

## Music as Poetry

Read the following song lyrics and decide if they could be considered poetry.

### **Born to Run**                      By Bruce Springsteen                      1975

In the day we sweat it out in the streets  
    Of a runaway American dream  
At night we ride through mansions of glory in  
    Suicide machines  
Sprung from cages out on Highway 9  
Chrome wheeled, fuel injected  
And steppin' out over the line  
Baby this town rips the bones from your back  
It's a death trap, it's a suicide rap  
We gotta get out while we're young  
'Cause tramps like us, baby we we're born to run

Wendy let me in, I wanna be your friend  
I want to guard your dreams and visions  
Just wrap your legs 'round these velvet rims  
And strap your hands across my engines  
Together we could break this trap  
We'll run till we drop, baby we'll never go back  
Will you walk with me out on the wire  
'Cause baby I'm just a scared and lonely rider  
I gotta know how it feels  
I want to know if your love is wild  
Girl I want to know if love is real

Beyond the palace hemi-powered drones  
    Scream down the boulevard  
The girls comb their hair in rearview mirrors  
And the boys try to look so hard  
The amusement park rises bold and stark  
Kids are huddled on the beach in a mist  
I wanna die with you Wendy on the streets tonight  
In an everlasting kiss

The highway's jammed with broken heroes  
On a last chance power drive,  
Everybody's out on the run tonight  
But there's no place left to hide.  
Together Wendy we can live with the sadness  
I'll love you with all the madness in my soul.  
Someday girl, I don't know when  
We're gonna get to that place  
Where we really want to go  
And we'll walk in the sun,  
But till then tramps like us,  
Baby we were born to run.

1. Discuss the imagery in these lyrics. What pictures does it bring to your mind?
2. How are these lyrics like a poem? What is this song about?

## **A Hard Rain's Gonna Fall** by Bob Dylan

Oh, where have you been, my blue-eyed son?  
Oh, where have you been, my darling young one?  
I've stumbled on the side of twelve misty mountains,  
I've walked and I've crawled on six crooked highways,  
I've stepped in the middle of seven sad forests,  
I've been out in front of a dozen dead oceans,  
I've been ten thousand miles in the mouth of a graveyard,  
And it's a hard, and it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard,  
And it's a hard rain's a-gonna fall.

Oh, what did you see, my blue-eyed son?  
Oh, what did you see, my darling young one?  
I saw a newborn baby with wild wolves all around it,  
I saw a highway of diamonds with nobody on it,  
I saw a black branch with blood that kept drippin',  
I saw a room full of men with their hammers a-bleedin',  
I saw a white ladder all covered with water,  
I saw ten thousand talkers whose tongues were all broken,  
I saw guns and sharp swords in the hands of young children,  
And it's a hard, and it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard,  
And it's a hard rain's a-gonna fall.

And what did you hear, my blue-eyed son?  
And what did you hear, my darling young one?  
I heard the sound of a thunder, it roared out a warnin',  
Heard the roar of a wave that could drown the whole world,  
Heard one hundred drummers whose hands were a-blazin',  
Heard ten thousand whisperin' and nobody listenin',  
Heard one person starve, I heard many people laughin',  
Heard the song of a poet who died in the gutter,

Heard the sound of a clown who cried in the alley,  
And it's a hard, and it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard,  
And it's a hard rain's a-gonna fall.

Oh, who did you meet, my blue-eyed son?  
Who did you meet, my darling young one?  
I met a young child beside a dead pony,  
I met a white man who walked a black dog,  
I met a young woman whose body was burning,  
I met a young girl, she gave me a rainbow,  
I met one man who was wounded in love,  
I met another man who was wounded with hatred,  
And it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard,  
It's a hard rain's a-gonna fall.

Oh, what'll you do now, my blue-eyed son?  
Oh, what'll you do now, my darling young one?  
I'm a-goin' back out 'fore the rain starts a-fallin',  
I'll walk to the depths of the deepest black forest,  
Where the people are many and their hands are all empty,  
Where the pellets of poison are flooding their waters,  
Where the home in the valley meets the damp dirty prison,  
Where the executioner's face is always well hidden,  
Where hunger is ugly, where souls are forgotten,  
Where black is the color, where none is the number,  
And I'll tell it and think it and speak it and breathe it,  
And reflect it from the mountain so all souls can see it,  
Then I'll stand on the ocean until I start sinkin',  
But I'll know my song well before I start singin',  
And it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard,  
It's a hard rain's a-gonna fall.

## Changes by Tupac Shakur 1992

Come on come on  
I see no changes wake up in the morning and I  
ask myself  
is life worth living should I blast myself?  
I'm tired of bein' poor & even worse I'm black  
my stomach hurts so I'm lookin' for a purse to  
snatch  
Cops give a damn about a negro  
pull the trigger kill a ni\*\*\* he's a hero  
Give the crack to the kids who the hell cares  
one less hungry mouth on the welfare  
First ship 'em dope & let 'em deal the brothers  
give 'em guns step back watch 'em kill each  
other  
It's time to fight back that's what Huey said  
2 shots in the dark now Huey's dead  
I got love for my brother but we can never go  
nowhere  
unless we share with each other  
We gotta start makin' changes  
learn to see me as a brother instead of 2 distant  
strangers  
and that's how it's supposed to be  
How can the Devil take a brother if he's close to  
me?  
I'd love to go back to when we played as kids  
but things changed, and that's the way it is

[Chorus]  
Come on come on  
That's just the way it is  
Things'll never be the same  
That's just the way it is  
aww yeah

I see no changes all I see is racist faces  
misplaced hate makes disgrace to races  
We under I wonder what it takes to make this  
one better place, let's erase the wasted  
Take the evil out the people they'll be acting  
right  
'cause mo' black and white is smokin' crack  
tonight  
and only time we chill is when we kill each other  
it takes skill to be real, time to heal each other  
And although it seems heaven sent  
We ain't ready, to see a black President,  
It ain't a secret don't conceal the fact  
the penitentiary's packed, and it's filled with  
blacks  
But some things will never change

try to show another way but you stayin' in the  
dope game  
Now tell me what's a mother to do  
bein' real don't appeal to the brother in you  
You gotta operate the easy way  
"I made a G today" But you made it in a sleazy  
way  
sellin' crack to the kid. "I gotta get paid,"  
Well hey, well that's the way it is

[Chorus]2X

We gotta make a change  
it's time for us as a people to start makin' some  
changes.  
Let's change the way we eat, let's change the  
way we live  
and let's change the way we treat each other.  
You see the old way wasn't working so it's on us  
to do  
what we gotta do, to survive.

And still I see no changes can't a bother get a  
little peace  
There's war in the streets and war in the middle  
east  
Instead of war on poverty they got a war on  
drugs  
so the police can bother me  
And I ain't never did a crime I ain't have to do  
But now I'm back with the facts givin' em back  
to you  
Don't let 'em jack you up, back you up,  
crack you up and pimps Smack you up  
You gotta learn to hold ya own  
they get jealous when they see ya with ya  
mobile phone  
But tell the cops they can't touch this  
I don't trust this when they try to rush I bust this  
That's the sound of my tool you say it ain't cool  
my mama didn't raise no fool  
And as long as I stay black I gotta stay strapped  
I never get to lay back  
'Cause I always got to worry 'bout the pay backs  
some buck that I roughed up way back  
comin' back after all these years  
rat-a-tat-tat-tat that's the way it is.

Chorus 2x

Some things will never change...

## Sympathy for the Devil by Mick Jagger

Please allow me to introduce myself  
I'm a man of wealth and taste  
I've been around for a long, long year  
Stole many a man's soul and faith  
And I was 'round when Jesus Christ  
Had his moment of doubt and pain  
Made damn sure that Pilate  
Washed his hands and sealed his fate

Pleased to meet you  
Hope you guess my name  
But what's puzzling you  
Is the nature of my game

I stuck around St. Petersburg  
When I saw it was a time for a change  
Killed the czar and his ministers  
Anastasia screamed in vain  
I rode a tank  
Held a general's rank  
When the blitzkrieg raged  
And the bodies stank.

Pleased to meet you  
Hope you guess my name, oh yeah  
Ah, what's puzzling you  
Is the nature of my game, oh yeah

I watched with glee  
While your kings and queens  
Fought for ten decades  
For the gods they made  
I shouted out,  
"Who killed the Kennedys?"  
When after all  
It was you and me.  
Let me please introduce myself  
I'm a man of wealth and taste  
And I laid traps for troubadours  
Who get killed before they reached Bombay

Pleased to meet you  
Hope you guessed my name, oh yeah  
But what's puzzling you  
Is the nature of my game, oh yeah, get  
down, baby  
Pleased to meet you  
Hope you guessed my name, oh yeah  
But what's confusing you  
Is just the nature of my game

Just as every cop is a criminal  
And all the sinners saints  
As heads is tails  
Just call me Lucifer  
Cause I'm in need of some restraint  
So if you meet me  
Have some courtesy  
Have some sympathy, and some taste  
Use all your well-learned politesse  
Or I'll lay your soul to waste, um yeah

Pleased to meet you  
Hope you guessed my name, um yeah  
But what's puzzling you  
Is the nature of my game, um mean it, get  
down

Tell me baby, what's my name  
Tell me honey, can ya guess my name  
Tell me baby, what's my name  
I tell you one time, you're to blame  
Oh, yeah  
What's me name  
Tell me, baby, what's my name  
Tell me, sweetie, what's my name

## **Creep** by Radiohead

When you were here before,  
I couldn't look you in the eye.  
You're just like an angel,  
Your skin makes me cry

You float like a feather  
In a beautiful world.  
I wish I was special  
You're so very special

But I'm a creep,  
I'm a weirdo  
What the hell am I doing here?  
I don't belong here

I don't care if it hurts,  
I want to have control.  
I want a perfect body,  
I want a perfect soul

I want you to notice  
when I'm not around.  
You're so very special  
I wish I was special

But I'm a creep,  
I'm a weirdo.  
What the hell am I doing here?  
I don't belong here. Oh...

She's running out again  
She's running out  
She runs runs runs runs...

Whatever makes you happy  
Whatever you want  
You're so very special  
I wish I was special

But I'm a creep,  
I'm a weirdo  
What the hell am I doing here?  
I don't belong here...

I don't belong here...

## **Fortunate Son**    by John Fogerty

Some folks are born made to wave the  
flag,  
ooh, they're red, white and blue.  
And when the band plays "Hail To The  
Chief",  
oh, they point the cannon at you, Lord,

It ain't me, it ain't me,  
I ain't no senator's son,  
It ain't me, it ain't me,  
I ain't no fortunate one, no.

Some folks are born, silver spoon in hand,  
Lord, don't they help themselves? oh.  
But when the taxman come to the door,  
Lord, the house look a like a rummage  
sale, yes,

It ain't me, it ain't me,  
I ain't no millionaire's son, no, no.  
It ain't me, it ain't me,  
I ain't no fortunate one, no.

Yeah, some folks inherit star spangled  
eyes,  
ooh, they send you down to war, Lord,  
And when you ask them, how much should  
we give,  
oh, they only answer, more, more, more,

It ain't me, it ain't me,  
I ain't no military son, son, no  
It ain't me, it ain't me,  
I ain't no fortunate one, no, no!

It ain't me, it ain't me,  
I ain't no fortunate one, no no no,  
It ain't me, it ain't me,  
I ain't no fortunate son.