“Poetry is the opening and closing of a door, leaving those who look through to guess about what is seen during a moment.”

—Carl Sandburg, “Poetry Considered”
PHOTOGRAPHERS CAPTURE MOMENTS in time. Painters depict visual ideas through arrangements of colors and shapes. What methods allow writers to use words as someone else might use a camera or a paintbrush? In the beginning of the modern age, a group of poets called the Imagists developed new, influential techniques for presenting visual impressions. Much of their inspiration came from the Symbolists, across the Atlantic Ocean, in France.

The Symbolist Foundation
The avant-garde, or experimental, Symbolist movement in Paris dominated French poetry and art in the late 1800s and inspired the Imagists. Symbolist poets such as Charles Baudelaire, Stéphane Mallarmé, Arthur Rimbaud, and Paul Verlaine reacted against Realism by focusing their attention inward on moods and sensations. These poets believed that direct explanation could not capture emotion. They sought access to the inner workings of the mind through suggestion, metaphor, and symbols. The Symbolists took inspiration from Edgar Allan Poe, whose work is rich in symbolism.

“No good poetry is ever written in a manner twenty years old, for to write in such a manner shows conclusively that the writer thinks from books, convention and cliché, and not from life.”

—Ezra Pound
“A Retrospect”

The American Imagists
Contrasting with the Symbolists’ abstract, atmospheric poetry, the Imagists presented a concrete, tangible image that appeared frozen in time. “Essentially, it is a moment of revealed truth,” wrote critic William Pratt on Imagism. In that sense, the Imagist method is similar to photography. Beyond that, however, Imagist poetry explores the effect of the image on an observer at a precise moment.

“In a Station of the Metro” by Ezra Pound (see page 654) is a classic example of an Imagist poem. Pound responded to the sight of faces in a train station. Pound deleted words to condense a first draft of thirty lines into two lines of fourteen words and two striking images. He believed that the poet should “use no superfluous word, no adjective which does not reveal something.” He found a model for this intense compression in Asian poetry, such as in this haiku (three lines, seventeen syllables, in the original) by Japanese poet Matsuo Basho:

On a dead limb
squats a crow—
Autumn night.
(Lucien Stryk translation)
Whirl up, sea—
Whirl your pointed pines,
Splash your great pines
On our rocks.
Hurl your green over us—
Cover us with your pools of fire.

H.D. and Amy Lowell were central figures in the Imagist movement. At a poetry reading, Lowell reportedly said to her audience, “Well, clap or hiss, I don't care which, but . . . do something!” Such bold statements energized American poetry, which often displays the Imagist method of compressing an emotion or idea into a sharply observed image.

Imagist Principles

The Imagists issued manifestos, or public declarations on their poetic principles. The following are sample manifestos in the style of those issued:

- The image is the essence, the raw material, of poetry.
- Poetry should be expressed in brief, clear, concrete language that forms precise images.
- These images should instantly convey to the reader the poem’s meaning and emotion.
- The language of these poetic images should sound like simple speech—not be made up of predictable rhythms and rhymes but of freer, more-modern verse forms.
- Topics for poems need not be high-minded or “poetic.” No topic is unsuitable for a poem.

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

1. Why did the Symbolist poets refrain from directly explaining their themes?
2. What did the Imagists want to eliminate from poetry? Why?
3. What type of images does H.D. create in “Oread”? What impressions and associations do they evoke?
4. Compare and contrast the ways in which the poems on these two pages reflect the themes of Imagist poets. Which do you find most interesting?
MEET EZRA POUND

Though Ezra Pound’s literary accomplishments were immense, many hated him. As his friend and protégé William Carlos Williams wrote, “Pound is a fine fellow, but not one person in a thousand likes him, and a great many people detest him.” Nevertheless, T. S. Eliot claimed that Pound was “more responsible for the twentieth-century revolution in poetry than [was] any other individual.”

Imagism  Pound was born in a small town in Idaho, but two years later his family moved east. When he was still young, he determined that “at thirty [he] would know more about poetry than any living man.” Pound entered the University of Pennsylvania at age fifteen but completed his undergraduate education at Hamilton College. As a student, he immersed himself in the Latin, Greek, and French classics.

“I have weathered the storm,  
I have beaten out my exile.”

—Ezra Pound, “The Rest”

After receiving his master’s degree in 1906, Pound briefly taught languages at a small Presbyterian college in Indiana. His eccentric manner did not fit well with the school’s character, and, at the age of 23, Pound left for Europe. He settled first in London, then Paris, and finally in Italy. There he wrote poetry and criticism and translated verse from nine languages. He also served as an overseas editor for Poetry magazine—a position he used to nurture the careers of Robert Frost and T. S. Eliot, among others. In 1912, Pound helped establish Imagism’s manifesto. It called for “direct treatment of the ‘thing’” and the use of “the language of common speech, but . . . always the exact word.”

A Complex Writer  Though Pound declared that writers should “Make it new!” he did not believe in newness for its own sake and relied heavily on the literature of the past. In The Cantos, his longest and best-known work, Pound combined materials from different cultures and languages, historical texts, and newspaper articles. The Cantos is an extremely complex work, notorious for its difficulty and uneven quality.

Politics, Prison, and Exile  During World War II, Pound supported Fascist Italian dictator Benito Mussolini and made radio broadcasts openly criticizing the United States and the efforts of the Allies in the war. After Italy fell, Pound spent six months as a prisoner of war near Pisa. Here he wrote The Pisan Cantos, generally considered the greatest section of his long work.

After being declared mentally unfit to stand trial for treason, Pound was sent to St. Elizabeth’s Hospital for the criminally insane in Washington, D.C. He spent the next twelve years at the hospital, after which the charges against him were dropped. Pound then left the United States, returning to Italy, where he stayed until his death in Venice in 1972.

Ezra Pound was born in 1885 and died in 1972.

Author Search  For more about Ezra Pound, go to www.glenco.com.
Connecting to the Poems

Have you ever experienced a moment in which an image, a sound, or an idea grabbed your attention and changed how you saw the world? This is what the speaker in each of the following poems experiences. Think about the following questions:

- Have you ever looked at something that you see every day as if for the first time? Explain.
- How can striking images change the way we think about mundane aspects of the world?

Building Background

"In a Station of the Metro" and "A Pact" were originally published together in Poetry in 1916. Pound was impressed with the brief but evocative Japanese haiku form (see Literary Terms Handbook, p. R1). After experiencing the moment that inspired "In a Station of the Metro," Pound composed a thirty-line poem. He destroyed this first attempt, calling it a work "of second intensity." After two other tries, he created a short, haiku-like poem with a single powerful image.

Setting Purposes for Reading

**Big Idea** New Poetics

As you read, notice how Pound employs free verse and the rules of Imagism in his work.

**Literary Element** Imagery

Imagery is the "word pictures" that writers create to make their subject more vivid or to evoke an emotional response in the reader. In creating effective images, writers use sensory details, or descriptions that appeal to one or more of the five sense: sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. As you read the poems, examine how Pound uses imagery to heighten the effect of his words.


Reading Strategy Questioning

Questioning is asking yourself regularly whether you’ve understood what you have read. In an Imagist poem such as “In a Station of the Metro,” it is important to use questioning to slow down your reading in order to fully understand the poet’s meaning.

Reading Tip: Taking Notes

As you read “In a Station of the Metro” and “A Pact,” note in a double-entry journal any questions that occur to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How does Pound feel about Walt Whitman?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulary

**apparition** (ap’ ar ih sh’ an) n. a ghostlike or nearly invisible appearance; p. 654 Those who saw the shadowy apparition in the cemetery believed it was a ghost.

**bough** (bou) n. tree branch; p. 654 The baby bird clung to the bough as it waited for food.

**detest** (di test’) v. to greatly dislike or loathe; p. 654 I have detested television ever since my favorite show was canceled.

**sap** (sap) n. a watery source of nutrients that flows through a plant’s circulatory system; p. 654 I decided never to park under a tree again after finding my car covered in sap.

**commerce** (kom’ ars) n. exchange of ideas and opinions; p. 654 Through lively debate and commerce, the two opposing political sides were able to reach an agreement.

Vocabulary Tip: Context Clues

When you look at the words and sentences surrounding a new or unfamiliar word to define it, you are using context clues.

**OBJECTIVES**

In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:

- monitoring comprehension with questioning
- analyzing imagery
A Pact

Ezra Pound

I make a pact with you, Walt Whitman—I have detested you long enough. I come to you as a grown child Who has had a pig-headed father; I am old enough now to make friends. It was you that broke the new wood, Now is a time for carving. We have one sap and one root— Let there be commerce between us.

Vocabulary

detest (di test’) v. to greatly dislike or loathe
sap (sap) n. a watery source of nutrients that flows through a plant’s circulatory system
commerce (kom’ərs) n. exchange of ideas and opinions

Big Idea
New Poetics What does line 6 suggest about Pound’s understanding of Walt Whitman’s relationship to modern poetry?

In a Station of the Metro

Ezra Pound

The apparition of these faces in the crowd; Petals on a wet, black bough.

1 The Metro refers to the Paris subway.

Vocabulary

apparition (ap’ə rish’ən) n. a ghostlike or nearly invisible appearance
bough (bou) n. tree branch
Responding and Thinking Critically

Respond
1. Which of these poems do you think reveals more about the poet? Explain.

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) In the first line of “In a Station of the Metro,” what word does the speaker use to describe how the faces look to him? (b) What might that word suggest about the faces?
3. (a) In the second line, to what image does the speaker compare the faces? (b) From this image, what can you infer about the speaker’s feelings?
4. (a) In “A Pact,” to whom is the poem addressed? In what way have the speaker’s feelings changed about that person? (b) What might be the reason?
5. (a) What is the extended metaphor used in the last four lines of “A Pact”? (b) What idea do you think the speaker expresses in these lines?

Analyze and Evaluate
6. Pound once wrote, “The image is the poet’s pigment.” How is “In a Station of the Metro” like a painting? Explain.
7. (a) Briefly describe the most important differences in tone, form, and content of these two poems. (b) Which poem seems more compelling? Explain.

Connect
8. Big Idea New Poetics How do these poems embody the values and stylistic goals of Modernism and Imagism?

Literary Analysis

Literary Element Imagery
While most of the imagery in literature appeals to the sense of sight, imagery can appeal to all five senses. Sometimes the same image will involve more than a single sense. For example, Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Raven” (page 244) includes the following line: “And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain.” In this line, Poe appeals to the senses of touch, hearing, and sight.

1. Which senses does Pound appeal to in “In a Station of the Metro”?
2. Identify one image from “A Pact” that appeals to the sense of sight.

Writing About Literature

Compare and Contrast Tone Write a brief essay in which you compare and contrast the tones of “In a Station of the Metro” and “A Pact.” Consider how word choice and imagery work together to create a specific tone for each poem. You might want to organize your ideas in a Venn diagram before you begin.

Reading Strategy Questioning
Questioning can help you determine an author’s purpose and the parts of a selection that are the most important. As you read a text, be sure to continually ask yourself whether you understand the ideas the author is trying to convey.

1. What do you think was Pound’s purpose for writing “A Pact”?
2. Write and answer two questions you might ask about the poem that could help you determine Pound’s purpose. Give evidence for your answers.

Vocabulary Practice
Practice with Context Clues For each blank identify the appropriate vocabulary word.

1. Anger never solved anything; we need healthy dialogue and ____ to solve the problem.
2. I highly doubt that some ghostly ____ stole your homework.
3. The heavy storm caused the ____ of a tree to fall and crash into my windshield.
4. I have never enjoyed travel in an airplane; in fact, I have always ____ it.

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
**The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock**

**MEET T. S. ELIOT**

T. S. Eliot revolutionized poetry more than any other twentieth-century writer. His experiments in language and form and his introduction of the scenes and concerns of everyday life into poetry changed literary tastes and influenced future poets.

Eliot was born in St. Louis, Missouri, into a distinguished family that provided him with the best education available. In 1906 he matriculated at Harvard, where he steeped himself in literature and published his first poems. At Harvard, he studied under Irving Babbitt, the New Humanist critic of Romanticism, who helped Eliot develop his taste for classicism in literature. Eliot then studied philosophy at the Sorbonne in Paris, at Harvard, and at Oxford. He eventually settled in England.

**The First Modernist Poet** In his youth, Eliot was influenced by the French Symbolist poets. In England, Eliot met the Imagist poet Ezra Pound, another American expatriate. Pound had an even stronger influence on Eliot. He championed Eliot’s writing and served as his editor. In 1915 Pound persuaded Poetry magazine to publish “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.” Often called the first Modernist poem, “Prufrock” captures the emptiness and alienation many people experienced while living in impersonal modern cities. The poem baffled and angered many readers. They found its subject matter “unpoetic,” its fragmented structure off-putting, and its allusions difficult to understand.

The outbreak of World War I prevented Eliot’s return to Harvard for his final doctoral examinations. He remained in England, where he married Vivien Haigh-Wood, taught school, and worked for Lloyds Bank. He also continued to write poetry and literary essays. His best-known work, *The Waste Land*, was published in 1922; in it he expresses the disillusionment that many people felt after World War I and decries the inability to find meaning and purpose in life. The work brought him international acclaim, but not happiness. Eliot was facing great strain in his marriage and in his job.

“**Genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood.”**

—T. S. Eliot

**Finding a Purpose** Eventually, Eliot began a new, more satisfying career as a book editor and joined the Church of England. In Christianity he found a purpose in life, and in his poems, such as “The Hollow Men,” “Ash Wednesday,” and *Four Quartets*, he described the importance and difficulty of belief in a spiritually impoverished world.

In his later years, Eliot wrote several plays, attempting to adapt verse drama to the modern stage. *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935), about the martyrdom of Saint Thomas à Becket, was a great success in both England and the United States. He also wrote literary criticism. In recognition of his achievements, he received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1948. Eliot’s poetry has been praised for the power of its symbolism, its precise, often ironic language, and its mastery of form. At the time of his death in 1965, Eliot was considered by many to be the most important and influential poet and critic writing in the English language.

*T. S. Eliot was born in 1888 and died in 1965.*
Connecting to the Poem

In Eliot’s poem, the speaker asks himself, “Do I dare?” about several things. As you read, think about the following questions:

- What makes the speaker afraid to dare?
- Do you find the questions that the speaker asks himself to be important or trivial? What would you choose to do if you were in the speaker’s situation?

Building Background

When Eliot wrote “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” cities were growing at a rapid rate. In many countries, city dwellers outnumbered those inhabiting rural areas. Factories overran residential neighborhoods, and people crowded into huge tenement buildings. Factory owners amassed great wealth at the expense of workers who toiled under miserable conditions. In his poems, Eliot expressed the feelings of loneliness, alienation, and frustration that came with these changes.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea | New Poetics

As you read, notice how Eliot deliberately rejects some of the conventions of traditional poetry.

Literary Element | Allusion

An allusion is an indirect reference to a character, a place, or a situation from history, art, music, or literature. For example, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” can be seen as an extended allusion to Dante’s Inferno. By quoting Dante in the epigraph, Eliot suggests that Prufrock’s journey with a companion through the streets of London to “the room” is similar to the journey that Dante and Virgil make through the underworld to the center of hell.


Vocabulary

insidious (in si’dē əs) adj. slyly dangerous; deceitful; p. 658 The insidious criminal gained the confidence of his victims.

presume (pri zōom’ə) v. to expect something without justification; to take for granted; p. 660; The employee presumed she would be promoted because her boss liked her.

digress (dī gre’sə) v. to depart from the main subject; to ramble; p. 660 The history teacher liked to digress by telling the class amusing personal anecdotes.

malingering (ma ling’gər) v. to pretend incapacity or illness to avoid work; p. 660 In order to avoid the big math test, John decided to malingering and stayed home.

deferrential (def’a ren’shəl) adj. yielding to someone else’s opinions or wishes; p. 662 The devoted son was always deferential toward his father.

Vocabulary Tip: Antonyms

Antonyms are words that have opposite or nearly opposite meanings. Antonyms are always the same part of speech.

Connecting to Cultural Context

A piece of writing is more meaningful to you when you place it in its cultural context. Think about the society in which the writer lived, the technologies that surrounded the writer, and the historical forces that influenced the writer’s choice of subject matter, point of view, and tone. “Prufrock,” like much of Eliot’s work, is set in the cultural context of England’s upper-middle-class society in London before, during, and after World War I.

OBJECTIVES

In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:

- interpreting literary allusions
- analyzing visual images
- understanding dramatic monologue
- writing a character analysis
The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock

T. S. Eliot

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherised upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question . . .
Oh, do not ask, ‘What is it?’
Let us go and make our visit.

1. The epigraph is from Dante’s *Inferno*, Canto XXVII, in which a condemned spirit in hell confesses his sins. He says, “If I thought that I was speaking / to someone who would go back to the world, / this flame would shake no more. / But since nobody has ever / gone back alive from this place, if what I hear is true, / I answer you without fear of infamy.”

2. *Etherised* (etherized) (ˈe-θə-rizd) means “anesthetized with ether, as before an operation”; in other words, “made insensitive to pain.”

3. *Tedious* means “tiresome because of length” or “boring.”
In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes,
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.
And indeed there will be time
For the yellow smoke that slides along the street
Rubbing its back upon the window-panes;
There will be time, there will be time
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;
There will be time to murder and create,
And time for all the works and days of hands
That lift and drop a question on your plate;
Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,
And for a hundred visions and revisions,
Before the taking of a toast and tea.

And indeed there will be time
To wonder, ‘Do I dare?’ and, ‘Do I dare?’
Time to turn back and descend the stair,
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair—
(They will say: ‘How his hair is growing thin!’)
My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,
My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple pin—
(They will say: ‘But how his arms and legs are thin!’)

Do I dare
Disturb the universe?
In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

For I have known them all already, known them all—
Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;  
I know the voices dying with a dying fall  
Beneath the music from a farther room.  

So how should I presume?

And I have known the eyes already, known them all—  
The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,  
And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,  
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,  
Then how should I begin

To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?  
And how should I presume?  
And I have known the arms already, known them all—  
Arms that are braceletèd and white and bare  
(But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!)?

Is it perfume from a dress  
That makes me so digress?  
Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl.  
And should I then presume?  
And how should I begin?

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets  
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes  
Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows? ...  
I should have been a pair of ragged claws  
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully!  
Smoothed by long fingers,  
Asleep ... tired ... or it malinger,  
Stretched on the floor, here beside you and me.  
Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,  
Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?

But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,  
Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought in upon a platter

I am no prophet—and here’s no great matter;  
I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker,

Vocabulary

**presume** (pri zōm) v. to expect something without justification; to take for granted

**digress** (di ges) v. to depart from the main subject; to ramble

**maligner** (ma ling’gar) v. to pretend incapacity or illness to avoid work

**Connecting to Cultural Context**

What does this metaphor tell the reader about the society that Prufrock inhabits?

**Allusion**

Although he claims not to be a prophet, Prufrock compares himself to John the Baptist. In what sense does Prufrock envision his head "brought in upon a platter"?

8. [head ... platter] This biblical reference is to the beheading of the prophet John the Baptist (Matthew 14:1–11). King Herod was so pleased with the dancing of Salome, his stepdaughter, that he promised her anything she desired. Prompted by her mother, Salome asked for the head of John on a platter. Herod granted her request.

9. A prophet is a person who predicts the future or who speaks by divine inspiration.
85 And I have seen the eternal Footman\textsuperscript{10} hold my coat, and snicker,  
And in short, I was afraid.

And would it have been worth it, after all,  
After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,  
Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me,  
90 Would it have been worth while,  
To have bitten off the matter with a smile,  
To have squeezed the universe into a ball  
To roll it towards some overwhelming question,  
To say: ‘I am Lazarus, come from the dead,\textsuperscript{11}  
Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all’—  
If one, settling a pillow by her head,  
Should say: ‘That is not what I meant at all.  
That is not it, at all.’  
And would it have been worth it, after all,  
Would it have been worth while,
After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets,
After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that trail along the floor—
And this, and so much more?—
It is impossible to say just what I mean!

But as if a magic lantern\(^\text{12}\) threw the nerves in patterns on a screen:
Would it have been worth while
If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,
And turning toward the window, should say:
‘That is not it at all,
That is not what I meant, at all.’

No! I am not Prince Hamlet,\(^\text{13}\) nor was meant to be;
Am an attendant lord, one that will do
To swell a progress,\(^\text{14}\) start a scene or two,
Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,
\textbf{Deferential,} glad to be of use,
\textbf{Politic,}\(^\text{15}\) cautious, and meticulous;
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;\(^\text{16}\)
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—
Almost, at times, the Fool.

I grow old . . . I grow old . . .
I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?
I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach.
I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I do not think that they will sing to me.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back
When the wind blows the water white and black.

We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

\(\text{12. The \textit{magic lantern}, a forerunner of the modern slide projector, was a device for projecting enlarged images.}\)

\(\text{13. \textit{Prince Hamlet} is the Prince of Denmark, the tragic hero of Shakespeare's play \textit{Hamlet}.}\)

\(\text{14. \textit{To swell a progress} is to participate in, and thereby increase (swell) the number of people in a royal procession or a play.}\)

\(\text{15. \textit{Politic} (po\textasciitilde{\i}l\textasciitilde{\ae} tik) means "characterized by prudence or shrewdness in managing, dealing, or promoting a policy."}\)

\(\text{16. \textit{High sentence} is fancy, pompous speech full of advice, like that of the old counselor Polonius in \textit{Hamlet}. \textit{Obtuse} (ob\textasciitilde{t}ts) means "slow in understanding" or "dull."}\)
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. What image does the name J. Alfred Prufrock conjure up for you? How does Prufrock, as his character and personality are expressed throughout the poem, illustrate this image?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) In lines 1–9, what do the images that Prufrock uses to describe the evening and the places he will travel through evoke? (b) What do these descriptions suggest about his state of mind?
3. (a) What kinds of activities does Prufrock say he will have time for in lines 26–48? (b) What does he mean by “Do I dare/Disturb the universe”?
4. (a) How does Prufrock describe himself and his life in lines 49–74? (b) What does Prufrock’s description of his life suggest about his personal self-assessment?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) What are being compared in the extended metaphor in lines 15–22? (b) How does this metaphor contribute to the meaning of the poem?
6. (a) In lines 26–27, Prufrock says that there will be time “To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet.” For what occasions does one “prepare a face”? Explain. (b) What is the difference between meeting a “face” and meeting a person?
7. (a) What, in your opinion, is Prufrock’s “overwhelming question” (lines 10 and 93)? (b) Why does Prufrock never ask the question?
8. (a) What does the allusion to mermaids (lines 124–130) suggest about Prufrock’s state of mind? (b) What is the function of the final line of the poem?

Connect
9. Big Idea New Poetics (a) How does this “love song” differ from traditional love poetry? (b) How is the title of the poem ironic?

VISUAL LITERACY: Fine Art
Study the painting Rainy Night below. The painter, Charles Burchfield (1893–1967), is known for his watercolors. This work was painted in 1930 and is representative of the second phase of the artist’s career, when he painted scenes depicting the bleakness of city life.

1. What is your overall impression of the painting? Cite details in the painting that contribute to your impression.
2. Which images or lines from “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” might you use to describe this painting? Explain.


T. S. ELIOT 663
**LITERARY ANALYSIS**

**Literary Element** | Allusion
---|---
When an author uses an allusion, he or she appeals to the reader to appreciate and enjoy a shared artistic experience. An allusion can add richness and depth to a work of literature through its association of ideas. For example, lines 92–93 contain an allusion to Andrew Marvell’s poem “To His Coy Mistress,” in which the speaker says, “Let us roll all our strength and all / Our sweetness into one ball, / And tear our pleasures with rough strife / Through the iron gates of life.” This allusion is ironic because Prufrock, after squeezing “the universe into a ball,” is unable to “roll it towards some overwhelming question.”

1. In the allusion to Shakespeare in lines 111–119, why does Prufrock claim he is not Prince Hamlet?
2. In the poem, Prufrock makes allusions to John the Baptist, Lazarus, and Hamlet. What do these characters have in common? How do they relate to Prufrock?
3. In your opinion, what is the overall effect of Eliot’s use of allusions in this poem?

**Review: Dramatic Monologue**
As you learned on page 500, a **dramatic monologue** is an extended speech by a literary character to a silent listener. When that silent listener is the reader, the speech takes the form of an interior monologue, also known as **stream of consciousness**, a term first used by the psychologist William James to describe the spontaneous flow of a person’s random thoughts and feelings. Some readers have interpreted “Prufrock” as a stream-of-consciousness monologue in which Prufrock addresses his **alter ego**, or the opposite side of his personality.

**Partner Activity** Meet with a classmate and talk about the function of the dramatic monologue in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.” Address these questions during your discussion:
1. Who is the “you” in line 1?
2. What is the relationship between the “you” in the poem and the “you” in the epigraph from Dante’s *Inferno*?
3. Does Prufrock maintain the same tone throughout the poem? Explain.

**READING AND VOCABULARY**

**Reading Strategy** | Connecting to Cultural Context
---|---
You can use what you know about the **cultural context** of the poem to enhance its meaning. For example, the allusion “In the room the women come and go / Talking of Michelangelo” (lines 13–14, 35–36) refers to the great Italian Renaissance painter.

1. What sort of room do you imagine the women are in? Describe it.
2. What can you infer about these women?
3. Why do you think that the lines are repeated? What can you infer from this repetition about the nature of the women’s conversations?

**Vocabulary Practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice with Antonyms</th>
<th>Find the antonym for each vocabulary word from “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” listed in the first column. Use a dictionary if you need help.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. insidious</td>
<td>a. candid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. presume</td>
<td>a. demur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. digress</td>
<td>a. stray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. malinger</td>
<td>a. persevere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. deferential</td>
<td>a. rude</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Academic Vocabulary**

Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R86. These words will help you think, write, and talk about the selection.

**comment** (ko’ ment) v. to make an observation or criticism; to express an opinion

**seek** (sēk) v. to go in search of; to look for

**Practice and Apply**

1. **Comment** on how successful you think Eliot was in finding new forms and new poetics to express his ideas in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.”
2. What does the speaker seem to **seek** throughout the poem? Does he find it?
Writing About Literature

**Analyze Character** Is Prufrock a tragic character—is the reader supposed to feel sorrow and pity about his situation? Or is he a comic character—is the reader supposed to laugh at him or think he is foolish? Write a brief essay in which you express and support your opinion. Begin by formulating a main idea in which you state that Prufrock is essentially tragic or comic—or a combination of both. Then review the poem to find lines and images that support your position. Organize your thoughts in a graphic organizer, such as the one below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Detail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

Then write a draft, making sure to include all your supporting details. Make smooth transitions between your ideas.

After you complete your draft, meet with a peer reviewer. Evaluate each other’s work and suggest revisions. Then proofread and edit your draft for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Submit the final copy to your teacher.

**Performing**

**Put Yourself in Prufrock’s Shoes** Choose a section (at least 15–20 lines) of “Prufrock” to perform. In planning your performance, you can create a costume or use props if you wish, but it is more important to choose a physical posture and vocal quality appropriate to the character. Plan your facial expressions, gestures, and movements. Also, practice speaking the lines aloud to determine the appropriate volume, intonation, and timing—and to determine which words and phrases you should emphasize. Finally, perform your piece for the class.

**Eliot’s Language and Style**

**Using Infinitives** An infinitive is a verb form that is usually preceded by the word to and is used as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb. In “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” Eliot uses infinitives to achieve emphasis through repetition and grammatical parallelism. Consider the following stanzas:

“And would it have been worth it, after all,
After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,
Among the porcelain, among some talk of you
and me,
Would it have been worth while,
To have bitten off the matter with a smile,
To have squeezed the universe into a ball

To roll it towards some overwhelming question,
To say: ‘I am Lazarus, come from the dead,
Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all’—
If one, settling a pillow by her head,
Should say: ‘That is not what I meant at all.
That is not it, at all.’”

Notice the grammatical parallelism in this stanza. All but one infinitive serve as appositives to “it.”

**Activity** Create a chart similar to the one above in which you list other infinitives in the poem, their parts of speech, and their functions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Part of Speech</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To have bitten</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>appositive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To have squeezed</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>appositive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To roll</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>appositive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To say</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>appositive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To tell</td>
<td>adverb</td>
<td>modifies “come back”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Revising Check**

**Using Infinitives** With a partner, go through the character analysis essay you wrote earlier. Look for places where you could improve clarity by using infinitives. Revise your essay accordingly.

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
William Carlos Williams led a double life as a doctor and an award-winning poet. Often he would write between seeing patients, sometimes even jotting down poems on prescription pads. Despite the fact that his attention was divided, Williams managed to write some of the most memorable poems of the Imagist movement. In his poetry, he captured America’s colloquial speech and presented everyday events in powerful, compact lines.

“Eyes stand first in the poet’s equipment.” —William Carlos Williams

Doctor and Poet  Williams was born in Rutherford, New Jersey, and came from a diverse background: his mother was born in Puerto Rico, and his father was British. Williams began writing poetry in high school and soon settled on the goal of becoming both a doctor and a writer.

While attending the University of Pennsylvania Medical School, Williams wrote many of the poems that would appear in his first book, Poems, published in 1909. At school he also met and befriended the poet Ezra Pound. Pound would become a great influence on the young Williams, even arranging for the publication of his second collection, The Tempers, in 1913.

After completing his internship in New York and further study in advanced pediatrics in Leipzig, Germany, Williams returned to Rutherford, where he began his medical practice and continued to write. In his next book, Al Que Quiere! (To Him Who Wants It!), published in 1917, Williams drew upon his Spanish and Puerto Rican heritage and established himself as a major voice in modern poetry. However, Williams soon began to drift away from Pound and mainstream Imagism. He felt that Pound’s ideas were too rooted in the cultural values of Europe, and not those of the United States, which Williams so adored.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Williams published several books, including two collections of poetry, Kora in Hell and Spring and All; a book of essays, In the American Grain; and a novel, White Mule, which was the first in a trilogy telling the story of an American family. From 1946 through 1958, Williams worked on his masterpiece, Paterson. This epic poem, which spans five volumes, mythologizes the world of northern New Jersey. In 1963 Williams was awarded a posthumous Pulitzer Prize for his collection Pictures from Brueghel and Other Poems.

Visionary and Legacy  Believing that poetry should be grounded in everyday things and scenes, Williams was famous for saying, “No ideas but in things.” He explored the world around him, writing of New Jersey’s gritty, industrial landscape and of his patients and neighbors, many of whom were impoverished immigrants struggling to succeed in the United States. Williams left an impressive legacy of work that had an enormous influence on the writers of the 1950s and 1960s and continues to be very important to poets today. Somehow, while accomplishing so much as a writer, he also managed to deliver more than two thousand babies.

William Carlos Williams was born in 1883 and died in 1963.
Connecting to the Poems
How do the things we see, hear, feel, smell, and taste affect how we interact with the world? In Williams’s poems, the speaker expresses awe and delight with ordinary aspects of the physical world. Think about the following questions:

• Have you ever found beauty in an ordinary thing or sound?
• How does beauty reveal itself in everyday life?

Building Background
Imagism’s influence is obvious in “The Red Wheelbarrow” and “This Is Just to Say.” Of the experience that inspired “The Red Wheelbarrow,” Williams wrote, “The sight impressed me somehow as about the most important, the most integral that it had ever been my pleasure to gaze upon.” About writing in this style, Williams wrote: “Cut and cut again whatever you write—while you leave by your art no trace of your cutting—and the final utterance will remain packed with what you have to say.”

Big Idea New Poetics
As you read, notice how Williams’s spare style exemplifies Imagism and evokes the American landscape.

Literary Element Form
Form is the structure of a poem. Many contemporary writers use loosely structured poetic forms instead of following stricter, more traditional patterns. These poets vary the length of the lines and stanzas, relying on emphasis, rhythm, and the placement of words and phrases to convey meaning. As you read these poems, examine how Williams uses and breaks with traditional forms as a means of adding depth and complexity to his poems.


Reading Strategy Recognizing Author’s Purpose
An author’s purpose is the author’s intent in writing a piece of literature. Authors typically write in order to persuade, inform, explain, entertain, or describe. While reading these poems, try to determine Williams’s purpose for writing them.

Reading Tip: Taking Notes Make a list of questions to ask yourself as you read “The Red Wheelbarrow” and “This Is Just to Say.” As you think about your answers, decide what the author’s purpose might be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What did I learn that I didn’t already know?</td>
<td>I learned that simple things can leave a lasting impression.</td>
<td>The poem is about a simple red wheelbarrow sitting in the rain.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulary

depend (di pend’) v. to rely on; p. 668. In football, the whole team depends on the quarterback to get the ball to the end zone.

glazed (gliːzd) adj. covered with a smooth, glossy coating; p. 668. The cinnamon rolls were glazed with icing.

delicious (di lish’ as) adj. having a very pleasing taste; p. 669. I love all kinds of ice cream flavors but I find chocolate to be the most delicious.

Vocabulary Tip: Antonyms When two words have opposite or nearly opposite meanings, they are called antonyms. Note that antonyms are always the same part of speech.
The Red Wheelbarrow

William Carlos Williams

so much depends
upon

a red wheel
barrow

5 glazed with rain
water

beside the white
chickens.

Literary Element
Form  What effect does the break between the words wheel and barrow have?

Vocabulary
depend (di pend’ v. to rely on

glazed (gláz) adj. covered with a smooth, glossy coating
This Is Just to Say

William Carlos Williams

I have eaten the plums that were in the icebox
and which you were probably saving for breakfast.

Forgive me;
they were delicious,
so sweet
and so cold.

Plums and Pears. Paul Cezanne. Oil on canvas, 7¼ x 14 in.
The Barnes Foundation Collection, Merion Station, PA.

Reading Strategy
Recognizing Author's Purpose

What does line 9 suggest about the author’s purpose?

Vocabulary

delicious (di lish’ as) adj. having a very pleasing taste
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. What feelings do the images, tones, and word choice in these poems evoke?

Recall and Interpret
2. What do the first two lines of “The Red Wheelbarrow” suggest about the speaker’s response to the scene?
3. (a) What does Williams describe in stanzas 3 and 4? (b) What do you think Williams is saying by introducing these elements into his poem?
4. (a) In “This Is Just to Say,” what does the speaker admit to in the first two lines of the poem? (b) What does this admission suggest about the speaker’s relationship with the person being addressed?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) What does the speaker want from the person being addressed? (b) What is described in the final lines of the poem? Why do you think these things are described?

6. (a) Williams carefully arranges his words, including breaking up the words rainwater and wheelbarrow. How, in your opinion, does the breaking of these words across lines affect their meaning? (b) What do you think of this technique? Explain.

7. (a) What is the tone of “This Is Just to Say”? (b) Why is this tone appropriate?

Connect
8. Big Idea New Poetics How are these poems innovative in their subject matter and style?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Form
No poem is ever entirely without form. Even free-verse poems contain some formal elements. Because poetic forms vary greatly from period to period, and from poet to poet, it can occasionally be difficult to identify the forms being used. For example, Williams’s poems appear, at first glance, to be written in free verse—lacking any formal structure. However, these poems have consistent stanza and line lengths, and though not technically metered, they have strong rhythmic qualities.

1. Briefly describe the forms used in “The Red Wheelbarrow” and “This Is Just to Say.”
2. Why do you think Williams used these forms?

Reading Strategy Recognizing Author’s Purpose
Writers of fiction or nonfiction generally have purposes that can be easily identified. This is not always true of poets. In Williams’s “This Is Just to Say,” the purpose at first seems to be to apologize to an unnamed listener, but it goes beyond that.

1. What do you think is the author’s purpose in “The Red Wheelbarrow”? What evidence do you find for this purpose in the poem?
2. What do you think is the author’s purpose in “This Is Just to Say”? What evidence do you find for this purpose in the poem?

Writing About Literature
Compare and Contrast Form Write a brief essay in which you compare and contrast the form in “The Red Wheelbarrow” with that of another poem you have previously read. Make sure to include in your essay a discussion of how form affects the meaning in each poem.

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.

670 UNIT 5 BEGINNINGS OF THE MODERN AGE
Vocabulary Workshop

Word Meanings

Defining Compound Words

so much depends upon

a red wheel barrow

—William Carlos Williams, from “The Red Wheelbarrow”

Connecting to Literature Wheelbarrow is a compound word; that is, a word made up of two words that together have a meaning different from each word’s meaning. Compound words may be spelled open (magic lantern), closed (sawdust), or hyphenated (half-deserted). You can check a dictionary to find out whether a compound word is closed, open, or hyphenated. Notice that Williams turns wheelbarrow, which is normally closed, into an open compound word and puts barrow on a new line for poetic effect.

Examples

The meanings of many compound words are obvious from the parts that make up the word. For example:

- What is sawdust?
  It is the dust created by sawing wood.

- What is a look-alike?
  It’s someone or something that looks just like someone or something else.

- What is a natural resource?
  It is a naturally occurring material that is useful to humans, such as mineral deposits, forests, or water.

The meanings of other compound words, however, may be less obvious. To learn the meaning of less familiar compound words, you should consult a dictionary.

Exercise

A. Use your understanding of the following compound words to match each word with its definition.

1. elbow room  a. underwater plant
2. seaweed  b. metal screen or grating
3. grillwork  c. mistreated
4. swaybacked  d. adequate space
5. ill-used  e. having a sagging spine

B. Define the following compound words based on their word parts. Discuss your definitions with a partner. Then check your definitions.

1. ivory tower
2. dark horse
3. icebox
4. green revolution

OBJECTIVES

- Analyze compound words.
- Use research tools such as a dictionary.
MEET AMY LOWELL

Amy Lowell was a brash, controversial, uncompromising woman, and one of the most important poets of the Imagist movement. Her promotion of Imagism in the United States, along with her irreverent personality, turned Lowell into one of the most well-known poets of her generation.

Amy Lowell was born in Brookline, Massachusetts. Her family was wealthy and socially prominent: Lowell was related to Fireside poet James Russell Lowell (see pages 200–201), her brother Abbott served as the president of Harvard University from 1909 to 1933, and her brother Percival was a famed astronomer. Lowell spent her first twenty-eight years like most women in her social set. She traveled, was educated in private schools in Boston, and considered prospects for marriage. However, in 1902, Lowell chose a new path and dedicated her life to poetry.

An Imagist Poet In 1913 Lowell read several poems by Imagist poet H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) in Poetry magazine. Lowell connected immediately to the Imagist style. She traveled to England that same year, met Ezra Pound (page 652), and joined his Imagist circle. The first anthology of Imagist poetry, Des Imagistes, edited by Pound, appeared the next year and included a poem by Lowell. Also in 1914, Lowell published her book Sword Blades and Poppy Seed.

Lowell also began to make friends with many literary figures, including Robert Frost (page 704) and D. H. Lawrence. In 1915 she helped launch Frost’s career with a favorable review of his collection North of Boston in the New Republic.

Poetic Influence Lowell’s growing influence within the Imagist movement caused Pound to remove himself from it. He would later sarcastically refer to the group as “Amygism” after it had fully come under Lowell’s influence. Over the next several years, she edited three volumes of the annual anthology Some Imagist Poets. Before 1920 she published many more books of poetry and prose, including Can Grande’s Castle, Tendencies in Modern American Poetry, and Men, Women, and Ghosts.

“Why should one read Poetry? That seems to me a good deal like asking: Why should one eat?” —Amy Lowell

Inspired by a lecture she gave about John Keats in 1921 and by a lifelong fascination with the English Romantic poet, Lowell published a biography of Keats. This, unfortunately, would be her last publication during her life. In 1925 Lowell died of a cerebral hemorrhage. One volume of her poetry, What’s O’Clock, appeared after her death and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize.

Lowell is important not just for her literary contributions, but also for her promotion of the poetic innovation of Imagism. Fellow Modernist T. S. Eliot called her “the demon saleswoman of poetry.” Through her tenacity, her brilliant mind, and her poems, Lowell helped to define the texture of twentieth-century verse.

Amy Lowell was born in 1874 and died in 1925.

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Amy Lowell was born in 1874 and died in 1925.
Connecting to the Poems

Can you ever “see” your feelings? Do your feelings ever seem to have weight, shape, or color? In “Summer Rain” and “Fireworks,” Lowell describes emotions that are so powerful that they take on vibrant colors and swift action. As you read the poems, think about the following questions:

- How do your feelings about others change your reaction to your environment?
- What do you think hate looks like? What might love look like?

Building Background

Both “Summer Rain” and “Fireworks” appeared in Lowell’s collection *Pictures of the Floating World*. This book contains nearly 200 Imagistic free-verse poems and is broken into multiple parts. The poems from the first section, “Lacquer Prints,” are based on a set of Japanese prints and very closely resemble haiku, a Japanese poetic form. The section from which “Summer Rain” and “Fireworks” are drawn is titled “Planes of Personality.” This section lyrically celebrates intense emotions such as love, hate, and longing.

Setting Purposes for Reading

**Big Idea**  Modern Poetry

As you read, notice how Lowell uses imagery to convey emotions and ideas.

**Literary Element**  Enjambment

Enjambment is the continuation of a sentence across a line break without a punctuated pause between lines. A poet may choose to use enjambment for a number of reasons: to maintain a rhyme scheme or a rhythm, to increase readability, or to create exciting juxtapositions of language or ideas. As you read, pay attention to Lowell’s use of enjambment and how it affects the poems.


**Reading Strategy**  Interpreting Imagery

**Imagery** is the “word pictures” authors use to evoke an emotional response in the reader. Poets may use figures of speech, including metaphors, similes, and personification, to create images. Often it is possible to explicitly determine the meaning of imagery. Other times different readers will have different interpretations of the same image.

**Reading Tip: Taking Notes**  Use a chart like the one below to record your interpretations of Lowell’s imagery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imagery</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“It spits and sparkles in stars and balls, Buds into roses—and flares, and falls.”</td>
<td>The speaker is filled with intense emotion upon seeing this hated person.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vocabulary**

- **pepper** (pe’par) v. to shower with small objects; p. 675  The crowd was peppered with candy from the passing parade floats.
- **crimson** (krim’zan) adj. a bright purplish red; p. 675  The girl’s crimson coat caught the eye of many people.
- **azure** (ă’zhar) adj. a light purplish blue; p. 675  The azure sky was a beautiful sight.
- **mount** (mount) v. to ascend or to soar; p. 675  As the rocket mounted, the crowd began to cheer.

**Vocabulary Tip: Synonyms**

When two words have nearly the same meaning, they are called synonyms. Note that synonyms always have the same part of speech.
All night our room was outer-walled with rain. Drops fell and flattened on the tin roof, And rang like little disks of metal. Ping!—Ping!—and there was not a pinpoint of silence between them.

The rain rattled and clashed, And the slats of the shutters danced and glittered. But to me the darkness was red-gold and crocus-coloured With your brightness, And the words you whispered to me

Sprang up and flamed—orange torches against the rain. Torches against the wall of cool, silver rain!

**Literary Element**  Enjambment  *Why do you think Lowell chose to use enjambment in lines 9–10?*
You hate me and I hate you,
And we are so polite, we two!

But whenever I see you, I burst apart
And scatter the sky with my blazing heart.
It spits and sparkles in stars and balls,
Buds into roses—and flares, and falls.

Scarlet buttons, and pale green disks,
Silver spirals and asterisks,
Shoot and tremble in a mist
Peppered with mauve and amethyst.

I shine in the windows and light up the trees,
And all because I hate you, if you please.

And when you meet me, you rend asunder
And go up in a flaming wonder
Of saffron cubes, and crimson moons,
And wheels all amaranths and maroons.

Golden lozenges and spades,
Arrows of malachites and jades,
Patens of copper, azure sheaves.

As you mount, you flash in the glossy leaves.

Such fireworks as we make, we two!
Because you hate me and I hate you.

1. *Rend asunder* means "to tear apart."
2. Here, *saffron* refers to an orange-yellow color.
3. Here, *amaranth* refers to a reddish purple color.
4. *Malachite* is a deep green stone.
5. *Patens* are small metal plates.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. In your opinion, which poem expresses the speaker’s emotion most effectively? Explain.

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) In “Summer Rain,” in what ways does the speaker describe the sound of the rain? (b) What do these descriptions suggest about the speaker’s feelings for the rain?

3. (a) How does the speaker see “the darkness”? (b) What does this suggest about the speaker’s feelings for the person addressed?

4. (a) In the first couplet of “Fireworks,” besides hate, how does the speaker characterize the relationship described in the poem? (b) What does this description suggest about the poem’s “fireworks”?

5. (a) What does the speaker claim to do in the window and to the trees? (b) In your opinion, how does this image affect the following line?

Analyze and Evaluate
6. (a) How does the rhyme scheme in “Fireworks” differ from that in “Summer Rain”? (b) Which poem’s rhyme scheme do you prefer? Explain.

7. (a) In what way does the content of the couplets in “Fireworks” differ from that in the quatrains? (b) Is the variation in stanza length effective?

Connect
8. Big Idea New Poetics In your opinion, how are the ideals of Modernism reflected in these poems? How are the more classical ideas and techniques reflected?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Enjambment
Enjambed lines contrast with end-stopped lines, in which both meaning and grammatical structure come to an end or a definitive pause. In both “Fireworks” and “Summer Rain,” enjambment serves to emphasize certain words or to expand their meanings by placing them in different contexts. This technique also serves to express the flow of the speaker’s thoughts and to establish rhythm.

Partner Activity Meet with a classmate to discuss the effect Lowell creates with each example of enjambment in “Fireworks.”

Reading Strategy Interpreting Imagery
The imagery in a poem can contribute to its tone. Use the imagery chart you created on page 673 to determine the tone of each poem based on the imagery. How would you describe the tone of each of these poems? Support your opinion with examples from the poems.

Vocabulary Practice
Practice with Synonyms Read the following sentences. Choose the best synonym for the underlined word. Use a dictionary if you need help.

1. Mark Twain’s literature was often peppered with regional dialect.
   a. dotted   b. flashed   c. pestered

2. All that remained of the sunset was a splash of crimson fading into the horizon.
   a. violet   b. scarlet   c. black

3. The morning sky was a beautiful azure color until the black storm clouds rolled in.
   a. blue   b. pastel   c. dark

4. The movie ended when the cowboy mounted his horse and rode off into the sunset.
   a. brushed   b. galloped   c. ascended
Connecting to the Reading Selections

How does one distinguish between what is ordinary and what is exhilarating? In asking such questions, poets trace the development of their work from an initial feeling or idea to a condensed and captivating piece of writing. The four writers compared here—Archibald MacLeish, Rainer Maria Rilke, Mark Strand, and Ishmael Reed—explore their enthusiasms for both reading and writing poetry in the following selections.

Archibald MacLeish

_Ars Poetica_ ................................................................................ poem ..........680
_Defining poetry_

Rainer Maria Rilke

_from Letters to a Young Poet_ .....................................letter ..........682
_Looking within_

Mark Strand

_Eating Poetry_ ........................................................................ poem ..........684
_A hunger for words_

Ishmael Reed

_beware: do not read this poem_ ................................. poem ..........686
_Poetry—a warning_

**COMPARING THE Big Idea New Poetics**

During the twentieth century, the boundaries of subject matter, form, and style were extended. Poets from the United States and elsewhere—such as MacLeish, Rilke, Strand, and Reed—sought to capture individual experience by bending the traditional rules and conventions of poetic form.

**COMPARING Imagist Poetry**

Modernist poets let content dictate form. In the early 1900s, the Imagists employed clear, concrete language to convey precise images. In abandoning traditional language, the Imagists’ poetry and their principles are reflected in the poetry of the later twentieth century.

**COMPARING Literary Trends**

Like other aspects of culture, literature has trends. However, sometimes a literary trend is not identified until years after it has passed. Distinct styles become apparent when one compares literary movements, such as local-color writing and Modernism.
Ars Poetica

MEET ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

Archibald MacLeish was a poet with a purpose. He believed that, through love and awareness, U.S. citizens could achieve the goals of freedom and equality set down in the Declaration of Independence. MacLeish’s idealism is evident both in his poetry and in his public life.

“But what, then, is the business of poetry? Precisely to make sense of the chaos of our lives.”
—Archibald MacLeish

Creative Echoes Born in the late 1800s in Glencoe, Illinois, MacLeish was keenly aware of both the traditional world and the constantly evolving cultural landscape of the early twentieth century. After attending Yale University, where he played football, MacLeish entered Harvard Law School at the age of twenty-three. Being at Harvard further enlivened his interest in, as MacLeish put it, “the vision of mental time, of the interminable journey of the human mind, the great tradition of the intellectual past which knows the bearings of the future.” Within the next two years, he married singer Ada Hitchcock and enlisted in the army. After World War I, he became a successful lawyer, but he soon quit his job to move with his wife and two small children to Paris. MacLeish pursued his writing there and published four poetry collections in five years. In 1928 MacLeish returned with his family to the United States, where he continued writing poetry. In 1933 he won his first Pulitzer Prize for Conquistador, an epic poem about the conquest of Mexico by the Spanish.

Public Interests Concerned about the nation’s social problems, MacLeish also wrote journalistic articles and supported President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal economic reforms and anti-Hitler stance. Critic David Luytens called MacLeish “the poet laureate of the New Deal.” In the 1940s, MacLeish served as director of a wartime office of propaganda, as assistant secretary of state, and as a librarian of Congress. He was also chairman of the U.S. delegation for the founding conference of UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) in 1945. Through all these diplomatic commitments, MacLeish continued to write poetry as well as drama. His first play to be produced—Panic: A Play in Verse—was based on the biblical story of Cain but was set in the Great Depression. MacLeish, who was also on the editorial board of the business magazine Fortune, lamented the economic hardship and growing despair brought on by the Depression.

In the 1950s, MacLeish won two more Pulitzer Prizes: one for poetry and one for drama. Between 1944 and 1954—during what has been called his “second renaissance” as a poet—he published more than eighty poems. MacLeish’s later works continued to explore both the poetic expression of the mysteries and feelings of the poet’s inner world, and of the core meaning of U.S. citizenship as passed down through the founders of the nation. Critic Hayden Carruth said, “MacLeish wrote not as a personal crusader, never as a political crank or lonely visionary, but instead as the spokesman of the people.”

Archibald MacLeish was born in 1892 and died in 1982.

Author Search For more about Archibald MacLeish, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poem

How do you judge an experience or a piece of art? Are there clear criteria that help you form an evaluation, or do more subjective factors inform your response, transcending mere positive or negative impressions? In “Ars Poetica,” MacLeish expresses what he believes a poem should be. As you read this poem, think about the following questions:

- How do you judge a poem?
- What qualities should a good poem have?

Building Background

Ars poetica, a Latin phrase meaning “the art of poetry,” is the title of a work written around 13 b.c. by the Roman poet Horace. In this text, Horace laid down his own rules for writing poetry. In 1926 MacLeish published his poem “Ars Poetica” in a collection titled Streets in the Moon. When he wrote it, MacLeish was living in Paris and was part of a circle of innovative writers—among them Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and E. E. Cummings—who were working to perfect their own creative skills.

Setting Purposes for Reading

**Big Idea** New Poetics

Although the concept for this poem has deep historical roots, MacLeish’s style is innovative and modern. As you read, note how the unique pattern of lines and creative, startling imagery add to his purpose.

**Literary Element** Theme

A theme is a central idea presented in a literary work. In some works the theme is stated directly, but in most works the theme is implied and revealed gradually. A literary work may have more than one theme. As you read “Ars Poetica,” look for events, dialogue, and description that help develop the theme of the poem.


Reading Strategy Analyzing Style

Combining knowledge about the separate parts of something to form an overall judgment of it is analyzing. Writers’ style includes the expressive qualities that distinguish their work, such as word choice, the length and arrangement of sentences, and the use of figurative language and imagery. As you read “Ars Poetica,” analyze MacLeish’s style. Consider why he chose to break the lines the way he did and how the imagery and word choice contribute to the overall effect of the poem.

Reading Tip: Taking Notes Record the effects of MacLeish’s style in a chart like the one below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author’s Style</th>
<th>Overall Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irregular line length</td>
<td>Helps emphasize certain words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulary

**palpable** (pal ’pa bəl) adj. tangible; able to be touched or felt; p. 680 The tension was palpable in the team’s locker room before the big game.

**mute** (mūt) adj. silent; p. 680 James hit the mute button on the television and decided to focus on his homework.

**entangled** (en tan ’gəld) adj. twisted together; caught p. 680 The fish was entangled in the fisherman’s net.

Vocabulary Tip: Analogies An analogy is a type of comparison that is based on the relationships between things or ideas. To solve an analogy question, identify the relationship in the first pair of words. These five types of relationships are a good place to start:

- Association or Usage
- Example/Class
- Object/Characteristic
- Part/Whole
- Synonym or Antonym
A poem should be palpable and mute
As a globed fruit

Dumb
As old medallions to the thumb

Silent as the sleeve-worn stone
Of casement ledges where the moss has grown—

A poem should be wordless
As the flight of birds

A poem should be motionless in time
As the moon climbs

Leaving, as the moon releases
Twig by twig the night-entangled trees,

Leaving, as the moon behind the winter leaves,
Memory by memory the mind—

A poem should be motionless in time
As the moon climbs

A poem should be equal to:
Not true

For all the history of grief
An empty doorway and a maple leaf

For love
The leaning grasses and two lights above the sea—

A poem should not mean
But be

Literary Element  Theme  How does MacLeish develop the idea that a poem can be "wordless"?

Vocabulary
palpable (pal’pə bəl) adj. tangible; able to be touched or felt
mute (mút) adj. silent
entangled (en tan’gold) adj. twisted together; caught
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Which image in the poem could you see, feel, or hear most vividly in your imagination? Why?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What five adjectives in lines 1–8 describe what a poem should be? (b) What is ironic about the use of these words to describe a poem?
3. (a) To what does the speaker compare poetry in lines 9–16? (b) What does this image suggest about the function of poetry?
4. (a) How does the speaker suggest that grief and love should be represented in poetry? (b) What can you infer from this suggestion about the way poems should express emotions?

Literary Analysis

Literary Element Theme
The themes of a literary work are different from its topics. In MacLeish’s poem, the topic is poetry itself, but the theme is a statement about poetry that suggests its relation to life in general.
1. What themes do you find in the poem?
2. Are the themes stated directly or implied? Explain.

Writing About Literature
Analyze Genre Elements Where do you draw the line between poetry and prose? Many writers of the modern era wrote works that blur the traditional distinctions between the two. Although MacLeish’s poem is written in rhymed couplets, the lines in the poem are of irregular length and meter. How do you think MacLeish decided where to break the lines? Write a brief essay in which you analyze the features that make this selection poetry rather than prose. Be sure to show how these features contribute to the author’s purpose.

Analyze and Evaluate
5. In your opinion, how effective are the images in this poem in appealing to the senses? Explain.
6. How does the repetition in lines 9–10 and lines 15–16 contribute to the poem?
7. In your opinion, do lines 20 and 22 adequately capture the emotions of grief and love? Why or why not?
8. A simile is a figure of speech in which things are compared through the use of words such as like or as. How do the similes in “Ars Poetica” contribute to the effectiveness of the poem?

Connect
9. Big Idea New Poetics MacLeish was a believer in both tradition and innovation. What traits of Modernism do you see in “Ars Poetica”?

Reading Strategy Analyzing Style
Style is made up of the expressive qualities that distinguish an author’s work. It can reveal an author’s personality as well as his or her purpose in writing.

Group Activity Meet with a group of classmates to discuss how each of the following elements contributes to MacLeish’s poem as a whole.
- figurative language
- sentence length
- diction
- structure

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Analogies Choose the pair of words below that best completes each analogy.
1. palpable : real ::
   a. durable : strong
   b. malleable : heat
2. mute : noisy ::
   a. smart : curiously
   b. slowly : quickly

Literature Online Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
You ask whether your poems are good. You send them to publishers; you compare them with other poems; you are disturbed when certain publishers reject your attempts. Well now, since you have given me permission to advise you, I suggest that you give all that up. You are looking outward and, above all else, that you must not do now. No one can advise and help you, no one.

There is only one way: Go within. Search for the cause, find the impenetrous¹ that bids you write. Put it to this test: Does it stretch out its roots in the deepest place of your heart? Can you avow² that you would die if you were forbidden to write? Above all, in the most silent hour of your night, ask yourself this: Must I write? Dig deep into yourself for a true answer. And if it should ring its assent, if you can confidently meet this serious question with a simple, "I must," then build your life upon it. It has become your necessity. Your life, in even the most mundane and least significant hour, must become a sign, a testimony to this urge.

¹. An impetus is a something that encourages or stimulates activity.
². To avow is to declare openly.
In this letter, Rilke insists that the individual finds the most powerful means of expression by looking inward. He also says that a writer must write in order to express himself or herself, just as one must breathe in order to live. In what ways does Rilke’s advice to the young poet apply to other aspirations people have in life?

Discussion Starter

Then draw near to nature. Pretend you are the very first man and then write what you see and experience, what you love and lose. Do not write love poems, at least at first; they present the greatest challenge. It requires great, fully ripened power to produce something personal, something unique, when there are so many good and sometimes even brilliant renditions in great numbers. Beware of general themes. Cling to those that your everyday life offers you. Write about your sorrows, your wishes, your passing thoughts, your belief in anything beautiful. Describe all that with fervent, quiet, and humble sincerity. In order to express yourself, use things in your surroundings, the scenes of your dreams, and the subjects of your memory.

If your everyday life appears to be unworthy subject matter, do not complain to life. Complain to yourself. Lament that you are not poet enough to call up its wealth. For the creative artist there is no poverty—nothing is insignificant or unimportant. Even if you were in a prison whose walls would shut out from your senses the sounds of the outer world, would you not then still have your childhood, this precious wealth, this treasure house of memories? Direct your attention to that. Attempt to resurrect these sunken sensations of a distant past. You will gain assuredness. Your aloneness will expand and will become your home, greeting you like the quiet dawn. Outer tumult will pass it by from afar.

If, as a result of this turning inward, of this sinking into your own world, poetry should emerge, you will not think to ask someone whether it is good poetry. And you will not try to interest publishers of magazines in these works. For you will hear in them your own voice; you will see in them a piece of your life, a natural possession of yours. A piece of art is good if it is born of necessity. This, its source, is its criterion; there is no other.

Therefore, my dear friend, I know of no other advice than this: Go within and scale the depths of your being from which your very life springs forth. At its source you will find the answer to the question, whether you must write. Accept it, however it sounds to you, without analyzing. Perhaps it will become apparent to you that you are indeed called to be a writer. Then accept that fate; bear its burden, and its grandeur, without asking for the reward, which might possibly come from without. For the creative artist must be a world of his own and must find everything within himself and in nature, to which he has betrothed himself.

It is possible that, even after your descent into your inner self and into your secret place of solitude, you might find that you must give up becoming a poet. As I have said, to feel that one could live without writing is enough indication that, in fact, one should not. Even then this process of turning inward, upon which I beg you to embark, will not have been in vain. Your life will no doubt from then on find its own paths. That they will be good ones and rich and expansive—that I wish for you more than I can say.

What else shall I tell you? It seems to me everything has been said, with just the right emphasis. I wanted only to advise you to progress quietly and seriously in your evolvement. You could greatly interfere with that process if you look outward and expect to obtain answers from the outside—answers which only your innermost feeling in your quietest hour can perhaps give you.

3. Renditions are versions.
4. Fervent means “with intense feeling.”

5. Betrothed means “engaged.”
6. Evolvement is growth.

Discussion Starter

In this letter, Rilke insists that the individual finds the most powerful means of expression by looking inward. He also says that a writer must write in order to express himself or herself, just as one must breathe in order to live. In what ways does Rilke’s advice to the young poet apply to other aspirations people have in life?
Building Background

Mark Strand developed as a writer during the 1960s—a period when, he later noted, "Poets were underground pop stars." Strand was born on Canada’s Prince Edward Island in 1934 and grew up in various cities in the United States. Strand is a noted poet, public reader, and translator who has taught at numerous universities—including Harvard, the University of Utah, and the University of Iowa (where he also received a master’s degree in creative writing). He was named U.S. Poet Laureate in 1990 and won a Pulitzer Prize for his collection of poetry *Blizzard of One* in 1999.

Influenced by the work of Archibald MacLeish, Strand’s poetry is noted for its surreal imagery and exploration of the power of presence and absence in life. Critic Jane Candia Coleman commented that although Strand’s poetry can be abstract and difficult, “the reader who delves, who meets the poet halfway, will be rewarded by glimpses of a different world, that changeable one of dreams and the elusive beauty that haunts us all.”

*Mark Strand was born in 1934.*

**LiteratureOnline**  
**Author Search** For more about Mark Strand, go to [www.glencoe.com](http://www.glencoe.com).
Ink runs from the corners of my mouth.
There is no happiness like mine.
I have been eating poetry.

The librarian does not believe what she sees.
5 Her eyes are sad
and she walks with her hands in her dress.

The poems are gone.
The light is dim.
The dogs are on the basement stairs and coming up.

10 Their eyeballs roll,
their blond legs burn like brush.
The poor librarian begins to stamp her feet and weep.

She does not understand.
When I get on my knees and lick her hand,
15 she screams.

I am a new man.
I snarl at her and bark.
I romp with joy in the bookish dark.

**Quickwrite**

Strand has said, “A poem may be the residue of an inner urgency, one through which the self wishes to register itself, write itself into being, and, finally, to charm another self, the reader, into belief.” Strand’s description of the speaker in “Eating Poetry” is purposefully ambiguous. Write a paragraph in which you interpret the character of the speaker in this poem. Identify the poet’s purpose and cite evidence from the text to support your view.
Building Background

Ishmael Reed has described his eclectic writing style as “Neoamerican hoodooism,” an expression that implies a melding of the magic healing in African folk culture and many other U.S. cultural elements. Reed was born in 1938 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, but he grew up in Buffalo, New York, where he studied at the University of Buffalo. He later moved to New York City. Throughout his career, Reed has shown a razor-edged satirical wit, often addressing the failures he sees in the cultural and political institutions of his country. Reed’s style blends European and African traditions and showcases his broad-ranging cultural and historical knowledge.

In his poems, Reed’s innovative approach is obvious. He purposely omits vowels, uses ampersands instead of the word and, and inserts punctuation at unexpected places. One effect of his techniques is to quicken and vary the pace of his poetry. The following selection is included in Reed’s second book of poetry, *Conjure*. The book, published in 1972, was nominated for a National Book Award.

*Ishmael Reed was born in 1938.*

**beware: do not read this poem**

Ishmael Reed

```
tonite ,        thriller\(^1\) was
abt an ol woman , so vain she
surrounded herself w/
many mirrors

it got so bad that finally she
locked herself indoors & her
whole life became the
mirrors

one day the villagers broke
into her house , but she was too
swift for them . she disappeared
into a mirror
```

1. *Thriller* was a television show hosted by horror-film actor Boris Karloff that ran from 1960 to 1962. The hour-long episodes were divided between mystery and horror genres.
each tenant who bought the house
after that , lost a loved one to
the ol woman in the mirror :
first a little girl
then a young woman
then the young woman/s husband

the hunger of this poem is legendary
it has taken in many victims
back off from this poem
it has drawn in yr feet
back off from this poem
it has drawn in yr legs

back off from this poem
it is a greedy mirror
you are into this poem . from
the waist down
nobody can hear you can they ?
this poem has had you up to here
belch
this poem aint got no manners
you cant call out frm this poem
relax now & go w/ this poem

move & roll on to this poem
do not resist this poem
this poem has yr eyes
this poem has his head
this poem has his arms
this poem has his fingers
this poem has his fingertips
this poem is the reader & the
reader this poem

statistic : the us bureau of missing persons reports
that in 1968 over 100,000 people disappeared
leaving no solid clues
nor trace only
a space in the lives of their friends

**Quickwrite**

The title of this selection naturally attracts the reader’s interest. Despite the fact that the title warns the reader not to continue reading, the poem focuses on the relationship that exists in poetry between the reader and the writer. Write a paragraph in which you discuss how this selection develops the idea that “this poem is the reader & the / reader this poem.”
COMPARING THE NEW POETICS

Group Activity Each of the writers compared here explains what he believes poetry should be. Read the four quotations below from the selections and discuss the following questions with a group of classmates.

1. Which writer’s statement about what poetry should be appeals to you most? Explain why.
2. In what ways does each selection break the traditional rules of poetry?
3. How does each writer demonstrate what the experience of poetry should be for both reader and writer, and how does each provide criteria for evaluating poetry?

“A poem should not mean
But be”
—MacLeish, “Ars Poetica”

“Put it to this test: Does it stretch out its roots in the deepest place of your heart?”
—Rilke, Letters to a Young Poet

“There is no happiness like mine.
I have been eating poetry.”
—Strand, “Eating Poetry”

“do not resist this poem
this poem has yr eyes”
—Reed, “beware: do not read this poem”

COMPARING IMAGIST POETRY

Visual Display What images struck you most as you read the poems by MacLeish, Strand, and Reed, and the letter by Rilke? Create a visual display that represents the imagery you saw in your mind as you read these selections.

COMPARING LITERARY TRENDS

Writing Research the literary trends associated with MacLeish, Rilke, Strand, and Reed. Write a short essay in which you discuss how each writer is a part of a literary trend.

OBJECTIVES
- Compare and contrast authors’ messages.
- Analyze historical context.
- Compare literary trends.
- Compare works from different eras that address similar themes.
For a poet with such a powerful imagination, Wallace Stevens led an outwardly quiet and uneventful life. His entire professional career was spent as an employee of an insurance company. In his journals he expressed embarrassment about writing poems: “Keep all this a great secret. There is something absurd about all this writing of verses; but the truth is, it elates and satisfies me to do it.”

“How full of trifles everything is! It is only one’s thoughts that fill a room with something more than furniture.”

—Wallace Stevens

Youth Stevens was born in Reading, Pennsylvania. His father was a country lawyer, and his mother was a teacher. Stevens enrolled at Harvard College in 1897, where he became friends with the philosopher George Santayana, who encouraged Stevens to publish his early poems in the Harvard Advocate. Stevens left school abruptly after only three years, failing to complete his degree. He moved to New York City and worked briefly as a reporter for the Herald Tribune. Then, after enrolling at the New York Law School, he acquired his degree and was admitted to the bar in 1904. For the next several years, Stevens worked for various law firms throughout the city before moving to Connecticut where he worked for the Hartford Accident and Indemnity Company until his death.

In 1914 Poetry magazine published four of Stevens’s poems. These poems were eventually included in his first book, Harmonium, which appeared in 1923. It was well received by critics but sold only one hundred copies. However, Harmonium contains some of Stevens’s most recognizable and important work. It shows the influence of both the French Symbolists and the English Romantics, particularly Wordsworth and Coleridge. The volume was reissued in 1931 and then again in 1947. In this book, Stevens illustrates his belief that “the imagination is man’s power over nature.”

Maturity and Acceptance During the 1930s, Stevens published three more books, Ideas and Order, Owl’s Clover, and The Man with the Blue Guitar, which reveal the progressive development of his poetic style. By the 1940s, Stevens had entered the most creatively fertile time in his life. He gradually abandoned the intricate forms and lavish imagery of his early work in favor of a more concise, abstract style. In 1954 Stevens’s Collected Poems appeared. With this publication, shortly before his death, Stevens attracted widespread attention for the first time. The Collected Poems was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1955.

Poet of the Imagination Central to all of Stevens’s poetry is the primacy of the creative imagination. According to Stevens, the role of the poet is to use the imagination to “become the light in the minds of others” by helping people to discover new ways of viewing reality and to experience a sense of order in a chaotic world devoid of a clear spiritual definition. His best work explored the complex relationship between the shaping power of the imagination and the physical world.

Wallace Stevens was born in 1879 and died in 1955.
Connecting to the Poems

How do artists approach the natural world? What is the best way for artists to represent the things they observe in a way that is true to reality, creative, and meaningful? As you read the poems, think about the following questions:

- When you view a physical object, how can you distinguish its appearance from its reality?
- How might a writer imaginatively transform his or her perceptions of the physical world?

Building Background

This excerpt from “The Man with the Blue Guitar” is the first stanza of a much longer poem that appeared in 1937. Although it is tempting to connect the title of this poem to Pablo Picasso’s famous painting The Old Guitarist, a product of Picasso’s so-called “blue period,” Stevens asserted that he had no particular painting of Picasso’s in mind when he wrote the poem. Stevens was deeply affected by the artistic experiments of Cubist painters, like the later Picasso, who were attempting to subvert painters’ traditional use of perspective. Stevens’s poetry, like Cubist painting, often mixes multiple points of view that culminate in interesting variations on the perspectives of observed objects.

Setting Purposes For Reading

Big Idea  New Poetics

As you read, notice how Stevens’s poems lead the reader to explore the way in which imagination can transform and deepen our perceptions of everyday experience.

Literary Element  Motif

A motif is a significant image, description, idea, or other element repeated throughout a literary work to help convey its theme. As you read Stevens’s poems, try to identify the motifs that he uses.


Reading Strategy  Recognizing Author’s Purpose

An author’s purpose is the author’s intent in writing a piece of literature. Authors typically write to accomplish one or more of the following goals: to persuade, to inform, to explain, to explore, to entertain, or to describe. While reading these poems, try to determine Stevens’s purpose for writing.

Reading Tip: Double-Entry Journal  Use a double-entry journal to determine an author’s purpose. Ask yourself questions like the ones below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions to Ask</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the tone?</td>
<td>Serious, instructive, and musical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kinds of details are there?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some descriptive words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulary

bulge  (bulj) v. to swell or curve outward; p. 691
The shoplifter’s shirt was bulging with the goods he had taken.

taper  (tä’par) v. to become progressively thinner or smaller; p. 691
The river slowly tapered out as it entered the dry gorge.

glisten  (gli’san) v. to shine or to reflect light; p. 691
All morning the dew was glistening on the grass.

Vocabulary Tip: Synonyms  Synonyms are words that have the same or similar meanings. Synonyms are always the same part of speech.
Study of Two Pears

Wallace Stevens

I
	Opusculum paedagogum.¹
	The pears are not viols,²
	Nudes or bottles.
	They resemble nothing else.

II
	The are yellow forms
	Composed of curves
	Bulging toward the base.
	They are touched red.

III
	They are not flat surfaces
	Having curved outlines.
	They are round
	Tapering toward the top.

IV

In the way they are modelled

There are bits of blue.

A hard dry leaf hangs
From the stem.

V

The yellow glistens.

It glistens with various yellows,

Citrons,³ oranges and greens

Flowering over the skin.

VI

The shadows of the pears

Are blobs on the green cloth.

The pears are not seen

As the observer wills.

---

Vocabulary

bulge (bulj) v. to swell or curve outward
taper (tā′ par) v. to become progressively thinner or smaller
glisten (glis′ an) v. to shine or to reflect light

1. Opusculum paedagogum is Latin for “a small instructional text.”
2. A viol is a bowed stringed instrument used chiefly in music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
3. Citron is a shade of yellowish green.

Big Idea New Poetics What is the speaker saying in this stanza about the difference between art and physical reality?

Reading Strategy Recognizing Author’s Purpose What do these lines suggest about Stevens’s purpose for composing this poem?
Wallace Stevens

I
The man bent over his guitar,
A shearsman\(^\text{1}\) of sorts. The day was green.

They said, “You have a blue guitar,
You do not play things as they are.”

The man replied, “Things as they are
Are changed upon the blue guitar.”

And they said then, “But play, you must,
A tune beyond us, yet ourselves,

A tune upon the blue guitar
Of things exactly as they are.”

---

1. Shearsman refers to the posture of the guitarist, squatting like a tailor working on cloth.

**Literary Element**

**Motif** How does the motif “things as they are” help to convey the theme of the poem?

**Viewing the Art:** How does the guitarist in the painting compare with your picture of the one described in the poem?
AFTER YOU READ

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. Which of these poems do you prefer? Explain.

Recall and Interpret

2. (a) In the final stanza of “Study of Two Pears,” what does the speaker mean by saying that the pears are not seen as the observer wills? (b) How does this statement relate to the speaker’s assertion in the first stanza?

3. (a) In “The Man with the Blue Guitar,” what do the listeners accuse the guitarist of doing? How does the guitarist respond? (b) What does this exchange tell you about the guitar and the guitarist?

4. (a) What do the listeners tell the guitarist to do in the last two stanzas? (b) The guitarist does not reply. If he did reply, what do you think he would say?

Analyze and Evaluate

5. (a) Why do you think Stevens chose to divide “Study of Two Pears” into multiple sections? How does this structure affect the poem’s meaning? (b) Do you think that dividing the poem into sections strengthens or weakens the poem? Explain.

6. (a) How does Stevens use rhyme in “The Man with the Blue Guitar”? Why do you think that Stevens chose to employ this rhyme scheme? (b) Do you find the rhyme scheme effective? Explain.

7. (a) In “The Man with the Blue Guitar,” the listeners demand that the guitarist play “a tune beyond us, yet ourselves.” What do you think this demand means? (b) In your opinion, what kinds of art may fulfill this dual function?

Connect

8. Big Idea New Poetics How do these two poems illustrate various aspects of Modernism?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Motif

A motif is the repetition of an image, description, idea, or other element that helps to convey the theme. In the poems of a Modernist like Stevens, the motifs are often symbols or image clusters.

1. Identify a motif in “Study of Two Pears.” Explain how this motif relates to the poem’s theme.

2. Identify the main motifs in “The Man with the Blue Guitar.” How do they convey the poem’s theme?

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Recognizing Author’s Purpose

An author’s purpose and the theme of a literary work are often interrelated.

1. (a) What is the poem’s theme? (b) What was Stevens’s purpose in writing a “Study of Two Pears”?

2. What do you think was Stevens’s purpose in writing “The Man with the Blue Guitar”?

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Synonyms Find the synonym for each vocabulary word from “Study of Two Pears.”

1. bulge a. shrink b. protrude
2. taper a. narrow b. race
3. glisten a. shine b. disappear

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond and anyone lived in a pretty how town

MEET E. E. CUMMINGS

Edward Estlin Cummings coined the term “mostpeople” to describe conformists. Throughout his life, Cummings rebelled against the authoritarian forces that tend to suppress uniqueness. Challenging the social norms of the day, he married three times and only briefly held a regular job. Friends and family came to his rescue when he needed money. “I’m living so far beyond my income,” he once wrote, “that we may almost be said to be living apart.” His rebellion against authority took radical form in his poetry. People often view language as a fixed system. Cummings did not see it that way; he saw language as a flexible tool. In his poems, he combined words, playing with punctuation and syntax to create unique forms of poetic expression.

“To be nobody-but-myself—in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make me everybody else—means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight and never stop fighting.”

—E. E. Cummings

Cummings was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the son of a Unitarian minister and a mother who encouraged him to write and keep a journal. A year after receiving a master’s degree from Harvard University in 1916, Cummings volunteered to serve as an ambulance driver in World War I. He and a friend were wrongly arrested and imprisoned in France on charges of spying. A few months later, they were released, and Cummings wrote about his experiences there in The Enormous Room (1922).

Art and Poetry After the war, Cummings settled in New York City’s Greenwich Village, studied art in Paris, and published his first book of poetry, Tulips and Chimneys (1923). In New York City, he continued his experiments with free verse and painted in the Cubist style, exhibiting his work regularly. He traveled in Europe in the 1920s and divided his time between New York City and a farm in New Hampshire owned by his family. In 1925, two more volumes of his verse were published, and Cummings received a $2,000 award from Dial magazine. In 1928 the Provincetown Playhouse produced a Cummings play called Him, which ran for 27 performances. Most critics hated it, but audience response was more favorable.

Applause at Last Cummings continued to publish his poetry throughout the 1930s and 1940s. His Collected Poems (1938) received generally good reviews but sold poorly. He had won a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1933, but it was not until the 1950s that he received more recognition, winning the Harriet Monroe Prize in 1950, another Guggenheim Fellowship in 1951, and the Bollingen Prize in Poetry in 1958. He also began to read his poetry to enthusiastic audiences, and in 1952–1953 he lectured at Harvard. Biographer Richard S. Kennedy summed up Cummings’s work by writing “What he produced will long amuse, titillate, thrill, provoke, or enthrall his readers.”

Edward Estlin Cummings was born in 1894 and died in 1962.

Author Search For more about E. E. Cummings, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poems

Despite differences in fashion, lifestyle, and technology, are people pretty much the same? In these poems, Cummings attempts to convey the feelings of someone tentatively exploring a love relationship and to portray the experience of the average life of “anyone.” As you read the poems, think about the following questions:

- Do you think it is possible to convey emotions accurately through language?
- Is there some common experience that binds us together as human beings?

Building Background

The first thing that readers often notice about Cummings’s poems is the unusual arrangement of words, the varied use of punctuation, and the uncommon use of capitalization. These experiments in language and grammar, what former poet laureate Billy Collins called “typographical high jinks,” were Cummings’s way of expressing his individuality and encouraging readers to look at the world in a new way. Although Cummings’s poems are innovative in style, they often explore traditional poetic subjects—such as love, death, and the natural world.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea New Poetics

Cummings was influenced by Imagist ideas, but he soon developed his own unique style, which to a great extent depended on visual images.

Literary Element Rhythm

Rhythm is the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables. Regular rhythm has a predictable pattern, whereas irregular rhythm has no definite pattern. Although both of these Cummings poems have irregular rhythm, the particular arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables in the second poem plays an especially important role.


Reading Strategy Analyzing Style

Style refers to the expressive qualities that distinguish an author’s work. Such things as word choice, figurative language, and imagery all help determine an author’s style. Cummings’s style is in part determined by his arrangement of words on a page. His sentence patterns, use of parentheses, division of words, and capitalization or lack of capitalization all contribute to his instantly recognizable style.

Reading Tip: Asking Questions In your first encounter with a Cummings poem, you will probably have some questions about his style. Write them down in your notebook. You can discuss them later in class.

Vocabulary

render (ren’ dar) v. to reproduce or depict in verbal or artistic form; p. 696 The painting was the artist’s attempt to render her emotional response to the tragedy.

reap (rép) v. to gather, as in harvesting a crop; p. 697 Tim hoped he would reap the results of his hard work with a good grade on the test.

apt (apt) adj. likely; having a tendency; p. 697 Peoples’ minds are apt to wander from doing homework on sunny days.

Vocabulary Tip: Analogies An analogy is a comparison to show similarities between things that are otherwise dissimilar. Writers often use an analogy to explain something unfamiliar by comparing it to something familiar.
somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond
any experience, your eyes have their silence:
in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me,
or which i cannot touch because they are too near

your slightest look easily will unclose me
though i have closed myself as fingers,
you open always petal by petal myself as Spring opens
(touching skilfully, mysteriously) her first rose

or if your wish be to close me, i and
my life will shut very beautifully, suddenly,
as when the heart of this flower imagines
the snow carefully everywhere descending;

nothing which we are to perceive in this world equals
the power of your intense fragility: whose texture
compels me with the colour of its countries,
rendering death and forever with each breathing

(i do not know what it is about you that closes
and opens; only something in me understands
the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses)

nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands

E. E. Cummings

Open Door on the Beach. Konstantine Rodko.
Private collection, New York.
anyone lived in
a pretty how town

E. E. Cummings

anyone lived in a pretty how town
(with up so floating many bells down)
spring summer autumn winter
he sang his didn’t he danced his did.

5    Women and men(both little and small)
cared for anyone not at all
they sowed their isn’t they reaped their same
sun moon stars rain

children guessed(but only a few
and down they forgot as up they grew
autumn winter spring summer)
that noone loved him more by more

when by now and tree by leaf
she laughed his joy she cried his grief
bird by snow and stir by still
anyone's any was all to her

30    someones married their everyones
laughed their cryings and did their dance
(sleep wake hope and then)they
said their nevers they slept their dream
(stars rain sun moon
(and only the snow can begin to explain

Reading Strategy Analyzing Style What features of
Cummings’s poetry stand out from the other poetry you
have read?

Vocabulary reap (rep) v. to gather, as in harvesting a crop

how children are apt to forget to remember
with up so floating many bells down)

25    one day anyone died i guess
(and noone stooped to kiss his face)
busy folk buried them side by side
little by little and was by was

all by all and deep by deep

and more by more they dream their sleep
noone and anyone earth by april
wish by spirit and if by yes.

Women and men(both dong and ding)
summer autumn winter spring
35    reaped their sowing and went their came
sun moon stars rain

Reading Strategy Analyzing Style Cummings uses famil-
liar words in unfamiliar ways. What effect does this stylistic
element have on your understanding of the poem?

Literary Element Rhythm What effect does the rhythm
have on the overall tone of the poem?

Vocabulary apt (apt) adj. likely; having a tendency

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. What was your first reaction to the strange syntax and the other unusual features in Cummings’s poems?

Recall and Interpret
2. In the first two stanzas of “somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond,” how would you characterize the loved one’s effect on the speaker?
3. (a) What metaphors are used throughout the poem, and what are they comparing? (b) Are the images presented in these metaphors typical for a love poem? Why or why not?
4. (a) In “anyone lived in a pretty how town,” what is the name of the main character, and what is the name of his wife? (b) What do their names suggest to you?
5. (a) According to the speaker in lines 5–6, what do “women and men” do? (b) What seems to be the speaker’s attitude toward these people?

Analyze and Evaluate
6. (a) What happens to children as they grow up? (b) What is Cummings suggesting about the difference between children and adults?
7. In “somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond,” Cummings frequently appeals to two senses at the same time. Explain how eyes can be silent or have a voice.
8. (a) In “anyone lived in a pretty how town,” what happens to the two main characters at the end of the poem, and how would you characterize the townspeople’s reaction? (b) Do you think that this is an appropriate ending? Why or why not?

Connect
9. Big Idea New Poetics Painters known as Cubists painted objects that looked fragmented. How might these Cubist ideas in painting have influenced Cummings’s ideas about poetry?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Rhythm

The rhythm, or the particular arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables, plays an important role in “anyone lived in a pretty how town.”

Women and men (both little and small) cared for anyone not at all

1. Which lines in the poem have the same or nearly the same rhythm as the lines presented above? Which lines have a different rhythm?

2. What do you think the differences in rhythm emphasize?

Internet Connection

E. E. Cummings on the Web Look for Web sites devoted to Cummings. Print out or copy down two more of his poems. Compare your reactions to these poems with those you had to the poems in your textbook. Share your thoughts with a partner.

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Analyzing Style

Some words in “anyone lived in a pretty how town” can have more than one meaning. With a partner, examine the possible meanings and discuss how they affect your reading of the poem.

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Analogies For each question, decide what the relationship is between the first pair of words. Then apply that relationship to the second pair.
1. artist : render :: forecaster :
   a. guess  c. weather
   b. tells  d. predict

2. reap : farmer :: run :
   a. marathon  c. athlete
   b. jog  d. coach

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
**BEFORE YOU READ**

Chicago and Grass

**MEET CARL SANDBURG**

Although influenced by Ezra Pound and the Imagists, Carl Sandburg broke away from them. He sought to reach a wider audience—and he did. From the 1916 publication of *Chicago Poems* until his death in 1967, Sandburg was one of America’s most popular and successful poets.

Carl Sandburg collected material for his poetry from his broad and varied life experience. Besides being a poet and biographer, he worked as a milk-truck driver, bricklayer, and traveling salesman.

“Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you.”

—Carl Sandburg

Sandburg grew up in Galesburg, Illinois, the son of Swedish immigrants. He quit school after eighth grade and took odd jobs to help support his family. When he was nineteen, he set out to explore the United States, joining the many hoboes of the period who hitched rides on freight trains. Later he fought in the Spanish-American War, attended college, and then moved to Chicago. There he became a journalist, learning to write clearly and protesting social and racial injustices. He also began to contribute poems to *Poetry* magazine.

**Literary Giant** In the early twentieth century, Chicago was a vibrant place for a poet to live. It was home not only to the influential *Poetry* magazine, founded in 1912 by Harriet Monroe, but also to notable writers such as Sherwood Anderson, Theodore Dreiser, Vachel Lindsay, and Edgar Lee Masters. In 1914 *Poetry* magazine published six of Sandburg’s poems, and with the publication of *Chicago Poems* two years later, Sandburg emerged as one of Chicago’s literary giants. Dubbed “the Bard of the Midwest,” he soon wrote three more volumes of poetry that established his national reputation as a poet: *Cornhuskers* (1918), *Smoke and Steel* (1920), and *Slabs of the Sunburnt West* (1922).

Critics, however, were divided over Sandburg’s poetic merits. Supporters praised his original subject matter and voice, while detractors criticized his free-verse technique and focus on social issues. In response, Sandburg wrote that his goal in writing poetry was simply “to sing, blab, chortle, yodel, like people.”

The People’s Poet A great admirer of Walt Whitman, Sandburg might be considered Whitman’s successor in his enthusiasm for the common people. Sandburg’s poems, like Whitman’s, are noted for their use of the rhythms of everyday speech and for their democratic subjects and themes. They also include colorful use of sayings and anecdotes.

An extremely popular performer, Sandburg frequently traveled throughout the United States, lecturing on the lives of Whitman and Abraham Lincoln, reading his poems aloud, and singing folk songs while playing the guitar. Sandburg won the Pulitzer Prize for his biography of Lincoln in 1940 and for his *Complete Poems* in 1951. He continued to write throughout his final years.

Carl Sandburg was born in 1878 and died in 1967.

**Author Search** For more about Carl Sandburg, go to [www.glencoe.com](http://www.glencoe.com).
Connecting to the Poems
In “Chicago,” Sandburg responds to criticisms leveled against his adopted city. As you read the poem, think about the following questions:

- How do you feel when someone criticizes the city or community in which you live?
- What is the best way to respond to such criticism?

Building Background
In the late nineteenth century, Chicago was an economic lifeline of the United States. Sandburg was excited and deeply impressed when, at age eighteen, he first saw the bustling city. In 1896 Chicago’s waterways and web of railroads united the nation, linking the wealth of the East with the agriculture of the West, Midwest, and South. From Chicago, meat and grain flowed out to feed the nation.

The city had grown exponentially, from a small trading post in 1830 to an expanding metropolis at the turn of the century. Beginning in the 1840s, waves of immigrants from many different countries settled in Chicago. By the 1880s, the city was half a million strong; three-quarters were immigrants from northern and eastern Europe and their children. The city’s rapid industrial growth brought many labor disputes, including riots and a strike by railroad workers. During his years as a Chicago journalist, Sandburg observed firsthand the struggles and triumphs of the growing city.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea  New Poetics
In the first part of the twentieth century, American poetry pushed the boundaries of subject matter, form, and style. As you read, consider how Sandburg breaks new ground in these poems.

Literary Element  Apostrophe
Apostrophe is a figure of speech in which a writer directly addresses an inanimate object, an idea, or an absent person. For example, in “Chicago,” the speaker says to the city, “they tell me you are crooked.” As you read, look for other examples of this technique.


Reading Strategy  Making Inferences About Theme
The theme is the central message of a work of literature that readers can apply to life. The theme of a poem is often implied rather than stated directly. You can infer the theme by analyzing elements such as diction, imagery, and figurative language. As you read, look for evidence in the poem that suggests the theme.

Reading Tip: Taking Notes  Use a diagram to record direct statements, images, and examples of figurative language that support a theme in these poems.

Vocabulary
husky (hus′kē) adj. strong; burly; p. 701
He has a short, husky build.

wanton (wont′ən) adj. resulting from extreme cruelty or neglect; p. 701 The house is in a state of wanton disrepair.

sneer (snēr) v. to smile or laugh scornfully or critically; p. 701 The bully did nothing but sneer at the other children.

Vocabulary Tip: Synonyms  Synonyms are words that have the same or similar meanings. Note that synonyms are always the same part of speech.

Interactive Literary Elements Handbook  To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.
Carl Sandburg

Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation’s Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:
They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your painted
women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.
And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the
gunman kill and go free to kill again.
And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women and
children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.
And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city,
and I give them back the sneer and say to them:
Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive
and coarse and strong and cunning.
Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall bold
slugger set vivid against the little soft cities;
Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted
against the wilderness,
   Bareheaded,
   Shoveling,
Wrecking,
Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding,
Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,
Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,
Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs the
heart of the people,
Laughing!
Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of Youth, half-naked, sweating,
proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player
with Railroads and Freight Handler to the Nation.

Reading Strategy  Making Inferences About Theme  What does this phrase suggest about Chicago?

Vocabulary

husky  (hus’kē) adj. strong; burly
wanton  (wont’an) adj. resulting from extreme cruelty or neglect
sneer  (snēr) v. to smile or laugh scornfully or critically
Pile the bodies high at Austerlitz and Waterloo.¹
Shovel them under and let me work—
I am the grass; I cover all.

And pile them high at Gettysburg²
And pile them high at Ypres and Verdun.³

Shovel them under and let me work.
Two years, ten years, and passengers ask the conductor:
What place is this?
Where are we now?

I am the grass.
Let me work.

¹ Austerlitz and Waterloo refer to battle sites in Moravia (the present-day Czech Republic) and Belgium during the Napoleonic Wars in the early 1800s.
² Gettysburg refers to a battlefield in southern Pennsylvania where Union and Confederate forces fought a horrific battle in 1863 during the Civil War.
³ Ypres and Verdun refer to battle sites in Belgium and northern France where well over a million soldiers were slain in World War I.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Which images in these poems impress you the most? Explain.

Chicago
Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What names does the speaker give Chicago in the first five lines? (b) What do these names reveal?
3. (a) List some of the positive adjectives the speaker uses to describe Chicago. (b) What do these words reveal about the city’s inhabitants and the speaker’s attitude toward them?

Analyze and Evaluate
4. How well does Sandburg’s diction, or word choice, help create a vivid image of the city? Explain.

Grass
Recall and Interpret
5. (a) Who is the speaker in this poem? (b) What does the speaker want to do?
6. (a) Why does the speaker mention famous battle sites from different wars? (b) What battle sites would you add to the speaker’s list?

Analyze and Evaluate
7. (a) Why does the speaker describe passengers on a train in lines 7–9? (b) How well does this image support the view of war presented in the poem?

Connect
8. Big Idea New Poetics Ezra Pound stated that modern poets should “Make it new!” What do you find new about Sandburg’s poems?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Apostrophe
Poets often use apostrophe either to achieve a formal tone or to convey a sense of emotional immediacy.
1. In which lines does the speaker address the city as “you” in “Chicago”?
2. What effects do you think Sandburg’s overall use of apostrophe creates? Explain.

Writing About Literature
Explore Author’s Purpose Does the speaker in “Chicago” exhibit pride for the city or defend its poor public image? Write a few paragraphs to explain and support your opinion.

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Making Inferences About Theme
1. On the basis of the evidence you listed in your diagram on page 700, how would you state the theme of “Chicago”?
2. Notice two similes, or comparisons using the word like or as, that Sandburg uses in lines 19–20 of “Chicago.” How effective are these similes in suggesting the theme?

Vocabulary Practice with Synonyms Choose the best synonym for each vocabulary word from “Chicago.”
1. husky
   - a. frail
   - b. stocky
   - c. huge
2. wanton
   - a. cautious
   - b. sincere
   - c. inhumane
3. sneer
   - a. scoff
   - b. grin
   - c. weep

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Robert Frost—a poet of dignity, simplicity, and ambiguity—was one of the most honored poets of the twentieth century. A four-time winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, Frost received special recognition from Congress in 1960. The following January, at age eighty-six, he had the honor of reciting his poem “The Gift Outright” at President John F. Kennedy’s inauguration.

Although closely associated with New England, Frost spent his first eleven years in San Francisco. After his father died in 1885, his mother moved Frost and his sister to the gritty industrial city of Lawrence, Massachusetts. She taught school and wrote poetry, introducing Frost to the work of the English Romantic writers, the New England Transcendentalists, and the poets of her native Scotland. Frost graduated from high school and went off to Dartmouth College, but he left the school after less than a year.

Farming and Teaching  Frost married Elinor White in 1895. (They had been co-valedictorians of their high school class.) They had six children, two of whom died young. Frost supported his growing family by farming and teaching school. At age twenty-six, Frost moved his family to a farm near Derry, New Hampshire, where he got to know the rugged landscape and inhabitants of rural New England. There, between farm chores, Frost wrote poems describing the region’s often harsh conditions and the experiences of his fellow New Englanders. In 1912, unable to get his poems published in the United States, he sold his farm and moved his family to England.

Success and Enduring Acclaim  In London Frost became acquainted with Ezra Pound and other Modernist poets. He was able to publish his first volume of poetry, A Boy’s Will, in 1913, and North of Boston soon after. Praised by poet Amy Lowell in a review, North of Boston was soon published in the United States and sold well. By the time Frost returned to New England in 1915, at the start of the First World War, he was well on the road to fame. Prominent publishers backed his work, and prestigious universities sought him to teach.

“[A poem] begins in delight and ends in wisdom . . . in a clarification of life—not necessarily a great clarification, . . . but in a momentary stay against confusion.”

—Robert Frost

Frost’s later years were filled with accolades. He received more awards than any other twentieth-century poet and was chosen as poetry consultant to the Library of Congress. By the time of his death, his poetry had deeply embedded itself in the American imagination, and it continues to live there today.

Robert Frost was born in 1874 and died in 1963.

For more about Robert Frost, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poems
Robert Frost’s poems have a strong sense of place. Often set in the New England countryside, they describe the landscape and the people, capturing their speech patterns in a quiet, reflective voice. Think about the people who live near you and consider the following questions:

- What activities, if any, bring you and your neighbors together?
- What things keep you apart?

Building Background
From 1900 to 1909, Frost tried to earn a living on a small family farm he had bought in Derry, New Hampshire. Farming in New England was difficult because of the rocky soil, short growing season, and harsh climate.

Although Frost loved the outdoors, he was unsuited for farm life. He found working around livestock awkward, disliked regular chores and early rising, feared darkness and storms, and had a somewhat frail build. Three years before leaving for England, Frost abandoned farming and resumed his teaching career. Despite his lack of success as a farmer, Frost drew inspiration for many poems from his memories of New England farm life.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea  New Poetics
Though Frost uses traditional forms for his poems, he often explores typical themes of modern poetry such as loneliness and isolation. As you read, notice how “Mending Wall” and “Birches” reflect these themes.

Literary Element  Blank Verse
Blank verse is poetry written in unrhymed iambic pentameter. Each line has a basic pattern of five pairs of syllables, with each pair made up of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. As you read, listen to the rhythms Frost creates by using blank verse.


Interactive Literary Elements
Handbook  To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.

OBJECTIVES
In studying these selections, you will focus on the following:

- comparing and contrasting speakers
- analyzing dramatic poetry
- evaluating characterization

Reading Strategy  Comparing and Contrasting Speakers
The speaker is the voice of a poem, similar to the narrator in a work of prose. Sometimes the speaker’s voice is that of the poet, and sometimes it is that of a fictional person or even a thing. The speaker’s words communicate a particular tone, or attitude, toward the subject of a poem. By comparing and contrasting the speakers of these poems, you can identify the qualities that distinguish each one.

Reading Tip: Using a Venn Diagram  As you read, consider how the speakers of “Mending Wall” and “Birches” are similar and different. Use a Venn diagram to record your information.

Vocabulary
enamel  (i nam’əl) n. a cosmetic or paint that gives a smooth, glossy appearance; p. 708  The pot was covered in an enamel to make it waterproof.

bracken  (bra’kan) n. a type of fern that grows in humid, temperate areas; p. 708  Bracken covered the forest floor in summer.

poise  (poiz’) n. a state of balance; p. 709  Her grace and poise made us think she must be a dancer.

coax  (kōks’v) v. to persuade gently; p. 716  I tried to coax the cat out of the tree with a catnip toy.

kin  (kin) n. relatives, or a group of people with common ancestry; p. 720  Sara had kin from four countries present at her wedding ceremony.

Vocabulary Tip: Synonyms  Synonyms are words that have the same or similar meanings. Note that synonyms are always the same part of speech.
Something there is that doesn’t love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.

The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbour know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.

We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
‘Stay where you are until our backs are turned!’

We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.

My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, ‘Good fences make good neighbours.’
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:

‘Why do they make good neighbours? Isn’t it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I’d ask to know,
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence.

Something there is that doesn’t love a wall,
That wants it down.’ I could say ‘Elves’ to him,
But it’s not elves exactly, and I’d rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father’s saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well

He says again, ‘Good fences make good neighbours.’
When I see birches bend to left and right
Across the lines of straighter darker trees,
I like to think some boy's been swinging them.
But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay
As ice-storms do. Often you must have seen them
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning
After a rain. They click upon themselves
As the breeze rises, and turn many-colored
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.
Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells
Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust—
Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away
You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.
They are dragged to the withered bracken by the load,
And they seem not to break; though once they are bowed
So low for long, they never right themselves:

Literary Element: Blank Verse
Which syllables are stressed in this sentence?

Vocabulary:
- **enamel** (i nam' al) n. a cosmetic or paint that gives a smooth, glossy appearance
- **bracken** (bra'kan) n. a type of fern that grows in humid, temperate areas
You may see their trunks arching in the woods
Years afterwards, trailing their leaves on the ground
Like girls on hands and knees that throw their hair
Before them over their heads to dry in the sun.

But I was going to say when Truth broke in
With all her matter-of-fact about the ice-storm
I should prefer to have some boy bend them
As he went out and in to fetch the cows—

Some boy too far from town to learn baseball,
Whose only play was what he found himself,
Summer or winter, and could play alone.
One by one he subdued his father's trees
By riding them down over and over again
Until he took the stiffness out of them,
And not one but hung limp, not one was left
For him to conquer. He learned all there was
To learn about not launching out too soon
And so not carrying the tree away

Clear to the ground. He always kept his poise
To the top branches, climbing carefully
With the same pains you use to fill a cup
Up to the brim, and even above the brim.
Then he flung outward, feet first, with a swish,
Kicking his way down through the air to the ground.

So was I once myself a swinger of birches.
And so I dream of going back to be.
It's when I'm weary of considerations,
And life is too much like a pathless wood
Where your face burns and tickles with the cobwebs
Broken across it, and one eye is weeping
From a twig's having lashed across it open.
I'd like to get away from earth awhile
And then come back to it and begin over.

May no fate willfully misunderstand me
And half grant what I wish and snatch me away
Not to return. Earth's the right place for love:
I don't know where it's likely to go better.
I'd like to go by climbing a birch tree,

And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk
Toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more,
But dipped its top and set me down again.
That would be good both going and coming back.
One could do worse than be a swinger of birches.
AFTER YOU READ

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Which images from the poems do you find the most powerful? Explain.

Mending Wall
Recall and Interpret
2. (a) According to the speaker, what causes a wall to fall apart? (b) To what might the “something” that “doesn’t love a wall” refer?
3. (a) Describe how the speaker and the neighbor fix the wall. (b) How do their opinions differ?

Analyze and Evaluate
4. (a) What does the speaker suggest by describing the neighbor as “an old-stone savage”? (b) How does dialogue help emphasize the differences between the speaker and the neighbor?
5. (a) Why does the speaker refer to this spring ritual as “another kind of out-door game” (line 21)? (b) What might walls and fences symbolize in this poem?

Birches
Recall and Interpret
6. (a) What does the speaker want to think has caused the birches to bend? What has really caused them to bend? (b) Why might the speaker want to believe in the imaginary cause?
7. (a) To what does the speaker compare the ice that falls from birches? To what does he compare their trunks and leaves? (b) What can you infer about the speaker’s feelings regarding the birches?

Analyze and Evaluate
8. (a) In describing the boy who lives “too far from town to learn baseball,” whom is the speaker really describing? (b) What kinds of activities might swinging on birches represent?

Big Idea
New Poetics In “Birches,” Frost compares life to a pathless wood. Do you think this is an appropriate simile? Why or why not?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Blank Verse
Both “Mending Wall” and “Birches” are written in blank verse, or unrhymed iambic pentameter. To determine the rhythm of any line, mark or scan its stressed and unstressed syllables. For example, the first line of “Birches” scans as follows:

When I see birches bend to left and right

Because Frost uses blank verse to imitate spoken English, every line in these poems is not perfectly regular.

1. Practice scanning several lines from each poem. What is unusual about the first line of “Mending Wall”?
2. Why are the rhythms of natural speech suitable for the subjects of these poems?

Reading Strategy Comparing and Contrasting Speakers
Refer to the Venn diagram you created on page 705 to answer the following questions:

1. How are the speakers of the poems similar and different?
2. How would you contrast the tone of each poem?

Vocabulary Practice
Practice with Synonyms Synonyms are words that have the same or similar meanings. Choose the synonym for each vocabulary word listed from Frost’s poems.

1. enamel
   a. glaze       b. rough       c. coat       d. pottery
2. kin
   a. children    b. strangers   c. relatives  d. oven

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.

710  UNIT 5  BEGINNINGS OF THE MODERN AGE
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.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Which lines from the poem did you find most powerful or meaningful? Explain.

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) Where does the owner of the woods live, and what will he not see? (b) Why might the speaker care that the owner will not see this?
3. (a) According to the speaker, what must the horse think? (b) How might the horse’s instincts differ from those of the speaker?
4. (a) What adjectives describe the woods in line 13? (b) What mood do these words create?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) How does the setting of the poem contribute to its meaning? (b) What might the woods symbolize?
6. (a) Why does the speaker not embrace the peaceful escape offered by the woods? (b) How does the repetition in the final lines affect their meaning?

Connect
7. **Big Idea** New Poetics: What themes of modern poetry does “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” reflect?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

**Literary Element** Rhyme Scheme
“Mending Wall” and “Birches” are written in blank verse, or unrhymed iambic pentameter. “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening,” on the other hand, contains end rhymes. A rhyme scheme, as you learned in Unit Four, is the pattern of end rhymes in a poem. For example, the rhyme scheme for the first stanza of the poem is *aaba*. Because the “b” sound is repeated in the second stanza, the rhyme scheme for that stanza is *bbcb*.

1. Determine the rhyme schemes for the final two stanzas.
2. What is the effect of repeating a sound from each stanza in the one that follows it?
3. How does the rhyme scheme in the last stanza reinforce the meaning of the poem?

READING AND VOCABULARY

**Reading Strategy** Comparing and Contrasting Speakers
Unlike the speaker in “Mending Wall,” the speaker in “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” is serious, not playful or mischievous. Even while pausing to absorb the beauty and tranquility of a winter scene, he never forgets his responsibilities, the promises he must keep.

1. How does the owner of the woods differ from the speaker?
2. How is the speaker similar to most people journeying through life?

**Academic Vocabulary**
Here is a word from the vocabulary list on page R86.

**design** (di zin’) n. the arrangement of elements or details in a product or work of art

Practice and Apply
1. How does the design of “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” add to the poem’s overall meaning?

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
I have been one acquainted with the night.
I have walked out in rain—and back in rain.
I have outwalked the furthest city light.

I have looked down the saddest city lane.
I have passed by the watchman on his beat
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.

I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet
When far away an interrupted cry
Came over houses from another street,
But not to call me back or say good-bye;
And further still at an unearthly height,
One luminary\(^1\) clock against the sky

Proclaimed\(^2\) the time was neither wrong nor right.
I have been one acquainted with the night.

---

1. *Luminary* means “giving light.”
2. *Proclaimed* means “declared publicly.”

**Reading Strategy** Comparing and Contrasting Speakers

*What does this line tell you about the speaker’s mood?*
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Which image from this poem is most memorable?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) When and where has the speaker walked in lines 1–3? What has he seen in line 4? (b) Why might the speaker be out walking alone at night?
3. (a) What does the speaker do when passing the watchman? (b) Why does the speaker choose to do this?
4. (a) What does the clock proclaim? (b) Why does the speaker not reveal the exact time?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) What is the night in this poem like? (b) What do you think “the night” symbolizes?
6. Why does Frost repeat line 1 in line 14?
7. How does Frost create a mood of loneliness or isolation in this poem?

Connect
8. Big Idea New Poetics What Modernist themes does Frost explore in this poem?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Rhyme Scheme
As in “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening,” rhyme supports the meaning in “Acquainted with the Night.” In this poem Frost uses a traditional form, derived from Italian poetry, known as terza rima. It consists of three-line stanzas, or tercets, in which the first and third lines rhyme.
1. Identify the rhyme scheme of this poem.
2. How is one tercet connected to the next?
3. What effects does Frost create in the final stanza?

Performing
Choose a Robert Frost poem, or a section of a poem, that you like or feel particularly strongly about to read in front of your class or a small group. To prepare for your reading, identify the sound devices the poem uses, such as its rhyme scheme. Practice your reading in front of a mirror beforehand, paying attention to your pronunciation, speed, and gestures.

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Comparing and Contrasting Speakers
In important ways, this poem is different from “Mending Wall,” “Birches,” and “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening.” For one thing, it is set in an urban area, not in the New England countryside. The speaker, moreover, is unlike those in the other three poems.
1. How would you characterize the speaker in this poem?
2. What sets this speaker apart from the other speakers created by Frost?

Academic Vocabulary
Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R86.

feature (fèr’char) n. a quality or attribute of something
perceive (pər sév’) v. to become aware of something by way of the senses, or in one’s mind

Practice and Apply
1. Describe one feature of “Acquainted with the Night” that you felt added to the poem’s mood.
2. How does the speaker perceive the city in the poem?
Mary sat musing on the lamp-flame at the table 
Waiting for Warren. When she heard his step, 
She ran on tip-toe down the darkened passage 
To meet him in the doorway with the news 
And put him on his guard. “Silas is back.” 
She pushed him outward with her through the door 
And shut it after her. “Be kind,” she said. 
She took the market things from Warren’s arms 
And set them on the porch, then drew him down 
To sit beside her on the wooden steps.

1. Musing means “meditating” or “pondering.”

What does this line of dialogue suggest about Mary’s values?
“When was I ever anything but kind to him? But I’ll not have the fellow back,” he said. “I told him so last haying, didn’t I? If he left then, I said, that ended it.

What good is he? Who else will harbor him? At his age for the little he can do? What help he is there’s no depending on. Off he goes always when I need him most. He thinks he ought to earn a little pay, enough at least to buy tobacco with.

‘All right,’ I say, ‘I can’t afford to pay any fixed wages, though I wish I could.’ ‘Someone else can.’ ‘Then someone else will have to.’

I shouldn’t mind his bettering himself if that was what it was. You can be certain, when he begins like that, there’s someone at him trying to coax him off with pocket-money,—in haying time, when any help is scarce.

In winter he comes back to us. I’m done.”

2. Harbor means “to give shelter or protection to.”
3. Beholden means “obligated” or “indebted.”

Reading Strategy Evaluating Characterization What are Warren’s reasons for not wanting Silas back?

Vocabulary

coax (kōks’) v. to persuade gently
“Sh! not so loud: he’ll hear you,” Mary said.

“I want him to: he’ll have to soon or late.”

“He’s worn out. He’s asleep beside the stove. When I came up from Rowe’s I found him here, huddled against the barn-door fast asleep, a miserable sight, and frightening, too—You needn’t smile—I didn’t recognize him—I wasn’t looking for him—and he’s changed. Wait till you see.”

“Where did you say he’d been?”

“He didn’t say. I dragged him to the house, and gave him tea and tried to make him smoke. I tried to make him talk about his travels. Nothing would do: he just kept nodding off.”

“What did he say? Did he say anything?”

“But little.”

“Anything? Mary, confess He said he’d come to ditch the meadow for me.”

“Warren!”

“But did he? I just want to know.”

“Of course he did. What would you have him say? Surely you wouldn’t grudge the poor old man some humble way to save his self-respect. He added, if you really care to know, he meant to clear the upper pasture, too. That sounds like something you have heard before? Warren, I wish you could have heard the way he jumbled everything. I stopped to look two or three times—he made me feel so queer—to see if he was talking in his sleep. He ran on Harold Wilson—you remember—

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4. Here, *ditch* means “to dig long, narrow channels.” These channels, or ditches, are often used for drainage or irrigation.

5. *Queer* means “odd” or “strange.”

The boy you had in having four years since.
He's finished school, and teaching in his college.
Silas declares you'll have to get him back.
He says they two will make a team for work:
Between them they will lay this farm as smooth!
The way he mixed that in with other things.
He thinks young Wilson a likely lad, though daft.
On education—you know how they fought
All through July under the blazing sun,
Silas up on the cart to build the load,
Harold along beside to pitch it on."

“Yes, I took care to keep well out of earshot.”

“Well, those days trouble Silas like a dream.
You wouldn’t think they would. How some things linger!
Harold’s young college boy’s assurance piqued him.
After so many years he still keeps finding
Good arguments he sees he might have used.
I sympathize. I know just how it feels
To think of the right thing to say too late.
Harold’s associated in his mind with Latin.
He asked me what I thought of Harold’s saying
He studied Latin like the violin
Because he liked it—that an argument!
He said he couldn’t make the boy believe
He could find water with a hazel prong—
Which showed how much good school had ever done him.
He wanted to go over that. But most of all
He thinks if he could have another chance
To teach him how to build a load of hay—"

“I know, that’s Silas’ one accomplishment.
He bundles every forkful in its place,
And tags and numbers it for future reference,
So he can find and easily dislodge it
In the unloading. Silas does that well.
He takes it out in bunches like big birds’ nests.
You never see him standing on the hay
He’s trying to lift, straining to lift himself.”

7. Daft means “foolish.”
8. Linger means “to continue to exist” or “to endure.”
9. Piqued means “aroused a feeling of anger or resentment in.”
10. Sympathize means “to share in or to agree with the feelings or ideas of another.”
11. A hazel prong is a stick believed to indicate the presence of underground water.
12. Dislodge means “to move or to force from a position.”
“He thinks if he could teach him that, he’d be
Some good perhaps to someone in the world.
He hates to see a boy the fool of books.
Poor Silas, so concerned for other folk,
And nothing to look backward to with pride,
And nothing to look forward to with hope,
So now and never any different.”

Part of a moon was falling down the west,
Dragging the whole sky with it to the hills.
Its light poured softly in her lap. She saw it
And spread her apron to it. She put out her hand
Among the harp-like morning-glory strings,
Taut with the dew from garden bed to eaves,
As if she played unheard some tenderness
That wrought on him beside her in the night.
“Warren,” she said, “he has come home to die:
You needn’t be afraid he’ll leave you this time.”

“Home,” he mocked gently.

“Yes, what else but home?
It all depends on what you mean by home.
Of course he’s nothing to us, any more
Than was the hound that came a stranger to us
Out of the woods, worn out upon the trail.”

“Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
They have to take you in.”

“I should have called it
Something you somehow haven’t to deserve.”

13. A morning glory is a vine that produces trumpet-shaped flowers.
Gardeners often position a lattice or strings for a vine to grow along.
14. Taut means “stretched tight.”
15. Wrought means “worked.”

Big Idea New Poetics How is Silas depicted in these lines?

Literary Element Dramatic Poetry What does the description in these lines reveal about Mary?

Literary Element Dramatic Poetry What is the difference between Mary’s view of a person’s home and Warren’s?
Warren leaned out and took a step or two,  
Picked up a little stick, and brought it back  
And broke it in his hand and tossed it by.  
“Silas has better claim on us you think  
Than on his brother? Thirteen little miles  
As the road winds would bring him to his door.  
Silas has walked that far no doubt to-day.  
Why didn’t he go there? His brother’s rich,  
A somebody—director in the bank.”

“He never told us that.”

“We know it though.”

“I think his brother ought to help, of course.  
I’ll see to that if there is need. He ought of right  
To take him in, and might be willing to—  
He may be better than appearances.  
But have some pity on Silas. Do you think  
If he had any pride in claiming **kin**

**Vocabulary**

**kin** (kin) n. relatives, or a group of people with common ancestry
Or anything he looked for from his brother, 
He'd keep so still about him all this time?"

145 “I wonder what’s between them.”

“I can tell you. 
Silas is what he is—we wouldn’t mind him— 
But just the kind that kinsfolk can’t abide. 
He never did a thing so very bad.

150 He don’t know why he isn’t quite as good 
As anybody. Worthless though he is, 
He won’t be made ashamed to please his brother.”

“I can’t think Si ever hurt anyone.”

“No, but he hurt my heart the way he lay 
And rolled his old head on that sharp-edged chair-back. 
He wouldn’t let me put him on the lounge. 
You must go in and see what you can do. 
I made the bed up for him there to-night. 
You’ll be surprised at him—how much he’s broken.

160 His working days are done; I’m sure of it.”

“I’d not be in a hurry to say that.”

“I haven’t been. Go, look, see for yourself. 
But, Warren, please remember how it is: 
He’s come to help you ditch the meadow. 
He has a plan. You mustn’t laugh at him. 
He may not speak of it, and then he may. 
I’ll sit and see if that small sailing cloud 
Will hit or miss the moon.”

It hit the moon.

170 Then there were three there, making a dim row, 
The moon, the little silver cloud, and she.

Warren returned—too soon, it seemed to her, 
Slipped to her side, caught up her hand and waited.

“Warren?” she questioned.

175 “Dead,” was all he answered.

16. *Abide* means “to put up with” or “to tolerate.”

**Reading Strategy** | **Evaluating Characterization** *Is Mary a good judge of Silas’s character? Explain.*
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. How do you feel about the characters in this poem?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) Describe what Mary does and says upon Warren's return in lines 1–10. (b) Why does she feel the need to put Warren "on his guard"?
3. (a) How does Silas look when Mary first sees him? (b) Why does Warren refuse to believe that Silas will tackle the chores he says he will?
4. (a) Who is Harold Wilson, and what does Silas dislike about him? (b) What do Silas's thoughts and emotions regarding Harold reveal about Silas's personality?
5. (a) According to Mary, why has Silas come to the house? (b) Why does Silas avoid asking his brother for help?

Analyze and Evaluate
6. (a) From your reading of lines 1–30, how would you describe the differences between Mary and Warren? (b) Why does Frost associate Mary with moonlight in lines 108–109 and lines 170–171?
7. In this poem Frost presents two different definitions of home. Which definition do you prefer, and why?
8. (a) What does the end of the poem suggest about Warren's feelings toward Silas? (b) Could Frost have chosen a better ending for the poem? Support your evaluation.
9. How does Frost's use of dialogue affect the tone of the poem?

Connect

RURAL LIFE IN THE EARLY 1900S

“The Death of the Hired Man” is set on a farm in the early years of the twentieth century. At that time, life was vastly different from the way it is today, especially in rural areas. In the year 1900, when Robert Frost was twenty-six, most people had neither electricity nor indoor plumbing. They heated their homes with a stove, often set up in the living room.

Those fortunate enough to own a telephone shared a “party line” with several others. To make a call, a person first had to dial the operator and indicate the number he or she wished to reach. If there was someone else already on the line, the caller had to wait for that conversation to finish before placing the call.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, boys and girls in rural areas combined schooling with chores at home. After leaving school at about age fourteen, boys often worked as farm laborers. Some became apprentices and learned trades or worked in stores. When they were not in school, girls helped with household chores such as cooking, sewing, and making cheese or butter. Men and women usually married in their twenties. Most babies were born at home, and infant mortality rates were high.

Although a few people owned automobiles, horses were the usual method of transportation. They pulled wagons, carriages, and even fire engines and hearses. Of course, no one in 1900 had ever flown in an airplane, listened to a radio, played a video game, or visited a shopping mall.

Group Activity Discuss the following questions with your classmates.
1. How has life changed since 1900, and why?
2. Is today’s society a better place to live compared with the early 1900s? Support your opinion.
**LITERARY ANALYSIS**

**Literary Element**  
**Dramatic Poetry**

In “The Death of the Hired Man,” Frost reveals the personalities of Silas, Mary, and Warren through dialogue. He also includes purely narrative or descriptive passages.

1. How is this poem similar to a play?
2. Do you think this poem would have been as powerful if Frost had revealed Silas’s personality through description only instead of dialogue and description together? Explain.
3. How does the language used in the dialogue between Mary and Warren differ from that used in the descriptive passages?

**Review: Blank Verse**

As you learned when studying the poems “Mending Wall” and “Birches,” blank verse is unrhymed poetry that is written in a rhythmic pattern called *iambic pentameter*. In iambic pentameter, each line has five feet, or basic units of measurement of a line of metrical poetry; each foot contains an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. Pauses do not always come at the ends of lines but wherever they make sense.

**Partner Activity**  
With two classmates, read aloud the first fifty lines of “The Death of the Hired Man.” One person should read the narrative or descriptive passages; the other two should read the lines of Mary and Warren. After your reading, discuss how iambic pentameter captures the cadences and rhythms of ordinary speech.

**READING AND VOCABULARY**

**Reading Strategy**  
**Evaluating Characterization**

In “The Death of the Hired Man,” Frost uses indirect characterization. Simply put, he shows rather than tells, letting the reader draw his or her own inferences about the characters from the details provided in the poem. Remarkably, though Silas remains offstage, the reader learns much about this hired man. Seeing him through Warren’s and Mary’s eyes, the reader learns about Silas’s physical condition, his work habits, his interaction with Harold Wilson, his estrangement from his brother, and his motivation for his final return to the farm. Through his choice of details, Frost attempts to bring Silas to life in the reader’s imagination.

1. Is Silas a realistic, well-developed character? Support your answer.
2. What does Frost accomplish by keeping Silas offstage?

**Vocabulary Practice**

**Practice with Synonyms**  
Choose the synonym for each vocabulary word listed from Frost’s poems. Use a dictionary or thesaurus if you need help.

1. **poise**
   - a. elegant
   - b. balance
   - c. dancer
   - d. clumsy
2. **coax**
   - a. scam
   - b. persuade
   - c. prevent
   - d. ask
3. **bracken**
   - a. bramble
   - b. wire
   - c. broken
   - d. fern

**Academic Vocabulary**

Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R86.

- **task** (task) n. an assigned piece of work
- **partner** (pär’tnər) n. associate or colleague

**Practice and Apply**

1. What task did Silas do best on the farm?
2. What two skills did Silas want to teach Harold Wilson, his former working partner?
Writing About Literature

Compare and Contrast Characters  How would you compare and contrast Silas and Harold Wilson? Write a brief essay to explore this question, using evidence from the poem to support your ideas. To help you get started, jot down notes about the characters using a Venn diagram.

As you draft, introduce your topic in the first paragraph and develop the notes listed on your diagram in the middle paragraph(s). Conclude your essay with a parting thought about Silas and Harold as foil characters in the poem.

Exchange your draft with a peer reviewer; then revise if necessary. Proofread your paper for errors in usage and spelling.

Reading Further

If you are interested in reading more by or about Robert Frost, look for the following:


Biographies: Frost: A Literary Life Reconsidered (1993), by William H. Pritchard, is a narrative exploring the interaction between Frost’s life and work.

Robert Frost: A Life (1999), by Jay Parini, provides an analysis of Frost’s poetry and a balanced look at his life.

Web Activities  For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.

Frost’s Language and Style

Using Prepositional Phrases  A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition, its object, and any modifiers of the object. A prepositional phrase can function as an adjective, modifying a noun or a pronoun. (Mary noticed the light from the moon.) A prepositional phrase may also function as an adverb when it modifies a verb, an adverb, or an adjective. (Silas rolled his head on the chair-back.)

• Set off two or more introductory prepositional phrases or a single long one with a comma.

During the busiest part of the summer, Silas deserted the farm.

In their conversation about Silas in the evening, Mary and Warren disagreed.

• Do not use a comma if the introductory prepositional phrase is immediately followed by a verb.

In the heat of July worked Silas and Harold Wilson.

Activity  In “The Death of the Hired Man,” Frost often uses prepositional phrases, sometimes to describe actions or reinforce the somber mood:

“She ran on tip-toe down the darkened passage”

“Its light poured softly in her lap”

Identify other examples of prepositional phrases in the poem and indicate whether each phrase functions as an adjective or an adverb. Read your list to the class.

Revising Check

Punctuation  Work with a partner to review and revise the punctuation of commas after introductory prepositional phrases in your essay for “The Death of the Hired Man.”
In October 1963, President John F. Kennedy presented the following remarks at Amherst College, in Amherst, Massachusetts. The speech was given in honor of the groundbreaking of the Robert Frost Library, which was completed two years later. This would be one of Kennedy's last public appearances before his assassination less than a month later. Robert Frost, who died earlier in the year, had long been associated with Amherst College, having taught English there periodically throughout his career.

**Setting Purposes for Reading**

Read to discover the historical and social impacts of Robert Frost’s poetry.

**Reading Strategy**

**Analyzing Philosophical Assumptions**

Analyzing philosophical assumptions involves gathering information to determine an author’s implicit and explicit philosophical assumptions and beliefs about a subject. As you read, take notes about the assumptions you discover in President Kennedy’s speech.

Mr. McCloy, President Plimpton, Mr. MacLeish, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

I am very honored to be here with you on this occasion which means so much to this college and also means so much to art and the progress of the United States. This college is part of the United States. It belongs to it. So did Mr. Frost, in a large sense. And, therefore, I was privileged to accept the invitation somewhat rendered to me in the same way that Franklin Roosevelt rendered his invitation to Mr. MacLeish, the invitation which I received from Mr. McCloy. The powers of the Presidency are often described. Its limitations should occasionally be remembered. And therefore when the Chairman of our Disarmament Advisory Committee, who has

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1. John Jay McCloy (1895–1989), a diplomat and lawyer, served as an adviser to every president from Franklin Delano Roosevelt to Ronald Reagan. Calvin Hastings Plimpton was the president of Amherst College from 1960 to 1971. Archibald MacLeish (1892–1982) was a famed poet and playwright. MacLeish also served as a librarian of Congress and briefly as an assistant secretary of state.
2. Kennedy is referring to President Franklin Roosevelt’s invitation to MacLeish to become a librarian of Congress.
labored so long and hard, Governor Stevenson’s assistant during the very difficult days at the United Nations during the Cuban crisis, a public servant for so many years, asks or invites the President of the United States, there is only one response. So I am glad to be here.

Amherst has had many soldiers of the king since its first one, and some of them are here today: Mr. McCloy, who has long been a public servant; Jim Reed who is the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury; President Cole, who is now our Ambassador to Chile; Mr. Ramey, who is a Commissioner of the Atomic Energy Commission; Dick Reuter, who is head of the Food for Peace. These and scores of others down through the years have recognized the obligations of the advantages which the graduation from a college such as this places upon them to serve not only their private interest but the public interest as well.

Many years ago, Woodrow Wilson said, what good is a political party unless it is serving a great national purpose? And what good is a private college or university unless it is serving a great national purpose? The Library being constructed today, this college, itself—all of this, of course, was not done merely to give this school’s graduates an advantage, an economic advantage, in the life struggle. It does do that. But in return for that, in return for the great opportunity which society gives the graduates of this and related schools, it seems to me incumbent upon this and other schools’ graduates to recognize their responsibility to the public interest.

Privilege is here, and with privilege goes responsibility. And I think, as your president said, that it must be a source of satisfaction to you that this school’s graduates have recognized it. I hope that the students who are here now will also recognize it in the future. Although Amherst has been in the forefront of extending aid to needy and talented students, private colleges, taken as a whole, draw 50 percent of their students from the wealthiest 10 percent of our Nation. And even State universities and other public institutions derive 25 percent of their students from this group. In March 1962, persons of 18 years or older who had not completed high school made up 46 percent of the total labor force, and such persons comprised 64 percent of those who were unemployed. And in 1958, the lowest fifth of the families in the United States had 4 1/2 percent of the total personal income, the highest fifth, 44 1/2 percent. There is inherited wealth in this country and also inherited poverty. And unless the graduates of this college and other colleges like it who are given a running start in life—unless they are willing to put back into our society, those talents, the broad sympathy, the understanding, the compassion—unless they are willing to put those qualities back into the service of the Great Republic, then obviously the presuppositions upon which our democracy are based are bound to be fallible.

The problems which this country now faces are staggering, both at home and abroad. We need the service, in the great sense, of every educated man or woman to find 10 million jobs in the next

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3. Adlai Stevenson (1900–1965) served as governor of Illinois from 1948 to 1952 and as the U.S. delegate to the United Nations during the Kennedy administration. John McCloy served as Stevenson’s assistant during the Cuban missile crisis.

4. Here, incumbent means “imposed.”
2 1/2 years, to govern our relations—a country which lived in isolation for 150 years, and is now suddenly the leader of the free world—to govern our relations with over 100 countries, to govern those relations with success so that the balance of power remains strong on the side of freedom, to make it possible for Americans of all different races and creeds to live together in harmony, to make it possible for a world to exist in diversity and freedom. All this requires the best of all of us.

Therefore, I am proud to come to this college, whose graduates have recognized this obligation and to say to those who are now here that the need is endless, and I am confident that you will respond.

Robert Frost said:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

I hope that road will not be the less traveled by, and I hope your commitment to the Great Republic’s interest in the years to come will be worthy of your long inheritance since your beginning.

This day devoted to the memory of Robert Frost offers an opportunity for reflection which is prized by politicians as well as by others, and even by poets, for Robert Frost was one of the granite figures of our time in America. He was supremely two things: an artist and an American. A nation reveals itself not only by the men it produces but also by the men it honors, the men it remembers.

In America, our heroes have customarily run to men of large accomplishments. But today this college and country honors a man whose contribution was not to our size but to our spirit, not to our political beliefs but to our insight, not to our self-esteem, but to our self-comprehension. In honoring Robert Frost, we therefore can pay honor to the deepest sources of our national strength. That strength takes many forms, and the most obvious forms are not always the most significant. The men who create power make an indispensable contribution to the Nation’s greatness, but the men who question power make a contribution just as indispensable, especially when that questioning is disinterested, for they determine whether we use power or power uses us.

Our national strength matters, but the spirit which informs and controls our strength matters just as much. This was the special significance of Robert Frost. He brought an unsparing instinct for reality to bear on the platitudes5 and pieties6 of society. His sense of the human tragedy fortified him against self-deception and easy consolation. “I have been” he wrote, “one acquainted with the night.” And because he knew the midnight as well as the high noon, because he understood the ordeal as well as the triumph of the human spirit, he gave his age strength with which to overcome despair. At bottom, he held a deep faith in the spirit of man, and it is hardly an accident that Robert Frost coupled poetry and power, for he saw poetry as the means of saving power from itself. When power leads man towards arrogance, poetry reminds him of his limitations. When power narrows the areas of man’s concern, poetry reminds him of the richness and diversity of his existence. When power corrupts, poetry cleanses. For art establishes the basic human truth which must serve as the touchstone of our judgment.

The artist, however faithful to his personal vision of reality, becomes the last champion of the individual mind and sensibility against an intrusive society and an officious state. The great artist is thus a solitary figure. He has, as Frost said, a lover’s quarrel with the world. In pursuing his perceptions of reality, he must often sail against the currents of his time. This is not a popular role. If Robert Frost was much honored in his lifetime, it was because a good many preferred to ignore his darker truths. Yet in retrospect, we see how the artist’s fidelity has strengthened the fibre of our national life.

If sometimes our great artists have been the most critical of our society, it is because their sensitivity and their concern for justice, which must motivate any true artist, makes him aware that our Nation falls short of its highest potential. I see little of more importance to the future of our country and our civilization than full recognition of the place of the artist.

If art is to nourish the roots of our culture, society must set the artist free to follow his vision wherever it takes him. We must never forget that art is not a form of propaganda; it is a form of truth. And as Mr. MacLeish once remarked of poets, there is nothing worse for our trade than to be in style. In free society art is not

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5. Platiitudes are unoriginal statements.
6. Pieties are reverent statements.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. What is your opinion of Kennedy’s claim that “society must set the artist free to follow his vision wherever it takes him”? Are there limits to artistic expression? Explain.

Recall and Interpret

2. (a) According to Kennedy, the artist becomes the last champion of what? (b) How might this championing help to bring about Kennedy’s vision of America in the future?

3. (a) In Kennedy’s view, art is never a form of what type of information? (b) Why do you think he made this statement?

Analyze and Evaluate

4. (a) Why do you think Kennedy claimed that “a good many preferred to ignore [Frost’s] darker truths”? (b) Do you agree with Kennedy that Frost’s poems often hold “darker truths”? Why or why not?

5. (a) Why do you think Kennedy began his address by discussing economics and education? (b) What do you think of this portion of the address?

Connect

6. Briefly compare and contrast Kennedy’s arguments about artists and society with the beliefs held by particular literary movements of other arguments you’ve read by literary figures.

OBJECTIVES

- Read to enhance understanding of history and American culture.
- Analyze the influences of historical context that shape elements of a literary work.
- Connect a literary work, including character, plot, and setting, to the historical context.