

Mrs. Hall's
Poetry Extravaganza

Poetry Project:

Imagine that you are an aspiring poet who has been given the opportunity to study under the poet you most admire. Perhaps you admire this poet for the images she uses, or the social issues found within her poetry. This poet has asked you to write a poem to be presented at the Deck The Hall Café. Here is your task: (dates are subject to change)

1. **Choose a poet.** You must choose a poet whose work is in English. You will study American writers next year, so I encourage you to explore, perhaps, the British writers. Due date to be announced in class.
2. **Research your poet** by going to the reference room and by using the circulating collection in the library.
3. **Create an annotated bibliography** that reflects your research. Due date to be announced in class.
4. **Select three of your favorite poems by this poet and mark them up** with notes as we do in class. You will have to reproduce these poems by either making a photocopy or re-typing. Due date to be announced in class.
5. **Memorize your favorite poem** by that poet and present it at the Deck The Hall Café. You must submit a copy of the poem at this time. Due date to be announced in class.
6. **Write your own poem** in the style of your chosen poet, using thematic ideas that your poet uses frequently, metaphors that you find particularly poignant, rhyme scheme, stanza structures, etc. You must submit a copy of the original poem attached to the back of your poem. While you must submit your own poem, you may also choose to present this poem at the Café if you wish to earn some extra credit. Due date to be announced in class.
7. **Write a literary essay outline** on the poem that you memorized. You must submit a copy of the poem attached to the back of your outline Due date to be announced in class.

PLEASE NOTE: You MUST provide a copy of the original poem with your memorization and you MUST include another copy of the original poem with your pastiche AND with your essay. Please staple the original poem to THE BACK, THAT IS, BEHIND, your pastiche and your essay.

Walt Whitman (1819-1892)
from *Leaves of Grass* (1900)

O Me! O Life!

O ME! O life!... of the questions of these recurring;
Of the endless trains of the faithless – of cities fill'd with the foolish;
Of myself forever reproaching myself, (for who more foolish than I, and who more faithless?)
Of eyes that vainly crave the light – of the objects mean – of the struggle ever renew'd;
Of the poor results of all – of the plodding and sordid crowds I see around me;
Of the empty and useless years of the rest – with the rest me intertwined;
The question, O me! so sad, recurring – What good amid these, O me, O life?

Answer.

That you are here – that life exists, and identity;
That the powerful play goes on, and you will contribute a verse.

Robert Frost (1874-1963)
From *New Hampshire: A Poem with Notes and Grace Notes* (1923)

Nothing Gold Can Stay

Nature's first green is gold,

Her hardest hue to hold.

Her early leaf's a flower;

But only so an hour.

Then leaf subsides to leaf.

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So Eden sank to grief,

So dawn goes down to day.

Nothing gold can stay.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)
from *The Oxford Shakespeare: Poems* (1914)

“Let me not to the marriage of true minds”

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark, 5
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love is not time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come; 10
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and upon me prov'd
I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd

W.H. Auden (1907-1973)
from *Selected Poems of W. H. Auden* (1990)

Funeral Blues

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead
Scribbling on the sky the message He Is Dead,
Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves,
Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.

He was my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and my Sunday rest,
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
I thought that love would last for ever: I was wrong.

The stars are not wanted now: put out every one;
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun;
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood.
For nothing now can ever come to any good.