

Splash 2010: Poetry Workshop

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Instructions: Read each poem by your classmates and critique each one. Bring a copy of the poems to the class. There's no one right thing to say for these things, so ask questions, make comments, say what comes to your mind! What did you like about the poem? What did you think the author did well? What was clear? What wasn't clear? What did the poem make you think about? Do you feel like the mood, the tone were appropriate for the subject of the poem? What do you think could use improvement? When phrasing criticism, be constructive, and be nice! Remember, a workshop class is fundamentally about improving poetry. We draw from all of the different talents and experiences in the group, and together work to give constructive feedback for the author.

tl;dr: Bring a copy of the poems to class. Prepare feedback for each poem. Be constructive and nice!

I have attached every poem that I received in this packet. I tried to preserve typography/stylistic use of paper space as best as I could, though some things may get changed. If there did not appear to be a title, I didn't include a title.

ANSWER

**I listen to the whispering of the wind
In the leaves of the trees, as it tells me my answer.**

**I listen to the trickle of the water
On the beach to the sand, as I hear my answer.**

**I listen to the flicker of the flame
As it talks to the coals, who tell me my answer.**

**I listen to the rumble of the thunder
As it speaks to the lightning, and tells me my answer.**

**I listen to the call of a bird
As it sings to the sparrow, and I hear my answer.**

**I listen to the swoop of the falcon
As it dives for its food, and I hear my answer.**

**Now listen Emily, really listen
To the wind, water, fire, and earth, as they tell you your answer.**

By: Emily Lynn

I am from...
By: Peter Klapes

I am from dirt, fresh veggies and a garden
Which seems to magically transport food
to our kitchen table
I am from the smell of fresh cut grass
I am from the stiff and below freezing feel
of keys being manipulated in my miniature paw
I am from the blob of soft pudding which sits in my room...
Waiting for my nightly plop

I am from being the “odd man out”
of not liking pizza
I am from “Good Night Moon” and “The Big Red Barn”
From “Row, Row Your Boat” and “This Old Man”
From asking this and asking that,
From my mother’s verbal composition, who, in my brain only spoke “college”
I’m from asking my father ‘who’s the president’ and ‘what’s the capital of Massachusetts?’
I am from turning my head to television and the movies, to anything that acquired visual stimulation;
most flashy toys...I hated...police lights, the worst

I am from Greek cuisine made from only the two hands of my grandmother
I am from liturgy, not mass, from “why is Easter later than everybody else”
And from the strictness of Christianity, the way it formed,
without change, since the beginning, I am preached
I am from a family, 2 cousins, and sparse relatives in this country
I am from family road trips, and vacationing around New England,
And some of the unthinkable
I am from a hard drive, filled to the max with pictures and correspondence
Of my life, and the life of those who I may never know were in existence

I am from branches, leaf-fall autumn, change, addition
And the identity of the roots which begin in the inner core, core of life
And branch out all the way, until it is spilling off of the mantle and crust.

“Midnight Daisies”

Alex

Midnight daisies on a backlit grave
Rows of bodies they couldn't save
Snow-white petals reflecting the moon
Too-young soldiers killed too soon

Dewy grass 'neath booted feet
An army cap tipped to greet
The men arranged in frozen soil
Freed from war and fruitless toil

A graveyard, silent of the sound of guns
Where midnight daisies wait for sun

As I look
Through the back of the cage
I see
Darkened lights over there

On the cage material itself
There is a sign:
“Closed for Holiday”
It says
But holidays
Do not matter
When they cannot be celebrated
And although
I can try to leave
Through the open cage door
I do not
Because there is no reason to
For there is nowhere
To go
So I stay
In this cage
Not able to advance
For the door is closed
Not wanting to leave
So not to lose
My spot in line
Even though
I am the line
On this celebrated day
To this place of worship
Where food is given out
Freely
From the soup kitchen
But not
On this Christmas Day

Hunter Johnson

“Moon”
MaryKate

I can't describe the elegance,
That flows upon your cheeks,
A vivid painting before my eyes,
A source of light I seek.

You clothe the world in a life of color,
So close, but far away.
You change upon the mood of night,
And refining day by day.

Your 'children'!live and love for you.
You're surrounded by their grace.
Your all they need to stay alive,
!And they light your mourning face.

I can find you deep in great pallor,
Humbled by the view.
For a moment, you stand there still,
A secret I wish I knew.

You close the depth, surrounding them.
But it's only from your love,
Time goes on and on from here,
Engulfed by a pitiful glove.

Your enemies, vulgar and quick,
You defend, but tire fast.
You have just enough strength to carry on,
An instrument of your cast.

The deep acne that deludes your face,
I still know you're quite serene,
Beyond the bumps and dents and cracks,
You're still the living queen.

You protect your children as a mother would,
They blend to please the sight.
An accessory that won't delude,
The faces of the night.

Your presence is a blessing -
Small, but noticed well.
Shining out from miles away,
As we watch your spirit dwell.

I look around and all I see,

Is you and your magnificent galaxy.
Your shining presence in the night,
Proves your wonder and relentless might.

The Golden Archway
By Connor Batsimm

I dreamed that
There was a golden archway
Patiently waiting on my horizon,
For the day
That it would welcome me
With open arms.

I dreamed that
There was a swiftly flowing,
Grand, turquoise river,
That could
Whisk me away there
In a night and a day only.

I dreamed that
There was a train
Moving through the night,
Moving,
To the river's mouth and back
Like a bird migrating.

I dreamed that
No more than a mile away,
There stood a station,
Made of
Majestic marble,
And the hopes of people.
People like me.

But then I see
With my own eyes
Those who are here
And those who love me.
I look
At their warm, glowing faces again,
And I decide
To let the golden archway
Patiently wait a little longer.

“Two Faces”

There are no good people in this world,
Nor are there bad,
Only mortal.
There is no white,
No black,
Only grey.

Light is clear, golden, pure,
Light is laughter and joy,
Yet light burns, light blinds,
Light shows things better unseen.
Light is the glare, the flash of pain.

Darkness is mysterious, peaceful, calm,
Darkness is a whisper,
A sigh of relief.
Darkness is the hidden thing,
The unknown.
And darkness hides,
And darkness is a blanket of ignorance.
What is out there?
Darkness is a disguise
For the monsters of children’s dreams.

The hero, the celebrity,
The one who can do no wrong,
Has lied.
Has done things later regretted.
Has made people hurt,
Has made the world cry.

And yet, the robber,
The murderer, the one in jail,
Has made someone smile.
Has given a gift,
Has thought of someone else.
Has given a helping hand
To lift those who are down.

So there is no true good,
No absolute bad,
No black, no white
Only mortal.
Grey.
As Janus,
Everyone has two faces.

“I dreamt a dream”

I dreamt a dream
That I was dreaming
That we were all dreaming
That the world was but a dream
And if it was all an illusion
Then what could we call reality
For our lives are but a dream

Tia Dawn

“Forward”

Forward! Don't stop until the flag is planted firmly in the ground. In the soil
stained with the red ink of war.

Forward! Never look back. It is not a sight to see and will weigh heavy on your feet
like shoes of cinder.

Forward! Gunfire and explosions ring in every ear yet it is silent. Man down. He
was a fellow soldier, my comrade. Now he lies face down, his back to the cause.

Forward! Is that the halfway mark? Is it possible to push to the end?

Forward! Another casualty. He was my friend, he had a family. They're still at
home, waiting for him, but he's not coming back.

Forward! Trample the enemy. Crush anyone in the way. Win! Complete
the mission, pride and honor are at stake.

Forward! Blown to smithereens! He was my brother, my best friend, the father to
my godchildren. Each one his mirror image. What will they say? He promised
them he would be back, but now it's just a lie buried underneath blankets of dust
and sand. He won't be back, not for holidays or birthdays, even though he
promised. He promised. Now is not the time to lose sight of what is most
important!

Forward! I must get there, I will! The enemies fall like domino's crushed under a
great force. I can see the horizon, I can almost taste the sweet flavor of victory!

Forward! My flag stands strong! Waves of relief and pride consume and wash
over me like a hungry ocean, but quickly drain away when I look back. I've
beaten the hardest obstacle course, seized the moment that I've trained so hard
for, but my peers, my friends, my brothers and sisters...fallen but not forgotten.

And the enemy, who's friend, sister or father was trampled along the way?
Pride, accomplishment, integrity? Is it true that only together we can? I may have won
but who is there to share the glory? At what cost did I move
Forward?

Lucia Terry

“extended no. iv”

Caitie Smith

i miss you like the rainbow misses the rain.
sometimes more, sometimes less,
but even the faintest of pitter-pattering
on my rooftop
gets me giddy like a child.

i can't sleep.

i don't sugar-coat myself for you,
and you think it's funny,
so i laugh.
should you think to, you're welcome to laugh along.

and when i think about the future,
i wonder if you'll be
there;
but then i shut my eyes
to overcast skies
and sleep away
these cloudy days.

this grayscale heart of mine--
dipped in past and previous,
never, ever the present.
my memory is delayed and detached.
i'm a broken record saying these things to you.

tut tut -

looks like rain.

Siobhan Delorey

You walk down the hall with that beautiful smile,

And I can't help but laugh to myself,

You are just so amazing,

Deep brown eyes and a voice so enchanting,

If you only knew,

You are all that's on my mind and my inspiration,

You say hi and I just stand in stupidity,

“PAINT ON”

Dana Brooks

You can make my heart melt and my brain lose itself.
I am an imaginative, athletic, artistic adventurer.
I wonder, with every word spoken, what these words would look like on a large canvas.
I hear the song begin to play, the instruments are projected over the bodies of water, of land, and of sky.
I see, with every note of the music, a splash of paint on the canvas
I want the limit beyond the sky.
I am an imaginative, athletic, artistic adventurer.

I pretend I don't care, I just paint on.
I feel the song in my hand as the color spreads.
I touch the paint, still wet, my fingertips now a burst of color.
I worry that every mark on this canvas, cannot be erased.
I cry when I make a mistake, and paint with white instead of violet, green instead of blue.
I am an imaginative, athletic, artistic adventurer.

I understand that the song must come to an end, as it had begun.
I say, the colors run out, as the music dies down.
I dream that I am an imaginative, athletic, artistic adventurer.
I wonder, with every word spoken, what these words would look like on a large canvas.
I hear the song begin to play, the instruments are projected over the bodies of water, of land, and of sky.
I see, with every note of the music, a splash of paint on the canvas
I want the limit beyond the sky.
I am an imaginative, athletic, artistic adventurer.

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I touch the paint, still wet, my fingertips now a burst of color.
I worry that every mark on this canvas, cannot be erased.
I cry when I make a mistake, and paint with white instead of violet, green instead of blue.
I am an imaginative, athletic, artistic adventurer.

I understand that the song must come to an end, as it had begun.
I say, the colors run out, as the music dies down.
I dream that the mellifluous sound and elaborate artwork would continue forever.
I try to make the canvas as full as humanly possible, and I don't stop there.
I hope that when I put down my paintbrush, the canvas will be complete.
I am an imaginative, athletic, artistic adventurer. the mellifluous sound and elaborate artwork would continue forever.
I try to make the canvas as full as humanly possible, and I don't stop there.
I hope that when I put down my paintbrush, the canvas will be complete.
I am an imaginative, athletic, artistic adventurer.