundred of them—that Dickinson had gathered into handmade booklets. Dickinson said that her poems were her “letter to the world” that never wrote to her.

Manuel Ulacia
(1954–2001)

Professor and Poet
Manuel Ulacia studied both architecture and literature. He went on to become a professor at Yale University and also taught at Mexico City’s Universidad Autónoma. In addition to his own poetry, Ulacia studied and wrote about the work of his mentor, Octavio Paz, a Nobel prize–winning Latin American poet and essayist.

Think About the Writers
Dickinson led a private life; Ulacia taught at universities. What did they have in common?

Preview the Selections
In “A word is dead” the speaker contrasts her beliefs about language with what other people think.
In “The Word” the speaker uses comparisons to tell readers what a word is like.
A word is dead
by Emily Dickinson

A word is dead
When it is said,
Some say.
I say it just
begins to live
That day.

Read and Discuss
What point is the poet making?

The Word
by Manuel Ulacia
translated by Jennifer Clement

comes out from the pen
like a rabbit from a magician’s hat
astronaut who knows itself alone
and weightless suspended on a line
in space

Literary Focus
Figures of Speech
To what does the speaker compare words? What do these comparisons tell us about words?

La palabra
por Manuel Ulacia

sale de la pluma
como el conejo del sombrero de un mago
astronauta que se sabe sola y sin peso
suspendida en una línea
en el espacio

Sketch of a Rabbit (c. 1900–1925)
by Seiho Takeuchi.
A word is dead / The Word / La palabra

Respond and Think Critically

Reading Focus

Read with a Purpose
1. What ideas do these poems convey about words?

Reading Skills: Re-Reading
2. Review the charts you completed as you read the poems. Now, add a row to each chart with your final impression of each poem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A word is dead</th>
<th>The Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Reading</td>
<td>This is a simple poem about words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Final Impression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Literary Focus

Literary Analysis
3. Interpret In Dickinson’s poem, what does people mean when they say “A word is dead/ When it is said”?
4. Interpret In “The Word,” how can a word be like an astronaut in space?
5. Make Judgments Do you agree with either Dickinson’s or Ulacia’s point of view about words? Explain.
6. Extend Name a word that seems “alive” to you. Why does it seem so?

7. Extend A children’s rhyme goes, “Sticks and stones / Can break my bones / But names can never hurt me.” How would Dickinson feel about that saying? How do you feel about it?

Literary Skills: Figures of Speech
8. Interpret Dickinson uses personification when she says that a word “begins to live.” How do you think a word might begin to “live” after it is spoken?
9. Interpret What do the similes in lines 2–4 of Ulacia’s poem make you see?

Literary Skills Review: Imagery
10. Analyze Imagery appeals to the senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. In Ulacia’s poem, to which sense does the image of a rabbit coming from a magician’s hat appeal? To which senses does the image of an astronaut “weightless suspended on a line in space” appeal?

Writing Focus

Think as a Reader/Writer
Use It in Your Writing Look back at the figures of speech you jotted down in your Reader/Writer Notebook. Now, write a paragraph expressing your views on words. Like these poets, use figures of speech to get your ideas across. You might start the same way that Dickinson did: “A word is . . . ”

What Do You Think Now How have these poems changed your thoughts about the importance of words? Explain.
Poetry and Feeling

Vocabulary Development

Connotations

Connotations are the meanings, associations, or emotions suggested by a word. A word’s connotations can be different from its denotation, or dictionary definition. For example, imagine that “Birdfoot’s Grampa,” had instead been titled “Birdfoot’s Grandfather.” The title’s connotations would have been very different, even though the basic meanings of grandfather and grampa are the same.

Often, a word’s connotations affect shades of meaning or intensity. For example, in line 44 of “My Mother Pieced Quilts,” Acosta uses the word sobbing, rather than crying. While sobbing basically means the same as crying, it is associated with greater intensity. Here are more examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Words with Stronger Connotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>talk</td>
<td>chatter, slander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thin</td>
<td>skinny, skeletal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your Turn

For each word in the left-hand column below, write a word or two in the right-hand column that has a similar denotation but different connotations.

1. afraid __________________________
2. happy __________________________
3. relaxed __________________________
4. careful __________________________
5. house __________________________

Choices

As you respond to the Choices, use these Academic Vocabulary words as appropriate: intent, evoke, associations, interpretation.

Review

Create a Multimedia Presentation

TechFocus As Ulacia and Dickinson cleverly offer their interpretations of words, write your own poem about thoughts. Use figures of speech to portray what thoughts do and how they are created and grow. Use presentation software to present your poem to the class, and be sure to incorporate sound files and images.

Connect

Write a Personal Essay

Timed Writing Some poems you have just read celebrate the wisdom and nurturing offered by older relatives. Write a personal essay about your relationship with an older relative or friend. What gift has this person passed along? Did he or she give you something tangible, tell you a story, give you advice, or teach you by example?

Extend

Analyze a Translation of a Poem

“Sweater” and “The Word” were originally written in Spanish and then translated into English. If you know Spanish, read each poem in both languages. How are the original Spanish versions different from the English translations? Has anything been lost in translation? Explain.
Poetry and Storytelling

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by John Greenleaf Whittier
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The Cremation of Sam McGee
by Robert Service
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The Dying Cowboy
traditional American ballad
page 722

from Beowulf
oral tradition
page 727

Casey at the Bat
by Ernest Lawrence Thayer
page 730

How do people express their beliefs and emotions?

QuickTalk
In a small group, discuss ways that people express themselves. For example, how do they stand up to authority, make requests, demonstrate their skills?
Narrative Poetry: Rhythm and Meter

A narrative poem tells a story, complete with characters, setting, and plot. Many narrative poems use a strong rhythm and meter. In language, rhythm is the rise and fall of the voice, produced by stressed and unstressed syllables. When the stresses occur in a regular pattern, we call it meter.

“Paul Revere’s Ride” is written with a strong meter. Notice, when you read it aloud, how the meter sounds like a galloping horse: da da DUM da da DUM da da DUM.

Paraphrasing
To paraphrase, restate a text in your own words. A paraphrase restates all the information in the original, unlike a summary, which retells only the most important points.

Into Action
Stop to paraphrase difficult lines of poems. Keep track of your paraphrases in a chart like this one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paul Revere’s Ride</th>
<th>My Paraphrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lines 1-3</td>
<td>Listen, and I will tell you all about Paul Revere’s famous midnight ride that took place on April 18, 1775.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Language Coach

Multiple-Meaning Words
Many English words have more than one meaning. For example, stirred most often means “mixed together,” as in “He stirred the cake batter.” How is the word stirred used in the definition and example sentence above?
MEET THE WRITERS

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
(1807–1882)

A Poet of American History
If you went to school a hundred years ago, you and all your friends would probably be able to recite by heart several of the poems of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Born in Portland, Maine, Longfellow became the most popular poet of his day. Many of his poems, such as Evangeline (1847), The Song of Hiawatha (1855), and The Courtship of Miles Standish (1858), were inspired by people and events in American history. As “Paul Revere’s Ride” shows, Longfellow believed that one person’s actions could make a difference.

John Greenleaf Whittier
(1807–1892)

Dedicated to Freedom
John Greenleaf Whittier was born and raised on a farm in Haverhill, Massachusetts, where his Quaker family had lived since 1688. Whittier devoted most of his life to the antislavery movement. His poems reflect his dedication to freedom and justice and his deep religious faith. Whittier was one of the hugely popular Fireside Poets, whose works sold the way bestselling novels do today.

Think About the Writers
What values do you think Longfellow and Whittier held in common?

Preview the Selections

In “Paul Revere’s Ride,” you will read Longfellow’s account of how Paul Revere warned his fellow citizens that the British forces were coming.

In “Barbara Frietchie,” you will meet a woman named Barbara Frietchie, who bravely challenged an enemy general in order to show support for her country.
Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, “If the British march
By land or sea from the town tonight,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry° arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light—
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm.”

Then he said, “Good night!” and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,

8. belfry (BEHL free): steeple of a church where bells are hung.

A Literary Focus  Rhythm  The rhythm of this poem reflects its subject—a long, fast ride on horseback. Clap out the first two lines of the stanza. What feeling does the rhythm evoke?

B Read and Discuss  What is Revere’s plan?
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings\(^\circ\) lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
20 A phantom ship, with each mast and spar\(^\circ\)
   Across the moon like a prison bar,
   And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
   By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street,
25 Wanders and watches with eager ears,
   Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster\(^\circ\) of men at the barrack door,
   The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
   And the measured tread of the grenadiers,\(^\circ\)
30 Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church,
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
   To the belfry chamber overhead,
   And startled the pigeons from their perch
35 On the somber rafters, that round him made
   Masses and moving shapes of shade—
   By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
   To the highest window in the wall,
   Where he paused to listen and look down
40 A moment on the roofs of the town,
   And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night encampment on the hill,
   Wrapped in silence so deep and still
45 That he could hear, like a sentinel's\(^\circ\) tread,

---

18. **moorings**: cables holding a ship in place so that it doesn't float away.

20. **mast and spar**: poles supporting a ship's sails.

27. **muster**: assembly; gathering.

29. **grenadiers** (grehn uh DIHRZ): foot soldiers who carry and throw grenades.

45. **sentinel's** (SEHN tuh nuhlz): guard's.
The watchful night wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, “All is well!”
A moment only he feels the spell

50 Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay—

55 A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.

60 Now he patted his horse’s side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search

65 The belfry tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral° and somber and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry’s height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!

He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!  

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet:
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,

Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders° that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock,
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer’s dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

67. spectral: ghostly.

84. alders (AWL duhrz): shrubs and trees of the birch family.
It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.

95 He saw the gilded weathercock°
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meetinghouse windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

95. weathercock: weathervane made to look like a rooster (cock). Weathervanes indicate the direction in which the wind is blowing.

Vocabulary  aghast (uh GAST) adj.: shocked; horrified.
It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,
How the British Regulars fired and fled—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the redcoats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm—
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forevermore!
For, borne on the night wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoofbeats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

---

**Literary Focus** Narrative Poem Retell the story this poem has recounted.

**Read and Discuss** What is Longfellow trying to get across to his readers?
Build Background
This poem is set during the Civil War. In 1862, after defeating Union forces at the Second Battle of Bull Run, Confederate troops moved north into Maryland. Led by generals Robert E. Lee and “Stonewall” Jackson, the troops marched into the town of Frederick. Lee and his men were expecting a warm welcome, but the people of Frederick were loyal to the Union. Whittier based “Barbara Frietchie” on these events.

Barbara Frietchie
by John Greenleaf Whittier

Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.  

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,

Fair as the garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,°

On that pleasant morn of the early fall
When Lee marched over the mountain wall;

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.  

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

---

A Literary Focus  Rhythm  he first two lines have a regular meter, which is varied in the next two. What might the poet’s intent be in varying the beat of the lines?

B Read and Discuss  What have we learned about the time and place of the story?

8. horde: crowd.
15 Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down

In her attic window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,°
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

25 Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced; the old flag met his sight.

“Halt!”—the dust-brown ranks stood fast.
“Fire!”—out blazed the rifle blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;
30 It rent° the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the windowsill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

35 “Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country’s flag,” she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

21. staff: pole; stick.
23. tread: footstep.
30. rent (past tense of rend, meaning “tear”): tore; ripped.
The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word;

“Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!” he said. 

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet:

All day long that free flag tossed
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.°

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

---


**Read and Discuss** Now what do we know?

**Vocabulary**
- **stirred** (sturd) v.: moved; roused.
- **host** (hohst) n.: army; large number.

---
Paul Revere’s Ride / Barbara Frietchie

Respond and Think Critically

Read with a Purpose
1. Why is it important that people remember what Paul Revere and Barbara Frietchie did?

Reading Skills: Paraphrasing
2. If you haven’t done so already, paraphrase the final lines of “Paul Revere’s Ride” and “Barbara Frietchie” to learn each poem’s message.

My Paraphrase

Paul Revere’s Ride
lines 251–130

Barbara Frietchie
lines 55–60

5. Infer Why does Longfellow believe that Americans will remember Revere’s ride “In the hour of darkness and peril and need”?

6. Make Judgments Discuss the bravery or folly of Barbara Frietchie’s response, “Shoot, if you must, this old gray head, but spare your country’s flag.”

Literary Skills: Narrative Poetry: Rhythm and Meter
7. Analyze Summarize the events of “Paul Revere’s Ride.” How does the poem’s strong rhythm enhance the story it tells?

8. Analyze Narrative poems contain characters. What do Frietchie’s actions reveal about her?

Literary Skills Review: Rhyme
9. Analyze A rhyme scheme is the pattern of rhymes in a poem. What are the rhyme schemes of “Paul Revere’s Ride” and “Barbara Frietchie”? For what purpose might the poets have chosen to use regular rhyming patterns?

Vocabulary Check
Fill in the blanks with the correct Vocabulary words.

impetuous  aghast  stirred  host

3. The townspeople were _______ that a British _______ was coming. Revere, always _______, was ready to act. His bravery was _______ by the desire to protect his people.

Literary Analysis
4. Interpret What is your interpretation of Longfellow’s words “The fate of a nation was riding that night”?  

Think as a Reader/Writer
Use It in Your Writing Create an outline for a short narrative poem about an event that took place at your school. Next to narrative details, list word pairs you would use as end rhymes.

What Do You Think Now? How did the poems clarify your ideas about when it might be important to express your beliefs?
The Cremation of Sam McGee / The Dying Cowboy

**Literary Focus**

**Ballads and Hyperbole** A *ballad* is a song or a songlike poem that tells a story, usually about lost love, betrayal, or death. Ballads usually use simple language and much repetition. Most ballads have *refrains*, repeated words, phrases, lines, or group of lines. Some ballads, such as “The Cremation of Sam McGee” use *hyperbole*, or exaggeration, to make a point.

**Literary Perspectives** Apply the literary perspective described on page 723 as you read “The Dying Cowboy.”

**Reading Focus**

**Using Form to Find Meaning** Many poems are in the form of *stanzas*—groups of consecutive lines that form a single unit. Determining the main idea or the events described in each stanza can help you understand the ballads you will read.

**Into Action** Use a chart to record the main idea of each stanza of the following poems. Add a row for each stanza.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poem: The Creation of Sam McGee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stanza Number</strong></td>
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**Language Coach**

**Multiple-Meaning Words** In day-to-day life, you might say you *spent* money to pay a *tax* you owed. Both *spent* and *tax*, however, have very different meanings as used in “The Cremation of Sam McGee.” What meanings do those words have in the poem? Look at the definitions above to find out.

**Writing Focus**

**Think as a Reader/Writer**

**Find It in Your Reading** As you read, note in your Reader/Writer Notebook the poets’ use of *imagery*, language that appeals to the senses. How does the imagery enliven the stories?
Robert W. Service
(1874–1958)

“A Story Jack London Never Got”
Born in Lancashire, England, Robert W. Service immigrated to Canada in his early twenties. After traveling along the Canadian Pacific coast, he took a job with a bank and was transferred to the Yukon Territory. He wrote his most popular poems there, including “The Cremation of Sam McGee.” The poem was inspired by a story Service heard at a party where he was feeling awkward and out of place:

“I was staring gloomily at a fat fellow across the table. . . . Suddenly he said, ‘I’ll tell you a story Jack London never got.’ Then he spun a yarn of a man who cremated his pal. It had a surprise climax which occasioned much laughter. I did not join, for I had a feeling that here was a decisive moment of destiny. I still remember how a great excitement usurped me. Here was a perfect ballad subject. The fat man who ignored me went his way to bankruptcy, but he had pointed me the road to fortune.”

Service left the party and spent the next six hours wandering through the frozen woods, verses in his head. When he went to bed, the poem was complete; he didn’t even put it on paper until the next day.

Think About the Writer
What do the details of Service’s background suggest about him?

Build Background
The Cremation of Sam McGee
In the 1890s, thousands of fortune hunters rushed north, braving bitter cold and deep snow. Gold had been found in northwestern Canada, in the Klondike region of the Yukon Territory. The town of Dawson, at the center of the region, became the Yukon’s capital. (Cremation is the burning of a body to ashes.)

The Dying Cowboy
Ballads like this one were sung by cowboys in the American West. This ballad is based on an eighteenth-century Irish tune, and it gave rise to the famous blues song “St. James Infirmary.” The ballad also provided the title and the haunting theme music for Bang the Drum Slowly, a movie about the death of a young baseball player.

Preview the Selections
The two ballads you are about to read are both about a man dying before his time who asks a friend to honor his last request. The main characters of the poems are Sam McGee in “The Cremation of Sam McGee” and simply a handsome young cowboy in “The Dying Cowboy.”
There are strange things done in the midnight sun
   By the men who moil° for gold;
The Arctic trails have their secret tales
   That would make your blood run cold;
The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,
   But the queerest they ever did see
Was that night on the marge° of Lake Lebarge
   I cremated Sam McGee.  

Now Sam McGee was from Tennessee, where the cotton
   blooms and blows.
Why he left his home in the South to roam ’round the
   Pole, God only knows.
He was always cold, but the land of gold seemed to hold
   him like a spell;
Though he’d often say in his homely way that he’d
   “sooner live in hell.”  

On a Christmas Day we were mushing our way over the
   Dawson trail.
Talk of your cold! through the parka’s fold it stabbed like
   a driven nail.

---

A Read and Discuss What has the poet told us so far?
B Reading Focus Using Form to Find Meaning What do we learn about McGee in this stanza?

2. moil: labor.
7. marge: edge.
If our eyes we’d close, then the lashes froze till sometimes we couldn’t see; It wasn’t much fun, but the only one to whimper was Sam McGee.

And that very night, as we lay packed tight in our robes beneath the snow, And the dogs were fed, and the stars o’erhead were dancing heel and toe, He turned to me, and “Cap,” says he, “I’ll cash in this trip, I guess; And if I do, I’m asking that you won’t refuse my last request.”

Well, he seemed so low that I couldn’t say no; then he says with a sort of moan: “It’s the cursèd cold, and it’s got right hold till I’m chilled clean through to the bone. Yet ’tain’t being dead—it’s my awful dread of the icy grave that pains; So I want you to swear that, foul or fair, you’ll cremate my last remains.”

A pal’s last need is a thing to heed, so I swore I would not fail; And we started on at the streak of dawn; but God! he looked ghastly pale. He crouched on the sleigh, and he raved all day of his home in Tennessee; And before nightfall a corpse was all that was left of Sam McGee.

Read and Discuss Why is cremation so important to Sam McGee?
There wasn’t a breath in that land of death, and
I hurried, horror-driven,
With a corpse half hid that I couldn’t get rid, because of
a promise given;
It was lashed to the sleigh, and it seemed to say: “You
may tax your brawn and brains,
But you promised true, and it’s up to you to cremate
those last remains.”

Now a promise made is a debt unpaid, and the trail has
its own stern code.
In the days to come, though my lips were dumb, in my
heart how I cursed that load.
In the long, long night, by the lone firelight, while the
huskies, round in a ring,
Howled out their woes to the homeless snows—O God!
how I loathed the thing.

**Literary Focus** Hyperbole  How do the exaggerations in this stanza convey the way the speaker feels about the corpse?

**Vocabulary**
- **tax** (taks) v.: here, burden; strain.
- **loathed** (lohthd) v.: hated.
And every day that quiet clay seemed to heavy and
ever grow;
And on I went, though the dogs were spent and the grub
was getting low;
The trail was bad, and I felt half mad, but I swore I
would not give in;
And I’d often sing to the hateful thing, and it hearkened°
with a grin.

Till I came to the marge of Lake Lebarge, and a derelict°
there lay;
It was jammed in the ice, but I saw in a trice it was called
the “Alice May.”
And I looked at it, and I thought a bit, and I looked at
my frozen chum;
Then “Here,” said I, with a sudden cry, “is my cre-ma-
tor-ium.”

Some planks I tore from the cabin floor, and I lit the
boiler fire;
Some coal I found that was lying around, and I heaped
the fuel higher;
The flames just soared, and the furnace roared—such a
blaze you seldom see;
And I burrowed a hole in the glowing coal, and I stuffed
in Sam McGee.

Then I made a hike, for I didn’t like to hear him sizzle so;
And the heavens scowled, and the huskies howled, and
the wind began to blow.
It was icy cold, but the hot sweat rolled down my cheeks,
and I don’t know why;
And the greasy smoke in an inky cloak went streaking
down the sky.

Read and Discuss
How is the speaker handling McGee’s death?

Vocabulary
spent (spént) adj.: worn-out.
I do not know how long in the snow I wrestled with grisly fear;  
But the stars came out and they danced about ere again I ventured near;  
I was sick with dread, but I bravely said: “I’ll just take a peep inside.  
I guess he’s cooked, and it’s time I looked”; . . . then the door I opened wide.

And there sat Sam, looking cool and calm, in the heart of the furnace roar;  
And he wore a smile you could see a mile, and he said: “Please close that door.  
It’s fine in here, but I greatly fear you’ll let in the cold and storm—  
Since I left Plumtree, down in Tennessee, it’s the first time I’ve been warm.”

There are strange things done in the midnight sun  
By the men who moil for gold;  
The Arctic trails have their secret tales  
That would make your blood run cold;  
The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,  
But the queerest they ever did see  
Was that night on the marge of Lake Lebarge  
I cremated Sam McGee.
The Dying Cowboy

traditional American ballad

As I rode out by Tom Sherman's barroom,
As I rode out so early one day,
'Twas there I espied a handsome young cowboy,
All dressed in white linen, all clothed for the grave.

5 “I see by your outfit that you are a cowboy,”
These words he did say as I boldly stepped by.
“Come sit down beside me and hear my sad story,
For I’m shot in the breast and I know I must die.

“Then beat your drum slowly and play your fife lowly,
And play the dead march as you carry me along,
And take me to the graveyard and throw the sod o’er me,
For I’m a young cowboy and I know I’ve done wrong.

“'Twas once in the saddle I used to go dashing,
'Twas once in the saddle I used to go gay,
But I first took to drinking and then to card playing,
Got shot in the body and I’m dying today.

“Let sixteen gamblers come handle my coffin,
Let sixteen young cowboys come sing me a song,

Read and Discuss  What have we learned so far?

Reading Focus  Using Form to Find Meaning  What is the main idea of this stanza? What information does it offer readers?
Take me to the green valley and lay the sod o'er me,
For I'm a poor cowboy and I know I've done wrong.

"Go bring me back a cup of cool water
To cool my parched lips," this cowboy then said.
Before I returned, his soul had departed
And gone to his Maker—the cowboy lay dead.

We swung our ropes slowly and rattled our spurs lowly,
And gave a wild whoop as we carried him on,
For we all loved our comrade, so brave, young and handsome,
We all loved our comrade, although he'd done wrong.

The following perspective will help you analyze the archetypes in this ballad.

**Analyzing Archetypes**

Patterns that appear in literature across cultures and are repeated through the ages are called **archetypes**. An archetype can be a character, plot, image, or setting. For example, there are stories about heroes on quests in both ancient myths and in modern movies. In this ballad, concentrate on the character of the dying cowboy. How is he like other characters you know? Notice the question above that guides you in using this perspective.
The Cremation of Sam McGee / The Dying Cowboy

**Respond and Think Critically**

Read with a Purpose
1. What last request does each speaker fulfill?

Reading Skills: Using Form to Find Meaning
2. Complete the charts you began while reading. Then, add a row to each chart and write a short summary of each ballad.

Poem: The Creation of Sam McGee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stanza Number</th>
<th>Main Idea or Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My Summary:

Vocabulary Check
Match each Vocabulary word with its synonym.
3. loathed a. tired
4. tax b. friend
5. spent c. hated
6. comrade d. burden

Literary Analysis
7. Identify List two or three details from “The Cremation of Sam McGee” that help you picture the frozen landscape or feel the cold.

8. Infer Based on the language he uses to describe Sam McGee and his actions, what does the speaker think of Sam?

9. Analyze How does Service’s writing style make a dire event—death—come across as light and odd instead of sad and dreary?

10. Analyze What details about his life help us understand what has happened to cause the dying cowboy’s death?

11. Literary Perspectives In what ways is the dying cowboy timeless? How might the archetype of the lone cowboy be represented in a modern story?

Literary Skills: Ballad and Hyperbole
12. Analyze How does the use of hyperbole contribute to the humor of “The Cremation of Sam McGee”? Use examples in your response.

13. Analyze “The Dying Cowboy” is a ballad, typical of the ballads sung by cowboys to help time pass more quickly. What characteristics of ballads does this poem have?

Writing Focus

Think as a Reader/Writer

Use It in Your Writing How does the use of imagery bring the ballads to life? What feelings do the images evoke? Explain, and give examples.

What Do You Think Now? What ideas about life are these poems expressing?
from Beowulf / Casey at the Bat

Literary Focus

**Epic and Mock-Heroic Poems** An **epic** is a long narrative poem written in formal, elegant language that tells about a series of quests undertaken by a great hero. In ancient epics, such as *Beowulf*, this hero is a warrior who embodies the values cherished by the hero’s culture. “Casey at the Bat” is a **mock-heroic poem** that imitates the old epic tales, but in a comical way. For example, instead of a warrior, we have a small-town baseball player, and instead of the epic poet’s elegant similes, metaphors, and alliteration, we have sports slang.

**TechFocus** As you read, write down heroic qualities that Beowulf and Casey both exhibit. Also, list qualities you look for in a hero.

Reading Focus

**Re-reading** Poetry is meant to be read and re-read. Each time you read a poem, you unlock layers of meaning.

**Into Action** Use a chart to record what you learn from these poems each time you read them. Read each poem at least twice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beowulf</th>
<th>My Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First reading</td>
<td>I’m not sure what a mead-hall is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second reading</td>
<td>Now I understand what a mead-hall is and why the warriors would miss it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing Focus

Think as a Reader/Writer

**Find It in Your Reading** Heroic actions call for strong active verbs to describe them. As you read, write in your *Reader/Writer Notebook* the verbs that tell about Beowulf’s and Casey’s actions.

**Vocabulary**

**from Beowulf**

- **purge** *(purj)* v.: get rid of something harmful. *Beowulf wanted to purge the monsters from the kingdom.*

- **scorn** *(skawrn)* n.: obvious disrespect or dislike for someone or something. *The monsters feel scorn for the Danes.*

**Casey at the Bat**

- **defiance** *(dih FY uhns)* n.: willingness to fight; rebellious feelings. *Filled with defiance, Casey sneered at the pitcher.*

**Language Conventions: Spelling** Note the suffix –*ance* in the Vocabulary word *defiance*. You might be tempted to spell the word with –*ence*. Think up a way that you can remember the –*ance* spelling for the ending for this word, and write it in your *Reader/Writer Notebook*.

Learn It Online

Listen to professional actors read these poems at: go.hrw.com L8-725 Go
Secret Author
When the journalist Ernest Lawrence Thayer submitted “Casey at the Bat” to the San Francisco Examiner in 1888, he had no idea it would become the most famous baseball poem ever written. In fact, he didn’t even sign his own name to his work, choosing instead to use a nickname, Phin.

Surprise Success
Shortly after the poem appeared in the California newspaper, a copy was given to a vaudeville entertainer named William De Wolf Hopper, who was about to appear in a Baseball Night performance in New York. He went onstage and recited it; the audience went wild. Hopper went on to make a successful career of touring the country reciting “Casey at the Bat.”

Undesired Attention
Despite the poem’s popularity, Thayer considered it badly written and for years would not admit authorship. When he was finally identified as the author, he refused to take money for the poem’s many reprintings.

“All I ask is never to be reminded of it again.”

Think About the Writer
What can you infer about the author from his reaction to his poem’s success?

Build Background
Beowulf is considered the first great work of English literature. The poem was handed down orally for many generations and has an unknown author. Since it was originally written in Old English, which is very different from the English used today, the epic has been translated into Modern English many times.

First page of Beowulf (10th century). Old English vernacular poem.

Preview the Selections
In the excerpt from the epic poem, Beowulf, a warrior from the land of the Geats (in Scandinavia), has arrived at the court of Hrothgar, a Danish king. Beowulf gives his credentials; that is, he tells the king why he should be chosen to face Grendel, a huge monster who has been devouring Hrothgar’s followers.

In “Casey at the Bat” by Ernest Lawrence Thayer, you will meet Casey—the star baseball player of Mudville—who plans to turn around the game for his losing team.
“Hail, Hrothgar!
Higlac is my cousin° and my king; the days
Of my youth have been filled with glory. Now Grendel's
Name has echoed in our land: Sailors
Have brought us stories of Herot, the best
Of all mead-halls,° deserted and useless when the moon
Hangs in skies the sun had lit,
Light and life fleeing together. A
My people have said, the wisest, most knowing
And best of them, that my duty was to go to the Danes’
Great King. They have seen my strength for themselves,
Have watched me rise from the darkness of war,
Dripping with my enemies’ blood. I drove
Five great giants into chains, chased
All of that race from the earth. I swam

2. cousin: any relative. Higlac is Beowulf's uncle and his king.

6. mead-halls: Mead is a drink made from honey, water, yeast, and malt. The hall was a central gathering place where warriors could feast, listen to a bard's stories, and sleep in safety.
In the blackness of night, hunting monsters
Out of the ocean, and killing them one
By one; death was my errand and the fate
They had earned. Now Grendel and I are called
Together, and I’ve come. Grant me, then,
Lord and protector of this noble place,
A single request! I have come so far,
Oh shelterer of warriors and your people’s loved friend,
That this one favor you should not refuse me—
That I, alone and with the help of my men,
May purge all evil from this hall. I have heard,
Too, that the monster’s scorn of men
Is so great that he needs no weapons and fears none.
Nor will I. My lord Higlac
Might think less of me if I let my sword
Go where my feet were afraid to, if I hid
Behind some broad linden shield:° My hands
Alone shall fight for me, struggle for life
Against the monster. God must decide
Who will be given to death’s cold grip.

32. linden shield: shield made from wood of the linden tree.

**B Literary Focus  Epic Poem** Look at lines 20–26. What words or phrases are especially formal or elegant? (Remember that elegant and formal language is characteristic of epic poems.)

**C Read and Discuss** What is Beowulf saying here?

**Vocabulary**

- **purge** (purj) *v.*: get rid of something harmful.
- **scorn** (skawrn) *n.*: obvious disrespect or dislike for someone or something.
Sutton Hoo helmet (detail) (early 7th century) from the Sutton Hoo ship treasure, Suffolk, England. © The Trustees of the British Museum. All rights reserved.
The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day;
The score stood four to two, with but one inning more to play;
And so, when Cooney died at first, and Burrows did the same,
A sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest
Clung to the hope which springs eternal in the human breast;
They thought, if only Casey could but get a whack, at that,
They’d put up even money now, with Casey at the bat.

But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
And the former was a pudding, and the latter was a fake;
So upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,
For there seemed but little chance of Casey’s getting to the bat.

But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
And Blake, the much-despised, tore the cover off the ball;
And when the dust had lifted, and they saw what had occurred,
There was Jimmy safe on second, and Flynn a-hugging third.

What is happening so far? What is the crowd thinking?
Then from the gladdened multitude went up a joyous yell;  
It bounded from the mountaintop, and rattled in the dell;  
It struck upon the hillside, and recoiled upon the flat;  
20  For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.  

There was ease in Casey’s manner as he stepped into his place;  
There was pride in Casey’s bearing, and a smile on Casey’s face;  
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,  
No stranger in the crowd could doubt ’twas Casey at the bat.  

25  Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;  
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt;  
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,  
Defiance gleamed in Casey’s eye, a sneer curled Casey’s lip.  

— Robert C. Bradley

Read and Discuss  How have things changed?  
Reading Focus Re-reading  Re-read this stanza. What impression of Casey do you get?  
Vocabulary  defiance (dih FY uhns) n.: willingness to fight; rebellious feelings.
And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,

And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there; Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped. "That ain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one," the umpire said.

From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar, Like the beating of the storm waves on a stern and distant shore; "Kill him! Kill the umpire!" shouted someone on the stand; And it's likely they'd have killed him had not Casey raised his hand.

With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage shone; He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on; He signaled to the pitcher, and once more the spheroid flew; But Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said, "Strike two."

"Fraud!" cried the maddened thousands, and the echo answered, "Fraud!"

Read and Discuss

What does this information tell us about Casey as a person and a player?
But a scornful look from Casey, and the audience was awed; They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles strain, And they knew that Casey wouldn’t let that ball go by again.

45 The sneer is gone from Casey’s lips, his teeth are clenched in hate, He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate; And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go, And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey’s blow.

Oh! somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright; The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light; And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout, But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty Casey has struck

---

**Literary Focus** **Epic Poem** How are Casey’s actions similar to those of a hero in an epic like *Beowulf*?

**Read and Discuss** What just happened? Discuss the irony—the unexpected outcome—of the poem’s ending.
from Beowulf / Casey at the Bat

Respond and Think Critically

Read with a Purpose

Reading Skills: Re-reading
2. Once you’ve finished these poems, add a final comment about each to your chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poem Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>My Final Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulary Check
Match the Vocabulary words with their definitions.
3. purge  a. obvious disrespect or dislike
4. scorn   b. rebellious feelings
5. defiance c. get rid of

Literary Analysis
6. Infer  What can you infer about Hrothgar’s warriors in Beowulf?
7. Hypothesize  Why does Beowulf want to fight Grendel without a sword or shield? What would defeating Grendel prove?
8. Draw Conclusions  In “Casey at the Bat” what can you conclude about Casey’s usual performance at the plate?

9. Evaluate  “Casey at the Bat” is often cited as the most famous baseball poem ever written. Do you feel it deserves such an honor? Explain.

10. Compare  What associations can you make between Casey and sports stars of today? Support your ideas with details from the poem.

Literary Skills: Epic and Mock-Epic Poems
11. Analyze  List three characteristics of epic poetry that you find in Beowulf.
12. Compare and Contrast  What similarities can you find between Beowulf and “Casey at the Bat”? What key differences do you see?

Literary Skills Review: Diction
13. Classify  A writer’s or speaker’s choice of words is called diction. Which words in “Casey at the Bat” are appropriate for describing a baseball game? Which words are formal and more appropriate for an epic?

Think as a Reader/Writer
Use It in Your Writing  Using strong, active verbs, write a short paragraph about a heroic action you have witnessed, heard about, or performed yourself.
Wrap Up

Poetry and Storytelling

Vocabulary Development

Precise Meanings

A poet’s words must sound right in the poem and convey an exact—precise—meaning. Notice the words Thayer uses in “Casey at the Bat”:

“A straggling few got up to go in deep despair.”

If Thayer had instead used the words a few sad fans left instead of “a straggling few” and “deep despair,” the reader would have much less information about the fans’ emotions.

Your Turn

Use a dictionary to find a more precise word or phrase to replace each boldfaced word below.

1. Paul Revere’s friend goes through town toward the Old North Church.
2. Stonewall Jackson strongly commands his troops not to shoot Barbara Frietchie.
3. Sam McGee dislikes the cold Yukon weather.
4. The fans are sad when Casey strikes out.

Choices

As you respond to the Choices, use these Academic Vocabulary words as appropriate: intent, evoke, association, interpretation.

Review

Paraphrase a Well-Known Poem

Partner Work With a partner, choose a short poem in this collection. Each of you should paraphrase it in your own words. Exchange your paraphrase with your partner’s. Note the differences in your paraphrases, and discuss the reasons for your word choices.

Connect

Write About Leaders

Timed Writing Are there any other people like Paul Revere in history or in the present, who have rallied their people with cries “of defiance and not of fear”? Choose a leader, and explain the intent of his or her message. How did he or she evoke in people a desire for action? Give examples to support your ideas.

Extend

Discuss What Makes a Hero

TechFocus Using an online discussion board, collaborate with classmates to define the qualities of a hero. Start by discussing Beowulf’s and Casey’s qualities. Then, add your interpretations about what makes a hero. Ask classmates to contribute their opinions. Review all of the responses, and use them to create a set of criteria, or standards, for heroism. Share your completed list with the class.

Language Coach

Language Conventions: Spelling The sound /uh/ in English can be spelled in different ways. Note the spellings in these words: cousin, blood, hunting.

Now, use a dictionary to help you fill in the blanks with the correct vowels for the following words:

cquire (uh KKWYR)
strenu_s (STREN yu uhs)
dang_r (DAYN juhr)
weap_n (WEHP uhn)
Poetry and Form

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ELEGY
O Captain! My Captain!
by Walt Whitman
page 748

FREE VERSE
I Hear America Singing
by Walt Whitman
page 753
I, Too
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page 755

Why are poems such a useful form for expressing emotions such as joy, grief, and wonder?

QuickTalk
Discuss times when the form of an activity—such as writing, playing sports, or celebrating—helped you express feelings.

736 Unit 3 • Collection 7
Sonnet  A sonnet is a fourteen line poem that is usually written in iambic pentameter. Iambic refers to verse in which an unstressed syllable is followed by a stressed syllable. Pentameter is verse with five stressed beats in every line.

The poetry of earth is never dead

Keats’s poem is written in the Italian sonnet form, in which he makes a main point in the first eight lines and responds to the point in the last six lines.

Reading Focus

Using Form to Find Meaning  Examining the form of a poem can help you figure out the poem’s meaning.

Into Action  Use a chart like the one below to help you use form to find meaning in “On the Grasshopper and the Cricket.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonnet’s Structure</th>
<th>What I Find in the Poem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Octave (first eight lines)</td>
<td>Problem, questions, or idea presented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sestet (final six lines)</td>
<td>Solution, answer, or comment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing Focus

Think as a Reader/Writer

Find It in Your Reading  This poem is filled with imagery that appeals to the senses of sight, touch, and hearing. As you read, make a list of these images in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

Language Coach

Inverted Word Order  Why do poets sometimes order words in a way that doesn’t always seem natural? Take “increasing ever” in line 12 of “On the Grasshopper and the Cricket.” “Ever increasing” might be the order you would expect for the words to be in.

When poets write in iambic pentameter, they alternate unstressed and stressed syllables in each line. Changing “increasing ever” to “ever increasing” would destroy the rhythm of iambic pentameter.

Look at line 9 for similar wording. Why might the poet have chosen to order the words as he did?
John Keats (1795–1821)

From Medical School to Poetry
When Keats wrote “On the Grasshopper and the Cricket,” he had only begun to write sonnets. He had trained to be a doctor for six years and had passed his examinations to practice medicine, but he disliked surgery. What he really wanted to do was become a poet. Keats did indeed become a poet, one of the greatest in the English language.

A Short, Tragic Life
Keats’s short life was filled with tragedy. When he was eight, his father died in an accident. His mother died of tuberculosis when Keats was fourteen. Keats’s beloved brother Tom died of tuberculosis in 1818. Shortly afterward, Keats himself began to show signs of the disease. He had fallen in love with a young woman named Fanny Brawne, but he knew that his illness would keep them from marrying. Even though he was dying, Keats continued to write poems of such beauty and depth of meaning that they are still read and admired today.

“Beauty is truth, truth beauty,”—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

Think About the Writer
How might appreciating the beauty in life have helped Keats during difficult times?
The poetry of earth is never dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead;
That is the Grasshopper’s—he takes the lead
In summer luxury—he has never done
With his delights; for when tired out with fun
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.

The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The Cricket’s song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The Grasshopper’s among some grassy hills.

---

4. mead: meadow.

**Literary Focus** Sonnet  Which syllables in line 3 are stressed? Is this line iambic pentameter? How do you know?

**Read and Discuss** How does the poem explain the line “The poetry of earth is never dead?”
On the Grasshopper and the Cricket

Respond and Think Critically

Reading Focus

Read with a Purpose

1. How do the grasshopper and the cricket keep the poetry of the earth alive?

Reading Skills: Using Form to Find Meaning

Review the chart you completed, and answer the questions that follow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonnet's Structure</th>
<th>What I Find in the Poem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Octave (first eight lines)</td>
<td>Problem, questions, or idea presented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sestet (final six lines)</td>
<td>Solution, answer, or comment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. What season is described in the first eight lines of the poem? Who is the poet of that season?

3. What season is described in the final six lines? Who is the poet of that season?

4. What observation about nature does the poem’s speaker convey?

Literary Analysis

5. Interpret Which line of the poem echoes the first line? How do the changed words affect the meaning?

6. Analyze Poets often describe things in unexpected ways. What is unexpected about Keats’s description of the weed in line 8?

7. Analyze Read Keats’s poem aloud. Apart from the regular meter, what else do you notice about the poem’s sound? What do you notice about its pattern of end rhymes?

8. Infer Think about Keats’s view of nature and the way it plays out in the poem. How might you characterize Keats’s view of the world?

Literary Skills: Sonnet

9. Evaluate Review the definition of a sonnet on page 739. What elements make “On the Grasshopper and the Cricket” a sonnet?

Literary Skills Review: Tone

10. Analyze The attitude a writer takes toward the subject, characters, and audience—tone—is revealed through the writer’s use of language. How would you describe the tone of “On the Grasshopper and the Cricket”? Use evidence from the poem in your answer.

Writing Focus

Think as a Reader/Writer

Use It in Your Writing Look back at the images you listed in your Reader/Writer Notebook. Then, write a four-line description of your classroom. Be sure to include an image that appeals to each of the senses of sight, hearing, and touch. Share your writing with a partner.

What Do You Think Now What feelings about life does Keats express through the sonnet?
Ode to Thanks

**Literary Focus**

**Ode** The *ode* originated in ancient Greece. For centuries, poets imitated these long, complex poems, which celebrated, in elegant language, one person or thing. Over the centuries, odes have been written to nightingales, Greek vases, autumn, melancholy, joy, solitude, and winners in the Olympic Games. Although today's odes are looser in form, they still celebrate a particular person or thing.

**Reading Focus**

**Reading a Poem** Many poems are written in *stanzas*, groups of lines or sentences that function much as paragraphs do in prose. Sentences, or units of thought, in poems often extend over several lines of poetry. As you read this poem, identify its units of thought. Then, consider what each stanza has to say.

**Into Action** Use a chart like the one below to help you find meaning in this poem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Ode to Thanks”</th>
<th>What it means to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stanza 1&lt;br&gt;Unit of thought: lines 1-6</td>
<td>Say thanks to thanks; the word <em>thanks</em> has special power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanza 2&lt;br&gt;Unit of thought:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Writing Focus**

**Think as a Reader/Writer**

**Find It in Your Reading** In this poem, Neruda uses many *metaphors*—comparisons between two unlike things that do not use connecting words, such as *like* or *as*. In your *Reader-Writer Notebook*, list three metaphors Neruda uses in the poem. Note what he is comparing and what the comparison might mean.

**Learn It Online**

Listen to a professional reading of this poem at: [go.hrw.com](go.hrw.com)
Pablo Neruda
(1904–1973)

A Man of the World
Pablo Neruda was born and died in his beloved Chile, but he lived many years of his life abroad. Sometimes he was a diplomat representing his country, and sometimes he lived in political exile. In 1971, Neruda won the Nobel Prize in literature. Today, Neruda is considered by many to be the most influential Latin American poet of the twentieth century.

A Poet for Everyone
Neruda was only in his twenties when he first became famous for his love poems. In his odes, Pablo Neruda gave up a complex, formal style and adopted a plainer one, using simple words and short lines so that his poems could be enjoyed by all people.

“I wanted to describe many things that had been sung and said over and over again. My intention was to start like the boy chewing on his pencil, setting to work on his composition assignment about the sun, the blackboard, the clock, or the family.”

Think About the Writer
From the information above, what can you infer about Neruda’s attitude toward life?

Preview the Selection
The speaker in “Ode to Thanks” expresses his gratitude for the word thanks, while reflecting on all the good that this one simple word produces.
Thanks to the word
that says thanks!
Thanks to thanks,
word
that melts
iron and snow!

The world is a threatening place
until
thanks
makes the rounds
from one pair of lips to another,
soft as a bright
feather
and sweet as a petal of sugar,
filling the mouth with its sound
or else a mumbled
whisper.  A
Life becomes human again:
it’s no longer an open window.

A bit of brightness
strikes into the forest,
and we can sing again beneath the leaves.  B
Thanks, you’re the medicine we take
to save us from
the bite of scorn.

A Read and Discuss What point is the poet making about
the word thanks?
B Reading Focus Reading a Poem What thought is
expressed in lines 20–22?
Your light brightens the altar of harshness.
Or maybe
a tapestry
known
30 to far distant peoples.
Travelers
fan out
into the wilds,
and in that jungle
35 of strangers,
merci°
rings out
while the hustling train
changes countries,
sweeping away borders,
then spasibo°
clinging to pointy
volcanoes, to fire and freezing cold,
or danke,° yes! and gracias,° and
45 the world turns into a table:
a single word has wiped it clean,
plates and glasses gleam,
silverware tinkles,
and the tablecloth is as broad as a plain.

50 Thank you, thanks,
for going out and returning,
for rising up
and settling down.
We know, thanks,
55 that you don’t fill every space—
you’re only a word—
but
where your little petal
appears
the daggers of pride take cover,
and there’s a penny’s worth of smiles.

36. merci (mehr SEE): French for “thanks.”
41. spasibo (spa SEE buh): Russian for “thanks.”
44. danke (DAHNG kuh): German for “thanks.” gracias (GRAH see ahs): Spanish for “thanks.”
Ode to Thanks

Respond and Think Critically

Reading Focus

Read with a Purpose
1. Why is the word thanks so important?

Reading Skills: Reading a Poem
2. Review the chart you began on page 743. Then, add a row to the chart and write down what insight about life Neruda conveys in this poem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Ode to Thanks”</th>
<th>What it means to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stanza 1</td>
<td>“Say thanks to thanks”; The word thanks has special power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit of thought: lines 1-6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Insight about life:

Literary Focus

Literary Analysis
3. Interpret In what way is the word thanks like medicine (lines 23–25)?
4. Draw Conclusions According to Neruda, how can the word thanks affect people all over the world? What might have been his intent in choosing to include the word thanks in other languages in lines 36–44?
5. Analyze How does the image of a table (lines 45–49) convey an additional idea about thanks? To what senses does the image appeal?
6. Interpret The last line of “Ode to Thanks” is “and there’s a penny’s worth of smiles.” What interpretation can you offer for this line?

7. Extend Neruda makes a point that a small word, thanks, sends a powerful message. What other “simple” words carry powerful messages and associations?

Literary Skills: Ode
8. Compare and Contrast Review the definition of an ode on page 743. How is “Ode to Thanks” similar to classical odes? How is it different? Cite details to support your answer.

Literary Skills Review: Repetition
9. Analyze Free-verse poets often use repetition for both sound and sense. How do the many uses of the word thanks add to the meaning of the poem? How do the repeated structures of the phrases create rhythm in lines 12–14 and 51–53?

Writing Focus

Think as a Reader/Writer
Use It in Your Writing Review the metaphors Neruda uses in his ode. Now, choose a person, place, or thing you would like to celebrate, and write an ode. Your purpose is to express strong, positive feelings about many aspects of your subject. Like Neruda, strive to include interesting metaphors in your ode.

What Do You Think Now? How could writing an ode help you express your feelings?
O Captain! My Captain!

Elegy and Extended Metaphor  An elegy (EHL uh jee) is a poem of mourning. Most elegies are about someone who has died. “O Captain! My Captain!” mourns the tragic death of President Abraham Lincoln. Whitman’s elegy includes an extended metaphor, a comparison that is extended through several lines or even an entire poem. As you read, decide who the captain really is and what the ship represents.

Paraphrasing  When you paraphrase, you restate all of the text in your own words. A paraphrase is unlike a summary, which covers only major points. Paraphrasing can help you understand difficult poems, especially ones that use inversion, the reversal of the normal word order of a sentence. Look for the subject and verb to help you paraphrase sentences with inversion.

Into Action  Use a chart to paraphrase complicated sentences or phrases. An example that includes inversion is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text from Poem</th>
<th>My Paraphrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“O the bleeding drops of red, / Where on the deck my Captain lies, / Fallen cold and dead.”</td>
<td>Oh, the blood that is on the deck where my dead captain lies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Language Coach  Word Forms and Origins  Which word on the Vocabulary list also appears in two other forms in the Literary Focus section? If you chose mournful, you’re right. The word mourn, built on the Indo-European root mer, means “remember.” In what way is mourning a remembrance?

Think as a Reader/Writer  Find It in Your Reading  Many poets use repetition to add emphasis and rhythm to their writing. Look for instances of repeated words and phrases in “O Captain! My Captain!” Note them in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
Walt Whitman
(1819–1892)

A Colorful Character
Walt Whitman, who was born in Long Island, New York, was never interested in being like everyone else. He dressed and behaved in a manner all his own. According to one story, Whitman once drove a horse-drawn carriage along Broadway in New York City, reciting Shakespeare at the top of his lungs.

Leaves of Grass
Whitman was a determined and talented writer. When he couldn’t find a publisher for his book of poems, *Leaves of Grass*, he published the book himself in 1855. He even wrote his own reviews. The poems in the book embrace and celebrate all aspects of the United States and its people.

A Criticized Masterpiece
*Leaves of Grass* is now recognized as a masterpiece, but that wasn’t always so. Many readers criticized Whitman’s poems because they were about common people and experiences and because they were written in free verse instead of in rhyme and meter. Undeterred, Whitman continued adding poems to *Leaves of Grass* and publishing new editions of the book until he died. It is now one of the best-loved books in American literature.

“An American bard at last!”

Think About the Writer
Based on this information, what three adjectives would you use to describe Whitman? Why?

Build Background
Walt Whitman lived in Washington, D.C. during the Civil War, where he worked as a government clerk and war correspondent and also served as a volunteer nurse. He cared for thousands of wounded soldiers who filled the nearby military hospitals. The Saturday before Abraham Lincoln’s second inauguration, Whitman attended a reception at the White House. On inauguration day, March 4, 1865, Whitman twice saw Lincoln pass by in his carriage. He commented that the president “looked very much worn and tired; the lines, indeed, of vast responsibilities, intricate questions, and demands of life and death, cut deeper than ever upon his dark brown face; yet all the old goodness, tenderness, sadness, and canny shrewdness, underneath the furrows.” Lincoln was assassinated on April 14, 1865, just a month after Whitman saw him on inauguration day. Although the Civil War was over, the difficult job of healing the country had just begun.

Preview the Selection
In this poem, the speaker—a sailor in a ship returning after a perilous journey—tries to encourage his captain to rise up and see the adoring crowds that are celebrating and waiting for him at the port.
O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weathered every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;

But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
   Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;

2. **rack**: here, violent change or disorder, like that caused by a storm.

**Vocabulary**  
weathered (WEHTH uhrd) v.: survived; came through safely.
mass (mas) n.: large group, in this case, of people.
Here Captain! dear father!
The arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You’ve fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchored safe and sound, its voyage closed
and done,

From fearful trip the victor° ship comes in with object
won:
Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

20. victor: winning; triumphant.

Read and Discuss
What does this stanza tell us about the captain?

Vocabulary mourningful (MAWRN fuhl) adj.: full of deep sadness.
**O Captain! My Captain!**

**Respond and Think Critically**

1. **How does the speaker feel about his captain?**

2. **Review your paraphrases on the chart you began on page 748. Then, use a chart like the one below to explain what each stanza means. Finally, sum up the meaning of the poem as a whole.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stanza 1</th>
<th>Stanza 2</th>
<th>Stanza 3</th>
<th>Meaning of Poem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. **In line 20, the poet says, “From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won.” If the ship is a metaphor for the country, what “trip” has the country made? What “object” has it won?**

4. **“O Captain! My Captain!” is built on an extended metaphor. What clues tell you that the captain is Abraham Lincoln and that the ship stands for the United States?**

5. **Whitman’s elegy mourns the death of Lincoln. How does it reflect both Whitman’s and the nation’s grief over Lincoln’s death?**

6. **How does the use of a strong meter and regular rhyme (or near-rhyme) scheme affect the poem’s power and meaning? What emotions do these sound effects evoke?**

7. **Match each Vocabulary word with its definition.**
   - mass: a. full of sorrow
   - mournful: b. large group
   - weathered: c. survived

8. **How might Whitman’s poetic expression of sadness have helped others who read or heard his poem?**

9. **Look back at your list of examples of repetition. How does Whitman use repetition to emphasize his point and convey the emotions he is feeling? Write a short analysis of how Whitman uses repetition in the poem.**

10. **What Do You Think Now?**
I Hear America Singing / I, Too

**Literary Focus**

**Free Verse** A *free verse* poem does not follow a regular rhyme scheme or meter. Without a strict pattern to follow, poets writing free verse rely on their own sense of *rhythm* to make their poems “musical.” They may also use the following poetic devices:

- **Alliteration**: repetition of consonant sounds (snow spiraling)
- **Onomatopoeia** (awn uh maht uh PE uh): the use of words whose sounds echo their meanings (the chain saw’s buzz)
- **Imagery**: language that appeals to the five senses
- **Figures of speech**: language based on comparisons, such as metaphors, similes, and personification

**Reading Focus**

**Reading Aloud** One way to fully understand and appreciate the poetic devices in a poem is to read it aloud.

**Into Action** As you read these poems aloud, record instances of the following poetic devices. Then, add your impressions of them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alliteration</th>
<th>Onomatopoeia</th>
<th>Imagery</th>
<th>Figures of Speech</th>
<th>Rhythm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>America is singing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TechFocus** In “I, Too,” notice how Hughes gives a voice to a group of people. Think about a group you know who needs to be heard.

**Writing Focus**

**Think as a Reader/Writer**

**Find It in Your Reading** Record in your *Reader/Writer Notebook* images from the poems that _____ a strong emotional response.

**Learn It Online**

Listen to professional actors read these poems at: [go.hrw.com L8-751](go.hrw.com L8-751)

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**Language Coach**

**Multiple-Meaning Words** The speakers in the poems that follow both talk about “singing.”

The word *sing* has many meanings, some of which appear in the dictionary entry below. Read through these definitions of the verb *sing*.

**sing** (sihng) *v.*: 1. to make music with the voice. 2. to make pleasant musical sounds (Birds were singing in the trees.) 3. to make a humming, whistling, or buzzing sound (I heard the kettle sing.) 4. to shout out or proclaim. 5. slang: to inform about or tell on.

As you read the poems, think about the ways the poets talk about singing. What differences, if any, do you find in the meaning of the word as it is used in those poems?
Walt Whitman (1819–1892)

For a biography of Walt Whitman, see page 747.

Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

A Chance Meeting of Poets
Born in Joplin, Missouri, Langston Hughes began writing poetry in his early teens. As a young man, he traveled around the world and held many jobs, including teacher, clerk, deck-hand, and flower salesman. One day in 1925, Hughes discovered that the famous poet Vachel Lindsay was staying at the Washington, D.C. hotel where he was working as a busboy. Hughes left some of his poems beside Lindsay’s dinner plate. That night, Lindsay read them aloud at a poetry reading, announcing that he had discovered a great new poet. The next day, Hughes received national publicity.

A Commitment to Justice and Strength
Hughes believed in writing for everyday people, those who “are not too important to themselves or the community, or too well fed, or too learned to watch the lazy world go round.” From his grandmother, he learned strength and determination. In his autobiography, he wrote:

“Nobody cried in my grandmother’s stories. They worked, or schemed, or fought. . . . Something about my grandmother’s stories (without her ever having said so) taught me the uselessness of crying about anything.”

Think About the Writers
How might Hughes’s varied jobs and experiences have helped him write poems?

Build Background
“I Hear America Singing”
Walt Whitman was the first American poet to use free verse. Today many poets write in free verse, so we take it for granted. In Whitman’s day, however, people were used to poems written in “poetic” language, which used strict rhyme schemes and meters. These people were shocked by Whitman’s sprawling lines and use of slang. In time many critics came to feel that Walt Whitman was the first and greatest poet to “give voice” to America. “I Hear America Singing” offers a good example of why they came to think so.

Preview the Selections
“I, Too” was written by Langston Hughes in response to “I Hear America Singing” by Walt Whitman. While Whitman’s poem is a celebration of the American worker, Hughes’s poem points out the injustices felt by African Americans.
I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be
blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or
beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or
leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat,
the deckhand singing on the steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hat-
ter singing as he stands,
The woodcutter’s song, the plowboy’s on his way in the
morning, or at noon intermission or at sundown,
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife
at work, or of the girl sewing or washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none
else,
The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of
young fellows, robust, friendly,
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious
songs.

A literary focus: Free Verse
What does Whitman do in these lines to create
a sense of rhythm?

B Read and Discuss
What picture is Whitman painting for us?
Viewing and Interpreting

How well does this image match your interpretation of Hughes’s poem?

Sit In (2005) by Gil Mayers.
Collage.
I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,

But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.  

Tomorrow,
I’ll sit at the table
When company comes.
Nobody’ll dare
Say to me,
“Eat in the kitchen,”
Then.

Besides,
They’ll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

---

A | Read and Discuss | What have we learned about the speaker?

B | Literary Focus | Free Verse | What metaphor appears in the poem’s last line? What two things are being compared?
I Hear America Singing / I, Too

Respond and Think Critically

Read with a Purpose
1. What might Whitman mean when he talks of "Each [person] singing what belongs to him or her and to none else?" What does Hughes mean when he says "I, too, sing America"?

Reading Skills: Reading Aloud
2. Review the entries in the chart you began on page 753. Then, write a statement that describes how reading aloud helped you identify sound devices and appreciate each poem.

Literary Analysis
3. Analyze Discuss the examples of working people in "I Hear America Singing." How do all those descriptions connect to the title?
4. Make Judgments Based on his poem, how do you think Whitman regarded America and its growth?
5. Interpret "I, Too" was written in response to "I Hear America Singing." Whitman's poem is a celebration of the American worker. What does Hughes's poem celebrate?
6. Extend Has Hughes's prediction in "I, Too" (written in 1922) in any way come true? In what ways, if any, has it not come true?

Literary Skills: Free Verse
7. Evaluate How well does the imagery from "I Hear America Singing" help you "see" or "hear" an American worker? Explain.

8. Analyze The poems you just read are free-verse poems—without a regular rhyme scheme or meter. They do, however, use repetition to create rhythm. In each poem, find examples of repeated words, lines, and sentence patterns. You may want to use a chart like this one to help you gather details.

Examples of Repetition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“singing his as he”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Literary Skills Review: Symbol
9. Interpret A symbol is a person, place, thing, or event that stands for something beyond itself. What do you think the kitchen and the table symbolize in Hughes's poem? Explain your response.

Think as a Reader/Writer
Use It in Your Writing Look back at the images you noted in your Reader/Writer Notebook. How did these images evoke a mood, or overall emotional effect? Try to capture the mood of each poem with a single word such as joyful or angry. Then, describe the different moods of the poems, using the images you noted to support your interpretations.

What Do You Think Now
What different attitudes do the two poets express in these poems?
Vocabulary Development

Multiple-Meaning Words

Many English words have more than one meaning. Some words can even be used as different parts of speech. Look at the following example:

The cycle of semesters continues every year.
The author wrote a cycle of poems.
The stars cycle through the heavens.
The riders cycle madly to the finish line.

Cycle is used as a noun in the first two sentences; in the final two, cycle is used as a verb. To be a good reader, learn the common meanings of multiple-meaning words and use context to determine which meaning applies.

Your Turn

The first three words below are from “I Hear America Singing”; the last word is from “I, Too.” Write down each word’s meaning in the poem. Then, use a dictionary to determine the word’s other possible meanings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning in Poem</th>
<th>Other Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>leaves (line 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intermission (line 7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>company (line 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you respond to the Choices, use these Academic Vocabulary words as appropriate: intent, evoke, associations, interpretation.

REVIEW

Write About Media Imagery

Advertising, like poetry, is full of images. Think about ads you have seen from television or magazines. In two paragraphs, give your opinion: What associations do companies want people to make with their products? When is imagery deceptive rather than just creative?

CONNECT

Create a Web Page

Think of a group you believe is not being heard (perhaps endangered animals or an oppressed people). Write a poem with a similar structure to Langston Hughes’s “I, Too.” Make a Web page for your poem, with critical words hyperlinked to images, sound files, or Web sites.

EXTEND

Recite a Poem

Listening and Speaking Which poet’s work did you enjoy the most from the “Poetry and Form” section of this collection? Choose a poet, and check out a collection of his poems from a library. Find another work from the poet, and recite it for your class. Introduce your poem first, explaining your interpretation of its meaning.

Learn It Online

Sharpen your knowledge of multiple-meaning words with the online interactive Vocabulary Tutor at: go.hrw.com L8-757 Go
COMPARING TEXTS
Analyzing Biographical Context

CONTENTS

BIOGRAPHY
Robert Frost: The New England Poet
page 761

POEM
Out, Out—
by Robert Frost
page 762

What Do You Think?
How much do our surroundings affect our feelings and attitudes?

QuickWrite
Make a list of places where you have lived, traveled, or spent time. Briefly describe how each of these places influenced your outlook on life.

**Literary Focus**  
**Biographical Context**  
Writers are often influenced by their surroundings—the people, events, and environments around them. For example, the settings in their works may reflect places they have lived. Their characters may be based on people they know or have heard about. A biographical approach to literary criticism looks at the connections between a writer’s life and his or her work:
- How might events in the writer’s life have affected the work?
- What effect did the writer’s surroundings have on the work?
- To what extent do the writer’s beliefs affect the work?

**Reading Focus**  
**Making Connections**  
In the pages that follow, you will connect what you learn from reading a short biography of Robert Frost to a poem written by Frost.

**Into Action**  
As you read Meet the Writer and “Robert Frost: The New England Poet,” use the chart below to record key details about Frost’s life. After you read the poem, record the ways you see Frost’s biography reflected in the piece.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biography</th>
<th>Poem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work</strong></td>
<td>farmer, poet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family</strong></td>
<td>two sons died</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beliefs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Writing Focus**  
**Think as a Reader/Writer**

**Find It in Your Reading**  
Note in your Reader/Writer Notebook the instances of dialogue Frost uses in “Out, Out—.”

---

**Vocabulary**

**Robert Frost:**
**The New England Poet**

**summoned** (SUHM uhn'd) v.: called; requested to come. During the medical emergency, we summoned a doctor.

**recite** (rih SYT) v.: present a memorized text orally, often in a formal manner. When you recite a poem, speak up so that others can hear you.

**Out, Out—**

**rueful** (ROO fuhl) adj.: regretful. When he understood the grave situation, the boy’s expression became rueful.

**appeal** (uh PEEL) n.: plea or call for help or sympathy. He turned to us in appeal, but there was nothing we could do to help.

---

**Language Coach**

**Word Forms**  
Many words can be used as either a noun or a verb. For example, the Vocabulary word *summoned* is a verb meaning “called; requested to come.” A *summons*, however, is a written order telling someone to appear in court. What other word on the list above can be used as a noun or a verb? Use a dictionary if you need help.
Robert Frost
(1874–1963)

From Farmer to Poet
Winner of four Pulitzer Prizes for Poetry, Robert Frost was for years the best-known poet in the United States. Frost was born in San Francisco, but he was raised in New England, which became the setting for almost all of his poetry. As a young man, Frost had tried raising chickens on a farm that his grandfather had given him, but he was unsuccessful. He also had a difficult time selling his poems. In 1912, after the deaths of two of his children, he and his family moved to England. There, Frost met with success: He found a publisher for his first two collections of poems (*A Boy’s Will* and *North of Boston*). The books were immediately popular, and by the time Frost returned to the United States, publishers were interested in his work.

“A poem begins as a lump in the throat, a sense of wrong, a homesickness, a lovesickness.”

An American Icon
Frost spent the rest of his long life farming, writing poetry, giving lectures, and reading his poems to audiences. By the end of his life, he had become a kind of national poet. On Frost’s seventy-fifth birthday, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution in his honor. It stated, “His poems have helped to guide American thought and humor and wisdom, setting forth to our minds a reliable representation of ourselves and of all men.” When he read his poem “The Gift Outright” at John F. Kennedy’s inauguration in 1961, Frost became the first poet to read a poem at a presidential inauguration.

Key Elements of Frost’s Poetry
- **Meter**: Frost remained committed to writing poetry in traditional meter at a time when many poets were trading metered forms for free verse.
- **Rhythm**: Frost tried to capture the sound of speech—especially the spoken rhythms of the farmers and other people he encountered every day.
- **Messages**: Frost’s messages often reflect a tragic view of life. However, his attention to detail—especially that of nature—offers a possibility of hope and redemption.

Think About the Writer
What aspects of Frost’s life or work do you think helped him become an American icon?
Robert Frost lived in New England for most of his life and found his subjects in the landscapes and people of that area, especially in New Hampshire and Vermont. The plain speech and everyday subjects of his poems disguise their complex thoughts.

Frost once wrote that a subject for poetry “should be common in experience and uncommon in books. . . . It should have happened to everyone but it should have occurred to no one before as material.”

He drew on the events that occurred around him for his subjects. For example, Frost based the poem “Out, Out—” on an article in the Littleton Courier, a New Hampshire newspaper. The article, entitled “Sad Tragedy at Bethlehem,” appeared in the March 31, 1901, issue. It read as follows:

Raymond Fitzgerald a Victim of Fatal Accident
Raymond Tracy Fitzgerald, one of the twin sons of Michael G. and Margaret Fitzgerald of Bethlehem, died at his home Thursday afternoon, March 24, as the result of an accident by which one of his hands was badly hurt in a sawing machine. The young man was assisting in sawing up some wood in his own dooryard [yard] with a sawing machine and accidentally hit the loose pulley, causing the saw to descend upon his hand, cutting and lacerating it badly. Raymond was taken into the house and a physician was immediately summoned, but he died very suddenly from the effects of the shock, which produced heart failure. . . .

In his poems, Frost tried to depict the sounds of New Englanders’ speech. He deliberately used the everyday language he heard in conversations with farmers. Frost wrote about his fascination with speech:

“I have sought only those words I had met up with as a boy in New Hampshire, working on farms during the summer vacations. I listened to the men with whom I worked and found that I could make out their conversation as they talked together out of earshot, even when I had not plainly heard the words they spoke. When I started to carry their conversation over into poetry, I could hear their voices.”

Given Frost’s feelings about the importance of the spoken word, it is not surprising that he liked to “say” rather than to recite his poetry. However, Frost never read “Out, Out—” (page 764) in public because he felt it was “too cruel.”

---

**Read and Discuss**

What do you think the poem “Out, Out—” will be about?

**Literary Focus**

How does Frost describe the dialogue in his poems? What can you infer about the poet from that description?

**Vocabulary**

- **summoned** (SUHM uhnd) v.: called; requested to come.
- **recite** (rih SYT) v.: present a memorized text orally, often in a formal manner.
Read with a Purpose
Read this poem to discover how suddenly something unexpected can happen.

Preparing to Read for this selection is on page 761.

Build Background
The title of this poem is an allusion—a reference to another literary work or a work in another field, such as history, mythology, or science. This title’s allusion is to a famous speech by Macbeth in Shakespeare’s play of that name. Macbeth has just heard of his wife’s death, and he speaks bitterly of the shortness of life:

“Out, out, brief candle!
Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.”

The buzz saw snarled and rattled in the yard
And made dust and dropped stove-length sticks of wood,
Sweet-scented stuff when the breeze drew across it.
And from there those that lifted eyes could count
5 Five mountain ranges one behind the other
Under the sunset far into Vermont.
And the saw snarled and rattled, snarled and rattled,
As it ran light, or had to bear a load.
And nothing happened: day was all but done.
10 Call it a day, I wish they might have said
To please the boy by giving him the half hour
That a boy counts so much when saved from work.

A Literary Focus | Biographical Context  What is the setting of this poem? Did Frost live somewhere similar? Explain.
His sister stood beside them in her apron
To tell them “Supper.” At the word, the saw,
As if to prove saws knew what supper meant,
Leaped out at the boy’s hand, or seemed to leap—
He must have given the hand. However it was,
Neither refused the meeting. But the hand!
The boy’s first outcry was a rueful laugh,
As he swung toward them holding up the hand,
Half in appeal, but half as if to keep
The life from spilling. Then the boy saw all—
Since he was old enough to know, big boy
Doing a man’s work, though a child at heart—
He saw all spoiled. “Don’t let him cut my hand off—
The doctor, when he comes. Don’t let him, sister!”
So. But the hand was gone already.
The doctor put him in the dark of ether.
He lay and puffed his lips out with his breath.
And then—the watcher at his pulse took fright.
No one believed. They listened at his heart.
Little—less—nothing!—and that ended it.
No more to build on there. And they, since they
Were not the one dead, turned to their affairs.

28. ether (EE thuhr): chemical compound used as an anesthetic.

B Read and Discuss What has happened?

C Reading Focus Making Connections What connections do you see between this poem and Frost’s biography?

Vocabulary rueful (ROO fuhl) adj.: regretful.
appeal (uh PEEL) n.: plea or call for help or sympathy.

Respond and Think Critically

Quick Check
1. Why is Frost considered “the New England Poet”?
2. In the poem “Out, Out—,” what causes the boy’s death? How do the others respond?

Read with a Purpose
3. In Frost’s biography, what real-life event inspired the poem “Out, Out—”? 
4. In “Out, Out—” what was so unexpected about the boy’s death?

Reading Skills: Making Connections
5. Complete the chart you began on page 761. Then, formulate a statement in which you show a connection between Frost’s life and “Out, Out—.” Also use this chart as you respond to item 14.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biography</th>
<th>Poem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>farmer, poet about a farming family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>two sons died about boy’s death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Literary Analysis
10. Interpret Re-read the background information for “Out, Out—.” How does the literary allusion, or reference, in the poem’s title affect your interpretation?

11. Infer Re-read lines 10–12 of “Out, Out—.” What do these details suggest about the poem’s speaker? What is his or her wish?

12. Analyze Who or what does the poem suggest is to blame for the tragedy? (See lines 14–18.)

Literary Skills: Biographical Context

Literary Skills Review: Sound Devices
14. Analyze “Out, Out—” opens with onomatopoeia—words whose sounds imitate their meaning. What do you think is Frost’s intent in opening with these sinister sounds?

Vocabulary Check
6. appeal a. regretful
7. recite b. called
8. rueful c. plea
9. summoned d. speak aloud

Use It in Your Writing
Did you notice how Frost uses everyday spoken dialogue to create the sense of real-life tragedy in this poem? Write a brief narrative about an actual event that you have heard about or witnessed. Use dialogue to help re-create the event.

Writing Focus

Write an Analytic Essay

**Biographical Context**  By reading Frost’s biography and poem, you have had a chance to examine how a writer’s life and surroundings may have influenced his or her work.

**Assignment**  Write an essay in which you consider the connections between Frost’s life and his poetry.

- In the essay’s first paragraph, introduce your topic and state what general associations you see between Frost’s life and work.
- In the body of the essay, write in detail about how Frost’s life affected his work. Support your analysis by citing details from the biographies and “Out, Out—.” Refer to your connections chart for specifics.
- Finally, in the last paragraph, draw a conclusion about the relationship between Frost’s life and this poem.

**Evaluation Guidelines**

An effective essay contains

- ✓ a clearly stated topic
- ✓ main ideas that are supported with details
- ✓ a clear and logical organization
- ✓ a thought-provoking conclusion

What Do You Think Now?

How did Robert Frost’s environment affect his feelings and attitudes?

**CHOICES**

As you respond to the Choices, use these **Academic Vocabulary** words as appropriate: intent, evoke, associations, interpretation.

**REVIEW**

Compare Two Texts

**Timed Writing** Re-read the 1901 news article that inspired “Out, Out—” (page 761). Then, re-read the poem. In a short essay, describe the similarities and differences in the accounts of the two events. What information in the newspaper article is missing from the poem? What insights in the poem are missing from the newspaper account?

**CONNECT**

Write a Poem

Choose a real-life event you have read about or witnessed. It can be amusing or tragic. Then, write a short poem based on this event. Which real-life details will you use? Will you make up details? What feelings will you try to evoke? Share your poem—and its source—with the class.

**EXTEND**

Storyboard a Writer’s Life

TechFocus  Think of a writer whose work you enjoy. Then, use online sources to research this writer’s life. Once you know the basics, storyboard a scene that you would use in a film version of this writer’s life.

**Learn It Online**

There’s more to this poem than meets the eye. Expand your view at:

go.hrw.com L8-765 Go
COMPARING TEXTS

Analyzing Symbol and Theme

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POEM
Saying Yes
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SPEECH
The First Americans
The Grand Council Fire of American Indians
page 776

What Do You Think?
What do the concepts of freedom and liberty mean? How do we express these ideas?

QuickWrite
Why do many people move to the United States? Discuss your ideas with a small group of classmates, and write down your group’s top three reasons.
The New Colossus / First Stop: Ellis Island / Refugee in America / Saying Yes / The First Americans

**Literary Focus**

**Symbol and Theme** In literature, a *symbol* is a person, place, thing, or event that stands for something beyond itself. For example, an abandoned toy may symbolize a character’s passage into adulthood. Often, analyzing a literary symbol can lead you to recognize the work’s *theme*, or insight about life. As you read the following works, look for symbols with associations that help you understand the writers’ ideas about what it means to be American.

**Reading Focus**

**Comparing and Contrasting Themes** The following selections were written at different times and by different members of American society. To uncover each selection’s theme, analyze selection details and consider your own knowledge. As you read, use a chart like this to help you identify each selection’s theme. Later, you will compare and contrast these themes across the selections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>“The New Colossus”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Important Details</strong></td>
<td>unlike conquering Colossus; Mother of Exiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Symbols</strong></td>
<td>Statue of Liberty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Knowledge</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme Statement</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Writing Focus**

**Think as a Reader/Writer**

**Find It in Your Reading** Writers can affect how a reader feels simply by choosing the right words. As you read each selection, note in your Reader/Writer Notebook examples of words and phrases that evoke a strong emotional response.

**Vocabulary**

**The New Colossus**

*yearning* (YURN ihng) *v.*: longing for; wanting badly. The immigrants, yearning for a better life, took a risk and moved to the United States.

*teeming* (TEEM ihng) *adj.*: full (in this case, of people); crowded. The lower deck of the ship was teeming with people.

**The First Americans**

*patriots* (PAY tree uhts) *n.*: people who love and support their country. Patriots will often fly a flag to show their love of country.

*wholesome* (HOHL suhm) *adj.*: good for the mind and spirit. The authors want wholesome legends of American Indian life taught in school.

**Language Coach**

*Word Origins* Whole in *wholesome* comes from the Old English word *hāl*, meaning “whole.” Other words with this same origin are *holy*, *healthy*, and *heal*. With a partner, discuss how the idea of wholeness exists in these other words.

**Learn It Online**

Hear a professional actor read these selections at: [go.hr.com](http://go.hr.com)
MEET THE WRITERS

Emma Lazarus
(1849–1887)

“Mother of Exiles”
Emma Lazarus was born into a wealthy family in New York City. From an early age, Lazarus studied the classics and foreign languages. Her first collection of poetry was published when she was a teenager. After reading an article by Lazarus in support of Jewish refugees from Russia, the Statue of Liberty committee asked her to write a poem for the statue’s pedestal. The result was the powerful sonnet “The New Colossus.”

Langston Hughes
(1902–1967)

For a biography of Langston Hughes, see page 752.

Diana Chang
(1934–)

Advice for Young Writers
Born in the United States to a Eurasian mother and a Chinese father, Diana Chang has taught creative writing at Barnard College in New York City. In an interview, Chang gave the following advice:

“First of all, you cannot ‘decide’ to become a serious writer. . . . But you can write. If you have it in you to write, you will write and you will continue to write and send things out and eventually some will be taken. After your work starts to be published, other people will say to you, ‘You are a writer.’”

Think About the Writers
What quality or qualities do Lazarus and Chang appear to possess?
Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
   With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
   Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
   Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp°!” cries she
   With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse° of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost° to me.
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

9. pomp: splendor; magnificence.
12. refuse (REHF yooz): useless; unwanted.
13. tempest-tost: upset by storm. Tempest here refers to other hardships as well.

---

A Read and Discuss What is the poet talking about here? What is she saying about the two statues?

B Literary Focus Theme What theme is suggested by the words Lazarus gives the Statue of Liberty?

Vocabulary yearning (YUR nihng) v.: longing for; wanting badly. teeming (TEE mihng) adj.: full (in this case, of people); crowded.
As they sailed into New York Harbor, immigrants spotted the Statue of Liberty in the distance and, nearby, Ellis Island. Ellis Island was their first stop in the United States. There they were given medical examinations and officially permitted to enter the country. More than twelve million people arrived through this gateway between 1892 and 1954. The peak year was 1907—when more than one million newcomers entered through the “Golden Door.”

A Read and Discuss What have we learned about Ellis Island?
“Well, I came to America because I heard the streets were paved with gold. When I got here, I found out three things: first, the streets weren’t paved with gold; second, they weren’t paved at all; and third, I was expected to pave them.”

—Old Italian Story

“I can remember only the hustle and bustle of those last weeks in Pinsk, the farewells from the family, the embraces and the tears. Going to America then was almost like going to the moon.”

—Golda Meir, a Russian Jewish immigrant in 1906

“We naturally were in steerage. Everyone had smelly food, and the atmosphere was so thick and dense with smoke and bodily odors that your head itched, and when you went to scratch your head you got lice in your hands. We had six weeks of that.”

—Sophia Kreitzberg, a Russian Jewish immigrant in 1908

“Those who are loudest in their cry of ‘America for Americans’ do not have to look very far back to find an ancestor who was an immigrant.”

—New Immigrants’ Protective League, 1906

B Literary Focus Symbol  What does this immigrant’s story tell us about the power of symbols?

C Read and Discuss What do Sophia’s and Golda’s comments tell us about the immigrants’ journeys?

D Literary Focus Theme  What idea about life does this quote from the New Immigrants’ Protective League convey?
The New Colossus / First Stop: Ellis Island

Respond and Think Critically

Quick Check
1. In “The New Colossus,” how does the speaker describe the statue that stands at New York’s “gates”?
2. Why was it required for immigrants to stop at Ellis Island first?

Read with a Purpose
3. What do you think is Lazarus’s intent in comparing the “old Colossus” and the new one?
4. What did you learn from the photo essay about the immigrants’ experiences?

Reading Skills: Comparing and Contrasting Themes
5. Review the charts you created, and compare the themes of the two selections you have just read. Are the themes similar or different?

Literary Analysis
7. Interpret In the late 1800s, immigrants from Europe poured into America. What do you think the statue in “The New Colossus” means when she tells these countries to keep their “storied pomp”? Explain your interpretation.
8. Analyze How does Lazarus’s use of personification (giving human traits to something nonhuman) affect our understanding of what the Statue of Liberty represents?
9. Extend What qualities might help immigrants as they make their difficult journeys?

Literary Skills: Symbol and Theme
10. Interpret What do the statue’s words to people coming to the United States reveal about the American dream? What do the words suggest about the poem’s theme? What symbols does Lazarus use to emphasize her message?
11. Analyze How might the immigrants in the photographs be considered symbols of America?

Vocabulary Check
Fill in the blanks with the correct Vocabulary word.

6. The Statue of Liberty welcomes the ________ masses from other lands, those who are ________ to find a better life.

Use It in Your Writing Look back at your notes in your Reader/Writer Notebook. What words and phrases evoked the strongest emotions in you? Write a paragraph in which you explain why you find these examples so gripping. What ideas do you connect with the words? How does the language make you feel?
Read with a Purpose
Read this poem to see how its speaker feels about the American dream of freedom and liberty.

Preparing to Read for this selection is on page 769.

Build Background
This poem about the American dream was written around 1943, before the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. The civil rights movement led to increased liberties for African Americans. For example, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 made discrimination based on race, religion, or national origin illegal. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was designed to stop tactics used to keep African Americans from voting.

There are words like Freedom
Sweet and wonderful to say.
On my heart-strings freedom sings
All day everyday.

There are words like Liberty
That almost make me cry.
If you had known what I knew
You would know why.

A Literary Focus Theme What is a refugee? What does the title suggest about this poem’s theme?

B Read and Discuss What is the speaker trying to help us understand?
“Are you Chinese?”
“Yes.”

“American?”
“Yes.”

“Really Chinese?”
“No . . . not quite.”

“Really American?”
“Well, actually, you see . . .”

But I would rather say

10 yes

Not neither-nor,
not maybe,
but both, and not only

The homes I’ve had,

15 the ways I am

I’d rather say it
twice,

yes
Read with a Purpose

1. After reading “Refugee in America,” do you see any differences in meaning between the words *freedom* and *liberty*? Explain.

2. In “Saying Yes,” how does the speaker describe herself when asked a series of questions about her nationality? Why does she respond that way?

Reading Skills: Comparing and Contrasting Themes

3. Review the charts you created to help you identify each selection’s theme (page 769). Then, compare the themes of the poems you have just read. In what ways are the themes similar or different? Use your responses to help you answer question 8.

Literary Analysis

4. Interpret The word *refugee* typically refers to a displaced person or someone without a country. Since Hughes was born in the United States, why do you think he chose to title his poem “Refugee in America”?

5. Analyze Chang uses dialogue in the first eight lines of “Saying Yes.” What does the use of dialogue add to the poem?

6. Extend When describing the confusion that accompanies one’s ancestry, the speaker in “Saying Yes” says, “Not neither-nor, / not maybe, / but both, and not only. . . .” Can this confusion apply to anyone? Why or why not?

Literary Skills: Symbol and Theme

7. Compare and Contrast Describe the similarities and differences in what these poems have to say about the power of words. Which words in these poems are symbolic? Explain.

8. Interpret One aspect of the American dream is a belief in freedom, equality, and respect for all Americans. What theme do these poems convey about the American dream?

Literary Skills Review: Repetition

9. Analyze The use of repeated words, phrases, and structures helps emphasize key ideas and gives poems rhythm. Find examples of repetition in these two poems, and explain how its use helps the poets achieve their purpose.

Think as a Reader/Writer

Use It in Your Writing The two short poems you just read explore the power of language. Which words or phrases made an impression on you? Choose a word or phrase from the poems, and write your own poem that explores some ideas you associate with that word or phrase.
To the mayor of Chicago:
You tell all white men “America First.” We believe in that. We are the only ones, truly, that are one hundred percent. We therefore ask you, while you are teaching schoolchildren about America First, teach them truth about the First Americans.

We do not know if school histories are pro-British, but we do know that they are unjust to the life of our people—the American Indian. They call all white victories battles and all Indian victories massacres.

The battle with Custer\(^1\) has been taught to schoolchildren as a fearful massacre on our part. We ask that this, as well as other incidents, be told fairly. If the Custer battle was a massacre, what was Wounded Knee?\(^2\)

---

1. **battle with Custer**: the Battle of the Little Bighorn, which took place in 1876 in what is now Montana. General George A. Custer (1839–1876) led an attack on a Native American village and was killed along with all of his troops by Sioux and Cheyenne forces.

2. **Wounded Knee**: Wounded Knee Creek, in South Dakota, was the site of a battle in 1890 between U.S. soldiers and Sioux whom they had captured. The U.S. soldiers killed about two hundred Sioux men, women, and children.
History books teach that Indians were murderers—is it murder to fight in self-defense? Indians killed white men because white men took their lands, ruined their hunting grounds, burned their forests, destroyed their buffalo. White men penned our people on reservations, then took away the reservations. White men who rise to protect their property are called patriots—Indians who do the same are called murderers.

White men call Indians treacherous—but no mention is made of broken treaties on the part of the white man. White men say that Indians were always fighting. It was only our lack of skill in white man’s warfare that led to our defeat. An Indian mother prayed that her boy be a great medicine man rather than a great warrior. It is true that we had our own small battles, but in the main we were peace loving and home loving.

White men called Indians thieves—and yet we lived in frail skin lodges and needed no locks or iron bars. White men

---

3. penned: confined or enclosed. (A pen is a fenced area where animals are kept.)

**Vocabulary** **patriots** (PAY tree uhts) **n.** people who love and support their country.

---

**B Reading Focus** Comparing and Contrasting Themes

Compare this speaker’s concerns with those of the speakers in Hughes’s and Chang’s poems. How are their situations different? How are they similar?
call Indians savages. What is civilization? Its marks are a noble religion and philosophy, original arts, stirring music, rich story and legend. We had these. Then we were not savages, but a civilized race.

We made blankets that were beautiful, that the white man with all his machinery has never been able to duplicate. We made baskets that were beautiful. We wove in beads and colored quills designs that were not just decorative motifs but were the outward expression of our very thoughts. We made pottery—pottery that was useful, and beautiful as well. Why not make schoolchildren acquainted with the beautiful handicrafts in which we were skilled? Put in every school Indian blankets, baskets, pottery.

We sang songs that carried in their melodies all the sounds of nature—the running of waters, the sighing of winds, and the calls of the animals. Teach these to your children that they may come to love nature as we love it.

We had our statesmen—and their oratory has never been equaled. Teach the children some of these speeches of our people, remarkable for their brilliant oratory.

We played games—games that brought good health and sound bodies. Why not put these in your schools? We told stories. Why not teach schoolchildren more of the wholesome proverbs and legends of our people? Tell them how we loved all that was beautiful. That we killed game only for food, not for fun. Indians think white men who kill for fun are murderers.

Tell your children of the friendly acts of Indians to the white people who first settled here. Tell them of our leaders and heroes and their deeds. Tell them of Indians such as Black Partridge, Shabbona, and others who many times saved the people of Chicago at great danger to themselves. Put in your history books the Indian’s part in the World War. Tell how the Indian fought for a country of which he was not a citizen, for a flag to which he had no claim, and for a people that have treated him unjustly.

The Indian has long been hurt by these unfair books. We ask only that our story be told in fairness. We do not ask you to overlook what we did, but we do ask you to understand it. A true program of America First will give a generous place to the culture and history of the American Indian.

We ask this, Chief, to keep sacred the memory of our people.

4. oratory (AWR uh tawr ee): skill in public speaking; the art of public speaking.

Vocabulary wholesome (HOHL suhm) adj.: good for the mind and spirit.
Navajo “code talkers” attached to a Marine regiment in the Pacific during World War II relay orders using a code based on their native language. The code was particularly effective because few non-Navajos understood the complex language.

A Native American woman and child demonstrate weaving techniques at the Golden Gate International Exposition, held in San Francisco in 1939 and 1940.
Quick Check

1. What is the intent of this speech?
2. What does the council recommend that children should be taught? Why?

Read with a Purpose

3. How do the speakers feel about their portrayal in textbooks?

Reading Skills: Comparing and Contrasting Themes

4. Finish filling in the themes of the selections in a chart like the one below. Then, identify a universal theme that applies to them all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The New Colossus”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“First Stop: Ellis Island”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Refugee in America”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Saying Yes”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The First Americans”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Universal Theme:

Literary Analysis

7. Analyze A stereotype is a fixed idea about a group of people; for example, the statement “Athletes are not intellectual” reflects a stereotype. Stereotypes are often offensive. What stereotypes about Native Americans does the speaker address in this speech?

8. Infer What can you infer from the fact that a council had to be formed to request that positive aspects of Native American life be included in history books?

9. Extend How might teaching unbiased accounts of historical events change how a group is viewed?

Literary Skills: Symbol and Theme

10. Connect The writers of the speech mention the importance of appreciating their peoples’ blankets, pottery, and other handicrafts. How can art be a symbol of a culture?

11. Analyze In a nonfiction text, we generally refer to themes as main ideas. In this speech, what main idea is conveyed about history? about education? about citizenship?

Vocabulary Check

Include the boldface Vocabulary words in your answers to the questions below. Refer to a dictionary if you need help.

5. What actions might patriots take?
6. How does one decide what is or isn’t wholesome?

Think as a Reader/Writer

Use It in Your Writing Review the notes in your Reader/Writer Notebook. Now, think of an issue you feel strongly about. Write a short persuasive essay to convince others to agree with your view. Try to include language that will evoke an emotional response from your readers.
Writing a Comparison-and-Contrast Essay

Each of the selections in this feature presents an idea of the American dream. Some also explore how the American dream can fall short for certain individuals or groups. Choose two selections from this section, and write an essay comparing their views of the American dream.

To find points of comparison for your essay, review the charts you filled in for the selections. You can organize your essay this way:

**Paragraph 1:** Present an introduction and thesis statement.

**Paragraph 2:** Explain how selection 1 reflects the hopes and realities of the American dream.

**Paragraph 3:** Explain how selection 2 reflects the hopes and realities of the American dream.

**Paragraph 4:** Draw a conclusion about the similarities and differences in how each selection treats the American dream.

**Revision Questions:**

- Did I state my main idea clearly?
- Did I include details and examples that support my main points?
- Is the organization of my essay easy to follow, with transitional words or phrases for clarity?

How have these selections expanded your ideas about the concepts of freedom and liberty?
Write with a Purpose

Select three or four poems to be used in a poetry presentation using multimedia. They can be poems you read in this anthology or other poems. Create a script for your presentation. As you develop your script, think about your audience. Who will view your presentation? Think about your purpose. Are you hoping to entertain your audience or to make them think differently about a subject?

A Good Poetry Presentation

- has a unifying topic or theme
- captures the audience’s attention in the introduction
- includes a variety of selections
- is made expressive through voice modulation and tone as well as gestures
- uses different media, such as sound effects, visuals, and music, to enhance the reading
- has a thoughtful conclusion

Think as a Reader/Writer

Before you plan your own poetry presentation, read this presentation of “On the Grasshopper and the Cricket” by John Keats. Then, read the notes in the margin that offer suggestions on how to present a poem orally.

Some poems take us to surprising places. John Keats’s “On the Grasshopper and the Cricket” gives me a feeling of being present in nature, listening to its music.

On the Grasshopper and the Cricket by John Keats

The poetry of earth is never dead
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead;
That is the Grasshopper’s—he takes the lead
In summer luxury—he has never done
With his delights; for when tired out with fun
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.

The poetry of earth is ceasing never;
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The Cricket’s song, in warmth increasing ever
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The Grasshopper’s among some grassy hills.

This poem emphasizes Keats’s belief that poetry is everywhere in nature and that if we listen carefully enough, we can hear it.

Think About the Model

With a partner, discuss the following questions about the model:

1. How effective is the speaker’s introduction? How might it be improved?
2. How well does the speaker help you understand the poem’s theme?
Prewriting

Select Poems
Before you select poems for your reading, decide on a topic or theme for your performance. To hold your audience’s attention, choose a group of poems that will create suspense, elicit a variety of moods, or appeal to your audience’s sense of humor. Like any form of theater, a poetry reading should be dramatic. Here are some suggestions for grouping poems that appear in this anthology:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme or Topic</th>
<th>Poems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Famous characters in poetry</td>
<td>“Barbara Frietchie” (page 711)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Paul Revere's Ride” (page 705)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Casey at the Bat” (page 730)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America the beautiful</td>
<td>“The New Colossus” (page 769)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I Hear America Singing” (page 753)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poems to make you laugh</td>
<td>“The Cremation of Sam McGee” (page 717)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Casey at the Bat” (page 730)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short and sweet</td>
<td>“A word is dead” (page 699)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Sweater” (page 695)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“For My Grandmother” (page 670)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consider reading some of your own poetry as well.

Think About Purpose and Audience
As you begin planning your presentation, think about your purpose. Are you hoping to make your audience laugh? Do you want them to think seriously about a topic? Or do you just want to entertain them with a dramatic oral presentation of a beautifully written poem? As you think about your audience, decide who they are and what they are likely to respond to. Picture them in your mind as you plan your presentation.

Prepare Background Material
Learn as much as you can about the poems you are presenting. Find out if there are special circumstances surrounding the composition of the poems. See if anything in the poet’s own life gives you clues to a poem’s meaning. You may want to share this information with your audience.

Ask Yourself
Do the poems
• have a common topic or theme?
• sound interesting when read aloud?
• lend themselves to a dramatic presentation?
• have possibilities for the use of different media?
Preparation Your Presentation

Interpret and Read Poems
After you choose a theme or topic and the poems to read, prepare your oral interpretation following these steps:

• Read and reread each poem aloud, concentrating on its meaning. Jot down ideas on ways to communicate your thoughts and feelings to an audience.
• Copy the poems, and add notes and marks to guide you in your reading. Underline words or phrases to be emphasized. Use slashes to represent pauses.
• Aim for a natural reading of the lines. Follow the punctuation of the poem, varying your pauses, volume, tone, and the emphasis you put on certain words.
• Practice reading the poems aloud in front of a small audience. Identify the vocal effects that work best.
• Tape-record or videotape your practice reading. Analyze the recording to see whether you need to make any changes.

Plan Your Use of Media
Look at the list below to help you brainstorm different ways in which you can make your poetry presentation a multimedia event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual Aids</th>
<th>Audio Aids</th>
<th>Audiovisual Aids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• illustrations from books and magazines</td>
<td>• audiotapes or CDs of voices or sound effects</td>
<td>• clips from movies or TV programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• posters</td>
<td>• recordings from Web sites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• photographs</td>
<td>• recordings of music on CD or tape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• images from Web sites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your Turn
Plan Your Presentation Make notes in your RWN as you plan how to present the poems. Then, work on your plan. Create an outline that will include basic information on the poems, poets, and backgrounds as well as ideas about media to accompany your presentation of the poems.
Drafting

Follow the Writer’s Framework
Now that you have planned your use of media, you are ready to plan your overall presentation. Use the writer’s framework to the right to help you draft a script for an effective multimedia poetry presentation. Be sure to think about where media will have the most impact in your presentation. Is there a way that media can help grab the attention of your audience in your introduction? Perhaps media can also help make your conclusion more dramatic and interesting.

Develop a Script
Remember that an effective presentation makes poetry come alive for the listeners. Your insights into the poems you have chosen can help your audience appreciate the poets’ skills.

Grammar Link  Using Clear Pronoun References
In your presentation, you will be talking about several poems and authors. You will probably be referring to various aspects of the poems, such as theme, sound effects, and figurative language. Your audience will more easily follow your presentation if you use pronouns correctly. (Pronouns are words that stand for nouns or other pronouns; for example, he / Harry, hers / Mary’s, its / the dog’s, that place / England.) Below are some examples of clear and unclear pronoun references. You can find more information about the correct use of pronouns in the Language Handbook.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNCLEAR</th>
<th>CLEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The book contains my favorite poem. I have read it several times.</td>
<td>The book contains my favorite poem. I have read the poem several times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That was important to him.</td>
<td>Nature was important to Keats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He sings more than him in the summer.</td>
<td>The grasshopper sings more than the cricket in the summer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your Turn  Write Your Draft  Following the framework, write a draft of the script for your poetry presentation. Think about ways in which you can make this presentation exciting for your audience. Once you have completed your draft, look for examples of vague pronoun reference in your script, and correct them.

Writing Tip
As you draft your script, picture your audience. Have you included details that will pique their interest and keep them engaged throughout your presentation? Perhaps you need to add more interesting background information about the poets’ lives and work.

Framework for a Poetry Performance Script

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• an attention-getting opener</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• titles and authors of poems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a theme or topic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Body</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a presentation of each poem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• any special media effects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a dramatic conclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a summary of the theme or topic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Peer Review
Working with a peer, review your scripts. Answer each question in the chart at the right to locate where and how your presentations could be improved. As you discuss your scripts, be sure to take notes in your RWN about each other’s suggestions. You can refer to your notes as you revise your poetry presentation.

### Multimedia Presentation: Poetry

#### Evaluating and Revising

Read the questions in the left-hand column of the chart. Then, use the tips in the middle column to help you make revisions to your script. The right-hand column suggests techniques you can use to revise your draft.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poetry Presentation: Guidelines for Content and Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Does your introduction grab your listeners’ attention?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Does your introduction clearly present the theme or topic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you develop the theme or topic in the body of your script?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Have you planned to use different media in your presentation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you provide a dramatic conclusion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. When you read the poems, do you pause at punctuation marks rather than at line breaks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Have you practiced maintaining a good pace—not too fast or too slow? Have you practiced using gestures?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Walt Whitman: An American Original

Today Walt Whitman is recognized as one of America’s great poets. His work has been translated into many languages. In my presentation, I’m going to focus on two well-known poems that show his individuality and genius.

When Whitman published the first edition of his volume of poetry, *Leaves of Grass*, in 1855, many readers didn’t know what to make of it. No one had ever written poetry like it before. Some readers did recognize its worth, though, and in the years since then, Whitman has found his place as a great original poet.

What was so new about Whitman’s poetry? Most American poets of the time wrote in a fairly formal style, using rhyme and a set meter. Whitman used rhyme and meter in some of his poems, but he also wrote free verse. Poetry written in this style mimics the sound of natural speech: It lacks a regular meter and rhyme scheme. Whitman’s subject matter was also unconventional: He wrote about himself and about Americans from all walks of life. Listen to “I Hear America Singing.”

Theme of poetry presentation (Walt Whitman’s originality) is presented at beginning.

Background information is introduced to give the audience context for the poems in the presentation.

Paragraph elaborates on Whitman’s original style.

Enunciation

When you present something orally, it’s important to keep in mind that your audience has to understand every word. You need to *enunciate*; that is, speak each word clearly, or misinterpretations or misunderstandings are bound to follow. The author of the script above highlighted places in his script where he wanted to make sure his enunciation was very clear.

Example

When Whitman published the first edition of his volume of poetry, *Leaves of Grass*, in 1855, many readers didn’t know what to make of it. No one had ever written poetry like it before. Some readers did recognize its worth, though, and in the years since then, Whitman has found his place as a great original poet.

Your Turn

Read your draft. Where do you need to make notes about *enunciation*? Are there any words or phrases that might be misunderstood or misinterpreted if they’re not pronounced clearly? Add notes as needed to help you as you deliver your oral presentation effectively.
Using Media Elements Effectively

Your script should indicate the use of any special media, such as sound effects, music, and visuals. Look at this addition to the script on page 789. The author has added notes to indicate when to use which media to make the poetry presentation more effective.

Revision

**Visuals:** photograph of Walt Whitman by Mathew Brady (c. 1866); title page of *Leaves of Grass* (1855); painting *The Jolly Flatboatmen in Port* (1857) by George Caleb Bingham; photograph of Lincoln’s funeral (1882)

**Music:** “O Captain! My Captain!” excerpt from *Memories of Lincoln* by John Church (available on CD)

**Recordings:** wax cylinder recording by Thomas Edison of Whitman reading his own poetry (available on CD or Web site)

**Texts by Whitman:** “I Hear America Singing;” “O Captain! My Captain!”; excerpt from preface of *Leaves of Grass*; excerpt from *Specimen Days*

Walt Whitman: An American Original

*Present visual: Photograph by Mathew Brady*

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*Present visual: Title page of *Leaves of Grass* *

When Whitman published the first edition of his volume of poetry, *Leaves of Grass*, in 1855, many readers didn’t know what to make of it. No one had ever written poetry like it before. Some readers did recognize its worth, though, and in the years since then, Whitman has found his place as a great original poet.

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*Text by Whitman: “I Hear America Singing”*
Proofreading and Presenting

Proofreading
Check your final version of the script to make sure it is free from any errors in spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure. Even though you may be the only person who reads the script, you don’t want errors to get in the way of a good presentation. Proofread your writing carefully, using proofreading marks to make the necessary corrections. Use a dictionary and the Language Handbook to look up any words you’re not sure of or style questions you may have.

Grammar Link  Marking Up Your Script
Your audience can’t see your script while you’re speaking, of course, but you will depend on it to cue you when it is time to present a new form of media or change something about your delivery. Think about the following ways to mark up your script:
• Write notes in the margin to remind you where to make gestures you have planned.
• Add slashes to indicate pauses you wish to make.
• Highlight parts of your script in different colors to indicate where you should change volume, tone, or emphasis.

Presenting
Here are some poetry presentation ideas:
• Stage your presentation for your class or for the whole school.
• Record your oral presentation, and share it on the school public address system or even as part of a local radio show.
• Videotape the presentation, and archive it in the school library.

Reflect on the Process  As you think about your presentation, write a short response in your RWN to the following questions:
1. What was the biggest challenge in choosing poems to present?
2. How did you choose your theme? Do you think the theme worked? Why or why not?
3. What strategies did you use to keep your audience interested? Which ones worked the best? Why?
4. What would you do differently the next time you do a poetry presentation? Explain.

Presentation Tip
• Check the pronunciations of poet’s names and of any unfamiliar words in the poems.
• Do not pause automatically at the end of each line, even if the poem contains rhyme.
• Let the punctuation guide your pauses. Pause at commas and semicolons; pause a little longer at dashes and periods.

Your Turn  Proofread and Present
Proofread your script, making sure you have corrected any errors. Have you included all the directions necessary for your poetry presentation? Are you happy with the script, or are there any changes you still want to make? Are you ready to deliver your presentation?
1. Homer’s great stories of the heroes of the Trojan War, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*; the ancient Mesopotamian story of the hero-king Gilgamesh; and the story of the warrior Beowulf, who saves a people from monsters—all of these are called —
   A ballads  
   B epics  
   C lyrics  
   D elegies

2. Read this short poem by Langston Hughes, and answer the questions that follow.

   O God of dust and rainbows help us see  
   That without dust the rainbow would not be.

   This poem could best be described as —
   A a ballad  
   B a sonnet  
   C a lyric  
   D an epic

3. In the poem above, the rhyme could best be described as —
   A free verse  
   B a couplet  
   C meter  
   D approximate rhyme

4. An old song of love, betrayal, or death that rhymes and has a **refrain** is called —
   A a ballad  
   B a sonnet  
   C an epic  
   D a stanza

5. If you were reading a serious poem written to mourn someone who has died, you would be reading —
   A an ode  
   B an epic  
   C a lyric  
   D an elegy

6. A regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a poem is called —
   A meter  
   B couplet  
   C simile  
   D metaphor

7. The sentence “People are like snowflakes, no two are alike” uses a —
   A metaphor  
   B simile  
   C couplet  
   D symbol
8. If you read a poem called “Ode to the North Wind,” you could expect a —
   A poem that was lighthearted and humorous
   B mournful song with a refrain
   C sad poem about someone who died
   D serious poem written in formal language

9. Read these famous lines from the Bible, and answer the questions that follow.
   To every thing there is a season,
   And a time to every purpose under the heaven:
   A time to be born, and a time to die;
   A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted.
   —Ecclesiastes 3:1–2
   Which of the following comments about these lines is correct?
   A The lines are in free verse.
   B The lines are in couplets.
   C The lines are a ballad.
   D The lines are written in strict meter.

10. In the lines from the Bible, above, the words season and heaven could be considered —
    A exact rhymes
    B approximate rhymes
    C internal rhymes
    D repetition

11. Read the following poem, and answer the questions that follow. (Be sure to count the number of lines in the poem. Also, note that “D.R.” in line 6 means “Dominican Republic.”)

   I’ve heard said that among the eskimos there are over a hundred words for snow: the soft kind, the hard-driving kind, the roll a snowball kind: snow being such a force in their lives, it needs a blizzard of words.
   In my own D.R. we have many rains: the sprinkle, the shower, the hurricane, the tears, the many tears for our many dead.
   I’ve asked around and find that in all tongues there are at least a dozen words for talk: the heart-to-heart, the chat, the confession, the juicy gossip, the quip, the harangue—no matter where we’re from we need to talk about snow, rain, about being human.
   —Julia Alvarez

   This poem is an example of —
   A an elegy
   B an ode
   C a ballad
   D a sonnet
12. In line 3, Alvarez uses **imagery** to appeal to the reader’s sense of —
   A taste  
   B touch  
   C smell  
   D hearing

13. In line 5, the phrase “a blizzard of words” is an example of —
   A metaphor  
   B simile  
   C alliteration  
   D personification

14. In lines 7, 8, 11, and 12, Alvarez uses _____ to create **rhythm** in the poem.
   A repetition  
   B balance  
   C onomatopoeia  
   D symbols

15. Which of the following statements best expresses the **theme** of Alvarez’s poem?
   A Eskimos have too many words for snow.  
   B Communication is important for all people.  
   C The D.R. has many words for “rain.”  
   D All languages have many words for “talk.”

**Constructed Response**
16. List at least four elements of poetry. Then, describe what all poems have in common.
Multiple-Meaning Words  Directions: Choose the answer in which the italicized word is used the same way as in the quoted passages.

1. “You can’t order a poem like you order a taco.”
   A  He put the pages in order.
   B  Will you order me a spinach salad?
   C  Don’t order me around like that.
   D  Pick up your clothes—and that’s an order!

2. “Walk up to the counter, say, ‘I’ll take two.’”
   A  The director wanted a sixth take of the scene.
   B  What is your take on this controversy?
   C  Can you take the stress of your new job?
   D  You may take the puppy you like most.

3. “Still, I like your spirit.”
   A  The cheerleader has a strong spirit.
   B  A book can spirit you away to an imaginary place.
   C  In the spirit of the holiday, I gave away the best seat.
   D  He always follows the spirit, if not the letter, of the law.

4. “Check your garage, the odd sock / in your drawer, the person you almost like, but not quite.”
   A  Your friend looks like my cousin.
   B  Do you like chocolate ice cream?
   C  My brother is afraid of spiders, roaches, and the like.
   D  My old house looks something like this photograph.

5. “filling the mouth with its sound / or else a mumbled / whisper”
   A  I like the sound of the violin.
   B  We spent the day sailing on the sound.
   C  At boot camp, we all had to sound off.
   D  I think your argument is sound.

6. “Travelers / fan out / into the wilds.”
   A  The spinning fan cooled the room.
   B  If you fan the fire, it will burn faster.
   C  The dogs will fan out to hunt the fox.
   D  I am not a big fan of that singer.

Academic Vocabulary  Directions: Choose the correct synonym for each italicized Academic Vocabulary word.

7. It is the intent of many lyric poets to arouse strong feelings in their readers.
   A  plan
   B  aim
   C  dream
   D  act

8. Readers’ associations contribute to their understanding of poems.
   A  connections
   B  acquaintances
   C  relatives
   D  interpretations
Poetry

In the Eyes of the Cat

You will gain an appreciation of Japanese poetry in *In the Eyes of the Cat*. The editor and illustrator Demi has selected short poems about animals, from the gnat to the monkey, and has arranged them according to the seasons. The illustrations, which are as important as the poems, at times burst with colors and at other times are subdued with the pastel colors of fall and winter. The intricate artwork, along with the fine translations, help make this a thoroughly enjoyable book for all readers.

You Come Too

Discover some of the best of Robert Frost’s poetry in *You Come Too*. In this collection for readers of all ages, you’ll encounter poems such as “Christmas Tree,” “Hyla Brook,” and his famous, inviting title poem. Frost brings to life the trees, mountains, cliffs, dirt roads, old fences, grassy fields, and abandoned houses of his beloved New England. Reading his work, you’ll have the sense that you are there—deep in the woods or at the edge of a babbling brook.

Canto Familiar

Gary Soto, the well-known writer for young adults, celebrates the experience of growing up in a Mexican American community in *Canto Familiar*. Many of these touching poems focus on everyday tasks, such as washing dishes or ironing clothes. Soto lovingly and humorously captures childhood in this collection. Artist Annika Nelson supplements the writing with original and beautiful woodcut illustrations.

The Same Sky: A Collection of Poems from Around the World

In her anthology, *The Same Sky: A Collection of Poems from Around the World*, Naomi Shihab Nye offers up a large assortment of poems from countries in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, India, and South and Central America. Like the variety of the poem’s origins, the subject matter varies greatly and includes musings on language, nature, childhood, and politics. The collection is a great resource for kids and parents alike.
**Nonfiction**

**Island of Hope: The Story of Ellis Island and the Journey to America**

Dramatic firsthand stories and evocative archival photographs combine to bring the Ellis Island experience to life in Martin Sandler’s *Island of Hope: The Story of Ellis Island and the Journey to America*. Both the joys and miseries of the immigration process are captured in this historic account. Sandler also gives an overview of the immigrants’ lives after they were finally settled in America.

**Lincoln: A Photobiography**

Russell Freedman’s *Lincoln: A Photobiography* takes an intimate look at the man who has been called our greatest president. Freedman writes about Abraham Lincoln’s childhood, his legendary debates with Stephen Douglas, and his struggles as president during the years of the Civil War. The photographs and text of this Newbery Medal winner are complemented by illustrations and historical documents.

**A Great and Glorious Game**

Baseball was more than a game to A. Bartlett Giamatti; each game was a drama that gave insight into the American character. *A Great and Glorious Game* collects some of Giamatti’s writings about the game he loved, from the time he was a literature professor at Yale University through the period when he served as commissioner of baseball.

**The Harlem Renaissance**

In *The Harlem Renaissance*, Veronica Chambers looks back at a special time in American history. During the 1920s, African American musicians such as Duke Ellington, writers such as Zora Neale Hurston, and painters such as William H. Johnson produced visionary art. Their work continues to influence American culture and society to this day.