

STANDARD KNOWLEDGE - Poetry (ALPL Suggested)

Creating a piece of art gives us its own kind of demonstration about a topic that cannot be gleaned in any other way.

In literature, for example, one sees a writer choose and arrange words to communicate information, but more to the point, the essence of knowing about a theme portrayed that cannot be done in drawing or mathematical calculation, etc.

Poetry has its own range of opportunities for expression, etc.

There are many forms of poetry...

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Walt Whitman (1819–1892). Leaves of Grass. 1900.

[226. Miracles](#)

WHY! who makes much of a miracle?

As to me, I know of nothing else but miracles,

Whether I walk the streets of Manhattan,
 Or dart my sight over the roofs of houses toward the sky,
 Or wade with naked feet along the beach, just in the edge of the water,
 Or stand under trees in the woods, 5
 Or talk by day with any one I love—or sleep in the bed at night with any one I love,
 Or sit at table at dinner with my mother,
 Or look at strangers opposite me riding in the car,
 Or watch honey-bees busy around the hive, of a summer forenoon, 10
 Or animals feeding in the fields,
 Or birds—or the wonderfulness of insects in the air,
 Or the wonderfulness of the sun-down—or of stars shining so quiet and bright,
 Or the exquisite, delicate, thin curve of the new moon in spring;
 Or whether I go among those I like best, and that like me best—mechanics, boatmen, farmers, 15
 Or among the savans—or to the soiree—or to the opera,
 Or stand a long while looking at the movements of machinery,
 Or behold children at their sports,
 Or the admirable sight of the perfect old man, or the perfect old woman,
 Or the sick in hospitals, or the dead carried to burial, 20
 Or my own eyes and figure in the glass;
 These, with the rest, one and all, are to me miracles,
 The whole referring—yet each distinct, and in its place.

 To me, every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,
 Every cubic inch of space is a miracle,

25

Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with the same,

Every foot of the interior swarms with the same;

Every spear of grass—the frames, limbs, organs, of men and women, and all that concerns them,

All these to me are unspeakably perfect miracles.

To me the sea is a continual miracle;

30

The fishes that swim—the rocks—the motion of the waves—the ships, with men in them,

What stranger miracles are there?

In the instance of opals. Annie imagined the ones that were wrested from her father to be so magnificent as to be miraculous in their beauty qua beauty, as Whitman describes miracles, below. In her / our mind this is in great contrast to the evil / curses - opposite to miracles - that the sailors saw them as.

Write one line about opals that would fit into Whitman's poem. On about what line would you put it?

Using that line, write your own poem about opals, using Whitman's form:

What if you believed opals to be bad luck? Write a line in the form of Whitman:

Example:

Whitman: As to me, I know nothing else but miracles
 alpl line -- Whether I harvest Maine's piney wood,

Read this poem about opals. It uses Whitman's and the line from the example, above.

Example:

As to me, I know nothing else but miracles
Whether I harvest Maine's piney wood,
Or walk the Niger's decks so black and hard,
Or must throw overboard the miracle of our cask of opals
To that miracle, the sea, its depths, its swallowing

Add another stanza using the same form.

Finish the poem, below, using the same form:

**We see only the beauty of their fire, while,
those crazed, evil-terrorized hearts
required us to deep-six them
or the work, and the boat, would stop**

Write a haiku about opals.

Example:

**I guess I forgot
Those glowing rainbow opals
Terrified the crew**

5 syllables

7 syllables

5 syllables