

Reading a selection of poems



Before you read these poems answer the following:

1. Who is your favorite author or poet?
2. Do you have a favorite poem? If so, what is it and why is it your favorite?

Now **skip** the following questions and come back **after** you read the story

After you read the series of poems, discuss the following questions individually or with a friend.

1. Which of these poems did you connect with the most? Why?
2. Choose 1 or more poems and pick out a major theme and how the poem supports the theme.
3. Are there any strong metaphors that you can find in the poems? What are they and how do they add to the narrative?
4. What are some of your favorite lines from the poems? Why?
5. How would you say the writing styles differ between different writers?

“No Man Is An Island” by John Donne

No man is an island,

Entire of itself,

Every man is a piece of the continent,

A part of the main.

If a clod be washed away by the sea,

Europe is the less.

As well as if a promontory were.

As well as if a manor of thy friend's

Or of thine own were:

Any man's death diminishes me,

Because I am involved in mankind,

And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;

It tolls for thee.

“Stopping by Woods On a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.

His house is in the village though;

He will not see me stopping here

To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer

To stop without a farmhouse near

Between the woods and frozen lake

The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake

To ask if there is some mistake.

The only other sound's the sweep

Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,

But I have promises to keep,

And miles to go before I sleep,

And miles to go before I sleep

“Still I Rise” by Maya Angelou

You may write me down in history

With your bitter, twisted lies,

You may tread me in the very dirt

But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?

Why are you beset with gloom?

'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells

Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,

With the certainty of tides,

Just like hopes springing high,

Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?

Bowed head and lowered eyes?

Shoulders falling down like teardrops.

Weakened by my soulful cries.

Does my haughtiness offend you?

Don't you take it awful hard

'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines

Diggin' in my own back yard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?

Does it come as a surprise

That I dance like I've got diamonds

At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame

I rise

Up from a past that's rooted in pain

I rise

I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,

Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear

I rise

Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear

I rise

Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,

I am the dream and the hope of the slave.

I rise. I rise. I rise.

“Shall I Compare Thee To A Summer’s Day?” by William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?

Thou art more lovely and more temperate.

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,

And summer’s lease hath all too short a date.

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,

And often is his gold complexion dimmed;

And every fair from fair sometime declines,

By chance, or nature’s changing course, untrimmed;

But thy eternal summer shall not fade,

Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow’st,

Nor shall death brag thou wand’rest in his shade,

When in eternal lines to Time thou grow’st.

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,

So long lives this, and this gives life to thee

“There Will Come Soft Rain” by Sara Teasdale

There will come soft rain and the smell of the ground,

And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;

And frogs in the pools singing at night,

And wild plum trees in tremulous white;

Robins will wear their feathery fire,

Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;

And not one will know of the war, not one

Will care at last when it is done.

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree,

If mankind perished utterly;

And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn

Would scarcely know that we were gone.