**Poet Research Project/Presentation**

Poetry evokes the power of words, feelings, and images. We are surrounded by poetry in its various forms on a daily basis--popular music, billboards, and advertising jingles. Poetry allows us to stop and appreciate the mystery of daily life, as Walt Whitman noted in *Leaves of Grass*:

Stop this day and night with me, and you

shall possess the origin of all poems;

You shall possess the good of earth and

sun... (there are millions of suns left,)

You shall no longer take things at second or

third hand, nor look through eyes of the

Dead, nor feed on the spectres in books;

You shall not look through my eyes

either, nor take things from me,

You shall listen to all sides, and filter them

from yourself.

-Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*

Careful attention to the works of published poets will help you to explore your own poetic voice for our Poetry Cafe in the middle of May. For the Poetry Cafe, you will create a thematic poetry anthology containing an introduction to the collection, five original poems with complementary visuals, and a reflection that explains the style and content of work presented.

Therefore, your objective for the **Poet Research Project and Presentation** is to develop an understanding and appreciation of a poet of your choice (one poet per student in class) through studying the poet’s life, literary time period in which he/she lived, his/her writing style, and his/her influence in the genre of poetry.

**Requirements for the Poet Research Project: (Test grade)**

**\*Biography of the poet:** including birth, education, death (if deceased), key events of the time period in which your poet lived, major themes in writing, and most famous works. Be sure to write a well-written and specific account of your poet--be sure to cite and document all sources to avoid plagiarism!

**\*Annotated poems by your poet**: using our close reading strategies, annotate **two** poems by the poet. Include a key if necessary to describe your annotations (colors, symbols, etc.). Be sure to label and analyze figurative language and poetic devices used. After the poem is annotated, for each poem complete a what/why chart to analyze the poetic devices that you located in your poem. You should have at least 6 levels in each chart. You MUST also write a thematic statement for each poem. See Springboard on how to do this.

Example of What/Why Chart Analysis

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What (Poetic Device) | Why |
| Poetic Device  “Quote from poem”  Explanation of why quote is that poetic device | This has to do with the effect of that poetic device. You are not explaining why your quote is that poetic device. That is the What?) |

**\*Performance Explanation**: You will perform one of your annotated poems to the class. In 1-2 paragraphs, explain how you plan on performing your poem. For example, talk about lines that you might emphasize, tone of voice during various stanzas, and hand gestures used. In case you get nervous and forget something during your performance, this paragraph will show that you had a plan.

**\*Self-reflection paragraph**: write a thoughtful and specific paragraph (7-10 complete sentences) exploring how poetry in any form is relevant in your life today.

**\*MLA Works Cited Page**: document the sources you used in researching your poet including where you found copies of your poems. Remember only credible sources can be used!

**4/21:** You must have signed up for your poet by Friday, April 14th. It is a first come, first serve policy. You must have your poet approved by Ms. Denstaedt.

**4/28:** Submit a copy of one of the poem you would like to perform for approval.

**5/5:** Research Paper due.

**5/8:** Poetry Performances.

Poets to consider:

E.E. Cummings Emily Dickinson Maya Angelou

Pablo Neruda Sandra Cisneros Robert Frost

Walt Whitman Dwight Okita Sylvia Plath

Janet Wong N. Scott Momaday Alfred Noyes

Anne Sexton Julia Alvarez Langston Hughes

Rita Dove Carl Sandburg William Butler Yeats

John Donne Billy Collins Jimmy Santiago Boca

Kay Ryan Percy Bysshe Shelley Naomi Shihab Nye

Robert Browning W.B. Yeats Henry David Thoreau

William Wordsworth Shel Silverstein Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Oscar Wilde Ralph Waldo Emerson Gwendolyn Brooks

Credible Websites to consider:

<http://www.biography.com/>

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/>

<https://www.poets.org/>

<http://www.poetryoutloud.org/>

<http://www.poetryarchive.org/>

<http://www.pw.org/>

<http://www.tweetspeakpoetry.com/>

**Poetry Performance**

• Your assignment is to memorize and perform an analyzed poem from your researched poet to the class.

• Your poem must be at least 65 words. COUNT THEM.

• You must submit a copy of the poem by April 21 for approval by Ms. Denstaedt. This copy must include the poem, poet’s name and your name.

• The poem must be school appropriate.

• Your presentation of the poem will be graded on the following: (rubric attached)

1. Knowing the poem

2. Speaking clearly

3. Posture and eye contact

4. Volume Voice

5. Acting/Dialogue

Your Poet Research Project will count as a test grade (100% formal.)

Your poetry performance will count as a quiz grade (50% formal.)

