



Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra

POETRY AS A LINGUA FRANCA

edited by Mária Hricková and Rahil Dellali

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Mgr. Olha Bohuslavska, PhD. graduated from the Department of English and American Studies, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia, with her thesis focused on the position of English in the linguistic landscape of selected Slovak cities. The results of her research were partially presented an article entitled "English in the Slovak glocalised urban space: A study of the English language and the processes of glocalization in the linguistic landscape of Bratislava" (2023). Her other contributions connected with linguistics were presented in the following studies: "The Role of Ethnography in the Linguistic Landscape Analysis" (2020) and "Media Literacy as a Vital Part of Teaching English as a Foreign Language" (2021).



Although she mainly focuses on the domain of linguistics, she is also interested in literary studies, with particular attention paid to fairy tales and haiku.

Rahil Dellali, PhD. is an associate professor at the department of Letters and English Language of Badji Mokhtar-Annaba University. Rahil additionally holds a 140-Hour Blended TEFL/TESOL certificate from the Bridge Education Group, USA. She developed her Research and Teaching Skills at SIT Graduate Institute, Vermont, USA. Rahil has a great passion for everything related to the world of words and literature. Her fields of interest encompass literary theory, philosophy, African, American, British, Caribbean, Postmodern, Postcolonial, Gender and interdisciplinary studies.

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Doc. PhDr. Mária Hricková, PhD. teaches at the Department of English and American Studies, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia. Her research focuses mainly on the study of literature, particularly on poetry, interpersonal communication and ELT. She is the author of *Empowering Encounters: On Writers, Places and Books* (2022) which explores how literature, poetry and art relate to our lives. At present, she is the main coordinator of two international projects, *Fostering*





Students' Interdisciplinary Competence through the Action-Oriented Approach and Collaborative Online International Learning, and Poetry as lingua franca – effective approaches to teaching poetry as a vehicle for personal growth within the context of international cross-cultural communication, which connect teachers and students from different countries and cultures, including Algeria, India, Iraq, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Czech Republic. She is interested in positive psychology and in the use of positive strengths in pedagogical practice. She became a certified positive psychology coach (Wholebeing Institute, US) in 2022. Her other interests include areas such as interspiritual dialogue and the integration of contemplative practices in education, and service learning.

Doc. Simona Klimková, PhD. works as an Associate Professor at the Department of English and American Studies at Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia, where she has been teaching since 2005. Her research activities focus predominantly on literary theory, contemporary Anglophone fiction and postcolonial literature. Her pedagogical activities are centred on literary seminars which facilitate literary interpretation, improve reading skills and also focus on interdisciplinary approaches by interconnecting literature with film and visual art. Moreover, she regularly organizes literary and educational activities for students. Professor Klimková has participated in several research projects focusing on raising intercultural awareness through literature and cultural studies. She has published extensively on the abovementioned issues and has participated in numerous international conferences. She is the author of the monograph *Committed Literature: the novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o* (2019) as well as the co-author of several monographs, such as *Cultural Encounters in Contemporary Literature* (2008), *Multicultural Awareness – Reading Ethnic Writing* (2008), *Literature and Culture* (2010) and *Contemporary Short Stories in English I-II* (2010, 2015).

Mgr. Zuzana Kozáčiková, PhD. works at the Department of English and American Studies, Faculty of Arts, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia. She specialises in syntax and discourse studies, focusing mainly on academic discourse – the use of hedging, modality and other means of text cohesion. She is the author of several journal articles and textbooks published in Slovakia and abroad and has presented her research outcomes at international conferences and workshops. She is co-editor of the linguistics journal "Topics in Linguistics".



INTRODUCTION

*The temple bell stops –
but the sound keeps coming
out of the flowers.
Matsuo Bashō (1644 – 1694)*

The haiku of the Japanese poet Matsuo Bashō presents the many powers that great poetry possesses in a remarkable way. On the one hand, there exists its power to capture the essence of the moment – the sharing of the intimate occasion between the speaker and the reader through the vividness of images: the temple, the bell, and the flowers. We are – together with Bashō, on sacred ground, silently observing, and possibly imagining also, the beauty of the scene that the poet has painted in our minds' eyes. On the other hand, there exists the magic of the inexpressible that poetry often seeks to explore. The reader may wonder about the obvious logical inconsistency in Bashō's words and about the way the sound could be coming from the flowers. Here, the poet goes beyond our rational expectations, beyond the horizon of our usual everyday experience. A more rational reader might say that the author is thought-provoking us. A more intuitive reader might say that Bashō is doing to us what we probably cannot do on our own. He is helping us to enter the realm beyond thoughts. He acts as a guru who guides us and suggests how – through his transformation of our expectations - we can change our own way of seeing – and listening – to the world around us.

In the cultural history of mankind, poetry has always been a powerful tool for change, be it personal, spiritual, social or political. Obviously, change is never straightforward, and the effects that poems may have on their readers always depend on the willingness of the audience to actively engage with the texts, to think about them and to respond actively to the expressed ideas.

The course book *Poetry as a Lingua Franca* contains twenty-six lesson plans with poetry as their main content, and where the study of poetry aims to develop the personal strengths of students. The book uses the theoretical framework of positive psychology, particularly its classification of character strengths, designed by Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman in the early 2000s. In each lesson plan, the character strengths which are to be developed are specified.

Peterson's and Seligman's typology recognizes 6 main virtues and 24 corresponding strengths of character, which are, in fact, "pathways to those virtues" (Niemić, 2013).





VIRTUES

STRENGTHS OF CHARACTER

WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Judgment
- Love of learning
- Perspective

COURAGE

- Bravery
- Perseverance
- Honesty
- Zest

HUMANITY

- Love
- Kindness
- Social intelligence

JUSTICE

- Teamwork
- Fairness
- Leadership

TEMPERANCE

- Forgiveness
- Humility
- Prudence
- Self-regulation

TRANSCENDENCE

- Appreciation of beauty and excellence
- Gratitude
- Hope
- Humour
- Spirituality

The lesson plans in this course book were designed by a team of university teachers from three universities: Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia, Badji Mokhtar University in Annaba, Algeria, and the University of Mosul, Iraq, within the framework of the project KEGA 009UKF-4/2022 *Poetry as a lingua franca – effective approaches to teaching poetry as a vehicle for personal growth within the context of international cross-cultural communication (2022-2024)*. Some of the lessons were carried out online as part of the course of Anglophone Poetry in the autumn of 2023 and as workshops organized in 2022 and 2023.



We hope that this publication will be a useful resource for teachers of academic courses in literature, ethics, psychology, and teacher training in general. The lessons were designed for online classes but as the readers will notice, they are easily adaptable to the in-person setting. One of the strengths of this book lies in the great variety of poems used in the lesson plans, from classics to modern e-literature. Each lesson plan contains a section called Instructor's post-session reflection, the aim of which is to be filled in by the teachers who will be using the book and carrying out the lessons. It is hoped that the lesson plans will be looked at through the lens of a growth mindset and that the materials will be modified so that they serve the learners and teachers well, according to the needs of their culture and context.

When students are introduced to poetry, they often complain that its language is deliberately obscure and they think that the poems are beyond their understanding, not to speak of the sense of joy and pleasure that their time with poetry may certainly bring. Although reading poems is in general a solitary and intimate endeavour, the relational and interpersonal dimensions created when the texts are discussed in a group brings forth unique benefits, including shared experience and learning from each other.

We hope that the designed lesson plans will give much enrichment to your teaching and learning. We wish you many such leaps of imagination as we found in Bashō's poem. Through the plans, we hope to cultivate wisdom, courage and other virtues, as poetry prompts one to grow kinder, happier, and a better human being.







SECTION 1
POETRY AND VALUES



1. POETRY AND POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

SESSION LENGTH:	90 minutes
TEXTS USED:	William Arthur Ward: "Wisdom Teaches" William Arthur Ward: "Brighten Your Corner" William Arthur Ward: "While Others Are..." William Arthur Ward: "Do More"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

WILLIAM ARTHUR WARD (1921 – 1994) was an American motivational writer who published poems, meditations, and articles in magazines like *Reader's Digest*, *Science of Mind*, and *Quote*. He had a regular column entitled "Pertinent Proverbs" in the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*. One of his most widely used quotes is: "The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires."

Ward's poems can be read in the light of positive psychology which, as opposed to traditional psychology, values the character strengths of human beings to help them flourish (Seligman, 2012). It tries to enhance wellness by helping individuals identify their strengths and employ them in ways that render their lives more meaningful. According to Alex Linley (2008), a strength is "a pre-existing capacity for a particular way of behaving, thinking or feeling that is authentic, energizing to the user, and enables optimal functioning, development and performance" (p. 9). Perceiving one's strengths is hence a source of energy that is not only favourable for happy living, but also conducive to deep learning.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: wisdom, love, kindness, appreciation of beauty and excellence, spirituality, gratitude, humour, self-regulation, forgiveness, leadership, love of learning, curiosity, persistence, bravery, honesty

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- recognize the importance of knowing oneself as the first step towards wisdom,
- reflect on the meaning of their own lives,
- judge the best they can do to live their lives joyfully,
- appraise the character strengths highlighted in the selected poems,
- practice gratitude for the good things and towards the good people in their lives,
- know their strengths profile through the VIA character strengths survey,
- practice mindfulness about their own character strengths by writing a short self-reflection.

TEACHING AIDS: worksheet (with the poems and related activities); clip of Roger Hodgson singing "The Logical Song"



WARM-UP ACTIVITY: KNOW THYSELF

AIM: By the end of this activity, participants are expected to:

- realize the importance of self-knowledge.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: quote by Aristotle in the worksheet (assignment no. 1)

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The instructor says:

I think the meaning of this quote is quite explicit, but do you think you know yourself, at least quite well?

What can you do to know yourself better?

PRE-READING: THE BEST OF YOU

AIM: By the end of this activity, participants are expected to:

- reflect on the meaning of their own lives,
- judge the best they can do to live their lives joyfully.

FORM: individual (10 minutes: participants listen to a poetic song excerpt and answer self-reflective questions) / whole class work (10 minutes: some participants present their answers to the whole class)

AIDS:

- clip from "The Logical Song" by Roger Hodgson (Supertramp)
- worksheet (assignment no. 2)

TIME: 20 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The instructor says:

I beg your "indulgence" for introducing a song that might seem old-fashioned to you. Yet, for me, the songs of the past were by far more poetic and meaningful.

Please read the instructions in the worksheet entitled "Assignment no. 2."

You are going to work first on your own for 10 minutes. Be sure the microphones are muted.

First, listen to the song excerpt entitled "The Logical Song."

Answer the comprehension questions.

After 10 minutes, some of you volunteer to share your answers with the whole class.



- The instructor listens to the participants' contributions, then says:

Well, developing your character traits through poetry is a good choice if you want to remember your young age joyfully. It will foster your relationships and help you make wise decisions you will not regret later in your life.

Would you like to discover some of them through poetry? Come on!

WHILE READING: HONING CHARACTER STRENGTHS THROUGH POETRY

- AIM:** By the end of this activity, participants are expected to:
- identify, classify, and discuss the character strengths highlighted in the selected poems.

FORM: group / whole class work

AIDS: instructions in the worksheet (assignment no. 3)

TIME: 30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher projects or distributes the texts of the two poems without the author and the title.
- First, the instructor introduces the concepts of positive psychology and character strengths.
- Second, subgroups study the poems in the form of Socratic seminars in breakout rooms (15 minutes).
- Each subgroup reads one of the four poems written by William Arthur Ward (the subgroup is written in the corner of each page).
- Each group draws a table in which they identify, classify, and discuss the virtues and character strengths highlighted in the given poem.
- Finally, a spokesperson presents the summary of the discussion to the whole class (15 minutes).

AFTER READING: PRACTICE GRATITUDE

- AIM:** By the end of this activity, participants are expected to:
- practice gratitude for the good things and towards the good people in their lives.

FORM: individual (10 minutes: participants read the instructions and answer self-reflective questions) / whole class work (10 minutes: some participants present their answers to the whole class)

AIDS: worksheet (assignment no. 4)

TIME: 20 minutes





INSTRUCTIONS:

- The instructor says:

Please read the instructions in the worksheet, assignment no. 4.

You are going to work first on your own for 10 minutes. Be sure the microphones are muted.

Write thank-you notes following the instructions.

After 10 minutes, some of you volunteer to share your answers with the whole class.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY 1: ASSIGNMENT

- AIM:** By the end of this activity, participants are expected to:
- know their strengths profile through the VIA character strengths survey (homework).
 - appraise their own character strengths and weaknesses with real-life examples.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: ▫ worksheet (assignment no. 5)

TIME: 5 minutes (in class)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The instructor says:

We will end the workshop with a survey, the instructions for which are in the worksheet, assignment no. 5.

Please send me your results by email within 7 days.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY 2: SUMMARY

- AIM:** By the end of this activity, participants are expected to:
- summarize the moral lessons and character strengths targeted by the workshop.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 5 minutes



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "Wisdom Teaches" by William Arthur Ward:

Wisdom teaches:
The fruits of silence;
The blessings of health;
The rewards of self-discipline;
The satisfaction of achievement;
The responsibility of power;
The beauty of nature;
The miracle of love;
The meaning of friendship;
The privilege of prayer;
The power of faith;
The joy of sharing;
The treasure of integrity.

Character strengths: wisdom, self-regulation, appreciation of beauty and excellence, love, spirituality, kindness, integrity

2: "Brighten Your Corner" by William Arthur Ward:

Brighten your corner with gratitude;
it is the candle of contentment.
Brighten your corner with kindness;
it is the flame of friendship.
Brighten your corner with cheerfulness;
it is the light of good will.
Brighten your corner with joy;
it is the window to health.
Brighten your corner with humor;
it is the sunshine of the soul.
Brighten your corner with faith;
it is the door to discovery.
Brighten your corner with generosity;
it is the portrait of character.
Brighten your corner with enthusiasm;
it is the torch of achievement.
Brighten your corner with work;
it is the lantern of success.
Brighten your corner with patience;
it is the reflection of maturity.
Brighten your corner with love;
it is the power of brotherhood.
Brighten your corner with prayer;
it is the lamp of understanding.



Character strengths: gratitude, kindness, humour, spirituality, curiosity, vitality, appreciation of beauty and excellence, self-regulation, love

3: "While Others Are..." by William Arthur Ward:

Believe while others are doubting.
Plan while others are playing.
Study while others are sleeping.
Decide while others are delaying.
Prepare while others are daydreaming.
Begin while others are procrastinating.
Work while others are wishing.
Save while others are wasting.
Listen while others are talking.
Smile while others are frowning.
Commend while others are criticizing.
Persist while others are quitting.

Character strengths: spirituality, self-regulation, love of learning, persistence

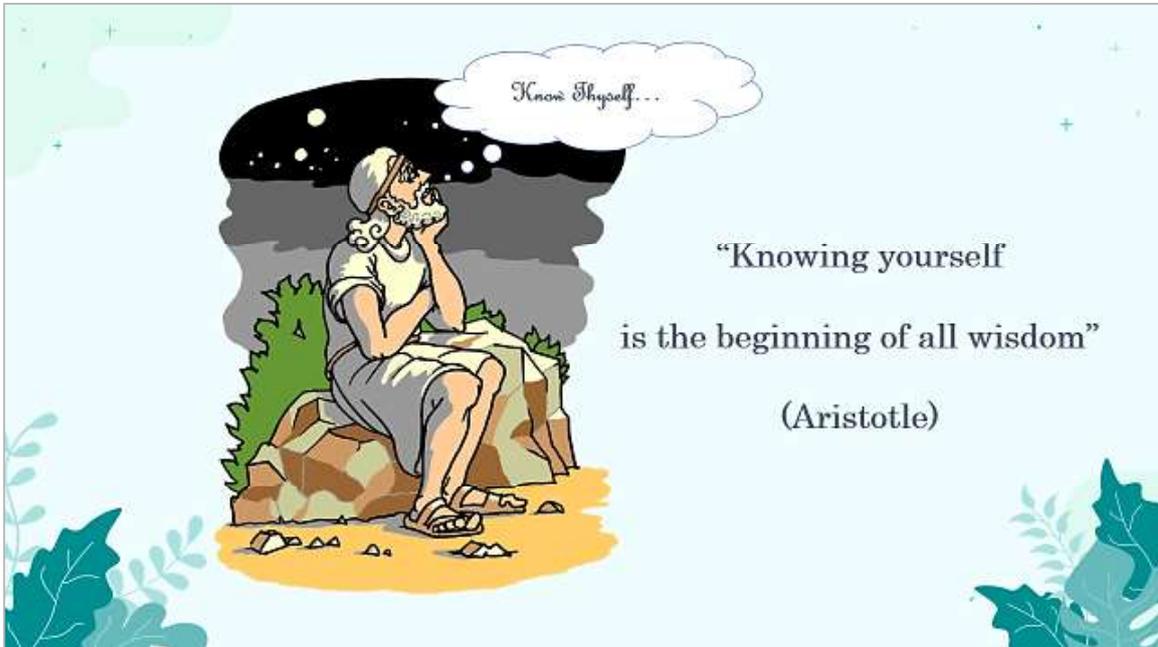
4: "While Others Are..." by William Arthur Ward:

Do more than belong; participate.
Do more than care; help.
Do more than believe; practice.
Do more than be fair; be kind.
Do more than forgive; forget.
Do more than dream; work.
Do more than teach; inspire.
Do more than earn; enrich.
Do more than give; serve.
Do more than live; grow.
Do more than suffer; triumph.

Character strengths: kindness, forgiveness and mercy, leadership, bravery

WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: KNOW THYSELF



ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: THE BEST OF YOU

+ Excerpt from "The Logical Song" by Supertramp

When I was young, it seemed that life was so wonderful
A miracle, oh, it was beautiful, magical
And all the birds in the trees, well they'd be singing so happily
Oh, joyfully, oh, playfully watching me
But then they sent me away to teach me how to be sensible
Logical, oh, responsible, practical
Then they showed me a world where I could be so dependable
Oh, clinical, oh, intellectual, cynical

The album cover for Supertramp's "The Logical Song" features the four band members. The title "Supertramp" is written in a large, stylized yellow font at the top, with "THE LOGICAL SONG" in smaller text above it. The background is a warm, orange-toned photograph of the band members.

Individual Work: The Best of YOU

- Roger Hodgson wrote his reflection on the meaning of life in this existentialist song in 1979.
- He says, "Throughout childhood, we're very rarely told anything about the deeper purpose of life. We go from the innocence and wonder of childhood to the confusion of adolescence, and that often ends up in disillusionment in adulthood. And many of us spend our lives trying to get back to that innocence."
- According to him, the magic of childhood is quickly wiped out to turn the child into a sensible, logical, responsible, and practical adult. The child, whose sensitivity and creativity are eclipsed, becomes dependable and cynical.
- The most important sentence in this song is "Please tell me who I am."

Self-reflective Questions

- Being young, what makes life meaningful to you?
- What is the best you can do now to remember your young age joyfully when you will later say: "when I was young...?"

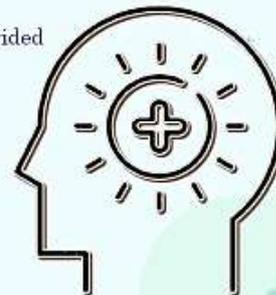


ASSIGNMENT NO. 3: HONING CHARACTER STRENGTHS THROUGH POETRY

Positive Psychology and Character Strengths

Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman summarize 6 virtues subdivided into 24 character strengths:

- **Wisdom:** creativity, curiosity, judgment, love of learning, and perspective
- **Courage:** bravery, perseverance, honesty, and zest
- **Humanity:** love, kindness, and social intelligence
- **Justice:** teamwork, fairness, and leadership
- **Temperance:** forgiveness, humility, prudence, and self-regulation
- **Transcendence:** appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, and spirituality



- Each subgroup reads one of the four poems written by an American motivational writer, William Arthur Ward (your subgroup is written on the corner of the pages below).
- Draw a table on which you identify the virtues and character strengths highlighted in each poem.
- Discuss the meaning of the poem and take notes to be presented by the subgroup's spokesperson to the whole class.



Wisdom	Humanity	Justice	Courage	Temperance	Transcendence

ASSIGNMENT NO. 4: PRACTICE GRATITUDE

thankful

- **Practicing mindfulness and gratitude** helps human beings feel and think more positively; it reduces stress and raises satisfaction with one's life, as it strengthens relationships with others.
- Write short thank-you notes in which you mention the good things in your life you are grateful for, and to whom you are grateful, including yourself.
- Let this practice become a habit by keeping a gratitude journal.

ASSIGNMENT NO. 5: ASSIGNMENT

Assignment due in 7 days



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Individual Work

- Take the character strengths survey which takes about 10 minutes:
<https://www.viacharacter.org/survey/account/register>
- This survey will help you identify your strengths and weaknesses, raising your awareness about the need to consolidate the former and overcome the latter.
- Write a short self-reflection on the validity of your strengths profile that resulted from the survey.
- Illustrate with life stories in which you have been at your best with these strengths, making you feel both proud and happy.
- Even if boasting is poorly regarded in different cultures, it is allowed in this particular activity because you are practicing mindfulness and gratitude.

2. THE POWER OF POETRY

SESSION LENGTH: 60 minutes

TEXTS USED: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: "The Day is Done"
William Sieghart: *The Poetry Pharmacy* (excerpt from the introduction)

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807 – 1882) is often referred to as the most beloved American poet of the nineteenth century. That he was the first American poet to be enshrined in Westminster Abbey's Poet's Corner speaks to this fact. As a professor of modern languages and literature, he was well acquainted with various literary movements and mythologies, which is visible in the versatile array of poems he produced. He often intended to impart cultural and moral values to his readers.

He wrote the poem selected for this session as a foreword to an anthology of poems he curated. It is meant to encourage readers to appreciate the power of poetry.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: creativity, curiosity, judgment, appreciation of beauty and excellence, love of learning

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- identify and appreciate the positive remedial qualities of reading poems,
- discuss the potential benefits of reading poetry,
- comprehend what a haiku is and modify the given formula and example to construct one independently,
- demonstrate their understanding of the selected texts through various activities,
- share their personal experiences with their classmates.

TEACHING AIDS: texts projected onto a suitable surface or distributed; a suitable surface for attaching sticky notes (for the brainstorming and production phases) or a collaborative surface for online classes

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: BRAINSTORMING – TO POEM OR NOT TO POEM?

- AIM:**
- to list and acknowledge the potential benefits of reading poems,
 - to identify challenging areas, i.e. why people might be discouraged from reading poems.

FORM: Individual / whole class work

AIDS: brainstorming wall (board or any collaborative online tool with a similar feature)

TIME: 10 to 15 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- For starters, students think about the following pair of questions:

Why do people read poems?

Why might some people dislike reading poems?

- In 2 to 3 minutes, they try to come up with as many answers as possible and record them on their sticky notes (virtual or, if conducted in person, the teacher gives each student a few sticky notes). Students should also be able to justify their answers when asked. When ready, they attach the notes to a "discussion wall" or board (a shared virtual board is a good online substitute).
- The teacher chooses a few of the most thought-provoking answers and discusses them with the entire class.
- It might be beneficial to provide possible solutions for why people dislike reading poems. For example, if the answer is that they are too long or complicated, the teacher or students might point out that the array of available poems is exceptionally diverse, and that there are countless short, snappy poems which are easier to digest. Teachers can also provide possible websites for students where they can find poems to pique their interest: poets.org; poetryfoundation.org; poems.com; littleinfinite.com; ilovepoetry.org.
- Additional questions for this section (teachers can choose selectively, depending on the amount of time left or students' interests):

When do you read poems? Why?

Can you recall a time when you really WANTED to read a poem? What compelled you to do so?

Have you ever thought about the songs you listen to as poems?

- The teacher asks students to work in pairs and read a short excerpt from William Sieghart's Introduction to his book, *The Poetry Pharmacy*. Students should highlight the phrases they agree with and those they disagree with or do not entirely agree with. They have two to three minutes.

- They should be able to justify their choices.
- After two minutes, the teacher chooses one or two pairs to present their answers and discuss them with the entire class.

WHILE READING ACTIVITY: "THE DAY IS DONE" – ANALYSIS

- AIM:**
- to further discuss the potential benefits of reading poems,
 - to identify one image that best exemplifies the speaker's state of mind,
 - to identify the main idea of the analysed poem.

FORM: pairs / whole class work

AIDS: poem

TIME: 20 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher tells students to listen to the poem and focus on one image (line/moment) they really like. After listening to the poem, the teacher will ask a few students to share their favourite image and explain their choice.
- The teacher plays the audio recording of the poem (2 min.):

Available at: [The Day is Done - Audio Poem of the Day | Poetry Foundation](#)

- After listening to the poem, the teacher should give students at least 30 seconds to gather their thoughts. Ideally, the teacher should also share their favourite image.
- Next, the teacher discusses the poem with the whole class. The discussion should be constructed around the following questions and talking points:

The main idea of the poem. What is the overarching theme?

Describe the speaker's state of mind at the poem's beginning – use adjectives. If you can, refer to an image/line that best exemplifies or summarises that feeling.

What is the speaker's issue? What is the proposed solution?

What poems does the speaker talk about? Can you identify with the speaker's choice of poems? Why yes, why not?

What kinds of poems do you personally prefer?

Do you prefer reading poems aloud or reading them in silence?

What do you think about reading one poem every night before sleep?

- Again, teachers can choose questions selectively.

AFTER READING ACTIVITY: WRITING A HAIKU

- AIM:** □ to construct a haiku that offers advice for a particular life situation.
- FORM:** individual or pair work
- AIDS:** offline: paper, pen, board or wall; online: ideally a platform where students can also like or upvote each other's haikus
- TIME:** 25 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- If conducted in person: each student needs a piece of paper and a pen. If conducted online: students need to access the online collaboration tool. Students should work in pairs if the group size exceeds 10 to 12.
- The teacher gives students a list of emotions and attitudes to choose from: *overthinking, hopelessness, procrastination, general overload, loneliness, feeling lost, anxiety, lack of courage, insecurity, fear of making mistakes, fear of the unknown, and heartbreak.*
- Each student or pair of students picks one item from the list.
- The teacher writes the numbers 5, 7, 5 on the board and tells students to write three lines of text that give advice for the chosen negative emotion or attitude. The first line should have only five syllables, the second line seven and the third five again. Teachers should put one or two examples on the board.
- Students share their texts (by collecting them on the board/wall or online). If time allows, they should read them aloud.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: TOP X LIST

- AIM:** □ to identify the most effective haikus constructed by learners in the previous activity.
- FORM:** whole class work
- AIDS:** offline: paper, pen, board or wall; online: ideally a platform where students can also like or upvote each other's haikus
- TIME:** 5 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- As a closing activity, students can vote and comment on each other's creations – they create a TOP 5 list (or TOP 10, if there are more than ten haikus).
- Idea for a follow-up activity: Doctor Poetry (based on the motivation behind *The Poetry Pharmacy*): as homework, students will find a short poem for a specific issue (such as those outlined in the Writing a Haiku activity). They will present it at the beginning of



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "The Day is Done" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow:

The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me
That my soul cannot resist:

A feeling of sadness and longing,
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time.

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavor;
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who, through long days of labor,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.



Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

Audio available on poetryfoundation.com

2: Excerpt from the **Introduction** to William Sieghart's *The Poetry Pharmacy*

You don't need to be a poet to find solace in poetry.

...

Again and again, in my loneliest hours and in my most tumultuous, I have discovered the greatest solace in finding, reading and sometimes memorizing the perfect poem for the moment.

...a great many of us turn to poetry in times of need. Above all, when we're grieving, when we're broken-hearted, and when we find ourselves struggling to understand the things we're feeling, we long for the connection poetry can provide. To find the right poem at that crucial moment, one capable of expressing our situation with considerably more elegance than we can ourselves, is to discover a powerful sense of complicity, and that precious realization: *I'm not the only one who feels like this.*

...there can be therapeutic power to a poem...

The problem is shared. More than that, very often, it is transformed: the poet has made what you're going through seem more intriguing, more timeless, and more valid in some way, and that can be a great comfort.

3. GRATITUDE

SESSION LENGTH: 60 minutes
TEXTS USED: W. S. Merwin: "Thanks"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

WILLIAM STANLEY MERWIN (1927 – 2019) was an American poet, and the winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1971 and 2009. In 2010, he became the United States Poet Laureate. His work and life philosophy were much influenced by Buddhism and deep ecology. The poem "Thanks" was first published in 1987 in *The Nation*, a slightly different version was included in the collection *The Rain in the Trees* (1988).

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: perspective, gratitude, hope

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, participants will be able to:

- explain and analyse the concept of gratitude in W. S. Merwin's "Thanks",
- discuss various observations about the poem and give their opinion on the ideas presented by their peers,
- choose the most thought-provoking line in the text and support their choice with convincing arguments.

TEACHING AIDS: poem text, worksheet

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: THOUGHT EXPERIMENT ON GRATITUDE

AIM:

- to introduce the topic of gratitude,
- to show gratitude as a positive and desirable state.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: an online word cloud generator

TIME: 3 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher gives students the following instructions:
Think about a time when you felt grateful. What other feelings do you associate with this state?
- Students type their adjectives so that their answers generate word clouds of associations with gratitude.
- The teacher may ask students to comment on the results of the survey.



WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: OBSERVATIONS ON GRATITUDE IN "THANKS"

- AIM:**
- to analyse and interpret the poem "Thanks",
 - to comment on, compare and contrast the observations of other students.

FORM: individual / group / whole class work

AIDS: Worksheet

TIME: 37 minutes (2 minutes for reading the poem; 10 minutes for individual work; 15 minutes in break-out rooms; and, 10 minutes for a whole class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- A volunteer reads the poem out loud.
- Students work individually by filling in assignment no. 1 in their worksheet. They are supposed to write brief notes on what they learnt about gratitude in the poem "Thanks".
- After that, students work in break-out rooms, sharing their observations.
- When they return to the main room, the teacher facilitates a discussion about the findings of each group. Students are encouraged to respond to each other's observations and comments.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: THE MOST THOUGHT-PROVOKING VERSE

- AIM:**
- to develop the critical thinking of students by encouraging them to support their choice with convincing arguments,
 - to develop listening and speaking skills.

FORM: individual / group / whole class work

AIDS: poem text

TIME: 17 minutes (10 minutes for break-out rooms; and, 7 minutes for a whole class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students are instructed to choose the verse / line in the poem that speaks to them personally and which they find the most thought-provoking (assignment no. 2 of the worksheet).
- They should be able to give their reasoning and arguments for their choice.
- Students first discuss their ideas in break-out rooms. This is followed by an entire class discussion coordinated by the teacher.



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "Thanks" by W. S. Merwin:

Listen
with the night falling we are saying thank you
we are stopping on the bridges to bow from the railings
we are running out of the glass rooms
with our mouths full of food to look at the sky
and say thank you
we are standing by the water thanking it
standing by the windows looking out
in our directions

back from a series of hospitals back from a mugging
after funerals we are saying thank you
after the news of the dead
whether or not we knew them we are saying thank you

over telephones we are saying thank you
in doorways and in the backs of cars and in elevators
remembering wars and the police at the door
and the beatings on stairs we are saying thank you
in the banks we are saying thank you
in the faces of the officials and the rich
and of all who will never change
we go on saying thank you thank you

with the animals dying around us
taking our feelings we are saying thank you
with the forests falling faster than the minutes
of our lives we are saying thank you
with the words going out like cells of a brain
with the cities growing over us
we are saying thank you faster and faster
with nobody listening we are saying thank you
thank you we are saying and waving
dark though it is

Source: W. S. Merwin: *The Rain in the Trees*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992, p. 46.



WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: OBSERVATIONS ON GRATITUDE IN "THANKS"

What did you learn about the concept of gratitude from the poem? Write your ideas on the lines in the boxes. Try to find support for your thoughts in the text of the poem.



ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: THE MOST THOUGHT-PROVOKING VERSE

I think that the most thought-provoking verse in the poem is:

because:



4. VALUES WE LIVE BY

SESSION LENGTH: 60 minutes
TEXTS USED: William Stafford: "The Way It Is"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

WILLIAM STAFFORD (1914 – 1993) was an American poet and prose writer. His first major poetry collection *Traveling Through the Dark* was published in 1962. Stafford's poetry often deals with everyday life and ordinary situations. As a poet, Stafford was much influenced by Thomas Hardy, William Wordsworth, Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: prudence, perspective, hope, spirituality

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, participants will be able to:

- share their values and reflect on the values presented by others,
- specify keywords of the studied poem and relate it to the poem's theme,
- discuss various interpretations of the poem presented by their peers,
- create a visual representation of their values.

TEACHING AIDS: poem text, worksheet, a shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: VALUES

AIM:

- to bring focus to the topic of values,
- to become aware of where a student's values lie within the context of other students' values.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: a shared virtual whiteboard

TIME: 7 minutes (4 minutes for expressing values; and, 3 minutes for oral observations)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The students are asked to think of 3 key values that are most important to them. The students then write (anonymously) their values on the slide of the shared virtual whiteboard. After all students have written their values, the teacher may ask a student or the group of students to comment on the results. The teacher may comment on the result as well.
- It is also possible to arrange the values on the board so that the results are clearer.

- Students type their adjectives so that their answers generate word clouds of associations with gratitude.
- The teacher may ask students to comment on the results of the survey.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: KEYWORDS & THEME

- AIM:**
- to be able to identify and think critically about major concepts in the poem,
 - to give arguments and support one's ideas with the text.

FORM: pair / whole class work

AIDS: poem text, worksheet

TIME: 20 minutes (8 minutes for work in pairs; and, 12 minutes whole class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher instructs students to work on the Assignment no. 1 in their worksheet. The students work in pairs, choosing 4 keywords from the poem, and then offer convincing arguments for their choices. As a next step, they should use those 4 keywords to specify the theme of the poem.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: SHARING THE THREAD

- AIM:**
- to relate one's understanding of the poem to real life and personal value system,
 - to think creatively and critically about values in one's life.

FORM: group / whole class work

AIDS: a shared virtual whiteboard

TIME: 30 minutes (15 minutes for preparation of the slide; 4 minutes for observations; and, 14 minutes for sharing and discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- In this activity, students work in break-out rooms in groups. Each group has their own separate slide on the virtual whiteboard. It is expected that there would be about 4-6 students in each group. In each group, students should work collaboratively and prepare a visually appealing slide that would express their 'personal thread'. They can use pictures, words, photos, drawings, etc... It is fully up to them to decide on how to visualize it, but it is important that each student contributes their part to the thread. So, each slide, as a result, should reflect individual 'threads', but it will all eventually become one collaborative thread.



- When the groups have completed their slides, students get the opportunity (4 min.) to study the slides of other groups. It is recommended that they make some notes about their observations (what they liked; what was confusing; what they identified with; what needed more clarification...).
- The students, then, work as a whole group. First, each group briefly presents their own slide. After the presentations, students may ask questions and give their feedback on their classmates' slides.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: SHARING THE THREAD – CLOSING UP...

- AIM:** ▫ to summarize the whole class work.
- FORM:** whole class work
- AIDS:** a shared virtual whiteboard
- TIME:** 3 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher praises the quality of students' work and highlights some observations. If time allows it, the teacher may share and discuss their personal thread as well.

SOURCES:

Astley, Neil. ed. (2019) *Being Human*. Hexham: Bloodaxe Books Ltd.

INSTRUCTOR'S POST-SESSION REFLECTION:





POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "The Way It is" by William Stafford:

There's a thread you follow. It goes among
things that change. But it doesn't change.
People wonder about what you are pursuing.
You have to explain about the thread.
But it is hard for others to see.
While you hold it you can't get lost.
Tragedies happen; people get hurt
or die; and you suffer and get old.
Nothing you do can stop time's unfolding.
You don't ever let go of the thread.

Source: Neil Astley (ed.): Being Human. Hexham: Bloodaxe Books Ltd, 2019, p. 90.



WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: KEYWORDS & THEME

Work in pairs. With your peer, choose 4 keywords from the poem that you think are most relevant for the reader to understand the poem. The keywords should be taken directly from the text. Give arguments for your choice of the words.

KEYWORD	COMMENTS
<hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

THE THEME:







SECTION 2
POETRY AND LIFE



5. STAGES OF LIFE IN POETRY AND THE OTHER ARTS

SESSION LENGTH:	90 minutes
TEXTS USED:	William Shakespeare: soliloquy "The Seven Ages of Man" (<i>As You Like It</i> , Act 2, Scene 7) and some of its artistic adaptations: "The Seven Ages of Man" paintings by Robert Smirke "The Seven Ages of Woman" by Agnes Strickland "The Seven Ages of WoMan" photographs by William Mortensen

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564 - 1616), regarded as England's and one of the world's greatest dramatists and poets, wrote "The Seven Ages of Man" as part of a comedy entitled *As You Like It* (circa 1599). The seven ages of man was an old belief that the seven planets influenced the lives and characters of human beings. Seven is equally associated with the number of vices and virtues, the number of liberal arts, as well as other associations in different cultures. In "The Seven Ages of Man," Jacques ponders over life's impermanence. In his monologue's extended metaphor, man is an actor in a play he has no control over, starting from infancy and continuing to old age. Many artists and critics have considered Jacques's soliloquy as a pessimistic outlook on human existence, seen from a strictly male perspective. Yet, since the play is a comedy that ends in four weddings, and since the strong female Rosalind is the main character, rather than Jacques, this interpretation might seem simplistic. There is a stark contrast between his pessimism and her optimism, his melancholy and her vitality.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: judgment, perspective, humanity, hope

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the workshop, participants are expected to:

- realize the use of the number 7 in different cultures (intercultural awareness),
- describe the stages of life in Shakespeare's poem,
- analyze some artistic adaptations and their underlying criticism of Shakespeare's poem,
- relate Shakespeare's stages of life to their own lives and the lives of people around them,
- evaluate the relevance of Shakespeare's stages of life in today's world,
- appraise some character strengths related to each stage of human life,
- create a short poem (in verse or prose) that shapes a more optimistic outlook on the stages of life.

TEACHING AIDS: worksheet, a video of Morgan Freeman reciting the selected poem



INTRODUCTION: GETTING TO KNOW YOU

FORM: whole class work

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The instructor greets the participants.
- She asks them to mute their microphones and to switch them on only when given the floor (time to speak).
- She introduces herself, the project and the two workshops she will facilitate.
- She informs the participants about the necessity of staying focused, concise and precise, as well as avoiding digressions and side talk to respect the time management plan.
- She asks them to take turns introducing themselves (very briefly).

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: HUMAN AFFINITY & CULTURAL DIVERSITY

AIM: By the end of this activity, participants are expected to:

- understand the symbolism of number 7,
- realize human unity in diversity.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: assignment no. 1 of the worksheet

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The instructor says:

Take the worksheet with assignment 1 and let's discuss this question.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: PRESENTING THE POEM

AIM: By the end of this stage, participants are expected to:

- listen to the instructor briefly introduce the poem.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: instructions below

TIME: 1 minute max.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The instructor says:

Today's workshop is on a poem by William Shakespeare (1564-1616), regarded as England's and one of the world's greatest dramatists and poets. He wrote "The Seven Ages of Man" as part of a comedy entitled As You Like It (written approximately in 1599). The seven ages of man was an ancient belief that the seven planets influenced the lives and characters of human beings.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

- AIM:** By the end of this stage, participants are expected to:
- listen to a native speaker reciting the poem,
 - read the poem and summarize its message,
 - express the opinions and emotions raised by the poem

FORM: individual work

AIDS: Shakespeare's "The Seven Ages of Man" recited by Morgan Freeman (YouTube Video), assignment no. 2 of the worksheet

TIME: 25 minutes (15minutes for listening and answering comprehension questions; and, 10 minutes for some participants to present their answers)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The instructor says:

In this activity, you are going to work first on your own for 15 minutes. Be sure the microphones are muted. Use the worksheet, assignment no. 2.

First, listen to the poem recited by a native speaker by clicking on the provided link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5hcaYEcAp0>

Then, read it on your own. Answer the comprehension questions. After 15 minutes, some of you volunteer to share their answers with the whole class.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: GENDER EQUALITY ISSUE IN THE POEM

- AIM:** By the end of this stage, participants are expected to:
- understand the gender issue raised by Shakespeare's poem,
 - compare the poem with photographs about the seven ages of woman from the early 20th century,
 - reflect on the ages of woman in the early 21st century.



- FORM:** group work / Socratic seminar
AIDS: assignment no. 3 of the worksheet
TIME: 20 minutes (10 minutes for subgroups to discuss the gender equality question in breakout rooms; then, 10 minutes for a spokesperson to present the summary of the discussion to the entire class)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The instructor says:

In this activity, you are going to work in small groups, in breakout rooms, pre-organized by our team. You have 10 minutes to read the instructions in the worksheet, assignment no. 3.

Discuss the questions and take notes on your different points of view. Each subgroup should appoint a spokesperson to present the answers to the whole class. At the end of the 10 min., you will return to the class space and the spokespersons will take turns presenting their subgroups' answers.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: GENDER EQUALITY ISSUE IN THE POEM

- AIM:** By the end of this stage, participants are expected to:
- project Shakespeare's stages of life on today's context,
 - envision the different stages of life with optimism,

- FORM:** group work / Socratic seminar
AIDS: assignment no. 4 of the worksheet
TIME: 20 minutes (10 minutes for subgroups to discuss the gender equality question in breakout rooms; then, 10 minutes for a spokesperson to present the summary of the discussion to the entire class)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The instructor says:

The instructions for this last activity are exactly like the previous. You are going to work in small groups, in breakout rooms, pre-organized by our team. You have 10 minutes to read the instructions in the worksheet, assignment no. 4. Discuss the question and take notes on your different points of view. Each subgroup should appoint a spokesperson to present the answers to the entire class. At the end of the 10 min., you will return to the class space and the spokespersons will take turns presenting their subgroups' answers.

WORKSHOP WRAP-UP: SUMMARY & ASSIGNMENT

- AIM:** By the end of this workshop, participants are expected to:



- understand the moral lessons and character strengths from the workshop,
- create a short poem (in verse or prose) that provides an alternative view to Jacques's pessimistic outlook on the stages of life.

FORM: whole class work
AIDS: assignment no. 5 of the worksheet
TIME: 5 minutes in class

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The instructor says:

We will end the workshop with some homework, instructions for which are in the worksheet, assignment no. 5. Please do it when you have inspiration and send it to me by email within 7 days.

- The instructor asks participants about the moral lessons learnt in the workshop.
- The instructor closes the workshop using the following words:

The foremost morality of this workshop is that every stage of life is worth living. We just need to learn how to enjoy it.

SOURCES:

Morgan Freeman Reads Shakespeare's "The Seven Ages of Man." Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5hcaYECaP0>

Mortensen, William (1927). "The Seven Ages of WoMan." *Two Red Roses Foundation*. Available at: <http://www.tworedroses.com/news/sevenages.php>

Shakespeare, William (circa 1599). *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene VII. Lines 139-166. *Poets.org*. Available at: <https://poets.org/poem/you-it-act-ii-scene-vii-all-worlds-stage>

Smirke, Robert (between 1798 and 1801). "The Seven Ages of Man." *Yale Center for British Art*. Available at: <https://collections.britishart.yale.edu/catalog/tms:220>

Strickland, Agnes (1827). *The Seven Ages of Woman: And Other Poems*. Hurst, Chance, & Co.

INSTRUCTOR'S POST-SESSION REFLECTION:





POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "The Seven Ages of Man" by William Shakespeare:

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

Source: Shakespeare, William. *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene VII (circa 1599). Lines 139-166. *Poets.org*. <https://poets.org/poem/you-it-act-ii-scene-vii-all-worlds-stage>

WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: HUMAN AFFINITY AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY



Human Affinity and Cultural Diversity

Group Work

Number seven, like number three, has comparable symbolisms in different cultures, religions, and mythologies, showing that human beings have genuine affinities despite their cultural differences.

Can you share some examples on number 7 symbolism in your culture?



ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

Individual Work

- Listen to Morgan Freeman reciting “The Seven Ages of Man,” a soliloquy* by Jacques in William Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* (Act II, Scene vii) : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5hcaYEcAp0>
- Read it yourself illustrated by Robert Smirke’s paintings (between 1798 and 1801); then, answer the following questions:
 - What is the main message of the poem?
 - What are the stages in a man’s life?
 - What do you like or dislike about it? and why?

* Soliloquy: a monologue (talking to oneself)



ASSIGNMENT NO. 3: GENDER EQUALITY ISSUE RAISED BY THE POEM

Group Work



- Explain William Mortensen's "Seven Ages of WoMan" (1927) in the context of the roaring twenties and women's liberation.
- What about women's stages of life in the early 21st century?



ASSIGNMENT NO. 4: THE STAGES OF LIFE IN TODAY'S WORLD

Group Work



- Projecting Shakespeare's poem on today's world, do you agree with his stages of life in terms of number and meaning? If not, what can you suggest?
- Centuries after Shakespeare's line "Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything," natural-looking dentures, cutting-edge eye glasses, and state-of-the-art medicine have considerably improved the elderly's quality of life. Does this give you a positive impression on old age? How do old people live in your country? What can you do to improve their quality of life?



ASSIGNMENT NO. 5: SUMMARY AND ASSIGNMENT

Assignment



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Individual Work

If you were to live a long life, describe the stages you would dream up for yourself in a short poem (in verse or prose).

6. LIVING IN THE MOMENT

SESSION LENGTH: 60 minutes

TEXTS USED: selected haikus by William J. Higginson

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

WILLIAM J. HIGGINSON (1938 – 2008) was a remarkable American poet, author and translator. He significantly influenced and directed generations of haiku poets for nearly 50 years. His contribution to American literature is exceptional. As a poet, teacher, translator, editor, publisher and scholar, he was considered to be one of the three most influential English-language commentators to have written about haiku poetry. William J. Higginson was a mentor for many poets, editors and publishers of *Haiku Magazine*. Haiku poets considered him to be an icon in the history of English-language haiku.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: spirituality, perspective, awareness, connection to nature

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- define the notion of haiku,
- recognize the characteristics of haiku,
- identify the topics presented in haiku poems,
- share their own perceptions of the poems,
- write a haiku and debate their essence with other classmates.

TEACHING AIDS: haikus, video recording, a shared virtual whiteboard, a blank sheet of paper

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: HAIKU DEFINITION

AIM: ▫ watch the video recording and discuss the characteristics of haiku mentioned in the video.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: video (title: "Haiku The World's Shortest Poem". Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ip_JgdqB1Y)

TIME: 10 minutes (5 minutes for the video; and, 5 minutes for a shared virtual whiteboard and discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher introduces themselves and asks students to switch off the microphones.
- Teacher's instruction for students:

Today we are going to speak about haiku - one of the most important forms of traditional Japanese poetry. But what is so special about this form of poetry? Hopefully, you are going to find out by the end of this lesson. Now we are going to



watch a video about haiku and its characteristics. Please, pay attention to the peculiarities of haiku, as we are going to discuss them afterwards.

- Students watch the video. Then, the teacher shares the virtual whiteboard with students and asks them to complete the sentences on the virtual board:

Haiku is.....

Haiku is written in scheme.

Haiku consists of.....lines.

Characteristics of haiku are.....

- This part is followed by a short discussion between the teacher and students.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: THE ESSENCE OF HAIKU

AIM:

- to analyse haiku by William J. Higginson,
- to reveal other peculiarities of haiku,
- to share personal opinions, views and perceptions with others.

FORM:

individual / whole class work

AIDS:

haikus, a blank sheet of paper

TIME:

20 minutes (3 minutes for reading haiku poems; 5 minutes for individual work; and, 12 minutes for an entire class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher starts with an expository introduction of the author William J. Higginson, then he/she shares an online document with chosen haikus, and then asks if there is anyone willing to read the poems out loud. After that, students are supposed to find differences and similarities between the selected haikus. They can use their blank sheets of paper to write notes. All participants should work individually. The teacher encourages students to share their opinions by asking follow-up questions:

What tenses are used in each example?

Are there any words connected to nature?

Can you find any juxtapositions in the haiku? Why do you think they are important?

Are there any rhymes and repetitions in haiku? How are rhymes created in the selected examples?

What is the mood of every poem?

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: THE POWER OF NOW

- AIM:**
- to develop creativity,
 - to boost writing skills,
 - to improve listening skills,
 - to bring awareness to the power of the present moment

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: a blank sheet of paper

TIME: 27 minutes (14 minutes for creating 2 haiku poems; and, 3 minutes for discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students work independently. The instructions are:

We have discussed almost all of the peculiarities of haikus. Now you are going to create your own haiku poems. You are supposed to create 2 poems each. Remember, haiku is about your feelings and your own reflection of the present moment.

- Each student reads one chosen poem. Other students comment on the characteristics of the haiku and its meaning.
- In cases where students are not willing to read their poems aloud, the task can be performed on a shared virtual whiteboard.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: THE ESSENCE OF HAIKU

- AIM:**
- to check students' understanding of the haiku essence.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 3 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher says:

At the beginning of the lesson, I mentioned that haiku is a special form of poetry. So what is so special about it? What is the essence of haiku?

- The teacher ends the discussion by saying:

Our life is full of haiku moments. It can considerably change our perception of the world. Moreover, it can teach us to respect Mother Nature and the surrounding world.



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: Selected haikus by William J. Higginson:

- a. The clock
chimes chimes and stops
but the river . . .
- b. Holding the water
held by it—
the dark mud.
- c. caterpillar
atop the rock
the rising tide
- d. the tick, tick
of snow on the reeds . . .
sparrow tracks
- e. commercial break—
the cat and I
head for the kitchen
- f. the old cat
hesitates on the doorsill—
a falling leaf
- g. summer storm . . .
a shopping cart rolls past
the end of the lot
- h. fireworks crashing
and fireflies so silent . . .
tomorrow the biopsy

7. THE ART OF THE MOMENT

SESSION LENGTH: 60 minutes
TEXTS USED: visually 'unaloud' haikus by Marlene Mountain

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

MARLENE MOUNTAIN (1939 - 2018) was one of the first haiku poets who focused on the one-line approach, by way of analogy with the one-column vertical writing of Japanese haiku. Moreover, she is considered to be a major contributor to English-language haiku. She is known as an artist, who published a great variety of "concrete" poems for which the term "unaloud haiku" was coined. In addition to this, Marlene Mountain was the Honorary Curator of the American Haiku Archives which is considered to be one of the largest public collections of haiku materials outside Japan. This remarkable artist taught people how to perceive visual art as a poem and helped readers to develop their imagination while creating visual haikus.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: creativity, spirituality, self-care, connection to nature

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- define the notion of visual poems,
- analyse the selected poems and interpret their meanings,
- identify visual images in haiku poems,
- share their own perceptions of the poems,
- create haiku and debate their essence with other classmates.

TEACHING AIDS: shared documents with the selected images and haiku, a shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: HERE AND NOW

AIM:

- to create a friendly atmosphere in the classroom,
- to make students aware of their feelings in the present moment.

FORM: individual work

AIDS: a shared virtual whiteboard

TIME: 5 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher instructs the students:

Please, close your eyes. Put your feet on the ground, relax all the muscles in your body. Take a deep breath. Breathe out slowly. Continue breathing slowly, but deeply. Concentrate on how you feel, where you are, and feel the present moment. Are you feeling safe? Are you feeling happy? Try to express your own feeling with one word.



Now open your eyes. Are you still aware of the present moment?

- The teacher shares a virtual whiteboard with the students and asks them to express their feelings with one word.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: THE POWER OF THE IMAGE

- AIM:**
- to boost creative thinking,
 - to teach students how to focus on their feelings,
 - to share personal opinions, views and perceptions with others.

FORM: individual / group work

AIDS: a shared document with the selected images

TIME: 7 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher shares two images with students (see worksheet, assignment no. 1), giving them time to analyse colours, positions, shades, readability, appropriateness, mood. After that, each student shares his/her perception of the images.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: VISUALLY PRESENT

- AIM:**
- to introduce the notion of visual poems,
 - to analyse unaloud haiku by Marlene Mountain,
 - to shed light on the effect of the visual poetry,
 - to share personal opinions, views and perceptions with others.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: haiku text, a blank sheet of paper

TIME: 22 minutes (5 minutes for reading haiku poems; 5 minutes for individual work; and, 12 minutes for a whole class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher says:

Dear students, today we are going to focus not only on the written form of the poem, but also on its visual representation. Visual poetry is challenging for most readers. Some poems have a linear form, others are created vertically. Visual poems are frequently created in such a way that fragment words are divided into pieces, making it even harder for the reader to decode the message. It's not just about the written text, the visual design always contributes to the overall meaning of the poem. Proximity, colour, and shape are all essential elements within the meaning of every visual poem.



- The teacher shares an online document with visually "unaloud haiku" by Marlene Mountain and starts with an expository introduction of the author. The volunteer reads selected poems aloud. After that, students are supposed to work independently. They have to read poems once again, analyse their structures and their grammatical peculiarities. Moreover, students are supposed to focus on the shape, proximity between letters, and the visual design of the poems. They can use their blank sheets of paper to write notes. The teacher encourages students to share their opinions and asks follow-up questions:

How does the grammatical structure of visual poems differ from other poetic forms?

How does visual design contribute to the overall meaning of the poem?

How does the author use juxtapositions in visually "unaloud haiku"? Why do you think they are important?

How is the mood created in visual poems?

Do these examples evoke auditory or tactile images?

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: I SEE AND I FEEL

- AIM:**
- to develop creativity,
 - to boost writing skills,
 - to improve listening skills,
 - to bring awareness to the power of the present moment.

FORM: group / whole class work

AIDS: a shared virtual whiteboard

TIME: 27 minutes (15 minutes for creating 2-3 poems; and, 12 minutes for a discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students work in 3-4 groups. The instructions are:

Previously, you have written down some words and phrases that describe your emotions and feelings on the virtual whiteboard. Each phrase or word can be visually depicted. Every group has to create 3 visual poems. Portray your own perception of Now.

- One student from each group presents their visual poems. Other students comment on their characteristics and meanings.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: ENJOYING THE PRESENT MOMENT

- AIM:**
- to understand the essence of Now.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 2 minutes



3:

brown
 goose
 sleeping
 on
 one
 leg:
 the
 cold

4:

setting up the goal
 the workman
 shoots
 ball

5:

f
 i
 d
 f i d l
 e
 c r a r
 b



6:

f r o g
frog

7:

s
e p
s i
u d
o e
h o o r

8:

my neighbor's rooster hops the ^{stick} I throw





WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT N. 1: THE POWER OF THE IMAGE

Image no.1



Image no.2



8. THE UPS AND DOWNS OF LIFE

SESSION LENGTH:	90 minutes
TEXTS USED:	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: "The Rainy Day" Susan Coolidge: "New Every Morning" Walter D. Wintle: "Thinking"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW is often referred to as the most beloved American poet of the nineteenth century. That he was the first American poet to be enshrined in Westminster Abbey's Poet's Corner speaks to this fact.

The poem selected for this session is a meditation on the ups and downs of life, on how we must accept the bad days and recognise that there are still countless good days ahead.

SUSAN COOLIDGE, the pen name of American author **SARAH CHAUNCEY WOOLSEY**, is best known as a children's author. The selected poem reflects on an all-too-familiar situation: some days are simply bad and all we can do is accept this fact and begin the next day afresh. Sometimes, all we need is to realise that tomorrow can become the beginning of a new story.

WALTER D. WINTLE's poem "Thinking" approaches the topic from a different perspective. Sometimes, by not believing in ourselves, we become our worst enemies, the originators of our "rainy days". Wintle's poem offers inspiration for such circumstances, a call to action, and optimism instead of self-induced despair.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: bravery, perseverance, self-regulation, hope

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- analyse and interpret selected poems, identify their overarching themes and provide evidence to support their statements,
- compare and contrast the content of selected poems,
- relate the content of the selected poems to their own experiences,
- understand the importance of positive thinking,
- demonstrate their understanding of the selected poems through various activities,
- share their personal experiences with their classmates.

TEACHING AIDS: text, shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: SOUND EFFECT ASSOCIATIONS

- AIM:**
- to introduce students to the session's overarching theme: the ups and downs of life,
 - to elicit different responses to the sound effects and open a discussion about different perspectives and the challenges people face daily.
- FORM:** whole class work
- AIDS:**
- audio clip (Summer Night Thunder, available on Spotify – or any other recording of a storm)
- TIME:** 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- This activity will set the scene for the poems discussed later. It is also an excellent opportunity to see the students' differing perceptions, some of which will be pessimistic and some optimistic (based only on the sound, students can imagine countless scenarios), and to hear students' reasoning.
- The teacher explains that students will listen to an audio clip and must focus on emotions, attitudes or states that the sound elicits. The teacher asks students to close their eyes and focus on the audio clip.
- After playing the clip, the teacher asks students to share their thoughts. These should be collected on the board or an online document so that others can also see them.
- If students provide overwhelmingly pessimistic answers, the teacher might ask: *What do you do when you feel overwhelmed or depressed?*

MAIN ACTIVITY 1: "THE RAINY DAY" – DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

- AIM:**
- to identify the main idea of the analysed poem,
 - to share personal experiences and feelings with classmates.
- FORM:** group / whole class work
- AIDS:**
- the text
 - pen and paper
- TIME:** 30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher tells students that they will read a poem. But before they do so, they should keep in mind their task. Students are asked to make notes about their initial ideas and questions about the poem's message and similar experiences, feelings or memories they had in their lives.

- The teacher reads the poem or plays the recording. While students are listening, they should focus and only make notes after they have listened to the poem. They will have 2 minutes to make brief notes.
- Students are sorted into groups randomly. They share their ideas and experiences about the poem and the state of mind it describes. They get 5 minutes to discuss.
- After finishing their discussions, one member from each group shares something about how the discussion went and what they have learnt about the others.
- The teacher discusses the poem with the whole class, using these questions and prompts:
 1. *How does the speaker of the poem feel? Why? Which lines or images express this feeling best?*
 2. *How would you explain the line „my thoughts still cling to the mouldering past“? Have you ever felt this way? What are possible ways of dealing with similar situations?*
 3. *What is the message here?*
- The teacher asks students to share their opinions about the main idea.

MAIN ACTIVITY 2: "NEW EVERY MORNING" AND "THINKING"

- AIM:**
- to identify the main idea of the analysed poems,
 - to identify similarities and differences (in the ideas conveyed) in the assigned poems.

FORM: individual / whole class work

- AIDS:**
- the text
 - pen and paper

TIME: 25 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher projects or distributes the texts of the two poems without the author and the title.
- Students first read the texts and identify connections between the given texts and "The Rainy Day". They get around 3 minutes to write down some ideas.
- *What theme or idea connects all three texts?* Students explain their choice. The teacher facilitates a discussion with the whole class:
- *The poem "Thinking" is a bit different. Can you explain why?*
- *There's a saying that we are often our worst enemies. What does it mean? Can you relate that to the poem?*
- Students then think about one sentence that best summarises each poem's message. Answers must be justified.
- The teacher facilitates a discussion with the whole class.



AFTER READING ACTIVITY: FIND SUITABLE TITLES

- AIM:**
- to engage students' creativity,
 - to demonstrate students' understanding of the selected poems by selecting suitable titles.

FORM: pair / group work

AIDS: ▫ pen and paper

TIME: 15 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students work in pairs or groups of three and create creative titles for the two poems. They share their ideas with the rest of the class.
- A discussion about the suggested titles follows.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: A MOMENT OF JOY

- AIM:** ▫ to engage students in positive thinking.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: none

TIME: 5 - 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- With online classes, teachers can expect that students are most likely at home. Thus, they could ask students to find one object in their homes that brings them joy. It should be something that they can bring to the camera and share with the others if possible. If no other option is available, they should simply describe it (this version also works with in-person sessions).
- Alternatively, especially with in-person classes, or if there are only a couple of minutes left, teachers could bring one poem to the class that brings them joy and share it with students.

SOURCES:

Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth. "The Rainy Day". Available at: https://www.hwlongfellow.org/poems_poem.php?pid=39

Coolidge, Susan. "New Every Morning". Available at: <https://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/poem/new-every-morning/>

Wintle, Walter D. "Thinking". Available at: <https://allpoetry.com/poem/8624439-Thinking-by-Walter-D-Wintle>



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: **"The Rainy Day"** by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow:

The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering past,
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart, and cease repining;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

2: Excerpt from **"New Every Morning"** by Susan Coolidge:

Every day is a fresh beginning;
Listen, my soul, to the glad refrain,
And, spite of old sorrow and older sinning,
And puzzles forecasted and possible pain,
Take heart with the day, and begin again.

3: **"Thinking"** by Walter D. Wintle:

If you think you are beaten, you are
If you think you dare not, you don't,
If you like to win, but you think you can't
It is almost certain you won't.

If you think you'll lose, you're lost
For out of the world we find,
Success begins with a fellow's will
It's all in the state of mind.



If you think you are outclassed, you are
You've got to think high to rise,
You've got to be sure of yourself before
You can ever win a prize.

Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man,
But soon or late the man who wins
Is the man WHO THINKS HE CAN!



9. A LEAP OF FAITH

SESSION LENGTH: 90 minutes

TEXTS USED: Robert Kendall: "Faith"
William Ernest Henley: "Invictus"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

ROBERT KENDALL is a Canadian-born digital poet. His interest in music, programming and electronic literature are combined in his kinetic poems (poems in which words and phrases are animated) created primarily in Flash. His best-known electronic poem is "Faith", a poem that combines animation, sound and visual design to enhance the poem's central theme.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: perspective, bravery, spirituality

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- analyse and interpret the selected poem, identify its overarching theme and provide evidence to support their statements,
- relate the content of the selected poem to their own experiences,
- understand the phrase *a leap of faith*,
- demonstrate their understanding of the selected poem through various activities,
- share their personal experiences with their classmates.

TEACHING AIDS: text, screenshot of the title page, shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: HAVE YOU EVER LOST FAITH (IN YOURSELF)?

AIM: ▫ to introduce students to the session's overarching theme: faith in oneself / spiritual faith.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 12 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher explains that they are going to play a quick game. The teacher will make statements, and all students to whom the statements apply must raise their hands (online: ideally on a platform that supports a raise hand functionality).

- Statements:

Sometimes I feel overwhelmed by the choices I have to make.

I have lost faith in myself before.

I had missed a good opportunity before because I was afraid.

- After each statement, the teacher asks students to share some of their personal experiences if they wish to.
- The teacher discusses the statements and students' answers with the whole class.
- Follow-up questions:

How did you deal with the situation?

How important is it to have faith in yourself? Why?

What do you do when you lose faith in yourself?

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: BRAINSTORMING AROUND THE TITLE PAGE

AIM: ▫ to elicit students' responses to a picture prompt.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: a screenshot of the title page; virtual whiteboard

TIME: 12 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher shows the poem's title page to students and asks each of them to jot down on a sticky note (to be placed on the board):

What might the poem be about, and what does the title page remind you of?

- After the students post their responses, a short, shared reflection follows.

- Note: The poem is not explicitly about religious faith (it could also simply be about having faith in ourselves and our decisions and the necessity to take leaps of faith occasionally). Though certain elements, like the ornate title page that resembles medieval manuscripts produced by monks, or the musical instruments in later sections and the faith vs logic debate, are definitely connected to religious faith. If students are struggling, the teacher may ask:

Have you ever seen similarly ornate calligraphy before? Where? What does the visual design reveal about the significance of the word?

- The sub-title *Expanding Multiverse in 5 Movements* refers to the poem's musicality and what happens in the poem: each segment builds on the previous ones.



WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: "FAITH" ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

- AIM:**
- to identify the poem's central theme,
 - to discuss the speaker's feelings and the various ways they are expressed in the poem,
 - to identify ways the poem's message is enhanced compared to print poetry.
- FORM:** individual / whole class work
- AIDS:** poem (available at: collection.eliterature.org/1/works/kendall__faith); virtual whiteboard
- TIME:** 25 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

MOVEMENT 1:

- The teacher opens the poem and plays the first movement, which reads: *Faith – logic can't bend this.*
- Guiding questions:
 - Can anyone explain the meaning of this sentence?*
 - Which two words are the "main characters" of this segment? How are the two words presented in this segment, and how are they different visually?*
 - What about the animation? What is its purpose?*
 - What do you think: which word/quality did the author find more important? Why?*

MOVEMENT 2:

- The speaker makes a decision here: *I edge logic out.*
- The teacher asks:
 - What do you think that means? explanation: edge out means to remove or defeat something but just so...*
- The speaker continues with a question: *Can the mind press on around the bend to consummate this vision of the deep "or"?*
- The teacher's guiding questions:
 - You might not understand all the words, but so far, do you think this phrase and the words used signal certainty or uncertainty?*
 - Is it easy to let go of logic? To not be afraid of the unknown?*
 - What do you think the vision of the deep refers to?*

MOVEMENT 3:



- The speaker becomes more uncertain:

How did the music and the visual layout change?

What feelings do the music and the new colours evoke in you as a reader?

If it reflects the speaker's state of mind, what word would best describe that state?

- Here we have *red winking neon logic*.

Where would you see such neon signs? What are they used for?

- They signal where something is; they provide security because they are easy to spot and follow. At this moment in the poem, the speaker thinks about the safety that logic represents.

'Can't make the sunny side of my mind press the black button'

What does this mean and symbolise for you?

The unknown? The deeper world?

MOVEMENT 4:

- The speaker makes a decision: *a leap of faith*

What happens with the speaker? Which words or phrases are important here? – I step to the idea edge, press my foot firmly into the black...chasm, around the bend, off the rocker, leap

Once again, how do the music and the visual layout (the colours, the increasingly complex and chaotic text) reflect the speaker's state of mind?

MOVEMENT 5:

How would you sum up the poem's message?

- Note: I like the idea I read somewhere: most words fall down to the bottom of the screen – and faith falls on top of them. As if to say that it is okay to doubt ourselves, we need that too – the doubt and contemplation, perhaps some missed opportunities, are represented by the pile of thoughts that serve as a cushion.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: DEBATE – TO LEAP OR NOT TO LEAP

- AIM:**
- to investigate the central theme from different perspectives,
 - to develop compelling arguments for a given position.

FORM: group work

AIDS: (virtual) whiteboard

TIME: 30 minutes





INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students are divided into two groups (ideally of equal size).
- The teacher tells them that the two teams will debate against each other. The topic is: *Why should or shouldn't we take leaps of faith?* One team will argue for why we should take occasional leaps of faith, while the other will argue for why we should not.
- The teacher tells students that the point is not to agree with the statement they have to argue for but to find as many arguments supporting it as possible. They should convince the other team and the teacher.
- Each group should choose its first speaker to deliver the opening statement.
- Students will now work in groups for around 10 minutes to collect ideas (they can use the Internet to find supporting arguments) and organise them into a coherent opening speech (not all ideas have to be used right away, some can be saved for later arguments). They should think about the arguments the other team might find and prepare to refute them.
- Next, the first speaker of each group reads their speech, while the members of the other team listen and prepare to respond to what they hear.
- After the speeches have been read and each group gets at least 30 seconds to organise their thoughts, the groups take turns (all members can participate) to react to the other group's statements. While one group expresses their ideas, the other listen and prepare for their turn.
- After a few turns, the teacher ends the debate.
- The teacher may respond to the arguments and comment on them if time allows.
- Students summarize what they have learnt through this activity.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: FOOD FOR THOUGHT – "INVICTUS"

AIM: ▫ to engage students in positive thinking.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: poem

TIME: 11 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

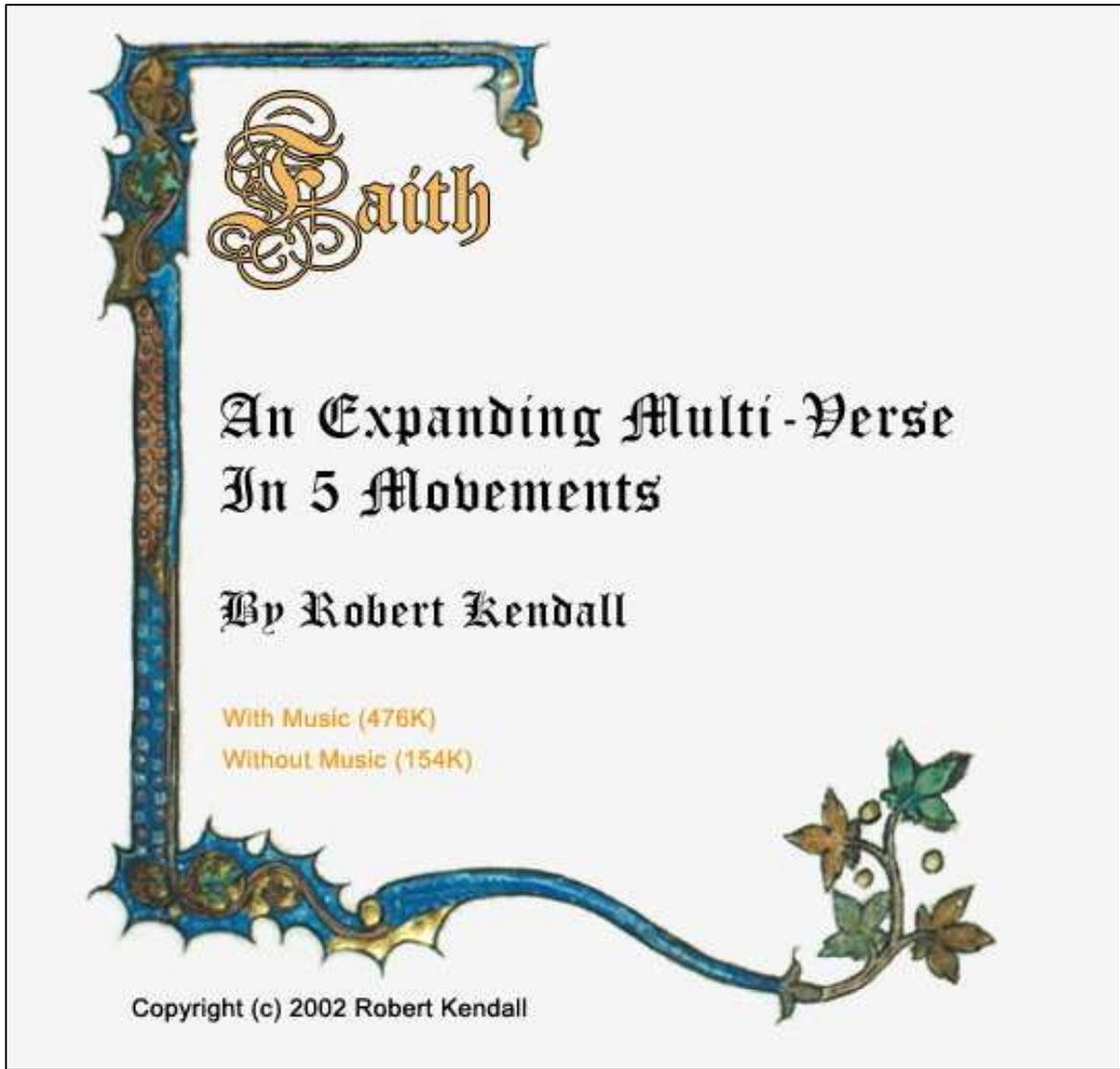
- The teacher ends the class by reading a stanza from an inspirational poem, directly related to taking or being afraid of taking leaps of faith:

"It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: Title page of "Faith" by Robert Kendall:



10. MAKING LIFE DECISIONS

SESSION LENGTH: 90 minutes

TEXTS USED: Edgar A. Guest: "His Other Chance"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

EDGAR ALBERT GUEST (1881 – 1959) was a famous and prolific English-born American poet. He became known as the People's Poet. His first poem appeared on December 11, 1898. Guest was widely read throughout North America, and he was famous for his numerous sentimental and optimistic poems. He wrote about 11 000 poems that were collected into more than 20 books and syndicated to over 300 newspapers throughout the United States. He published a new poem in a newspaper every day for more than 30 years. Guest's most famous poem is the oft-quoted "Home".

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: hope, spirituality, perspective, perseverance

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- explain and analyse the concept of "making life decisions" in Edgar Albert Guest's "His Other Chance".
- discuss various interpretations of the poem presented by their classmates.
- create an acrostic poem and briefly discuss its meaning.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheet, shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: TWO DIFFERENT ROADS

AIM: ▫ to introduce the topic of "making life decisions" showing two pictures.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 10 minutes (5 minutes for individual work; and, 5 minutes for sharing)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher instructs students to look at the pictures of the roads in the worksheet:

Look at these two roads. The first one illustrates a simple road. The second one illustrates a complicated road. Try to answer the questions in the assignment that are related to those representations of the road.

- When the students are finished, the teacher facilitates a short discussion in which the responses of students will be shared.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: POEM ANALYSIS

- AIM:**
- to analyse the poem "His Other Chance",
 - to discuss and compare the ideas of students.
- FORM:** individual / whole class work
- AIDS:** poem text, blank sheet of paper
- TIME:** 40 minutes (10 minutes for reading the poem; 15 minutes for individual work; and, 15 minutes for a whole class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- A volunteer reads the poem aloud. Students then read the poem again, this time more carefully, paying attention to the choice of words and ideas.
- Students then continue to work individually. They may underline or highlight the passages which speak to them or, on the other hand, parts of the poem that they are not sure about. They can also take some notes on a blank sheet of paper. The teacher encourages students to personalise the topic of the poem. After the students' individual work, the teacher facilitates a discussion about the text, offering opportunities for students to respond to each other and comment on the observations.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: AN ACROSTIC POEM

- AIM:**
- to create an acrostic poem and discuss its meaning,
 - to develop creative thinking,
 - to improve listening skills.
- FORM:** individual / whole class work
- AIDS:** poem text, blank sheet of paper
- TIME:** 30 minutes (15 minutes for creating an acrostic poem; and, 15 minutes for discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students work individually. The teacher gives them the following instructions:

Your task will be to create an acrostic poem (a poem in which particular letters in each line, usually the first letters, can be read downwards to form a word or words). Choose three words from the poem His Other Chance and use them in your own acrostic poem, e.g. "straight", "chance", "climb". Your poem should maintain the main idea of the analysed poem.

- The teacher monitors students' activity.



- When students finish their work, some volunteers read their acrostic poems. The whole class discusses their meaning and shares their ideas. If students are shy and do not want to read their poems, the teacher may encourage them to post them in the chat or to share the poems anonymously on a virtual whiteboard.
- It is important that the discussion about the students' work is facilitated by the teacher in a positive way, highlighting the strengths of the works and original ideas.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: A CHANCE TO CHANGE

AIM: ▫ to motivate and encourage students in the context of the last two verses from the poem.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: poem text

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher points at the last two lines of the poem:

Get hold of yourself and travel right; There's a fellow you've still got a chance to be.

- He/she encourages students to think about specific positive changes that they think they may be able to make in their life in the coming days/ months. What would they like to do more often? What do they wish to change in their daily lives to live a life of fulfilment and well-being?
- Students then share their ideas.

SOURCES:

Guest, Edgar A. "His Other Chance". Available at: <https://www.best-poems.net/edgar-albert-guest/his-other-chance.html>

INSTRUCTOR'S POST-SESSION REFLECTION:





POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "The Other Chance" by Edgar Albert Guest:

He was down and out, and his pluck was gone,
And he said to me in a gloomy way:
"I've wasted my chances, one by one,
And I'm just no good, as the people say.
Nothing ahead, and my dreams all dust,
Though once there was something I might have been,
But I wasn't game, and I broke my trust,
And I wasn't straight and I wasn't clean."
"You're pretty low down," says I to him,
"But nobody's holding you there, my friend.
Life is a stream where men sink or swim,
And the drifters come to a sorry end;
But there's two of you living and breathing still-
The fellow you are, and he's tough to see,
And another chap, if you've got the will,
The man that you still have a chance to be."
He laughed with scorn. "Is there two of me?
I thought I'd murdered the other one.
I once knew a chap that I hoped to be,
And he was decent, but now he's gone."
"Well," says I, "it may seem to you
That life has little of joy in store,
But there's always something you still can do,
And there's never a man but can try once more.
"There are always two to the end of time-
The fellow we are and the future man.
The Lord never meant you should cease to climb,
And you can get up if you think you can.
The fellow you are is a sorry sight,
But you needn't go drifting out to sea.
Get hold of yourself and travel right;
There's a fellow you've still got a chance to be."



WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT: TWO DIFFERENT ROADS

A straight road...



A complicated road...





Which road would you choose for driving? Why?

What do these roads remind you of? You can think about your personal associations, previous experiences, travelling...

Roads are often used in literature and art as metaphors for life and change. Can you think of any work of art (novel, movie, visual art) that uses this metaphor?

11. LIFE

SESSION LENGTH: 60 minutes

TEXTS USED: Shawnee Kellie: "One"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

SHAWNEE KELLIE is the author of poems of inspiration. She writes beautiful powerful words about the simple things in our everyday lives. Shawnee worked as much as she could for and with Vietnam war veterans (she was the widow of a Vietnam war veteran). The poem "One" is a very interesting and thought-provoking piece of writing. The poem spreads the message that it is not only a large group of people that can make a change, but that also one idea, one thought, and one human can help make the world a better place.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: hope, perspective, spirituality

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- explain and analyse the concept of "one" in Shawnee Kellie's "One".
- discuss various interpretations of the poem presented by their peers.
- create a mosaic containing some photos and pictures expressing the lines of the poem brought by students.

TEACHING AIDS: text, paper for a big poster, students` photos/pictures, glue, shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: SHOW ONE

AIM:

- to introduce student's first thoughts concerning the title of poem,
- to speculate about meaning of the word 'one'.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 3 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

▫ Teacher's instruction for students:

Draw the number "one" in the air and show your other classmates the number "one" using your thumb. Ask other classmates what associations they have in mind seeing this number/symbol.



WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: POEM ANALYSIS

- AIM:**
- to analyse the meaning and importance of the word 'one' in the poem,
 - to discuss and compare the ideas of students.
- FORM:** group / whole class work
- AIDS:** poem text
- TIME:** 32 minutes (2 minutes for reading the poem; 20 minutes for group work; and, 10 minutes for a whole class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students work in five groups. Each group is responsible for the analysis of one stanza of the poem (the fifth group also analyses the ending of the poem: *"One life can make a difference/ One life is me and you ..."*).
- After their discussion, they exchange their places in groups in the following way: one member from the first group joins the second and vice versa; one member from the third group joins the fourth and vice versa. The fifth group joins the teacher.
- During their analysis, students can focus on the words written in capital letters such as *"One"*, *"Spring"*, and *"Nation"*, trying to explain the author's intention.
- After that, each group summarises their ideas emphasizing the repetitive use of the word "one". The teacher encourages students to introduce their own experiences.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: ONE'S MOSAIC

- AIM:**
- to create a mosaic containing some photos and pictures expressing the lines of the poem brought by students,
 - to personalise the topic.
- FORM:** whole class work
- AIDS:** paper for poster, students' photos/pictures, glue
- TIME:** 20 minutes (10 minutes for sticking all photos/pictures on the poster; and, 10 minutes for discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- In-person: Students freely stick their photos/pictures on the poster. To maintain discipline in the classroom, the teacher can call students to follow the order of the groups in which they are working.
- Virtual: Students use a shared virtual whiteboard and they freely place their photos/pictures on it.
- When students finish their work, the teacher calls them in front of the poster to be seen by everybody and encourages them to comment on their work. The teacher then chooses a few specific photos/pictures and asks students to comment on them.



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "One" by Shawnee Kellie:

"One word can spark a moment,
One flower can wake the dream;
One tree can start a forest,
One bird can herald Spring.

One smile can bring a friendship,
One handclasp can lift a soul;
One star can guide a ship at sea,
One cheer can obtain a goal.

One vote can change a Nation,
One sunbeam can lift a room;
One candle wipes out darkness,
One laugh will conquer gloom.

One look can change two lives;
One kiss can make love bloom.
One step must start each journey,
One word must start each prayer;

One hope can raise our spirits,
One touch can show you care.
One voice can speak with wisdom,
One heart can know what's true;

One life can make a difference,
One life is me and you..."

Source: <https://poemfanatic.blogspot.com/2016/04/one-by-shawnee-kellie.html>

12. ADVENTURE AND LOVE OF LIFE

SESSION LENGTH: 90 minutes

TEXTS USED: Alfred Lord Tennyson: "Ulysses"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON (1809 – 1892) was an influential English poet who is considered the chief representative of the Victorian period. Among his best-known works are "The Palace of Art", "The Lotos-Eaters", "The Lady of Shalott", and "The Two Voices". The poem "Ulysses" was written during a difficult and depressing period of Tennyson's life, after the unexpected death of his best friend, Arthur Hallam, at the age of twenty-two. Tennyson's other famous work "In Memoriam A.A.H." is an elegy which reflects upon the death of his friend but also deals with topics such as faith, existence and the meaning of life.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: curiosity, perspective, zest

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- analyse the selected poem and interpret its meaning",
- recognize and interpret the concept of life as an adventure,
- listen carefully and reflect on the ideas expressed by others.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheets, shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: QUOTES ABOUT LIFE

AIM:

- to introduce the topic of life as adventure,
- to elicit students' associations and ideas with the topic,
- to personalize the topic to be discussed,
- to practice attentive listening.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet (assignment no. 1)

TIME: 15 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to carefully read the two quotes in the worksheet (assignment no. 1) and think about their responses. Students have about 5 minutes to think about their responses individually.
- An entire class discussion facilitated by the teacher follows. Students are encouraged not only to express their own views but also to respond to their classmates' ideas and observations.

- When the students are finished, the teacher facilitates a short discussion in which the responses of students will be shared.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: INTRO TO THE AUTHOR AND POEM

- AIM:**
- to familiarize students with the author and his work in general,
 - to elicit impressions after the first reading of the poem.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 15 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher provides a brief introduction to the life and work of Alfred Lord Tennyson to give students some context.
- Then the class reads the poem together and the teacher elicits first impressions from the students in the form of a short discussion.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: POEM ANALYSIS – STUDY QUESTIONS

- AIM:**
- to analyse and interpret the poem,
 - to understand the message of the poem.

FORM: individual / group / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 40 minutes (10 minutes individual work; 15 minutes for group work; 15 minutes for the whole class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to read the study questions and think about them on their own, in silence. Since the poem is long, they have about 10 minutes for this part of the activity.
- In the second part, the students are divided into groups, and answer the questions together, practicing attentive listening as in the previous activity.
- When this part is over, the teacher facilitates an entire class discussion, at the end of which students should have a solid understanding of the poem and its meaning.



AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: CLOSING DISCUSSION

- AIM:** □ to conclude the discussion on the meaning of adventure in one's life.
- FORM:** whole class work
- AIDS:** -
- TIME:** 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to share their experiences with adventure in their lives.

Do you relate to Tennyson's sentiments expressed in the poem?

Do you recall a specific experience / moment of adventure in your life (that this poem reminded you of)?

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: FURTHER EXPLORATION

- AIM:** □ to inspire students to do some follow-up exploration of the theme of life as adventure in various works of art.
- FORM:** whole class work
- AIDS:** -
- TIME:** 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to share their tips for works of art (books, films, paintings, songs, etc.) that focus on the theme of life as an adventure.

SOURCES:

Tennyson, Alfred Lord. "Ulysses". Available at:
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45392/ulysses>

INSTRUCTOR'S POST-SESSION REFLECTION:





As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle,—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark, broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'T is not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.



WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: QUOTES ABOUT LIFE

- *LIFE IS A JOURNEY TO THE UNKNOWN FUTURE. LIFE IS ALWAYS A DARING, GREAT ADVENTURE. SO GO ALONG WITH LIFE, WITH COURAGE BUT WITHOUT FEAR.*
 - **DEBASISH MRIDHA**

- *ONE DOES NOT DISCOVER NEW LANDS WITHOUT CONSENTING TO LOSE SIGHT OF THE SHORE FOR A VERY LONG TIME.*
 - **ANDRE GIDE**

ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: POEM ANALYSIS – STUDY QUESTIONS

- What is the attitude expressed towards life and death in Tennyson's "Ulysses"?
- Why, do you think, does Tennyson choose Ulysses to express his theme of adventure and the love of life?
- What are the characteristics of Ulysses in Tennyson's poem?

13. HAPPINESS

SESSION LENGTH: 60 minutes
TEXTS USED: Raymond Carver: "Happiness"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

RAYMOND CARVER (1938 – 1988) was an American short story writer and poet. Although Carver is widely known for his short stories, especially those published in the collections *What We Talk About When We Talk about Love* (1981) and *Cathedral* (1983), his poetry collections (e.g., *Where Water Comes Together with Other Water* (1985) or *A New Path to the Waterfall* (1989)) deserve as much attention and critical acclaim. The poem "Happiness" was first published in the journal of Poetry in February 1985. It was later included in the collection *Where Water Comes Together with Other Water*.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: curiosity, kindness, honesty

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- explain and analyse the concept of happiness in Raymond Carver's "Happiness",
- discuss various interpretations of the poem presented by their peers,
- create 'a pyramid of happiness' and give arguments for the elements included in it.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheet, glue, shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: BREATHING THROUGH THE FEET

AIM:

- to create a safe and relaxed atmosphere,
- to calm down.

FORM: individual work

AIDS: -

TIME: 2 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Teacher's instruction for students:

Sit in a comfortable way. Make sure your both feet are planted firmly on the ground. Drop your attention to the soles of your feet. In your mind's eye, imagine that you're breathing in and out through the soles of the feet. Keep your attention firmly on them. If your mind wanders, simply bring it back. Continue for a few breaths.



PRE-READING ACTIVITY: SEEING THAT MADE ME HAPPY

- AIM:**
- to introduce the topic of happiness.
 - to introduce personal perspectives on happiness.
 - to share different forms of happiness.
 - to practice attentive listening.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 5 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Teacher's instruction for students:

Today's session is focused on Raymond Carver's poem "Happiness". I'd like to ask you, before we get to the poem itself, to think about a situation from last week that made you happy. In that situation you were in a position of an observer. You saw something that made you happy. Think about it for a minute and then we'll share our experiences together.

Be attentive while listening to your peers, and feel free to naturally connect your experience with someone else's. For example, if someone observed a situation which reminds you of yours, you can mention it. You can also comment if the observed situation surprised you, etc.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: POEM ANALYSIS

- AIM:**
- to analyse the tone, imagery and meaning of the poem "Happiness".

FORM: group / whole class work

AIDS: study questions available on a collaborative whiteboard (prepared beforehand by the teacher and the link shared with students)

TIME: 26 minutes (1 minute for reading the poem; 15 minutes in break-out rooms; and, 10 minutes for an entire class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- A volunteer reads the poem aloud.
- Students then work in break-out rooms. They discuss study questions which will guide their analysis of the poem.
- After their discussion in break-out rooms, students report their observations to the whole class, in a discussion moderated by the teacher.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: THE PYRAMID OF HAPPINESS

- AIM:**
- to model and present the theme of the poem "Happiness",
 - to describe and justify the use of concepts in the model,
 - to compare and contrast ideas of other groups.

FORM: group / whole class work

AIDS: image of a pyramid on the collaborative whiteboard

TIME: 25 minutes (15 minutes for creating the pyramid; and, 10 minutes for discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students work in break-out rooms. The teacher gives them the following instructions:

In this activity, we'll continue to work with the poem "Happiness". This time, however, you'll try to represent it in a graphic model, i.e. what you think are the key ideas of the text in relation to the concept of happiness in it.

In your group, choose six words that, according to you, best represent the philosophy/ concept of happiness as it is expressed in the poem.

Place those six words in the pyramid so that it graphically represents the value of each word. The most important word should be on the top and somewhat less significant concepts should be placed at the bottom.

Try not to use the word 'happiness' / 'happy' or the words which are mentioned in the poem.

Be ready to share the pyramid with other groups in an entire class discussion.

- When students finish their work on the pyramid in break-out rooms, each group presents their pyramid in a class discussion coordinated by the teacher.
- The teacher encourages students to comment on the work of other groups in the class.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: WHAT I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO

- AIM:**
- to share a positive experience.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 5 minutes



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "Happiness" by Raymond Carver:

So early it's still almost dark out.
I'm near the window with coffee,
and the usual early morning stuff
that passes for thought.
When I see the boy and his friend
walking up the road
to deliver the newspaper.
They wear caps and sweaters,
and one boy has a bag over his shoulder.
They are so happy
they aren't saying anything, these boys.
I think if they could, they would take
each other's arm.
It's early in the morning,
and they are doing this thing together.
They come on, slowly.
The sky is taking on light,
though the moon still hangs pale over the water.
Such beauty that for a minute
death and ambition, even love,
doesn't enter into this.
Happiness. It comes on
unexpectedly. And goes beyond, really,
any early morning talk about it.



WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Comment on the tone of the poem. Discuss specific images which Carver uses in the text to evoke its tone and atmosphere.
2. Discuss how the poem explores the dichotomy of speech versus silence. How do they relate, in your perspective, to the concept of happiness in the poem?
3. Analyse the role of the speaker in the poem. What do we learn about him? What remains hidden?

ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: THE PYRAMID OF HAPPINESS

In your group, choose six words that best represent the philosophy / concept of happiness as it is expressed in the poem.

Place those six words in the pyramid so that it graphically represents the value of each word. The most important word should be on the top and somewhat less significant concepts should be placed at the bottom.

Try not to use the word 'happiness' / 'happy' or the words which are mentioned in the poem.



14. HOPE

SESSION LENGTH: 90 minutes

TEXTS USED: Emily Dickinson: "Hope is the Thing with Feathers"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

EMILY DICKINSON (1830 – 1886) was an American poet who is now recognized as one of the most prominent figures in American poetry. Though she was not recognized during her lifetime, her poetry collections present some of the finest literary legacy of American literature. Her work, acknowledged by literary scholars as innovative, features a variety of themes, including nature, love, im/mortality, identity, death, religion, etc.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: hope, gratitude

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- analyse the selected poem and interpret its meaning,
- recognize and interpret the emotions presented in the poem,
- discuss the topic of hope.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheets, shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: BRAINSTORMING AROUND THE TITLE

AIM:

- to introduce the topic of the poem,
- to brainstorm potential subject matters of the poem.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: worksheet / online picture of the book cover

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher shows students the cover of Max Porter's book *Grief is the Thing with Feathers*, the title of which has been clearly inspired by Dickinson's poem. Briefly, s/he introduces Porter's story and explains how the crow functions in the text.
- Then the teacher asks students to contemplate the title of Dickinson's poem.

What associations does the title evoke in you? Compare it with Porter's book.

What do you think the author means by "the thing with feathers"? What possible readings can that expression have? In your opinion, what does the author compare hope to?



How would you visualize the cover of a book with such a title?

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: VOCABULARY CHECK

AIM: ▫ to check the meaning of unknown words.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: (online) dictionary

TIME: 7 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to go through the poem and underline words they do not understand (e.g. gale, perch, abash, etc.). They write them on the whiteboard and then use an online dictionary to check their meaning.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: POEM ANALYSIS

AIM: ▫ to analyse the poem and interpret its meaning,
 ▫ to stimulate critical thinking and individual work with the poem.

FORM: individual / group / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher divides the class into small groups and distributes the worksheets. Students are asked to complete the tasks in the worksheet within the group by trying to find answers to the questions.
- The teacher monitors their activities and helps them with any potential problems. Afterward, a whole-class discussion about the questions follows where the students share their ideas.
- The teacher makes sure that everyone understands the meaning of the poem.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: VISUAL REPRESENTATION

AIM: ▫ to personalize the message of the poem,
 ▫ to provide an opportunity for creative expression of one's understanding of the poem.

FORM: group / whole class work





- AIDS:** visual material (magazines, coloured pencils, glue, scissors, etc.), a virtual vision board
- TIME:** 28 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher divides students into small groups and asks them to create posters (in class) / vision boards (online) to illustrate the meaning of the poem. They should capture the atmosphere, the tone, the metaphors and the message of the poem visually and thus portray their visual impressions of the poem - 17 min.
- Then, the teacher asks them to present their posters / vision boards to the whole class and comment on them - 11 min.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: PANDORA'S BOX AND HOPE

- AIM:** □ to discuss the importance of hope in one's life.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 15 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher shows the class the picture of Pandora and her box and briefly explains the myth behind it. The focus of the story should be on the fact that hope was the only thing that remained within the box. Students are asked to ponder these questions to conclude the discussion on the importance of hope.

What does the myth teach us? Why is hope important to us? What would it mean if hope had escaped from our possession?

- Then, the teacher asks them to present their posters / vision boards to the whole class and comment on them - 11 min.

SOURCES:

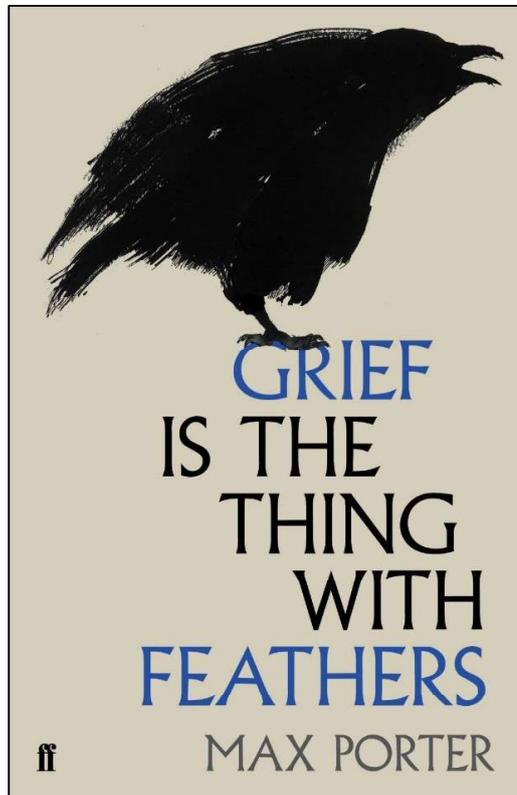
Dickinson, Emily. "Hope is the Thing with Feathers". Available at:
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/42889/hope-is-the-thing-with-feathers-314>





WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: TITLE OF THE POEM - BRAINSTORMING



ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: POEM ANALYSIS

PART 1: Write down your associations with the word "hope" and the expression "the thing with feathers". You can use nouns, adjectives, colours, etc. - anything that comes to mind when you hear these expressions.

HOPE	THE THING WITH FEATHERS
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	





*Have a look at your ideas and try to find a common denominator for both columns.
What do your associations have in common?*

PART 2 – IMAGERY: *Go through the poem and divide the images into the appropriate categories.*

VISUAL IMAGERY	EXAMPLES
AUDITORY IMAGERY	EXAMPLES
TACTILE IMAGERY	EXAMPLES

PART 3 - STUDY QUESTIONS:

What does the speaker compare hope to? Why?

Where does hope reside? What does it suggest about it and about human beings?

How does hope work according to the speaker? What power does it have?





Summarize the qualities of hope as they are described in the poem.

What is the overall message of the poem?

ASSIGNMENT NO. 3: PANDORA'S BOX AND HOPE



Charles Edward Perugini, 1839-1918, oil on canvas



15. DEATH

SESSION LENGTH: 60 minutes

TEXTS USED: Jane Austen: "When Winchester Races"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

JANE AUSTEN (1796 – 1817) was an English novelist primarily known for her six major novels. She wrote the poem "When Winchester Races" in 1817, only three days before she died. This poem with comic verses is her last known piece of writing and, therefore, indirectly reflects her coming death.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: wisdom, creativity, curiosity, judgement, humanity, social intelligence, justice

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- define the main themes of the poem "When Winchester Races",
- explain how the concept of death is reflected in Jane Austen's poem,
- defend their own arguments and counter arguments,
- collaborate with their classmates,
- come up with their own ideas on how death is treated in different cultures.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheet

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: DISCUSSION FORUM

- AIM:**
- to improve students' speaking skills,
 - to be aware of other people's feelings,
 - to foster teamwork,
 - to introduce the topic of the session.

FORM: individual / group / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet / online picture of the book cover

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher divides the students into four groups and asks them to discuss the following questions:

How do people feel about discussing death in your culture? Do you feel comfortable talking about dying? Why or why not?



What if we knew when and how we'd die?

How far do you agree or disagree with the following lines from the poem?

*"When once we are buried you think we are gone
But behold me immortal!"*

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: ST. SWITHIN

- AIM:**
- to foster students' creativity and curiosity,
 - to acquaint them with the story of St Swithin and to link it to the poem,
 - to foster students' cooperation.

FORM: group work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher divides the students into groups of three, and then asks them to write down one or two sentences using all the words from the following list:

St Swithin, St Swithin's day, 15th July, weather, 40 days.

- The teacher calls on one member of each group to read the sentence(s) aloud. Afterwards, the instructor explains that St. Swithin was a bishop of Winchester, and it is believed that if it rains on St. Swithin's Day, it will rain for 40 days. Then, the teacher asks the students to think of other similar legends they have heard.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: WORKING WITH OPPOSITES

- AIM:**
- to improve vocabulary,
 - to foster students' creativity and imagination,
 - to encourage students' cooperation, flexibility and decision-making,
 - to foster group work and collaboration.

FORM: individual / group / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet, video

TIME: 20 minutes (5 minutes for listening; and, 15 minutes for working with opposites and the follow-up discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- First, students listen to the poem "When Winchester Races" performed by Rebecca Hare (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pf77Kp2WKQE>), and discuss how the image



of death is realised in this poem. Then, they are divided into six groups (with each group working with one stanza of the poem). Their task is to think of the words which have positive and negative connotations. e.g., stanza No.4 has positive connotations (immortal, rebellious?), negative connotations (rebellious? buried, gone, sin, etc.)

*Oh! subjects **rebellious!** Oh Venta depraved*

*When once we are **buried** you think we are **gone***

*But behold me **immortal!** By vice you're enslaved*

You have sinned and must suffer, ten farther he said

- Then, the teacher asks them to work with the same stanza again and to replace the words they marked (positive, negative) with their opposites and thus, create a modified stanza of the poem. When they are done, they should give a title to their "new" stanza.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: FUTURE ALARM

- AIM:**
- to foster students' creativity and imagination,
 - to encourage students' cooperation,
 - to consolidate students' knowledge,
 - to stimulate students' creative thinking.

FORM: individual / group / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 10 minutes (5 minutes for discussion; and, 5 minutes for working with pictures)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Just three days before she died, Jane Austen wrote these impressive lines (stanza No. 4) in her poem "When Winchester Races"

*The Lords and the Ladies were satine'd and ermined
And nobody saw any future alarming.*

- The teacher encourages the students to discuss the following questions in groups:

What does "future alarming" evoke to you? What could it mean to Jane Austen at that time?

Now look at these two pictures (No. 1 and No. 2) and think of what "future alarming" means to the man and the lady in the pictures.



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "When Winchester Races" by Jane Austen:

When Winchester races first took their beginning
It is said the good people forgot their old Saint
Not applying at all for the leave of Saint Swithin
And that William of Wykeham's approval was faint.

The races however were fixed and determined
The company came and the Weather was charming
The Lords and the Ladies were satine'd and ermined
And nobody saw any future alarming.--

But when the old Saint was informed of these doings
He made but one Spring from his Shrine to the Roof
Of the Palace which now lies so sadly in ruins
And then he addressed them all standing aloof.

'Oh! subjects rebellious! Oh Venta depraved
When once we are buried you think we are gone
But behold me immortal! By vice you're enslaved
You have sinned and must suffer, ten farther he said

These races and revels and dissolute measures
With which you're debasing a neighboring Plain
Let them stand--You shall meet with your curse in your pleasures
Set off for your course, I'll pursue with my rain.

Ye cannot but know my command o'er July
Henceforward I'll triumph in shewing my powers
Shift your race as you will it shall never be dry
The curse upon Venta is July in showers--'.

Source: <https://www.poetrynook.com/poem/when-winchester-races>

WORKSHEET

JANE AUSTEN's "When Winchester Races"

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: DISCUSSION FORUM

Discuss the following questions in groups:

How do people feel about discussing death in your culture?

Do you feel comfortable talking about dying? Why or why not?

What if we knew when and how we'd die?

How far do you agree or disagree with the following lines from the poem?

"When once we are buried you think we are gone

But behold me immortal!"

ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: ST SWITHIN

Write down one or two sentences using all the words from the following list

St Swithin, St Swithin's day, 15th July, weather, 40 days.

Have you ever heard of St Swithin?

ASSIGNMENT NO. 3: WORKING WITH OPPOSITES

Listen to the poem "When Winchester Races" performed by Rebecca Hare (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pf77Kp2WKQE>) and discuss how the **image of death** is realised in this poem.

Within your group, read one stanza of the poem. Your task is to think of words or phrases which refer to positive and negative connotations.

E.g.: stanza No. 4 has positive connotations (immortal, rebellious?), negative connotations (rebellious? buried, gone, sin, etc.)

Work with the same stanza again and try to replace the words you marked (positive, negative) with their opposites, creating a modified stanza of the poem. When you are done, give a title to your "new" stanza.



POSITIVES

OPPOSITES

NEGATIVES

OPPOSITES

ASSIGNMENT NO. 4: FUTURE ALARM

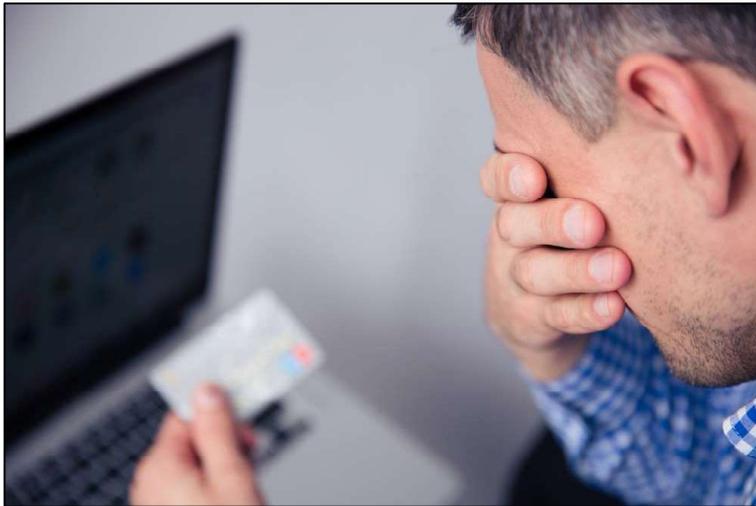
Just three days before she died, Jane Austen wrote these impressive lines (stanza No. 4) in her poem "When Winchester Races":

The Lords and the Ladies were satine'd and ermined
And nobody saw any future alarming.

What does "future alarming" evoke in you? What could it mean to Jane Austen at that time? Look at the two pictures (No. 1 and No. 2) and think of what "future alarming" could mean to the man and the lady in the pictures.



picture no. 1



picture no. 2



ASSIGNMENT NO. 5: TWO QUESTIONS

Think of two questions you would like to ask Jane Austen today.

E.g.: Which of your works is your favourite? You wrote the poem "When Winchester Races" three days before you died, why did you mention St Swithun in your work?

QUESTION 1

QUESTION 2





SECTION 3
POETRY AND RELATIONSHIPS



16. HELPING OTHERS

SESSION LENGTH: 60 minutes

TEXTS USED: Ella Wheeler Willcox: "At Set of Sun"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX (1850 – 1919) was an American author and poet. She started writing poetry when she was eight and started publishing them at the age of 13. Her most famous poems include "The Way of the World" and "Solitude". The poem selected for this session is "At Set of Sun", which reminds us that even the most minor acts of kindness that take no effort and might seem meaningless to us can make huge waves in someone else's life.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: perspective, judgement, kindness, social intelligence, teamwork

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- identify, compare and contrast different ways of helping others,
- prepare a list of questions on a given topic and interview their classmates,
- share their personal experiences with their classmates,
- analyse and interpret the selected poem, identify its overarching themes and provide evidence to support their statements,
- relate the content of the selected poem to their own experiences,
- construct a poem from a list of sentences,
- demonstrate their understanding of the selected poem and its central theme through various activities.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheet, shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: SENTENCE STARTERS

AIM: ▫ to elicit students' views on the topic of helping others.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: pen and paper, virtual whiteboard

TIME: 5 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher starts by writing on the board:

Helping others is...

- Then, students are asked to finish the sentence with whatever comes to mind first. Students are asked to share their ideas with their classmates and write their sentences on the board. Students' ideas are saved – no further action is taken at this point. The sentences will be used in the post-reading activity.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: DISCUSSING DIFFERENT FORMS OF HELP

- AIM:**
- to elicit students' views on different forms of helping others,
 - to share personal views, experiences and ideas with others.

FORM: group / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 25 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students work in groups (if possible, all groups should have the same number of students).
- Each group receives a handout: an opinion poll on one topic (volunteering, giving to charities, fundraising, donating). The groups follow the instructions in their handout and agree on three questions they want to ask about their topic (whatever questions they would like).
- Each group member prepares an interview sheet with the agreed-upon questions. A template is provided to students, which they can modify if needed. They should write their answers in the first row in the right-hand column next to My Answer.
- Students have five minutes to complete this segment.

- In the next segment, groups are rearranged so that there is one member from each group in each new interview group. Each member of the new group has to obtain the answers to their questions from all the other members. They can ask follow-up questions if necessary.
- This segment lasts at least five minutes – the teacher should monitor each group's progress and adjust the time limit if necessary. This segment requires additional time when conducting online classes – only one person can ask questions at a time.

- Students return to their original groups and discuss the answers they collected. One student from each group should prepare to present the results (most common answers, surprising answers, interesting ideas) once the entire class discussion segment begins.
- Groups should also consider the following questions:

How can we act on these results?



Which form of helping others would they do or consider doing? Why?

Which of them would they refuse? Why?

- Note: The teacher should deliberately start with these bigger forms as the poem that follows is centred on making students realise that small things like a smile, a positive comment, or similar things are also often enough.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: DISCUSSING DIFFERENT FORMS OF HELP

- AIM:**
- to identify the poem's central theme and discuss the meanings of selected words and phrases,
 - to discuss the central theme from various perspectives,
 - to share personal experiences and feelings with classmates.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: text, virtual whiteboard

TIME: 15 to 20 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- In the first step, the teacher reveals only the poem's title. Students are asked to brainstorm what the poem might be about – they should remember that it is somehow connected to the topic they have been discussing thus far.
- The teacher reads or plays the audio version of the poem.
- Students are asked to reflect on their previous ideas. *How close were they to the actual content and message of the poem?*
- Before the analysis: students work individually; the teacher asks them to imagine that they have some money and that they can buy up to three words or phrases from the poem. *Which words or phrases would they buy, and why?*
- The teacher discusses and analyses the poem with the students. Guiding questions:
Can you identify the poem's central theme?
What is the connection between the message and the overarching theme of the lesson?
Have you ever felt like nothing is worthwhile? That trying to make things better is a waste of time? Imagine that the poem is advice for such feelings; how can we verbalise that advice?
We don't often realise this, but we have much to offer to others. What do you think is meant by this?





What do these expressions in the poem mean: one self-denying act, one word, one glance, most kind, an act most small = that "nothing cost"? Try to think of specific examples.

Have you ever had a similar experience where just one small act of kindness changed your day? Can you remember a time when you offered a small act of kindness to someone else?

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: ASSEMBLE A POEM

AIM: □ to engage students' creativity.

FORM: group work

AIDS: pen and paper, virtual whiteboard

TIME: 20 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher tells students that they will work in groups (3 to 4 students). In groups, students select four of the sentences on the board, find or write a fifth line, and arrange them to make the writing feel more like a poem. They will have approx. 8 minutes to complete this segment.
- If time allows, one student from each group shares their poem with the rest of the class, and the other groups can comment on it.
- After all groups have read their creations, the class chooses their favourite. If there is not enough time, poems should be posted online – the teacher could open a discussion forum where students should comment on the poems and vote for their favourites.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: ONE WORD THAT EASED THE HEART OF HIM WHO HEARD...

AIM: □ to invite students to appreciate the moral of the lesson.

FORM: individual work

AIDS: -

TIME: 2 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to close their eyes and think of a small act of kindness they could do that day for someone in their lives.
- The teacher tells students that this is the end of the lesson – instead of sharing their ideas with others, they should go and try to actualise the thought they just had.



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "At Set of Sun" by Ella Wheeler Willcox:

If we sit down at set of sun,
And count the things that we have done,
 And counting, find
One self-denying act, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard,
 One glance, most kind,
That fell like sunshine where it went---
Then we may count that day well spent.

...

But if, through all the life-long day,
We've eased no heart by yea or nay;
 If through it all
We've done no thing that we can trace,
That brought the sunshine to a face---
 No act most small
That helped some soul, and nothing cost---
Then count that day as worse than lost.

WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT: DISCUSSING DIFFERENT FORMS OF HELP

TOPIC: VOLUNTEERING

As a group, agree on three questions you could ask someone else about the topic.
Avoid easy questions and use thought-provoking questions instead.

YOUR GROUP'S QUESTIONS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

INTERVIEW CARD

Q1:

My answer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Q2:

My answer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Q3:

My answer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



TOPIC: GIVING TO CHARITIES

As a group, agree on three questions you could ask someone else about the topic.
Avoid easy questions, and use thought-provoking questions instead.

YOUR GROUP'S QUESTIONS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

INTERVIEW CARD

Q1:

My answer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Q2:

My answer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Q3:

My answer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



TOPIC: DONATING (SOMETHING OTHER THAN MONEY)

As a group, agree on three questions you could ask someone else about the topic.
Avoid easy questions and use thought-provoking questions instead.

YOUR GROUP'S QUESTIONS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

INTERVIEW CARD

Q1:

My answer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Q2:

My answer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Q3:

My answer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.





TOPIC: FUNDRAISING

As a group, agree on three questions you could ask someone else about the topic.
Avoid easy questions and use thought-provoking questions instead.

YOUR GROUP'S QUESTIONS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

INTERVIEW CARD

Q1:

My answer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Q2:

My answer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Q3:

My answer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

17. FRIENDSHIP

SESSION LENGTH: 90 minutes

TEXTS USED: Matt Hart: "The Friend"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

MATT HART (1969) is an American author of nine books of poems, including most recently, *Everything Breaking/for Good* (2019) and *The Obliterations* (2019). His other books of poems include *Who's Who Vivid* (2006), *Wolf Face* (2010), *Light-Headed* (2011), *Sermons and Lectures Both Blank and Relentless* (2012), *Debacle Debacle* (2013), *Radiant Action* (2016) and *Radiant Companion* (2016). Currently, Matt Hart lives in Cincinnati where he teaches at the Art Academy of Cincinnati and plays in the band NEVERNEW. His poem "The Friend" was published in the journal *Poetry Magazine* in October 2015.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: gratitude, hope

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- analyse the concept of friendship/images used in Matt Hart's "The Friend",
- discuss various interpretations of the poem introduced by their classmates,
- create an interesting continuation of a selected part of the poem which fits into the context of the poem itself.

TEACHING AIDS:

text, a blank sheet of paper, worksheet, shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: LET'S GREET EACH OTHER UNUSUALLY

AIM:

- to create a safe and friendly atmosphere,
- to show an interest in each classmate's feelings.

FORM:

whole class work

AIDS:

-

TIME:

5 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Teacher's instruction for students:
- In-person:

*Mingle freely in the class. Greet all the classmates that you meet in the following way:
"Hello, _____ (name of the classmate). How are you today?"*



- Virtual (it is recommended to use the online option "raise your hand" when a student wants to speak):

Turn on your cameras. Greet all your classmates in the following way: "Hello, _____ (name of the classmate). How are you today?"

- In both cases, the teacher adds:

As you notice, this is a common way people greet each other. In your responses, however, I would like to ask you to respond using a word that does not make sense, but will still express the feelings and emotions that you're having right now. Try to experiment with sounds and the rhythm of your speech! E.g. the word 'euuuuweee' – may in fact mean 'I feel fine'.

- A few students may share their 'decoding' of their classmates' feelings.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: ASSOCIATIONS WITH FRIENDSHIP

- AIM:**
- to introduce the topic of friendship,
 - to introduce a few abstract nouns connected with friendship,
 - to introduce three concrete things concerning friendship,
 - to share abstract nouns and three concrete things,
 - to improve listening skills.

FORM: group / whole class work

AIDS: a blank sheet of paper

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher instructs students at the beginning of the activity:

Today's session is focused on Matt Hart's poem "The Friend". Before we analyse the poem, your task will be to introduce a few abstract nouns (e.g. joy, trust, etc.) and three concrete things that are your personal associations with the word friendship (e.g. a bracelet, a shopping mall, a classroom). Think about it for two minutes. Then, we will share our views.

- The teacher's instruction for students when they are sharing their ideas:

If you have the same or similar abstract nouns and/or concrete things in your mind or on a piece of paper as your classmate, raise your hand.

- After their sharing, the teacher encourages them to make some general observations on the words that were mentioned. Did they have something in common? Did they notice some unusual patterns or choices?

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: POEM ANALYSIS

- AIM:** □ to analyse the tone, imagery, abstract nouns and concrete things in the poem and meaning of the poem.
- FORM:** group / whole class work
- AIDS:** study questions (they are prepared in advance by the teacher and shared with students; see worksheet, assignment no. 1)
- TIME:** 40 minutes (10 minutes for reading the poem; 15 minutes group for the discussion either in person or in break-out rooms; 15 minutes for the entire class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- A volunteer reads the poem aloud.
- Students discuss their first impressions and share their ideas about the poem with their classmates. They discuss the tone, imagery, abstract nouns and concrete things in the poem and the meaning of the poem based on the study questions.
- Their discussion is followed by an entire class discussion during which students summarise their thoughts. The discussion is facilitated by the teacher.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: CREATIVE WRITING

- AIM:**
- to create three lines that would meaningfully fit into the selected place in the poem,
 - to compare and discuss the meaning, originality and creativity of these new parts within the context of the poem,
 - to practice creative thinking.
- FORM:** group / whole class work
- AIDS:** the text of the poem (see worksheet, assignment no. 2)
- TIME:** 30 minutes (5 minutes for re-reading the poem; 15 minutes for creative writing; 10 minutes for the whole class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students work in groups of three. The teacher gives them the following instructions:

The poem "The Friend" is full of vivid images, metaphors and contrasts. Your task will be to create three sentences and insert them into selected place in the poem as you can see on the worksheet, assignment no. 2.

In your group, read the whole poem. Try to create a continuation of the idea in the first sentence (The friend lives...light of summer) which would be connected with the following sentence (You put...on his shoulder).



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "The Friend" by Matt Hart:

The friend lives half in the grass
and half in the chocolate cake,
walks over to your house in the bashful light
of November, or the forceful light of summer.
You put your hand on her shoulder,
or you put your hand on his shoulder.
The friend is indefinite. You are both
so tired, no one ever notices the sleeping bags
inside you and under your eyes when you're talking
together about the glue of this life, the sticky
saturation of bodies into darkness. The friend's crisis
of faith about faith is unnerving in its power
to influence belief, not in or toward some other
higher power, but away from all power in the grass
or the lake with your hand on her shoulder, your hand
on his shoulder. You tell the friend the best things
you can imagine, and every single one of them has
already happened, so you recount them
of great necessity with nostalgic, atomic ferocity,
and one by one by one until many. The eggbirds whistle
the gargantuan trees. The noiserocks fall twisted
into each other's dreams, their colorful paratrooping,
their skinny dark jeans, little black walnuts
to the surface of this earth. You and the friend
remain twisted together, thinking your simultaneous
and inarticulate thoughts in physical lawlessness,
in chemical awkwardness. It is too much
to be so many different things at once. The friend
brings black hole candy to your lips, and jumping
off the rooftops of your city, the experience.
So much confusion — the several layers of exhaustion,
and being a friend with your hands in your pockets,
and the friend's hands in your pockets.
O bitter black walnuts of this parachuted earth!
O gongbirds and appleflocks! The friend
puts her hand on your shoulder. The friend
puts his hand on your shoulder. You find
a higher power when you look.



WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Hart uses unique images and contrasts in the poem, by means of which positive and negative feelings are mixed in the reader at the same time. Focus on these images in the context of friendship and specify the tone of the poem. Feel free to provide several examples of the tone.
2. Friendship is a relationship between friends which is mostly described by abstract nouns. Find as many concrete words as possible describing friendship in the poem. Try to explain their connection to friendship in general or introduce your personal experience.
3. The word "power" occurs four times in the poem. Comment on the meaning of this word in the text.

ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: CREATIVE WRITING

In your group, read the whole poem. Try to create a continuation of the idea in the first sentence of the poem (The friend lives...light of summer), which would be connected with the following sentence (You put...on his shoulder).

18. SELF-ACCEPTANCE AND SELF-LOVE

SESSION LENGTH: 90 minutes

TEXTS USED: Ocean Vuong: "Someday I'll Love Ocean Vuong"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

OCEAN VUONG (1988) belongs to one of the most promising young voices in contemporary American literature. The Vietnamese American writer was born in Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam in 1988 but emigrated from Vietnam to the United States where he was raised in Hartford, Connecticut. Vuong graduated from Brooklyn College where he read 19th Century American Literature and later received his MFA in Poetry from NYU. He debuted in 2016 with a poetry collection *Night Sky with Exit Wounds*, which won the T.S. Eliot Prize. In 2022, he published his second poetry volume *Time is a Mother*. He is best known for his semi-autobiographical novel *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* which is composed as a letter of a son to his illiterate mother. His works explore the themes of identity (both immigrant and gay), sexuality, war, etc.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: kindness, hope, gratitude, forgiveness, perspective

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- analyse the selected poem and interpret its meaning,
- recognize and interpret the emotions presented by the speaker of the poem,
- explain and discuss the meaning of self-acceptance and self-love and internalize their own experience.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheet, audio/video recording, shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: INTRODUCTION AND FIRST IMPRESSIONS

AIM:

- to introduce the author to the class since he is both the main speaker and object of the poem,
- to personalize the author so that students can understand his background and relate to it,
- to listen to/watch the reading of the poem and to elicit first impressions from students based on the author's presentation of the poem.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: worksheet, audio/video recording, shared virtual whiteboard

TIME: 15 minutes (4 minutes for the recordings; 11 minutes for discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher briefly introduces the author and his background using the worksheet.
- Students then listen to or watch the audio/video recording of the poem as presented by the author himself.
- Students are asked to comment on the tone of the poem by writing a few keywords on the virtual whiteboard/worksheet - one related to the tone/atmosphere of the poem and one to the content.
- This is followed by a short discussion with the teacher about their responses. The keywords are based solely on the students' impressions from the first reading; they do not require a thorough understanding of the poem.

Audio recording of the poem is available at:

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/05/04/someday-ill-love-ocean-vuong>

Video recording of the poem is available at:

<https://www.thestranger.com/slog/2020/03/27/43267819/take-a-break-and-read-a-fucking-poem-someday-ill-love-ocean-vuong-by-ocean-vuong>

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: POEM ANALYSIS

- AIM:**
- to understand the topics the poem raises,
 - to interpret the meaning of the poem,
 - to stimulate critical thinking and individual work with the poem.

FORM: group / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet, shared virtual whiteboard

TIME: 30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher divides students into small groups. Each group is given a set of study questions. The number of questions depends on the number of groups/number of students in the class, and the teacher asks them to discuss the questions within the group.
- A group discussion follows, which is monitored by the teacher - the teacher may help the groups with the study questions and/or provide further questions to stimulate the debate within the group - 15 min.
- Afterwards, a whole class discussion of the poem follows in which the teacher and the class go through all the questions together and discuss their ideas and responses so that everybody understands the meaning of the poem - 15 min.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

- AIM:**
- to personalize the content of the poem,
 - to stimulate critical thinking and individual work with the poem,
 - to reflect on one's personal experience.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to imagine their younger selves and think about any challenges and fears they might have faced, whether at school, at home, in a particular situation, etc. The teacher asks students to reflect on the following questions:

Has your perception of the fear/problem changed over time?

Have you learned something from that experience?

Has that experience made you stronger?

Can negative experiences or fears turn into something positive in the end?

Is there anything you would like to say to your younger selves now that you might have a different perspective on the challenge/problem/fear?

- The teacher asks students to write a short letter/ or a poem to their younger selves:
Write a short message to your younger self to encourage him/her during the current situation. Use your own name in the text just like Vuong does in his poem and write words of encouragement.
- Volunteers may present their texts or simply talk about their personal experience and what they learned from it. Alternatively, the texts can be collected by the teacher to be responded to individually. The teacher, with the help of the students, then summarizes the main ideas and themes of the poem and how it can be related to their own lives.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: FURTHER READING

- AIM:**
- to inspire an after-reading reflection on the topic and explain the inspiration behind Vuong's poem,
 - to encourage students to work independently and engage with poetry on their own,
 - the poems can be used as a part of a follow-up writing assignment.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: worksheet



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "Someday I'll Love Ocean Vuong" by Matt Hart:

Ocean, don't be afraid.
The end of the road is so far ahead
it is already behind us.
Don't worry. Your father is only your father
until one of you forgets. Like how the spine
won't remember its wings
no matter how many times our knees
kiss the pavement. Ocean,
are you listening? The most beautiful part
of your body is wherever
your mother's shadow falls.
Here's the house with childhood
whittled down to a single red tripwire.
Don't worry. Just call it *horizon*
& you'll never reach it.
Here's today. Jump. I promise it's not
a lifeboat. Here's the man
whose arms are wide enough to gather
your leaving. & here the moment,
just after the lights go out, when you can still see
the faint torch between his legs.
How you use it again & again
to find your own hands.
You asked for a second chance
& are given a mouth to empty into.
Don't be afraid, the gunfire
is only the sound of people
trying to live a little longer. Ocean. Ocean,
get up. The most beautiful part of your body
is where it's headed. & remember,
loneliness is still time spent
with the world. Here's
the room with everyone in it.
Your dead friends passing
through you like wind
through a wind chime. Here's a desk
with the gimp leg & a brick
to make it last. Yes, here's a room
so warm & blood-close,
I swear, you will wake—
& mistake these walls
for skin.

WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: INTRODUCTION AND FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Ocean Vuong (1988) is a young Vietnamese American poet who was born in Vietnam. At the age of 2, he emigrated to the US. His parents separated soon after because of his father's violent behaviour and Vuong does not maintain much contact with him. He has spoken about the important relationship with his mother in numerous interviews and in 2019 published a bestselling novel *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*, composed as a letter from a son to his illiterate mother, which presents a fictionalized account of his childhood. His poetry explores themes of identity, sexuality, race, etc.



Photo credit: Kuow Photo/ Megan Farmer

FIRST IMPRESSIONS:

Based on the recording of the poem, note down your first impressions of the text. Divide them into the respective categories.

- 1. TONE/ATMOSPHERE: What is the tone or atmosphere of the poem? What emotions does the poem raise in you solely based on the author's voice, intonation and facial expressions?
2. Did you catch any words that are repeated throughout the poem? What does the poem speak about (generally)? Try to write some general words that you feel are related to the content of the poem.

Table with 2 columns: TONE/ATMOSPHERE and SUBJECT. The table contains 6 empty rows for data entry.



ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: POEM ANALYSIS

1. *Who is the speaker of the poem? Who is the listener?*
2. *Think about the temporal frame of the poem. What is the time difference between the speaking Ocean and the listening Ocean in the poem?*
3. *What does the first line of the poem imply about its content? What is the poem going to talk about generally?*
4. *Do we know what the younger Ocean is afraid of? Go through the poem and try to find some references to his fears.*
5. *Find references to Ocean's parents in the poem. What did you find out about the family dynamics from them?*
6. *What type of sentences does the author use in terms of length? Why? What effect does it create?*
7. *Find examples of repetition in the text? Discuss their effect and meaning.*
8. *Find examples of oxymoron and simile in the text. Discuss their effect and meaning.*
9. *What role does TIME play in the poem? Does it have a positive or negative impact on the speaker?*
10. *What message is the speaker trying to convey to his younger self?*
11. *Summarize the main subject matters of the poem.*

ASSIGNMENT NO. 3: YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Write a short message to your younger self to encourage him/her during the current situation. Use your own name in the text just like Vuong does in his poem and write words of encouragement.





ASSIGNMENT NO. 4: FURTHER READING

Read the following poems that inspired Ocean Vuong. Think about the connections to his poem "Someday I'll Love Ocean Vuong". In what way are the poems similar? How do they differ? Do they express the same emotions?

1: "Someday I'll Love Roger Reeves" by Roger Reeves

Until then, let us have our gods and short prayers. Our obligations.
Our thighbone connected to our knee bone.

Our dissections and our swans. Our legs gashed
upon a barbwire fence and our heels tucked behind a lover's knees.
Let us have a stalk of sugarcane to suck

and another to tear our backs with what it knows of disaster
and a tadpole's folly. Let us have mistakes

and fish willing to come to a bell rung across a body of water.
Let us have our drawbridges and our moats. Our heavens
no higher than a pile of dried leaves. Let us have irrelevance

and a scalpel. A dislocated ankle and three more miles to run.
A plastic bottle to hold nothing but last names and a chill.

If none of this will be remembered, then let us keep speaking
with tongues light as screen doors clapping shut
on a child's fingers. For this is love. To press

one frame against another
and when something like a finger is found between this pressing,

to press nevertheless. For this is our obligation.
Let us forget our obligations. For this is love.
Let us forget our love. Our eyelids' need for beginnings

and ends and blood. Our coils of hunger
that turn another into dried honey on our hands.

And what if this goes on forever—our ours?
Our drafts and fragments? Our blizzards and our cancers?
Then let us. Then, let us hold each other toward heaven

and forget that we were once made of flesh,
that this is the fall our gods refuse to clean with fire or water.

Source: <https://getlitanthology.org/poemdetail/88/>



2: "Katy" by Frank O'Hara

They say I mope too much
but really I'm loudly dancing.
I eat paper. It's good for my bones.
I play the piano pedal. I dance,
I am never quiet, I mean silent.
Some day I'll love Frank O'Hara.
I think I'll be alone for a little while.

Source: <https://readalittlepoetry.com/2016/04/06/katy-by-frank-ohara/>

SESSION LENGTH: 60 minutes

TEXTS USED: Carol Ann Duffy: "Grief"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

CAROL ANN DUFFY (1955) is an acclaimed Scottish writer and the United Kingdom's Poet Laureate, whose poetry belongs to the finest contemporary production in Great Britain. Duffy's accessible poems, which focus on the themes of love, gender, oppression, loss and often explore feminist perspectives, have earned her worldwide readership. She has published numerous poetry collections, such as *Standing Female Nude* (1985), *The Other Country* (1990), *The World's Wife* (1999), *Rapture* (2005) and *Sincerity* (2018).

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: bravery, perseverance, hope

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- analyse the selected poem and interpret its meaning,
- recognize and interpret the emotions presented in the poem,
- discuss the theme of grief and internalize/vocalize their own experience with it.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheet, shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: BRAINSTORMING AROUND THE TITLE

AIM:

- to introduce the topic of grief,
- to brainstorm potential subject matters of the poem and thus discuss the associations students have with the concept of grief.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 5 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to contemplate the title of the poem which is, on one hand quite straightforward but, on the other hand, also deliberately vague.

What associations do you have with the word grief?

What do you expect the poem to be about?

- The teacher lets students to look at the shape of the poem.

Does it remind you of something?

- Their ideas - in the form of simple keywords - can be jotted down on the blackboard / virtual whiteboard for future reference.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: READING WITH COLOURS

AIM: ▫ to analyse the poem and interpret its meaning.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 25 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to read the poem - either silently or aloud - and then asks them about their first impressions. A short discussion follows:

What is the poem about?

What kind of emotions does it raise?

How would you describe the tone of the speaker?

What do you think has happened to the speaker?

- The teacher then asks students to read the poem once again, this time focusing on references to the speaker and his/her emotions. Students are asked to highlight the appropriate keywords in the poem with a specific colour and ponder the following questions.

Who is the speaker?

How does s/he feel?

Find references in the text that describe him/her and talk about their emotional state.

- A short whole-class discussion follows. Ideas and keywords may be jotted down on the blackboard / virtual whiteboard to make the content visually accessible.
- During the third reading, the teacher asks students to use a different colour to highlight all the references to the other person - "you". Students are asked to ponder the following questions:

Who is the "you" in the poem?

What relationship did the person have to the speaker?

Do we have any details about their past, about their relationship? Why/why not?

What word is used to describe this person? Why? What associations do you have with this word? What does it suggest about the relationship between these two people?



- A short whole-class discussion follows. Ideas and keywords may be jotted down on the blackboard / virtual whiteboard to make the content visually accessible.
- The entire class then thinks about the meaning of the last line of the poem and discusses it with the teacher.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: ART HUNTING

- AIM:**
- to learn about other artists and their approaches to capturing grief in their work,
 - to stimulate discussion about various responses people can have to grief and its diverse forms.

FORM: group / whole class work

AIDS: access to the Internet, (virtual) whiteboard

TIME: 25 minutes (15 minutes for group work; 10 minutes for presentations)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students are divided into small groups and are asked to research online, other artists who have dealt with the topic of grief, using a search engine. They can look at paintings, songs or sculptures from various periods (alternatively, each group can be assigned a different art form). They are asked to select 1-2 works of art that capture grief in different ways and copy the pictures/lyrics/videos to the virtual whiteboard.
- A whole-class discussion follows where students present their findings and talk about different forms and approaches to grief.
- Alternatively, the teacher may prepare a selection of appropriate works of art beforehand (with the focus on diverse handling of the theme), assign them to groups and ask students to find out more about them and their handling of the topic. Students then present their findings to the entire class.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: FINAL REFLECTION

- AIM:**
- to discuss positive aspects/outcomes/approaches to sorrow and grief.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: image with quote

TIME: 5 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher shows students the quote by the Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh and asks them to think about its implications.



Can sorrow and grief lead to a positive outcome?

What can one learn from a grieving experience?

What role does time play in the process?

SOURCES:

Duffy, Carol Ann. "Grief". Available at:

<https://voetica.com/voetica.php?collection=15&poet=781&poem=7572>

INSTRUCTOR'S POST-SESSION REFLECTION:





POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "Grief" by Carol Ann Duffy:

Grief, your gift, unwrapped,
my empty hands made heavy,
holding when they held you
like an ache; unlooked for,
though my eyes stare inward now
at where you were, my star, my star;
and undeserved, the perfect choice
for one with everything, humbling
my heart; unwanted, too, my small voice
lost for words to thank you with; unusual,
how it, given, grows to fill a day, a night,
a week, a month, teaching its text,
love's spinster twin, my head bowed,
learning, learning; understood.

Source: <https://voetica.com/voetica.php?collection=15&poet=781&poem=7572>



WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT: FINAL REFLECTION

Suffering is not enough. Life is both dreadful and wonderful...How can I smile when I am filled with so much sorrow? It is natural --you need to smile to your sorrow because you are more than your sorrow.



Thich Nhat Hanh





20. LOVE

SESSION LENGTH: 60 minutes

TEXTS USED: Alan Feldman: "A Man and a Woman"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

ALAN FELDMAN is an American poet. He is the author of several books of poetry, most recently *The Golden Coin* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2018); *Immortality* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2015), winner of the Four Lakes Prize in Poetry; and *A Sail to Great Island* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), winner of the Felix Pollak Prize in Poetry. He is also the recipient of the 1979 Elliston Book Award and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Massachusetts Artists Foundation. His poem "A Man and a Woman" (1975) is about the differences between men and women and on the immortality of love between them.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: humanity, social intelligence, teamwork, wisdom, creativity

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- recognize the major differences between men and women the author mentions in the poem "A Man and a Woman",
- present their own perceptions/ideas about a happy relationship,
- connect their real-life experiences to the topic of the poem,
- evaluate other suggestions and ideas,
- collaborate with their colleagues and to come up with their own ideas on how to build a successful relationship.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheet

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: HOW FAR DO YOU AGREE?

- AIM:**
- to focus students' attention on the topic of the session,
 - to share students' ideas,
 - to get know each other,
 - to understand others' point of view.

FORM: group work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 5 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Learners work in groups of four. They discuss whether they agree or disagree with the following quotation by Iris Murdoch "We can only learn to love by loving."
- If they agree with it, their task is to find a real-life example which can support the above-mentioned quotation.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: THE HAPPIEST COUPLE

- AIM:**
- to familiarize students with the topic of the session,
 - to think about the concept of love, understanding, acceptance and happiness,
 - to foster students' cooperation,
 - to be aware of what the other students think about the topic.

FORM: group work

AIDS: worksheet (<https://www.dobrenoviny.sk/c/146380/na-ktorom-obrazku-je-najstastnejisi-par>)

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Each group gets three different pictures of a loving couple. Based on their preferences, students should decide which picture (1, 2 or 3) shows the happiest couple. The teacher then asks them to explain their choice and to respond to the following questions:

Which couples (1, 2 or 3) have been together for more than 10 years? How do you know? Please, explain.

In a few words, how would you describe a happy couple?

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: MISSING WORDS

- AIM:**
- to enrich students' vocabulary,
 - to foster students' awareness of the others.

FORM: individual / group work

AIDS: text, worksheet

TIME: 30 minutes (10 minutes for individual work; and, 20 minutes for group work)



INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks the students to read the poem silently. After the first reading, they should find the lines/the verses which show the main message of this poem.

Which lines do you find most appealing? What do you think the poet is trying to say? What is the main theme/topic of this poem?

- For the next step, learners should fill in the missing words from the poem which were intentionally left out. Their task is to find other expressions - nouns (A., B., C., D., E), apart from the words used in the original passage, which may clearly show how different men and women are. Afterwards, students are asked to share their suggestions.

Like a claw-but because the pain differs

Much as the shape of the body, the woman takes

The suffering of the man for A....., the man

The woman's pain for B., the woman's lack of it

For C....., the man's tenderness for

The woman's lack of acceptance, D.

Which is really fear, the man's fear for E.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: THREE TIPS TO COPE WITH DIFFERENCES

- AIM:**
- to foster students' cross-cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity,
 - to link the topic of the poem with various real-life situations.

FORM: group work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Working in groups, students prepare three useful tips to cope with differences in male-female relationships and share their ideas with their classmates.



CLOSURE ACTIVITY: WHAT I HAVE LEARNED TODAY

- AIM:**
- to check students' understanding of the topic,
 - to summarize the key points.

FORM: individual work

AIDS: -

TIME: 5 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students work individually while they think of three ideas, things, or concepts they have learned in this session. If time allows it, they can share their ideas with the rest of the class.

SOURCES:

Feldman, Alan. (1975). "A Man and a Woman". *Shivpreetsingh*. Available at:
<https://www.shivpreetsingh.com/2013/05/a-poem-by-alan-feldman-about.html>

Dobrocká, D. (2018, October 30). The Happiest Couple. *Dobrénoviny*. Available at:
<https://www.dobrenoviny.sk/c/146380/na-ktorom-obrazku-je-najstastnejši-par>

INSTRUCTOR'S POST-SESSION REFLECTION:



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "A Man and a Woman" by Alan Feldman:

Between a man and a woman
The anger is greater, for each man would like to sleep
In the arms of each woman who would like to sleep
In the arms of each man, if she trusted him not to be
Schizophrenic, if he trusted her not to be
A hypochondriac, if she trusted him not to leave her
Too soon, if he trusted her not to hold him
Too long, and often women stare at the word men
As it lives in the word women, as if each woman
Carried a man inside her and a woe, and has
Crying fits that last for days, not like the crying
Of a man, which lasts a few seconds, and rips the throat
Like a claw- but because the pain differs
Much as the shape of the body, the woman takes
The suffering of the man for selfishness, the man
The woman's pain for helplessness, the woman's lack of it
For hardness, the man's tenderness for deception.
The woman's lack of acceptance, an act of contempt
Which is really fear, the man's fear for fickleness,
Yet cars come off the bridge in the rivers of light
Each holding a man and a woman.

Source: <https://www.shivpreetsingh.com/2013/05/a-poem-by-alan-feldman-about.html>

WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: HOW FAR DO YOU AGREE?

Discuss whether you agree or disagree with the following quotation by Iris Murdoch

"We can only learn to love by loving."

If you agree with it, find a real-life example which can support the above-mentioned quotation.

ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: THE HAPPIEST COUPLE

Look at the following pictures and decide which of these three represents the happiest couple. Then, explain your choice and respond to the following questions:

- Which couples (1, 2, or 3) have been together for more than 10 years? How do you know? Please explain.
- In a few words, how would you describe a happy couple?





ASSIGNMENT NO. 3: MISSING WORDS

Read the poem "A Man and a Woman" by Alan Feldman silently and try to answer the following questions.

*Which lines do you find the most appealing? What do you think the poet is trying to say?
What is the main theme/topic of this poem?*

Fill in the missing words from the poem which were intentionally left out. Please try to use other expressions - nouns (A.,B.,C.,D., E), apart from those used in the original passage, which clearly show how different men and women are.

Like a claw--but because the pain differs
Much as the shape of the body, the woman takes
The suffering of the man for A....., the man
The woman's pain for B., the woman's lack of it
For C....., the man's tenderness for,
The woman's lack of acceptance, D.,
Which is really fear, the man's fear for E.,

ASSIGNMENT NO. 4: THREE TIPS TO COPE WITH DIFFERENCES

Working in groups, students prepare three useful tips to cope with differences in male-female relationships and share their ideas with their classmates.

TIP 1:

TIP 2:

TIP 3:

21. LONELINESS

SESSION LENGTH: 60 minutes
TEXTS USED: Robert Frost: "Desert Places"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

ROBERT FROST (1874 – 1963) was an American poet whose poetry was mostly inspired by the landscape around him. In "Desert Places" (1933), he uses the emptiness created by a snowstorm and the darkness of the night and compares it to depression and emotional disbalance.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: transcendence, hope, wisdom, creativity, humanity, intelligence

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- analyse the poem "Desert Places" by Robert Frost,
- collaborate with their classmates,
- come up with their own interpretations of the poem,
- evaluate each other's suggestions and ideas.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheet

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: HOW FAR DO YOU AGREE?

AIM:

- to introduce the topic of the session,
- to foster students' creativity and imagination.

FORM: individual work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 5 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks the students to choose one of two photographs (either picture A or picture B) and within the time limit (2 min.) they are asked to list all the words which come to their minds and are linked to the pictures (either A or B).
- Next, the pictures are used to elicit learners' emotions - students sort out the words they were supposed to write down and think of up to 3 feelings that the picture (either A or B) evokes.



PRE-READING ACTIVITY: PREDICTION

- AIM:**
- to raise the interest of students,
 - to foster students' curiosity,
 - to introduce the poem.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher instructs the students to think about the following (or any other) expressions from the poem "Desert Places":

snow falling, night falling fast, animals are smothered in their lairs, a blanker whiteness, empty spaces, my own desert places

- Based on the above-mentioned expressions, students are asked to guess what the poem is about. Some of the students will be asked to share their suggestions.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: QUESTION TIME

- AIM:**
- to study the poem "Desert Places",
 - to foster learners' critical thinking.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 15 minutes (10 minutes for group work; and 5 minutes for discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students read the poem aloud to check if they were right or wrong about the predictions they made (see the pre-reading activity – Prediction). Then, they respond to the following questions (firstly, in groups and then together in in-class discussion).

What are the main themes addressed in the poem?

What does snow fall mean in the poem?

Which of these four stanzas is different from the rest of the poem? Why?

How is loneliness depicted in the poem?

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: LONELINESS

- AIM:**
- to develop speaking skills,
 - to foster students' critical reasoning,
 - to encourage students to express their opinions.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: text, worksheet

TIME: 5 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher instructs the students to choose one line from the poem which is the most appealing to them and which reflects the topic of loneliness. Afterwards, they have to explain why they find this line the most thought-provoking.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: MY OWN DESERT PLACES

- AIM:**
- to emphasize the importance of critical reasoning,
 - to foster students' critical reasoning.

FORM: individual work

AIDS: text, worksheet

TIME: 5 minutes (2 minutes for brainstorming; and 3 minutes for one piece of advice on how to avoid loneliness)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Sometimes, we all feel lonely and miserable. Think of a situation you have experienced recently (when you felt lonely and miserable).

- Note: There is no need to share it with their classmates (because this is quite a sensitive topic).

Now, share your piece of advice to avoid loneliness.

SOURCES:

Frost, Robert. (1933). "Desert Places". *Family Friend Poems*. Available at: <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/desert-places-by-robert-frost>



INSTRUCTOR'S POST-SESSION REFLECTION:

POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "Desert Places" by Robert Frost:

Snow falling and night falling fast, oh, fast
 In a field I looked into going past,
 And the ground almost covered smooth in snow,
 But a few weeds and stubble showing last.

The woods around it have it--it is theirs.
 All animals are smothered in their lairs.
 I am too absent-spirited to count;
 The loneliness includes me unawares.

And lonely as it is that loneliness
 Will be more lonely ere it will be less--
 A blanker whiteness of benighted snow
 With no expression, nothing to express.

They cannot scare me with their empty spaces
 Between stars--on stars where no human race is.
 I have it in me so much nearer home
 To scare myself with my own desert places.

Source: <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/desert-places-by-robert-frost>



WORKSHEET

ROBERT FROST'S "DESERT PLACES"

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: SNOW FALL

Choose one of these two photographs (either picture A or picture B) and within the time limit (2 min.) list all the words which come to your mind, and which are linked to the picture (either A or B).

You then have one more minute to sort the words you wrote down and to think of up to three feelings the picture (either A or B) evokes in you.

PICTURE A ([HTTPS://UNSPLASH.COM/PHOTOS/LIGTtFOYI2M](https://unsplash.com/photos/LIGTtFoyI2M))



MY WORDS

MY FEELINGS



PICTURE B (<https://www.chicagotribune.com/nation-world/chi-chicagodays-1967blizzard-story-story.html>)



MY WORDS

MY FEELINGS

ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: PREDICTION

Think about the following expressions from the poem "Desert Places":

snow falling, night falling fast, animals are smothered in their lairs, a blanker whiteness, empty spaces, my own desert places

How are these expressions linked to the title of the poem? What do you think the poem is about?



ASSIGNMENT NO. 3: QUESTION TIME

Respond to the following questions (firstly, in groups and then together during the whole class discussion).

What are the main themes addressed in the poem "Desert Places"?

What does snow falling mean in the poem?

Which of these four stanzas is different from the rest of the poem? Why?

How is loneliness depicted in the poem?

ASSIGNMENT NO. 4: LONELINESS

The most appealing line of this poem is:

ASSIGNMENT NO. 5: MY OWN DESERT PLACES

In order to avoid loneliness, you may:



SECTION 4
POETRY AND NATURE



22. NATURE AND SIMPLICITY

SESSION LENGTH: 90 minutes

TEXTS USED: Mary Oliver: "The Summer Day"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

MARY JANE OLIVER (1935 - 2019) was an American poet and author of prose who won the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize. The New York Times described her in 2007 as (America's) best-selling poet. Oliver's first collection of poems, *No Voyage and Other Poems*, was published in 1963, when she was 28. Her fifth collection of poetry, *American Primitive*, won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1984. Oliver's main themes include the intersection of the human and the natural world, as well as the limits of human consciousness and language in articulating such a meeting. "The Summer Day" was first published in 1992. It first appeared in *House of Light* (Beacon Press, 1990).

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: spirituality, humility, appreciation of beauty and excellence

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- analyse the concept of simplicity resulting in something "special" in Mary Oliver's "The Summer Day",
- discuss various interpretations of the poem presented by their peers,
- draw "The Summer Day" on a colourful decorated piece of paper as based on the analysed poem.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheet, video "The Summer Day" by Mary Oliver

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: LET YOUR IMAGINATION WORK

- AIM:**
- to calm students' minds based on musical elements connected with the text,
 - to create a relaxing and positive atmosphere,
 - to introduce students' first thoughts concerning the poem.

FORM: group work

AIDS: blank sheet of paper, video "The Summer Day" by Mary Oliver (available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VT_Zu7MC10k&t=2s)

TIME: 10 minutes (4 minutes for listening to the poem; 6 minutes for group work)



INSTRUCTIONS:

- Teacher's instruction for students:

Close your eyes. Imagine that you are in the fields with a little cube of sugar in your hand. You are admiring even small insects in the grass. You have only one question in your mind: How to stroll through the fields? Now, you are going to listen to peaceful music, and I (the teacher) will read the poem at the same time.

Feel free to introduce your first impressions and thoughts concerning the poem and share them in the group. If you want, you can write them on a blank sheet of paper and let other members of the group read them and add their own thoughts.

- Music is playing while students are discussing. Students have the opportunity to see the images in the video which may provoke other thoughts (while listening to the poem their eyes were closed).

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: POEM ANALYSIS

AIM: ▫ to analyse the concept of simplicity resulting in something "special" in Mary Oliver's "The Summer Day".

FORM: group work

AIDS: text

TIME: 23 minutes (15 minutes in groups – preparation; 8 minutes showing)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students work in two groups. Each group chooses three words, expressions or a whole sentence based on the lines which they analysed in the previous activity and is supposed to act it out.
- The other group will guess what their classmates are showing. After showing, students explain their choice of words, expressions or a whole sentence from the poem.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: DRAWING THE POEM

AIM: ▫ to draw a summer day on a colourful decorated piece of paper, based on the analysed poem.

FORM: group work

AIDS: text, collaborative whiteboard, a colourful piece of paper with a few images from the video (worksheet, assignment)

TIME: 20 minutes (13 minutes in groups – preparation; 7 minutes presentation)



INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students work in two groups. Each group is supposed to draw a summer day in the way that it is presented by the author. The analysis, presentation and a few pictures placed on the worksheet may help them to generate some ideas.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: TELL ME...

AIM: ▫ to emphasize the value of nature.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 7 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students what it means to be a careful observer of nature. He/ she shows them images from the video and encourages them to think about the topic in the future.

SOURCES:

Oliver, Mary. "The Summer Day". Available at: <https://www.saltproject.org/progressive-christian-blog/2015/6/29/the-summer-day>

INSTRUCTOR'S POST-SESSION REFLECTION:





POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: **'The Summer Day'** by Mary Oliver:

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
This grasshopper, I mean —
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down —
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

Source: <https://www.saltproject.org/progressive-christian-blog/2015/6/29/the-summer-day>



WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT: DRAWING THE POEM

23. NATURE AND THE PEACE OF MIND

SESSION LENGTH:	60 minutes
TEXTS USED:	Wendell Berry: "The Peace of Wild Things" Czeslaw Milosz: "Gift"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

WENDELL BERRY (1934) is an American poet, novelist, essayist, farmer and environmentalist. His writings emphasize the importance of the environment, community and rural life. He believes that people should have a responsible relationship with the land and with one another. "The Peace of Wild Things" was published in his collection *Openings* in 1968.

CZESLAW MILOSZ (1911 – 2004) was a Polish-American poet, prose writer and translator. Milosz won the 1980 Nobel Prize for literature, and he is regarded as one of the greatest poets of the 20th century. His works often deal with the issues of politics and history, but also ethics and morality. "Gift" was published in *The Collected Poems 1931 – 1987* in 1988. The text of the poem was translated from Polish into English by the author himself.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: perseverance, spirituality, kindness

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- give a critical perspective on the connections between the external context (the poet's words) and the content of the poem itself,
- discuss various observations about the studied poems and give their opinion on the ideas presented by their peers,
- illustrate visually their own experience related to the content of the poem.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheet

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: REFLECTIVE THOUGHTS

- AIM:**
- to become immersed in analysed text,
 - to elicit some introductory ideas on the text,
 - to make time for self-reflection and concentration.
- FORM:** individual work
- AIDS:** pen, piece of paper
- TIME:** 5 minutes (3 minutes for listening; and, 2 minutes for writing)



INSTRUCTIONS:

- A volunteering student reads Wendell Berry's "The Peace of Wild Things". Teacher's instructions: *Listen attentively to the poem.*
- After reading, the teacher instructs students to take a pen and a piece of paper and write freely all associations and words that come to their minds while listening to the poem. The students can approach this task freely. They can write just simple words; someone may have associations with a specific place they'd like to describe, and/or situations they experienced, etc.
- If there is someone willing to share their ideas, they may.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: BEGINNING WITH A QUOTATION

AIM: ▫ to explore the connection between the content of the poem and the poet's ideas about nature.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 10 minutes (4 minutes for individual work; and, 6 minutes whole class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Teacher's instructions:

In your worksheet in assignment no. 1, you'll find a quote from an interview with Wendell Berry. Read the quote by yourself and try to think whether you can understand this view related to the poem. If you can see the connection, try to elucidate it.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: COMPARISON OF POEMS

AIM: ▫ to specify similarities and differences between the studied texts,
▫ to critically express the tone of the poems and how it relates to the content and overall meaning of the texts.

FORM: group / whole class work

AIDS: texts, worksheet

TIME: 30 minutes (20 minutes for a break-out room; and, 10 minutes for a brief whole class discussion)





INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students work in break-out rooms by filling in assignment no. 1 in their worksheet. They are supposed to discuss and write down brief observations on the similarities and differences between Wendell Berry's "The Peace of Wild Things" and Czeslaw Milosz's "Gift".

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: PAINTING WITH A SIMILAR ATMOSPHERE

- AIM:**
- to analyse and compare verbal and visual art,
 - to develop students' critical thinking.
- FORM:** individual / whole class work
- AIDS:** worksheet
- TIME:** 15 minutes (5 minutes for individual reflection; and, 10 minutes for whole class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher instructs students to have a close look at four pieces of visual art in assignment no. 2 from their worksheet. Each student is supposed to choose one image which, according to them, best represents the tone and atmosphere of Wendell Berry's "The Peace of Wild Things" or Czeslaw Milosz's "Gift". It does not have to be a literal correspondence in terms of content but rather in the atmosphere that both the poem and the image evoke. (No search for background information about images is needed.)
- Images: Claude Monet: *Poppies* (1873); Ansel Adams: *Aspens, Dawn, Autumn* (1937); Andrew Wyeth: *Christina's World* (1948); Agnes Martin: *Stone* (1964)
- Students comment on their choices of the image in the whole class discussion.

SOURCES:

Berry, Wendell (1968). *Openings*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

Milosz, Czeslaw. (1988). *The Collected Poems 1931 – 1987*. New York: The Ecco Press.

INSTRUCTOR'S POST-SESSION REFLECTION:





POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "The Peace of Wild Things" by Wendell Berry:

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world and am free.

Source: Wendell Berry: *Openings*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1968, p. 30.

2: "Gift" by Czeslaw Milosz:

A day so happy.
Fog lifted early, I worked in the garden.
Hummingbirds were stopping over honeysuckle flowers.
There was no thing on earth I wanted to possess.
I knew no one worth my envying him.
Whatever evil I had suffered, I forgot.
To think that once I was the same man did not embarrass me.
In my body I felt no pain.
When straightening up, I saw the blue sea and sails.
Berkeley, 1971

Source: Czeslaw Milosz: *The Collected Poems 1931 – 1987*. New York: The Ecco Press, 1988, p. 251.



WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: COMPARISON OF POEMS

Compare the poems by Wendell Berry's "The Peace of Wild Things" and Czeslaw Milosz's "Gift". Work in a group and use direct quotes to substantiate your observations.

	SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES	OTHER OBSERVATIONS
Mood and atmosphere	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Theme <i>(attitude towards life)</i>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Imagery	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Your personal response	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: PAINTING WITH A SIMILAR ATMOSPHERE

Look at these four works of visual art. Choose one image which, according to you, best represents the tone and atmosphere of Wendell Berry's 'The Peace of Wild Things' or Czeslaw Milosz's 'Gift'. It does not have to be a literal correspondence in terms of content, but rather in the atmosphere that both the poem and the image evoke. Explain your choice.

(No search for background information about images is needed.)



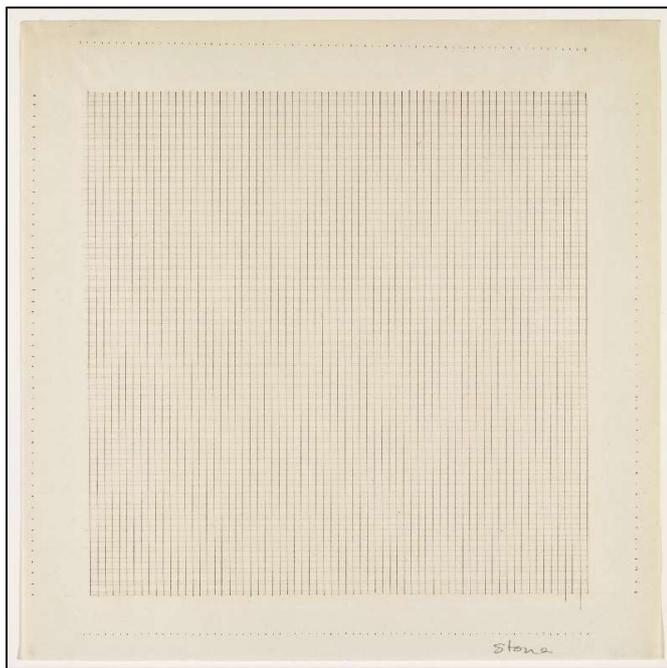
Claude Monet: *Poppies* (1873)



Ansel Adams: *Aspens, Dawn, Autumn* (1937)



Andrew Wyeth: *Christina's World* (1948)



Agnes Martin: *Stone* (1964)

In my view, the atmosphere and tone of the poem _____

is closest to the painting _____

because _____



24. NATURE

SESSION LENGTH:	90 minutes
TEXTS USED:	Mary Oliver: "Morning Poem"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

MARY OLIVER (1935 – 2019) was an award-winning American poet whose lyrical, deeply evocative poetry speaks to large masses of readers around the world. Oliver's poetry is heavily influenced by the Romantic tradition, with its focus on the natural world, tranquillity and contemplation. It is deeply introspective and personal yet universal. Some of her best poetry collections include *New and Selected Poems* (1992), which won the National Book Award, *Devotions* (2017) and *A Thousand Mornings* (2012).

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: gratitude, hope, appreciation of beauty, humility

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- analyse the selected poem and interpret its meaning,
- recognize and interpret the emotions presented in the poem,
- understand and discuss poetic devices used in the poem,
- discuss the topic of nature and its impact on humanity.

TEACHING AIDS: text, worksheets, shared virtual whiteboard, online board game generator

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: COLLABORATIVE WRITING

AIM:

- to introduce the topic of nature,
- to elicit students' associations and ideas with nature,
- to inspire creativity with a creative writing assignment,
- to personalize the topic to be discussed.

FORM: individual / group / whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 20 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher divides the class into small groups and asks students to take a piece of paper (alternatively, students might work in breakout rooms and use the virtual whiteboard for this activity).



- S/he then asks students to write the word NATURE at the top of it - this will be their poem's title. Each student is supposed to write one line of the poem that reflects and captures their idea of nature and their relationship to it and then pass it to another student (the order may be determined before they start, especially in an online setting).
- Students take turns - one student starts, and all the others, when writing their lines, first read the previous lines and then add their own to create a meaningful unit.
- Students might be asked to try to create rhymes, but this is not necessary. When they have all taken turns, the whole group goes through the poem together and puts some finishing touches to it. Then, they present it to the class.
- A short reflective discussion on the poems may take place after all groups have read their texts.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR AND POEM

- AIM:**
- to familiarize students with the author and her work in general,
 - to elicit impressions after the first reading of the poem.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 15 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher provides a brief introduction to the life and work of Mary Oliver to give students some context. Then the class reads the poem together and the teacher elicits first impressions from the students in the form of a short discussion. In the discussion, the students may also reflect on the ideas from their own poems, noticing similarities and differences in the ideas expressed by them about the natural world.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: DETECTIVE TEAMS – BOARD GAME

- AIM:**
- to analyse and interpret the poem,
 - to understand the message of the poem,
 - to focus on the poetic devices the poet uses in the text.

FORM: group / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet, dice, online board game generator

TIME: 40 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher divides the class into small groups (detective teams) and distributes worksheets with the board game plan (alternatively, the board game can be created and played online). The board game includes specific questions about the major poetic devices used in the poem.
- Students are asked to play detective and search the poem for specific clues that will lead them to the answers to the questions. They should roll the dice and answer all the questions as they approach the finish line. The teacher monitors their activity and asks them to make notes to each question (20 min.). This activity promotes critical thinking and independent analysis of the poem.
- When finished, students go through all the questions with the teacher together and provide their ideas. A whole-class discussion follows, at the end of which students should have a solid understanding of the poem and its meaning (20 min.).

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: CLOSING DISCUSSION

- AIM:**
- to conclude the discussion on the meaning of nature,
 - to personalize the topic.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 15 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to share their experience with nature and comment on their relationship with the natural world.

Do you relate to Oliver's sentiments expressed in the poem?

Do you recall a specific experience/moment when you felt rejuvenated/reborn by nature?

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: FURTHER READING AND EXPLORATION

- AIM:**
- to inspire students to do some follow-up exploration of the theme of nature in various works of art.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 10 minutes



INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to share their tips for works of art (books, films, paintings, songs, etc.) that are nature-centred, and which might express sentiments similar to Oliver's poem.
- Teachers may provide their own list of inspiring works to promote further interest in the topic.

SOURCES:

Oliver, Mary. "Morning Poem". (1992). In: *New and Selected Poems*. Volume One. Boston: Beacon Press.

INSTRUCTOR'S POST-SESSION REFLECTION:



POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "Morning Poem" by Mary Oliver:

Every morning
the world
is created.
Under the orange

sticks of the sun
the heaped
ashes of the night
turn into leaves again

and fasten themselves to the high branches—
and the ponds appear
like black cloth
on which are painted islands

of summer lilies.
If it is your nature
to be happy
you will swim away along the soft trails

for hours, your imagination
alighting everywhere.
And if your spirit
carries within it

the thorn
that is heavier than lead—
if it's all you can do
to keep on trudging—

there is still
somewhere deep within you
a beast shouting that the earth
is exactly what it wanted—

each pond with its blazing lilies
is a prayer heard and answered
lavishly,
every morning,

whether or not
you have ever dared to be happy,
whether or not
you have ever dared to pray.

WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT: DETECTIVE TEAMS - BOARD GAME

DETECTIVE TEAMS							
GO BACK 2 SPACES	Find all references to nature in the poem.	What colours are mentioned / implied in the poem?	Which line(s) may allude to the mythical phoenix?	GO BACK 4 SPACES	How does the poet make the poem personal?		
Explain the metaphor in lines 4-5.	The poem is based on a CONTRAST . Find examples.	Find examples of similes in the poem.	Find examples of personification in the poem.		What is the mood of the poem?		
Find all references to colours in the poem.	What lines might refer to the theme of REBIRTH ?	Find examples of personification in the poem.	What imagery is most dominant - visual, auditory, tactile...?		Name some subject matters / keywords of the poem.		
Comment on the meaning of the opening sentence.	Which images / words are connected to HAPPINESS ?	Which images / words are connected to SADNESS ?	What does the title of the poem symbolize?	GO BACK 3 SPACES	What is the message of the poem?		FINISH
START 							

25. FAMILY AND NATURE

SESSION LENGTH:	60 minutes
TEXTS USED:	William Wordsworth: "To My Sister" William Wordsworth: "The Tables Turned"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH was an English poet and one of the main founders of Romanticism. The poem "To my Sister" was written in 1798 for his sister Dorothy, and refers to power of nature and love. The poem "The Tables Turned" was published in the same year in his collection *Lyrical Ballads*. It refers to the wisdom of nature and supports the idea that a man can learn more from the nature than from the books.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: transcendence, gratitude, excellence, humanity, social intelligence, wisdom, creativity

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- list the main principles of Romanticism,
- explain how emotions affect our lives,
- categorize and demonstrate their emotions using Feeling Circle by Gloria Willcox,
- analyze the main similarities between the "To My Sister" poem and "The Tables Turned",
- write a thank-you letter for Dorothy using the ideas from the poem "To My Sister".

TEACHING AIDS: texts, worksheet

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: THANK YOU...

AIM:

- to foster emotional sensitivity,
- to improve writing skills.

FORM: individual work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher says:

Saying thank you is sometimes more difficult than one can imagine. Write a short thank-you letter to one member of your family.



- Note: This activity is very sensitive; therefore, students are not asked to share their ideas with their colleagues. If they wish, they can send or show their short letter to the intended addressee.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: FEELING CIRCLE

- AIM:**
- to familiarize students with the poem,
 - to verbalize students' emotions,
 - to help students to understand their feelings.
- FORM:** individual / whole class work
- AIDS:** worksheet, a video (William Wordsworth: "To my Sister" - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLK_LMAOEMO)
- TIME:** 10 minutes (3 minutes to watch the video; 7 minutes for the feeling circle)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students watch a short video (if they wish, they can close their eyes and listen to the poem).
- Afterwards, using the feeling circle by Gloria Willcox, they think of at least three feelings the poem evokes in them and share the ideas with their classmates.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: NOUNS IN ACTION

- AIM:**
- to foster students' creativity and imagination,
 - to enrich their vocabulary,
 - to help students understand the main principles of Romanticism via their own feelings and emotions.
- FORM:** individual work
- AIDS:** text, worksheet
- TIME:** 25 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks the students:

Try to list three different nouns that reflect your first impression of the poem "To my Sister". Then, they do the same with the poem "The Tables Turned" by the same author.

Afterwards, they are asked to write down the stanza (s) that evoke (s) these feelings, e.g., joy (To my sister; stanza 2). Then, they briefly comment on what these two poems have in common and find lines in both poems which show that the two poems are more similar than different.

AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: IDLENESS

- AIM:**
- to practise students' speaking skills,
 - to help students understand their feelings and emotions.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: text, worksheet

TIME: 5 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Students read the last two lines from the poem "To My Sister" and try to answer the following questions:

What is IDLENESS for Wordsworth? What does IDLENESS mean for you?

- They then discuss their answers with their classmates.

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: A LETTER TO DOROTHY

- AIM:**
- to foster emotional sensitivity,
 - to improve writing skills,
 - to develop imagination.

FORM: individual work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks the students to write a short thank you letter that William Wordsworth could have written to his beloved sister Dorothy.

SOURCES:

Wordsworth, William. (1798). "To my Sister". *Poem Hunter*. Available at: <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/to-my-sister/>

Wordsworth, William. (1798). "The Tables Turned". *Poetry Foundation*. Available at: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45557/the-tables-turned>



INSTRUCTOR'S POST-SESSION REFLECTION:

POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "To My Sister" by William Wordsworth:

It is the first mild day of March:
 Each minute sweeter than before
 The redbreast sings from the tall larch
 That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
 Which seems a sense of joy to yield
 To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
 And grass in the green field.

My sister! ('tis a wish of mine)
 Now that our morning meal is done,
 Make haste, your morning task resign;
 Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you;--and, pray,
 Put on with speed your woodland dress;
 And bring no book: for this one day
 We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate



Our living calendar:
We from to-day, my Friend, will date
The opening of the year.

Love, now a universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth:
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than years of toiling reason:
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey:
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We'll frame the measure of our souls:
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister! come, I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress;
And bring no book: for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

Source: <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/to-my-sister/>

2: "The Tables Turned" by William Wordsworth:

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.



Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

Source: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45557/the-tables-turned>



WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: THANK YOU...

Saying thank you is sometimes more difficult than one can imagine. Write a short thank-you letter to a member of your family.

Dear _____,

You are very special to me.

I would sincerely like to thank you for

1.

2.

3.

Warmest regards,

ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: FEELING CIRCLE

This is the link to THE FEELING CIRCLE by Gloria Willcox. Think of at least 3 feelings the poem evokes, and share your ideas with the rest of the group.

Link: https://allthefeelz.app/static/feelz/pdf/the_feeling_wheel_pdf__allthefeelz_dot_app.pdf

1.

2.

3.



ASSIGNMENT NO. 3: NOUNS IN ACTION

Read "To my Sister" silently, and then try to list 3 nouns that reflect your first impression of the poem. Then, do the same with "The Tables Turned" by the same author. Afterwards, write down the stanza(s) which evoke in you these feelings, e.g. joy (To my sister; stanza 2)

TO MY SISTER

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

THE TABLES TURNED

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Based on your brainstorming, could you briefly comment on what these two poems have in common?

Find lines in both poems which show that "To my Sister" and "The Tables Turned" are more similar than different.

ASSIGNMENT NO. 4: IDLENESS

Read the last two lines from the poem "To my Sister" and try to answer the following question:

What is IDLENESS for Wordsworth? What does IDLENESS mean to you? Discuss your answers with your classmates.

And bring no book: for this one day

We'll give to idleness.



ASSIGNMENT NO. 5: A LETTER TO DOROTHY

Imagine that you are William Wordsworth writing a letter to his beloved sister Dorothy. Complete the letter and link your suggestions with the poem "To my Sister".

Dear *Dorothy*,

You are very special to me.

I would sincerely like to thank you for

1.

2.

3.

Warmest regards,

26. LOVE, BEAUTY AND NATURE

SESSION LENGTH: 90 minutes

TEXTS USED: William Wordsworth: "The Solitary Reaper"

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR(S) AND POEM(S):

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770 – 1850) was a well-known English Romantic poet and served as Poet Laureate from 1843 until his death. Together with his friend, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, they published the seminal book *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), which launched Romanticism in English literature, and which has inspired generations of poets until now. William Wordsworth's poetry deals with themes of nature, love, immortality and spirituality. To his most well-known poems belong "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud", "Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey", "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood" and "The World Is Too Much with Us".

CHARACTER STRENGTHS: curiosity, love, kindness, appreciation of beauty and excellence

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- analyse the selected poem and interpret its meaning,
- recognize and interpret the concepts of beauty and nature in the text,
- listen carefully and reflect on the ideas expressed by others.

TEACHING AIDS: texts, worksheet, shared virtual whiteboard

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: QUOTES ABOUT NATURE

AIM:

- to introduce the topic of beauty and/in nature,
- to elicit students' associations with and ideas on the topic,
- to personalize the topic to be discussed,
- to practice attentive listening.

FORM: individual / whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 15 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to read the quotes in the worksheet (assignment no. 1) carefully. There are four quotes, of which they choose two that attracted their attention and which speak to them personally.

- Students have about 5 minutes to think about their responses to the quotes individually.
- The whole class discussion facilitated by the teacher follows.
- Students are encouraged not only to express their own views but also to respond to their classmates' ideas and observations.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY: INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR AND POEM

- AIM:**
- to familiarize students with the author and his work in general,
 - to elicit impressions after the first reading of the poem.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 15 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher provides a brief introduction to the life and work of William Wordsworth to give students some context. Then the class reads the poem together and the teacher elicits first impressions from the students through a short discussion.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITY: POEM ANALYSIS – STUDY QUESTIONS

- AIM:**
- to analyse and interpret the poem,
 - to understand the message of the poem.

FORM: individual / group / whole class work

AIDS: worksheet

TIME: 40 minutes (10 minutes individual work; 15 minutes group work; 15 minutes whole class discussion)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to read the study questions and think about them on their own, in silence. They have about 10 minutes for this part of the activity.
- In the second part, the students are divided into groups, and they answer the questions together, practicing attentive listening as in the previous activity.
- When this part is over, the teacher facilitates an entire class discussion, at the end of which students should have a solid understanding of the poem and its meaning.



AFTER-READING ACTIVITY: CLOSING DISCUSSION

AIM: □ to conclude the discussion on the meaning of beauty and nature in one's life.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to share their experience of beauty and nature in their lives.

Do you relate to Wordsworth's sentiments expressed in the poem?

Do you recall a specific moment of awe related to your experience of beauty and nature in your life (that this poem reminded you of)?

CLOSURE ACTIVITY: FURTHER EXPLORATION

AIM: □ to inspire students to do some follow-up exploration of the theme of beauty and nature in various works of art.

FORM: whole class work

AIDS: -

TIME: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The teacher asks students to share their tips on works of art (books, films, paintings, songs, etc.) that focus on the theme of beauty and nature.

SOURCES:

Wordsworth, William. (1807). "The Solitary Reaper". Available at:
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45554/the-solitary-reaper>

INSTRUCTOR'S POST-SESSION REFLECTION:







POEMS & OTHER MATERIALS:

1: "The Solitary Reaper" by William Wordsworth:

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

Source: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45554/the-solitary-reaper>.



WORKSHEET

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: QUOTES ABOUT NATURE

- "IN NATURE, NOTHING IS PERFECT AND EVERYTHING IS PERFECT. TREES CAN BE CONTORTED, BENT IN WEIRD WAYS, AND THEY'RE STILL BEAUTIFUL."

ALICE WALKER

- "THERE IS SOMETHING INFINITELY HEALING IN THE REPEATED REFRAINS OF NATURE—THE ASSURANCE THAT DAWN COMES AFTER NIGHT, AND SPRING AFTER WINTER."

RACHEL CARSON

- "FOR MOST OF HISTORY, MAN HAS HAD TO FIGHT NATURE TO SURVIVE; IN THIS CENTURY HE IS BEGINNING TO REALIZE THAT, IN ORDER TO SURVIVE, HE MUST PROTECT IT."

JACQUES-YVES COUSTEAU

- "NATURE TEACHES MORE THAN SHE PREACHES. THERE ARE NO SERMONS IN STONES. IT IS EASIER TO GET A SPARK OUT OF A STONE THAN A MORAL."

JOHN BURROUGHS

ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: POEM ANALYSIS – STUDY QUESTIONS

- Who is single in the fields, and why do you think the poet makes her single?
- What might the topic of the girl's song be?
- What is the form of the poem? And why does the poet choose it to express his theme?



CONCLUSION

Here comes the end!

Closure?

Beginnings are at hand.

Poetry as a Lingua Franca is more of a positivity-recipe-book for both teachers and learners. Poetry has long been associated with depressive moods and inexplicable moments of being. It has been labelled as inaccessible and incomprehensible, and its studies have often focused on the mathematical composition of its rhymes and rhythmic syllables. This course book, however, presents both learners and teachers with a simplified set of lesson plans that may help initiate students into a personal-growth journey that is promoted and encouraged by positive psychology and student-centred methods. No matter how comprehensive teachers are, they often find it hard to get into the deep layers of their students' personalities. No matter how hard educators try to get into the shoes of their learners and to see the world from their point of view, they often struggle at obtaining a full-scale image of their learner's mindsets. This book is an inviting empathic exploration of introspective, visionary, and tailored poetry-based lessons that aim to connect the learners to the realm of 'universally-personal' emotion.

Learning is more of a transformative experience, and character development allows more sustainable teaching and learning. With lessons specifically designed to tap into the cognitive and imaginative side of the learners, this book offers a variety of occasions for reading, writing, listening, speaking, and self-expression overall. The learners will have a chance to explore their literary tastes and to savour the beauty of words via the selected poems and haikus within this course book. The emotional side becomes essential as the learners are expected to enter into a contemplative state as they equally work on their language learning, artistic and/or creative sides, and personal development.

This collection of twenty-six lesson plans serves as a powerful tool to enhance learners' expressive skills. The lessons are designed with special attention to advanced technological tools, psychological pedagogy, and the various specific needs the students might have and the different cultures they might come from. Poetry bridges the gap of inhibitions and introversions, and this course book brings it back to the forefront as an essential genre to boost the learners' self-esteem, and to bring awareness to their virtues and strengths. Students generally feel more at home when the class is about them. When given enough space to focus and reflect on their positive traits, the learners will become more involved in language learning and even more confident after receiving evidence of their own skills.

This course book is a compelling hand given to the teachers, to facilitate their task of digging into the endless maze of finding the right poem to begin with. This collection



offers verifiable and adaptable lesson plans, which teachers can implement immediately and successfully. As much as the lesson plans are student-centred, they also bring the instructors a feeling of involvement with comfortable ease. The texts, the instructions, the materials, and the assignments included in this book are equally selected with extreme care, taking into consideration the positive atmosphere that the teachers need for many an excellent class day.

The authors of the lesson plans come from different countries and cultural backgrounds, which permits a more inclusive ground while approaching some rather delicate and sensitive topics. This preconceived awareness of the cultural contexts of the learners both creates the link deeply-sought through poetry and makes it the lingua franca between different individual learners. By delving into some challenging topics, the learners become fully aware of the fact that they are well-equipped to deal with difficult and/or overwhelming life situations as they develop a stronger mindset and a larger perspective through the musicality of the lyrical and appealing beauty of the visual.



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