

# Fishbowl Discussion on *Walt Whitman's Poetry*.

## Reading Standards:

1. Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of literature.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of foundational works of American Literature.

### **THE TASK:**

A fishbowl panel is a small group of students who prepare the same question in response to a prompt. They then discuss their answers as the class observes and takes notes.

As a participant in our fishbowl discussions, you will become 'experts' on particular poems and will have the opportunity to practice public speaking as you present and discuss your viewpoints in front of an audience. Also, your classmates will have the opportunity to learn from their peers.

### **FOCUS:**

We have read several Whitman poems while analyzing how the author's writing style, use of imagery and use of figurative language can create emotion and meaning. We have also analyzed how Whitman's poems relate to certain themes and topics of the time period. It is now your turn to apply this practice to open discussion.

### **You have two tasks:**

1. **Explain how Walt Whitman's writing style (form/style, themes, use of imagery, metaphor, and simile, etc.) do indeed create emotion and meaning in the following poems.**
2. **Compare/Contrast how Whitman's poems relate to certain themes and topics of the time period.**

### **GROUPS:**

<b>Group 1</b> From "Song of Myself" "One's-Self I Sing" "A Noiseless Patient Spider"	<b>Group 2</b> "America" "For You O Democracy" "Time to Come"
<b>Group 3</b> "Beat! Beat! Drums!" "Come Up from the Fields Father" "Reconciliation"	<b>Group 4</b> "A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown" "The Wound-Dresser" "O Captain! My Captain!"
<b>Group 5 – Challenge Group</b>	
"When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd"	

## THE RULES:

Your homework assignment is:

1. Read/Review your assigned reading, taking notes as you go along. Use the handout for assistance.
2. Think about the **imagery** in the poem. What images stand out to you? How do the images help create emotion/meaning? Are they pleasant or unpleasant? Also, consider the use of **metaphors and similes**.
3. Collect notes, including specific lines from the poem which support your planned statements.
4. Have line numbers ready for quick reference.
5. Be prepared for the class to follow along as they read passages as textual support. You may choose to use “post-it notes” to mark passages or type your ideas on a separate sheet. Go with what feels comfortable. Since the discussion is unrehearsed, organization of notes is necessary.
6. On \_\_\_\_\_, your group will engage in an unrehearsed discussion of your topic. The remainder of the class will observe silently and take notes. By the end of your timed discussion, the people on the outside of the fishbowl should have a clear understanding of how the author’s use of imagery and figurative language works to create emotion in your poems.

### Assessment: 25 points

Your grade will consist of the following:

1. Participation in the fishbowl – Number of times and how well you participate in the discussion
2. Connection – Do you clearly articulate and support your ideas?
3. Taking Notes – Both your prepared notes and notes taken during discussion will be collected.

### FISHBOWL NOTES SAMPLE:

Poem Title:

Examples of Imagery		Line Numbers:
Major Theme(s) related to Time Period		Line Numbers:
Examples of Metaphor/Simile		Line Numbers: