

• CONTENTS •

INTRODUCTION FOR STUDENTS	2
---------------------------	---

TOOLS FOR READING, WRITING, AND THINKING ABOUT POETRY	3
---	---

PROLOGUE	6
----------	---

Denise Levertov	The Secret	6
-----------------	------------	---

THE THREE DIMENSIONS: POEMS AND QUESTIONS

THE FIRST DIMENSION: CREATURES

SET 1. DISCOVERY

Julia Alvarez	Proof	8
Chana Bloch	Deer in the Bush	10
Gene Frumkin	White Panther	12
Naomi Shihab Nye	Lost	14

SET 2. WONDER

A. R. Ammons	Glass Specialty	16
Maxine Kumin	Credo	18
Mary Oliver	Moles	20
Nancy Willard	Aquarium	22

THE SECOND DIMENSION: JOURNEYS

SET 1. CHALLENGE

Diane Ackerman	Patrick Ewing Takes a Foul Shot	26
Sandra Cisneros	Little Clown, My Heart	28
Robert Francis	The Base Stealer	30
Joy Kogawa	Where There's a Wall	32
Adrien Stoutenberg	Sky Diver	34
William Carlos Williams	The Great Figure	36

SET 2. CHANGE

Maxine Kumin	Life's Work	38
Sharon Olds	Liddy's Orange	40
Theodore Roethke	The Waking	42
Gary Soto	Black Hair	44
May Swenson	How Everything Happens	46

THE THIRD DIMENSION: RELATIONSHIPS

SET 1. FAMILY

Rita Dove	Sunday Night at Grandfather's	50
Carolyn Kizer	Parents' Pantoum	52
Suzanne Rancourt	Whose Mouth Do I Speak With	54
Dudley Randall	Ballad of Birmingham	56
Ruth Whitman	Listening to Grownups Quarreling,	58
Al Young	Son	60

SET 2. TRIBUTE

Eric Chock	The Immigrant	62
Lucille Clifton	jackie robinson	64
Robert Hayden	Frederick Douglass	66
Garrett Hongo	What For	68
Cathy Song	Blue Lantern	70
Mary TallMountain	Matmiya	72

CLOSE-UPS OF TWO POETS: POEMS AND QUESTIONS

EMILY DICKINSON AND YUSEF KOMUNYAKAA

SET 1. THE POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON (1830–1886)

585	76
605	78
288	80
341	82

SET 2. THE POEMS OF YUSEF KOMUNYAKAA (1947–)

Boat People	84
Little Man Around the House	86
Slam, Dunk, & Hook	88
Starlight Scope Myopia	90

CLASSIC MODELS: POEMS AND QUESTIONS

BALLAD

Anonymous	Lord Randal	94
-----------	-------------	----

SYLLABIC POETRY: HAIKU, TANKA, AND CINQUAIN

HAIKU POEMS FROM THE JAPANESE TRADITION

Matsuo Bashō	untitled haiku	97
Masaoka Shiki	untitled haiku	97
Lady Murasaki Shikibu	untitled tanka	97

MODERN VARIATION ON THE JAPANESE HAIKU: THE CINQUAIN

Adelaide Crapsey	Triad	97
------------------	-------	----

PANTOUM

Joan Logghe	High School Graduation Pantoum	98
-------------	--------------------------------	----

SHAPE AND SOUND POEMS

Gwendolyn Brooks	We Real Cool	100
Marianne Moore	To a Chameleon	100

SONNET

William Shakespeare	Sonnet 73	101
---------------------	-----------	-----

VILLANELLE

Dylan Thomas	Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night	102
--------------	---------------------------------------	-----

ACTIVITIES 104

GLOSSARY OF POETIC TERMS 109

ABOUT THE POETS 115

ABOUT THE AUTHORS 119

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 120

INDEX OF POETS AND TITLES 124

• INTRODUCTION FOR STUDENTS •

Imagine life as a frog in an aquarium. Learn about the struggles and perseverance of an immigrant field worker, inspired by her dreams of the future. View the world from a new point of view—that of a skydiver observing earth. Experience the pain of war and racial prejudice, and how it feels to fight for freedom. Celebrate the accomplishments of athletes, musicians, and families. In Book Two of *Poetry in Three Dimensions*, we invite you to explore all of these subjects—and more, and to enjoy the form and rhythm that poetry offers.

WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS BOOK

You will see that the poems in this book are divided into five main sections. There are three topics or *Dimensions*: Creatures, Journeys, and Relationships. Within each of these *Dimensions*, the poems are further divided into subtopics called *Sets*. In addition, we have included two sections called *Close-Ups* and *Classic Models*. In *Close-Ups* we offer four poems by Emily Dickinson and four poems by Yusef Komunyakaa. All of the poems in *Dimensions* and *Close-Ups* are by American poets writing in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries. In *Classic Models*, you will find examples of traditional “fixed form” poems that poets have written throughout the ages in Europe, Asia, and the United States. Book Two of *Poetry in Three Dimensions* also includes several modern variations on these traditional forms.

WHAT YOU WILL DO

After each poem in the *Dimensions*, *Close-Ups*, and *Classic Models* sections, you will find two questions encouraging you to investigate the structure or language of the poem and the literary devices used by the poet. We also ask you to consider what the poem means and how this meaning relates to your personal experience. For many of the poems, we have provided activities designed to stimulate your creativity by asking you to write a poem or draw a picture, engage in some form of research, or compare and contrast different works.

Poetry in Three Dimensions, Book Two, is a collection of works by Americans: African Americans, Asian Americans, European Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans. Our society has been enriched by the contributions of all of these groups. Through *Poetry in Three Dimensions, Book Two*, we hope you will celebrate our shared heritage and enjoy thinking about the many ways human beings are different and the same.

THE FIRST STEP—GETTING THE FEELING OF A POEM

The first characteristic of poetry that most students notice is its brevity. Poems are short! Like small treasures, they are also packed with gem-like words and phrases that appeal to your senses. When you read a poem, you will hear and see, and possibly taste, touch, or smell the images that the poet puts before you. Sometimes, reading and listening to poetry is similar to listening to music. Even when you hear a song in a foreign language, you can feel the expression that the composer is conveying to you.

Poems, even complex poems, can have a similar effect on the reader. Don't give up if a poem doesn't "make sense" to you after an initial reading. First, try to express what the poem makes you feel in the same way you would for a song you've heard for the first time. Write your feelings in your poetry book, right next to the poem's title. Then use the reading, writing, and thinking tools suggested below to help you find ways to understand why and how the poem makes you feel a certain way.

IDENTIFYING THE SPEAKER IN A POEM

When poets write poems, sometimes they imagine what it must be like to observe the world from the point of view of a creature or a person who has had experiences very different from their own. This creature or person is the observer looking at the world conveyed to you through the poet's words. In this book, we refer to this observer as the **speaker**, and sometimes we refer to the **point of view** of the speaker. In other words, the speaker and the poet are often not the same.

To understand a poem, you must know who or what is telling you the story, expressing a feeling, or describing a scene in a poem. Is the speaker a boy or girl, a man or woman, a dog, an objective observer (such as a newspaper reporter), someone looking back on the past, or someone looking ahead to the future? Even if a poet uses an "I" as a speaker, that speaker may have a very different point of view from that of the poet.

The poet is like an invisible puppeteer or someone who manipulates the strings of a marionette and makes the puppet or marionette speak and move. The poet creates the words that the speaker speaks. He or she is the master artist behind the words. When we refer to the feelings or ideas that a poem creates, we refer to the speaker's feelings or ideas, not those of the poet.

UNDERSTANDING POETIC DEVICES

Like all artists, poets use **techniques** to make their art appealing and understandable to the reader. We call these tools **poetic devices**. In the “Glossary of Poetic Terms,” you will find helpful explanations for all the poetic devices and techniques to which we refer in the questions.

The questions about a poem might ask you to identify and explain the effects of these devices. For example, if a question asks you to find **figures of speech** such as **similes** in a poem, you will need to look for phrases that employ the words *like* or *as*, such as “My heart is like a rose.” After you find the similes and circle them in the poem, you are ready to ask, “What do they make me see or feel?”

The questions might also ask you to put brackets around the main sections of the poem. The sections of the poem, sometimes determined by stanzas, sometimes by punctuation, and sometimes only by a slight change in the types of words or images in the poem, constitute its **structure**. Like a well-planned house, a poem is built on a solid foundation, and it may have a simple or an intricate architecture. Locating the parts of the poem’s structure is similar to looking at a blueprint for a building. The parts enable you to see how the poet has organized the main ideas of the poem.

THE FIVE SENSES—GETTING THE PICTURE

The language of poetry often appeals to the five senses: sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste. While the last two may appear rarely in a poem, the first three are very common. Frequently, an “Activities” assignment will ask you to draw a picture of a poem. After you read a poem, try to make a picture in your head, or a series of pictures, that reflect the words of the poem. These pictures are the **imagery** of poetry. Sometimes the imagery involves the process of comparison in **figures of speech** such as **metaphor**, **simile**, or **personification**. These comparisons in figures of speech help you to make sense of the pictures in your head by comparing one thing to another.

If the words use **rhyme** or **rhythm** or repeated consonant or vowel sounds to create a feeling in a poem, you are hearing as well as seeing the picture in your head. Such a poem is like a movie with sound. If the other senses are involved, you may be stepping into the “virtual reality” of a poem. For example, if you can hear as well as picture “the arc of a flat stone skipping/in the hollow trough of a wave” in Garrett Hongo’s “What For,” you have entered the scene of the poem and have let your senses stimulate your imagination.

When you first read a poem, circle or underline words that appeal to your senses. Write those senses down in the margin of the poem, and they will serve as reminders of how the poem works.

THE READER

Once you have an idea of the picture or the feelings expressed in a poem, you are on your way to interpreting the poem's meaning. Sometimes a question asks you to explain how a specific poetic device works. For example, you might be asked about the **simile** in "My love is like a red, red rose," and you would probably answer that the image uses a direct comparison between the speaker's feeling of love and a beautiful red flower. You might also be asked what a word or title *implies*, or why there is a *contrast* between two images. To respond to such questions, you must figure out how the poem works—how the poetic devices contribute to your understanding of the feelings and ideas expressed in the poem.

A second question might ask you for your *interpretation*, *personal response*, or *opinion*. You are ready for these questions after you have tried to figure out how each piece of the poem fits into the big picture.

A question on *interpretation*, *personal response*, or *opinion* asks you, the reader, to take a stand on the poem. What do you think or feel about a particular subject and why?

USING THE BOOK

Poetry in Three Dimensions, Book Two, is easy to use.

- ♦ Beside the questions that follow each poem, you will find space for writing answers to the questions.
- ♦ The footnotes that accompany the poem will help you to understand difficult words and **allusions**.
- ♦ Before you do your first assignment in the book, examine the Contents to see where you can go to help yourself.
- ♦ The "Glossary of Poetic Terms" will help you to understand questions that ask you to identify examples of specific devices or techniques in a poem. (These devices or techniques are always indicated in **bold** type.)
- ♦ The "Activities" section, which follows the poetry sections, contains additional assignments that your teacher may ask you to complete.
- ♦ The section titled "About the Poets" gives you biographical information about the authors that you may find useful in helping you to understand the **context** of a particular poem.
- ♦ The Index will help you locate authors and titles.

We hope you will find both challenge and pleasure in reading the poems in this book.

Carol Clark and Alison Draper

THE FIRST DIMENSION: CREATURES



PHOTO BY ERIKA CARRILLO

Proof

Julia Alvarez (1950–)

Papi brought home a puppy
stained with ink spots, a gift
from a grateful American
whose tonsils he'd taken out.
Alone with the speckled puppy 5
I tried rubbing off the spots
until Looky yelped in pain.
The maids wouldn't come close
fearing the devil's work.
Only Gladys like doubting Thomas¹ 10
touched the dots wanting proof
the dog wasn't just another
made-in-the-USA² gadget.
I, too, doubted he was real.
Until in a book Tía brought 15
from a trip to Nueva York,³
I saw towers touching the sky,
a giant virgin with tiny people
walking inside her halo.⁴
I showed the pictures to Gladys 20
who wet her finger to turn
the pages as I had taught her.

Her hand flew up to her forehead
tracing a sign of the cross.⁵ 25
Let's make each other a promise—
I nodded, eager for pacts,
especially those confirmed
with blood or dare-you swigs
from coca-colas kept for company. 30
Swear that whoever goes first
to the USA land of marvels
will come back and report
if all of these are just stories.
Outside from his new pen 35
Looky barked as living proof
the extraordinary was alive
right under our very noses.

1995

1 doubting Thomas — a reference to the disciple of Jesus in the New Testament of the Bible. Thomas was known for his skepticism about Jesus's miracles.

2 made-in-the-USA — on a garment or product, a printed label identifying the United States as the country of origin on items imported to Mexico and other places outside the United States.

3 Nueva York — Spanish for New York City.

4 virgin . . . halo — a reference to familiar images of the Virgin Mary (the mother of Jesus in the Christian religion) in paintings and sculpture. It is also a reference to the Statue of Liberty.

5 sign of the cross — a reference to a solemn religious gesture made by some Christians as a symbol of Jesus's resurrection.

Questions for Proof

- I. Identify the **point of view** of the **speaker** (her age and cultural identity). What view of America does she suggest in such **images** as “made-in-the-USA gadget” (line 13), “towers touching the sky” (line 17), and “the USA land of marvels” (line 32)?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

2. At the end of the poem, what does the **speaker** discover about the “puppy / stained with ink spots” (lines 1–2), and what has helped her make her discovery? Explain the poem’s title.

[illegible]

SEE ACTIVITIES, PAGE 104.

Deer in the Bush

Chana Bloch (1940–)

They come down
in the mornings, sniff
the green edges of our lives,
munch the hydrangeas.

Shadows let them. 5

They step
in a pool of shade,
their legs spindly as twigs,

inquisitively
nosing our flowers, 10
nudging us out on the porch
to watch them

watch us for a sign.

They do not blink.

They measure our moving towards them 15
and won't be fooled,

letting their pleasure wilt on the bush
till they can be sure of us.

Nothing between us now, but
wood and air. Wait, 20

I can see a buck
up on his hind legs,
wrestling a branch down, his velvet mouth
dripping berries.

He's at home in our patch of seasons 25
like an old uncle
who comes when he pleases, and keeps
the secrets of the tribe.

1985

Questions for **Deer in the Bush**

1. Explain “sniff / the green edges of our lives” (lines 2–3): who is sniffing and what are the “green edges of our lives”? What examples of “green edges” can you think of in your own life or in someone else’s?

2. Why does the **speaker** demand our attention at the end of the fifth **stanza** with the command “Wait,” (line 20)? What has changed in her perception of the relationship between the deer and the people who watch them?

SEE ACTIVITIES, PAGE 104.

White Panther

Gene Frumkin (1928–)

I camped last night in the ravine
northeast of Taos¹ where the white panther
was rumored several times in recent months.
During the night I was counseled twice,
once by footfalls outside the tent 5
and later by an Indian, tall and hatchet-nosed,
eyes brown and calm as a bear's.
He said, "Get up and look outside."

I opened the flap and there was the moon,
stony cold, slanting through my dream. 10
The spruce and pine were still.
The fire I'd built to cook my late meal
was a grey cloud of ashes.
I remembered the footfalls and thought,
"Of course, it was the white panther! 15
God has consented to believe in me."

When I awoke in the morning
a crow had gotten wedged into my chest.
His wings smashed about furiously
and his "caw-caw" was the voice 20
of the Indian laughing at me.
Despite his counsel I had slept through
my welcome. There is no white panther
northeast of Taos, not any more.

1976

¹ Taos — a town in northern New Mexico surrounded by mountains and desert.

Questions for **White Panther**

1. In the margin to the right of the poem, label each **stanza** according to its main idea. What stage in the **speaker's** thoughts about the white panther does each stanza represent?

2. Why does the **speaker** use the phrase “not any more” (line 24) to emphasize that “There is no white panther / northeast of Taos” (lines 23–24)? How does the **speaker's** experience during the night with “footfalls” (line 5) and “an Indian” (line 6) lead him to an understanding about reality and imagination, as revealed in stanza 3?

SEE ACTIVITIES, PAGE 104.

Lost

Naomi Shihab Nye (1952–)

notices flutter

from telephone poles

until they fade

OUR SWEET TABBY AFRAID OF EVERYTHING

BIG GRAY CAT HE IS OUR ONLY CHILD 5

SIBERIAN HUSKY NEEDS HIS MEDICINE

FEMALE SCHNAUZER WE ARE SICK WITH WORRY

all night I imagine their feet
tapping up the sidewalk
under the blooming crepe myrtle 10
and the swoon of jasmine
into the secret hedges
into the cool dark caves
of the banana-palm grove
and we cannot catch them 15
or know what they are thinking
when they go so far from home

OUR BELOVED TURTLE RED DOT ON FOREHEAD
VEGETARIAN NAME OF KALI

please please please 20

if you see them

call me call me call me

1998

Questions for **Lost**

I. Underline phrases that reveal the **speaker's** feelings about the lost creatures in the notices.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

2. Why does the poet capitalize all the letters of some words and none of the letters of other words?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

SEE ACTIVITIES, PAGE 104.