

Walt Whitman born: _____ died: _____

In what area of the country did Whitman live much of his life?

Describe Whitman's family. How might these details have influenced him as a man or as a writer?

What are some of the various jobs and roles Whitman assumed over the course of his life?

What are different reasons for which Whitman was fired from some of his jobs?

Whitman said his poetry was greatly influenced by the "emotions, raptures, uplifts" of _____.

1855: published his collection of poems _____ at his own expense; the first edition contained _____ poems. The second edition was published in _____ with _____ poems.

Several new editions were published over the years. How did each edition change?

The "deathbed" edition of *Leaves of Grass* was published in _____ and contained more than _____ poems.

Title: Whitman considered each of his poems to be a separate leaf or blade of grass

- * because they were divine (though common)
- * because they were symbolic of life and cycles of birth and death (ever renewed) and
- * because they were significant both individually and in the mass.



What is the significance of the portrait of Whitman to the left? How is it a reflection his poetry and personality? Why would people find this shocking? (To view a larger version of the image, click [here](#).)

Emerson's response to *Leaves of Grass*: ". . . I give you joy of your free and brave thought. I have great joy in it. I find incomparable things said incomparably well . . ." "I greet you at the beginning of a great career, which yet must have had a long foreground somewhere, for such a start." How did Whitman use Emerson's words for his own benefit? How did Emerson feel about this?

How was Whitman's poetic style different from what had come before?

What types of people and places did Whitman frequently write about?

How did Whitman's view of the Civil War change over the course of the war? Why?

Where is Whitman buried? How is his burial place significant? (To see his burial site, click [here](#).)

["I Hear America Singing"](#)

1. What kinds of people does Whitman celebrate?
2. Why does the speaker say that each person's singing should be "blithe and strong"?

3. What is the tone of Whitman's poem? What words or phrases convey this tone?
4. How is this poem an example of a catalog?

"A Sight in Camp in the Daybreak Gray and Dim"

5. What is the context of this poem? (Thinking about Whitman's biographical information and his role during the Civil War.)
6. Each of the three forms the speaker sees is covered with a large blanket. What can you infer?
7. Describe the first "form" (line 9).
8. Describe the second "form" (lines 11-12).
9. Describe the third "form" (lines 13-15).
10. How can the third be "the face of Christ himself"? What similarities do the man and Christ share?
11. What is the tone of this poem? Support your answer.
12. What images stood out as you read? Why?

from "Song of Myself" 10. (p. 31)

1. What event does the first stanza (lines 175 – 179) focus on?
2. How is this an example of a catalog?
3. What is the focus of the second stanza (lines 180 – 181)?
4. What is the tone of the second stanza? Give specific examples.
5. What is the focus of the third stanza (lines 182 – 184)?
6. What is the tone of the third stanza? Give specific examples.
7. What is the focus of the fourth stanza (lines 185 – 188)?
8. What is the focus of the fifth stanza (lines 189 – 198)?
9. How is the tone of the fourth and fifth stanzas different from the first three? Support your answer.

from "Song of Myself" 33. (I understand the large hearts of heroes...)" p. 51 - 53

10. Who is the hero of lines 822 – 832? Why does Whitman consider him heroic?
11. Who is the hero of lines 833 – 834? Why?

12. Who is the hero of lines 835 – 846? How is he a hero?

13. Who is the hero of lines 847 – 857? Why?

14. Who is the hero of 858 - 870? Why?

15. Select at least one specific **image** from each of the above sections that stands out to you and explain why.

822 – 832:

833 – 834:

835 – 846:

847 – 857:

858 – 870:

16. How would you describe the tone of this poem? Why?

17. The speaker says, “I am the man, I suffer’d, I was there” (line 832). What could this mean?