

## **American Poets Unit**

English 5-6

Mr. Coia

From now until 11/26, we will read and discuss poems from Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson. Here are the poems and projects that you are responsible to know and understand:

### **Walt Whitman**

- “Song of Myself” p. 347
- “I Hear American Singing” p. 352
- “A Sight in the Camp in the Daybreak Gray and Dim” p. 362
- “Song of Myself 10” p. 353
- “Song of Myself 33” p. 356
- “Song of Myself 52” p. 359

### **Emily Dickinson**

- “Heart! We will forget him!” p. 374
- “If you were coming in the fall” p 376
- “Some Keep the Sabbath” p. 381
- “I Taste a liquor never brewed” p. 382
- “Apparently with no surprise” p.385
- “Because I could not stop for death” p. 391
- “I heard a fly buzz-when I died” p. 392

### **Work and Projects to Complete:**

- Diagraming 4.1 and 4.2
- Subordinate and Independent Clauses worksheet
- “I Hear America” rewrite
- Film Scenes from “Song of Myself 10”
- 12 completed T Notes (all poems except for first one)
- Echoes of Whitman and Dickinson (write or memorize a poem)
- Exam on Whitman, Dickinson, and diagraming
- Showcase #4

## **Walt Whitman Unit**

### **Tuesday 11/12**

- Diagraming 4.1
- Listen and follow to “America” (Neil Diamond). What does this say about America?
- Introduce new section of our class: American Poets
- Begin Walt Whitman biography (1819-1892)
- Show quotations from critics:

“Less than a hundred years after the United States was founded, the new nation found its voice in a poet who spoke to all the world. His name was Walt Whitman, and he struck a note in literature that was forthright, as original, and as deeply charged with democracy’s energies as the land that produced him.”

“Whitman throws his chunky language at the reader. He cajoles and thunders; he chants, celebrates, chuckles, and caresses. He spills from his capacious American soul every dreg of un-Englishness, every street sound thumbing its nose at traditional subject matter and tone. Here is Samson pulling the house of literature down around his ears, yet singing in the ruins.”

- Read beginning of “Song of Myself” (p. 347)
- Discuss
- Do you agree about “every atom belonging to me”?
  
- Explain T Notes (you will do one for each of our poems in this unit)
  
- Read “I Hear American Singing” (p. 352)
- Discussion on meaning
- Examine painting “Construction of the Dam.” Compare with the poem.
- Student Activity: In pairs, rewrite the poem to include modern-day occupations.
  
- Read “A Sight in the Camp in the Daybreak Gray and Dim” (p. 362)
- Discussion on meaning of the poem

### **Grammar Lesson**

- Introduce independent and subordinate clauses
- Students will identify the difference between the two with 15 examples
- Worksheet “Grammar Link”

### **Thursday, 11/14**

- Diagramming 4.2
  
- “Song of Myself 10” p. 353
- Create four film scenes for action in this poem
  
- “Song of Myself 33” (on heroes) p. 356
- Discussion
  
- Show clip from “Dead Poet’s Society” (Barbaric Yawp)
- “Song of Myself 52” p. 359
  
- What elements of the American Dream do these hold?

## Monday, 11/18

### **Emily Dickinson Poetry Unit**

Discuss biography p. 372

“Heart! We will forget him!” p. 374

- Venn diagram (head, heart, activities that fit into both)
- Explain unrequited love
- Are you persuaded more with promptings of feeling or intellect?
- Read poem

“If you were coming in the fall” p 376

- What is a movie or song that deals with romantic fulfillment?
- Read
- similes
- is uncertainty worse than direct pain? (Is not knowing worse than knowing something awful?)

“Some Keep the Sabbath” p. 381

- Does a place of worship have to be a human-built construction?
- Read poem
- What are the speaker’s beliefs about practicing religion?

## Wednesday, 11/20

“I Taste a liquor never brewed” p. 382

- Where does your inspiration arise from?
- Read
- List 5 images of nature

“Apparently with no surprise” p.385

- Read
- What is the blonde assassin?
- What is it that God approves of?
- What is the speaker seem to be saying about God’s attitude toward creation?
- (cycles, life and death are part of God’s plan; theodicy)

“Because I could not stop for death” p. 391

- Read
- Where did they stop?
- Meaning of the last line?

“I heard a fly buzz-when I died” p. 392

- Describe a time when a minor occurrence or interruption happened at a major event (Getting yelled at and notice something on TV; friend crying and you look at her hair)
- Read
- What does the speaker notice?
- What is the mood change?
- Was it a good thing that the speaker was distracted? Disrespectful?

**Homework:**

Work on exam question. Pick one of these choices to bring in on Friday.

Choice 1) Echoes of Dickinson and Whitman (see p. 396 Choice #2)

- Type a 10-15 line poem that examines one of the themes of Dickinson or Whitman. I'll evaluate your work on the quality of the poem, and how it shows an understanding of Dickinson or Whitman.
- Begin with an opening line from any of her poems.

Choice 2) Memorize a Whitman or Dickinson poem. Pick one that is approximately 15 lines.

**Friday, 11/22**

- Exam on poetry unit: Whitman, Dickinson, and diagraming work (about 60 points)
- Bring in your poem, or be prepared to share your memorized poem (25 points)

**Tuesday, 11/26**

- Showcase #4 due: Pick an aspect from Whitman or Dickinson to explore.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

T Notes

Poem:

Author:

Thoughts from My Reading

Thoughts from Class Discussion

Poem:

Author:

Thoughts from My Reading

Thoughts from Class Discussion

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

T Notes

Poem:

Author:

Thoughts from My Reading

Thoughts from Class Discussion

Poem:

Author:

Thoughts from My Reading

Thoughts from Class Discussion

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

T Notes

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T Notes

Poem:

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