

Unit – Poetry

Purpose : This unit is designed to increase your knowledge and appreciation of this literary art form. Good understanding of poetry leads to better analysis of literature in general. In addition, this unit is a natural segue into Romeo and Juliet.

Essential Questions:

What is poetry?

How do you study poetry?

How do you read and write poetry?

What is figurative language and what does it add to poetry?

Literary terms:

allusion – a reference, usually brief, to a person, historical or mythological event or condition that should be familiar to the reader

blank verse – unrhymed iambic pentameter

hyperbole – a rhetorical overstatement

iambic pentameter – A line of poetry that consists of five iambs (unstressed-stressed syllable pairs, i.e. metrical feet). The iamb is the most common metrical foot in the English language.

lyric poem – a short poem about a subject, or that expresses the thoughts and feelings of the author

narrative poem – a poem that tells a story

metaphor – a comparison of two unlike things without using “like” or “as”

meter – a measure that refers to the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of poetry

sonnet – a lyric poem of 14 lines, usually in iambic pentameter with an intricate rhyme scheme; a sonnet is usually about one topic, thought or idea

stanza – the arrangement and grouping of lines of verse

personification – a figure of speech in which abstractions, animals, ideas and inanimate objects are endowed with human form, characteristics or traits

prose – the ordinary form of spoken and written language (we speak in prose, novels are written in prose; any writing that isn’t verse ↓)

simile – a comparison using “like” or “as”

verse – writing that follows a metrical pattern

Vocabulary:

Explored through in-class and homework exercises