

Poetry Research Project
Dr. Coffman
English III (H)

First, select a poet from the Poetry Project Choices (found in Poetry folder on class website). Your whole project will be about this poet and his/her work. To complete this project successfully, follow these steps:

(1) Biographical Information (3 documents)

- A. Articles. Locate at least two biographical articles about your poet. These articles may come from the literature database or any reputable source (e.g., Poetry Foundation, Academy of American Poets, .edu or .gov websites)—not Wikipedia!
- B. Photocopy or print the articles. Then, annotate each article. Be sure to annotate, not just highlight.
- C. Using MLA format, type a one-page summary including the key points from *both* articles. You will have only one summary of the biographical information in the articles; you don't need two separate summaries.
- D. Go ahead and start a Works Cited page for step 7. Each time you find a source that you are going to use, add the MLA-formatted citation. If you use a database, it will provide the MLA citation. If you use a website, follow the MLA citation format. (Some examples listed under step 7 in these directions)

(2) Annotated Poems (6 documents)

- A. Read at least five poems by your poet in addition to the one given in the Poetry Project Choices packet.
- B. Print all six poems (the one in the packet plus the five you find) with each poem beginning on a new sheet of paper. Annotate all six poems.
- C. Add the source(s) for your poems to your Works Cited page document. (Sample of poem citation included in step 7 directions) If all poems come from the same website, you can cite the website once.

(3) Literary Criticism (4 documents)

- A. **Using the literature database**, locate at least two articles of literary criticism about your poet's work. These articles may focus on a specific poem, several poems, or the poet's work in general. Try the "Literary Criticism," "Topic and Work Overviews," and "Multimedia" buttons in the database to see what you may find. (*Note: Criticism does not mean that the article will be negative toward the poet's work. Criticism basically means "analysis." Like a restaurant critic or movie critic, literature critics use their expertise to analyze, interpret, and/or comment on literature.) Be sure the articles are not labeled "Brief Article" or "Book Review." You want articles in the database that discuss, analyze, interpret the poet's work. Use the filters to narrow your results; for example, click "Person-About," select your poet's name, and apply the filter. Filtering will help you avoid getting articles that only mention your poet rather than focus on your poet. You can also use the "Document Type" filter and select the type(s) of article you're looking for. Don't select Brief Article or Book Review so you can avoid

those types of articles.

- B. Print and annotate the articles. If you use a source from the Multimedia tab, you will need to print out the transcript that is included with the source. Remember, don't just highlight; annotate.
- C. For each article, write an MLA-formatted reflection that both summarizes the key points of the article (in your own words!) and comments/reflects upon them. Be sure to identify the title and author of the article in the first paragraph of your reflection. Include in-text citations that indicates which paragraph the information was found in. If the article is long and includes headings, you can identify section title and then the paragraph number in that section. For example: (sec. "Delivered, Palpable, Ours" para. 3).
- D. While you have the articles handy, go ahead and add those MLA citations to your Works Cited page.

(4) Poetry Elements (1 document)

- A. Using the poetry terms that we learned earlier in the semester, along with your annotations from step 2, create a list of at least 15 poetry elements found in your step 2 poems. You need a total of 15 examples, not 15 from each poem!
*However, within your list of 15, include at least 6 different types (e.g., alliteration, simile, metaphor, hyperbole, paradox, etc.). For example, you might have 6 similes, 3 metaphors, 2 allusions, and one each of paradox, imagery, speaker, personification. *Most people organize their list of elements by poem rather than by type. So, you would list the title of the poem and under it have the examples from that poem. Then, list the next title and have the examples from that poem.
- B. For each example, you should include the type of element, give the actual example [quote of line(s)], and write an explanation/analysis of the poet's use of the element: Explain the effectiveness of the device used by the poet in a sentence or two.
A few examples are listed below:

"The Last Night She Lived"

- 1. Metaphor: "We noticed smallest things -- / Things overlooked before / By this great light upon our Minds / Italicized — as 'twere." The speaker of the poem discusses how the death of the woman causes them to notice things that would otherwise go unnoticed. She compares this to the use of italics in a piece of writing; the italicized words, even if very small, will stand out from the rest and gain emphasis.
- 2. Simile: "She mentioned, and forgot-- / Then lightly as a Reed / Bent to the Water, struggled scarce-- / Consented, and was dead--" Dickinson uses a simile to compare a dying woman to a reed, which is a tall, slender plant that often grows near water. This comparison contributes to the image of a thin and frail woman in the last moments of her life.

"Because I Could Not Stop for Death"

- 3. Personification: "Because I could not stop for Death – / He kindly stopped for me—" Dickinson personifies death as if it is a carriage driver. Death and the

speaker of the poem go on a leisurely ride, which suggests that death is a natural part of life that isn't to be feared.

4. **Paradox:** "We passed the School where Children strove / At Recess—in the Ring—" Usually we think that children would be playing at recess and having fun; however, Dickinson says the children were "striving," which sounds like hard work. Possibly Dickinson is suggesting that humans are too busy to enjoy life fully.
5. **Symbol:** "We passed the Setting Sun—" Dickinson use the "setting sun" as a symbol of death. Just as the setting of the sun indicates the end of a day, so the speaker of the poem has come to the end of her life.
6. **Metaphor:** "We paused before a House that seemed / A Swelling of the Ground" Dickinson compares the grave to a house, indicating that this is the speaker's new home—where she will reside after death. Comparing the grave to a house implies that death is a comfortable place.

(5) Analysis Essay (1 document)

Select one of the poems you annotated in step 2 to analyze in a formal essay, using MLA format. You might look back at your annotations and note what stands out to you. You might consider using a *brainstorming* strategy (e.g., TP-CASTT, the Big Six) to generate ideas for your essay. Then, organize your thoughts and formulate a thesis that states what your essay will be showing about the poem. Think about the essay we wrote about *Our Town* and how you generated the thesis for that essay and included textual evidence in the body paragraphs to support your claims. In your introductory paragraph be sure to identify the title and author of the poem you are analyzing. The essay will be evaluated using the writing rubric we've discussed in class. Be sure to review that rubric. A couple sample essays can also be found in the Poetry folder on the class website.

(6) Original Poem (1 document)

Write an original poem that emulates the poet's style. Consider the types of subjects/themes he/she frequently uses (e.g., death, parent-child relationships, politics, love), the forms (e.g., free verse, meter, rhyme, length) and elements (e.g., allusions, nature imagery, metaphors). You might even take one of his/her poems and use it as a model; write your own version of the poem.

(7) Works Cited (1 document)

Type your Works Cited page according to MLA guidelines. Include all sources that you used in gathering your information. The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) is a great place to get information about citing sources correctly. *For database articles, you can get the MLA citation using the Citation Tools or Cite button, usually found to the right of the article or scroll to the very bottom of the article. *For websites, the URL is not sufficient. Formatting examples of websites are below:

Academy of American Poets. "Poems by Langston Hughes." *Poets.org*,

<https://poets.org/poems/langston-hughes>.

Hughes, Langston. "Harlem." *Poetry Foundation*,

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46548/harlem>.

"Langston Hughes." *Poetry Foundation*, 2020,

www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/langston-hughes. Accessed 29 March 2020.

Summers, Martin. "Langston Hughes (1902-1967)." *Black Past*, 19 Jan. 2007,

<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/hughes-langston-1902-1967/>.

Accessed 29 March 2020.

*Centered at the top of your page, type Works Cited. Do not put this title in a larger font, bold font, italics, etc. Just type it in the same size and font as the rest of the page (generally, Times New Roman, size 12).

*Be sure to put sources in alphabetical order and use hanging indentation. For a quick video tutorial on setting up hanging indentation in Word: http://bit.ly/hanging_indentation The sources should NOT be bulleted or labeled. Hopefully, you did this step as you worked on the previous steps, and it's already pretty much done. Just double-check formatting.

(8) Final Thoughts (1 document)

Using MLA format, type a "Final Thoughts" page—a relatively informal writing approximately one page in length reflecting on the project. After all that work, how have you grown as a reader, researcher, writer, student, person? What new knowledge have you gained related to the poet (but don't just re-write the biography), the research process, the craft of poetry, yourself? The goal of this page is to reflect on your thinking and learning. Here is an article that discusses the value of reflective writing as a part of learning and provides some guiding questions for what you might write about: "[Genres in Academic Writing: Reflective Writing.](http://www.uefap.com/writing/genre/reflect.htm)" (<http://www.uefap.com/writing/genre/reflect.htm>)

Your Poetry Research Project should be submitted in a folder or small notebook that is in good condition. Include a TITLE PAGE that identifies the poet's name, your name, the course name, your block number, the instructor's name, and the due date: _____. The title page should also include a meaningful graphic (usually a picture of the author). Following the title page, include a table of contents with accurate page numbers. You should wait to make the table of contents until you have the final project assembled so you can then number your pages in a consistent location (e.g., top right corner or bottom

center). You can handwrite page numbers. Then, make the table of contents that lists at least the main sections of the project (steps 1-8 above) and the page number for the beginning of each section. Make sure the project is neat, typed, organized, and arranged in this order:

Criteria/Points Possible

- Title page with require elements
5 points
- Table of contents with accurate page numbers
5 points
- Biographical Information - one summary followed by two annotated articles
10 points
- Annotated Poems (6 or more; each poem beginning on a new page)
10 points
- Literary Criticisms- each summary followed by its annotated article
15 points
- Poetry Elements and Explanations (15 or more)
15 points
- Poem Analysis Essay
15 points
- Original Poem
10 points
- Works Consulted page - follow proper MLA documentation
5 points
- Final Thoughts Page
10 points

This project counts as TWO test grades.

For projects submitted past the due date, a late penalty of 10 points per day will be assessed for each day.

Extra credit can be earned by bringing completed steps by the intermittent deadlines established.

Steps 1 & 2 shown to Dr. Coffman by _____ = +5

Steps 3 & 4 shown to Dr. Coffman by _____ = +5