



POETRY COLLECTION

Turtle Watchers

"Nature" is what We see—

The Sparrow

Concept Vocabulary

As you perform your first read, you will encounter these words.

ancestors wisdom heed

Using a Dictionary To check the meanings of unfamiliar words, consult a print or online dictionary. Dictionaries provide a word's definition, pronunciation, part of speech, variant forms, and etymology, or word origin.

This box shows an example of a dictionary entry for the word *anthology*. Note that the pronunciation is in parentheses, and the etymology is in square brackets.

anthology (an THOL uh jee) *n.*, *pl. -gies* [Gr. *anthologia*, a garland, collection of short poems < *anthologos*, gathering flowers < *anthos*, flower + *legein*, to gather] a collection of poems, stories, songs, excerpts, etc., chosen by the compiler.

Apply your knowledge of using a dictionary and other vocabulary strategies to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words you encounter during your first read.

First Read POETRY

Apply these strategies as you conduct your first read. You will have an opportunity to complete a close read after your first read.

STANDARDS

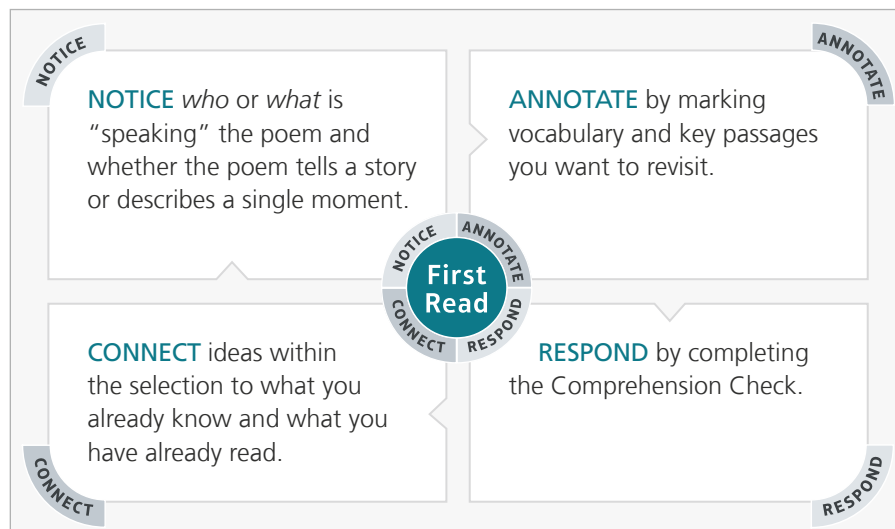
Reading Literature

By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Language

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

c. Consult general and specialized reference materials, both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.



About the Poets



Linda Hogan (b. 1947) is an award-winning Chickasaw novelist, essayist, poet, and environmentalist. Her writing often addresses topics such as the environment, ecofeminism, and Native American history. An activist and educator, Hogan has spoken at various global conferences and events including the Environmental Literature Conference in Turkey in 2009. She lives in the Colorado mountains and teaches creative writing.



Emily Dickinson (1830–1886) considered books her “strongest friend.” Withdrawn and shy, she spent most of her time at home in Amherst, Massachusetts, reading and writing. Most of her 1,775 poems were discovered after her death, including one that begins, “I’m nobody! Who are you?” Today, Dickinson is considered one of the most important American poets.



Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906) was the son of former slaves. Encouraged by his mother, he began writing poetry at an early age. Dunbar was inspired by Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, and in his own work he honored people who fought for the rights of African Americans. Over the course of his life, Dunbar published more than ten volumes of poetry, four novels, and four volumes of short stories.

Backgrounds

Turtle Watchers

Some sea turtles, such as loggerhead sea turtles, travel thousands of miles to lay their eggs on the same beach where they were born. The turtles dig a small nest in the sand, where they lay their eggs, sometimes over a hundred in a single nest. When the eggs hatch, the baby turtles make the dangerous trek back to the ocean to continue the cycle.

“Nature” is what We see—

From ancient Greeks to English romantics to Japanese haiku masters, poets from every period of time have contemplated the beauty of the natural world. The poet William Wordsworth wrote, “Come forth into the light of things, let Nature be your teacher.”

The Sparrow

Sparrows are one of the most common birds in the world. They are often seen in North America, but this was not always the case. In the mid-1800s, a man named Nicholas Pike decided to bring several dozen over from England and release them in New York. Since then, these small brown birds have flourished and spread across the continent.

Turtle Watchers

Linda Hogan

NOTES

Use a dictionary or indicate another strategy you used that helped you determine meaning.

ancestors (AN sehs tuhrz) *n.*

MEANING:

Old mother at water's edge
 used to bow down to them,
 the turtles coming in from the sea,
 their many eggs,
 5 their eyes streaming water like tears,
 and I'd see it all,
 old mother as if in prayer,
 the turtles called back to where they were born,
 the hungry watchers standing at the edge of trees
 10 hoping for food when darkness gathers.

Years later, swimming in murky waters
 a sea turtle swam beside me
 both of us watching as if clasped together
 in the lineage of the same world
 15 the sweep of the same current,
 even rising for a breath of air at the same time
 still watching.
 My **ancestors** call them
 the keepers of doors
 20 and the shore a realm to other worlds,
 both ways and
 water moves the deep shift of life
 back to birth and before
 as if there is a path where beings truly meet,
 25 as if I am rounding the human corners.



"Nature" is what We see—

Emily Dickinson

"Nature" is what We see—
The Hill—the Afternoon—
Squirrel—Eclipse—the Bumble bee—
Nay—Nature is Heaven—

5 "Nature" is what We hear—
The Bobolink¹—the Sea—
Thunder—the Cricket—
Nay—Nature is Harmony—

"Nature" is what We know—
10 But have no Art to say—
So impotent our **Wisdom** is
To Her Sincerity—

1. **Bobolink** *n.* small bird.

NOTES

Use a dictionary or indicate another strategy you used that helped you determine meaning.

wisdom (WIHZ duhm) *n.*

MEANING:



The Sparrow

Paul Laurence Dunbar

NOTES

Use a dictionary or indicate another strategy you used that helped you determine meaning.

heed (heed) *v.*

MEANING:

A little bird, with plumage brown,
Beside my window flutters down,
A moment chirps its little strain,
Ten taps upon my window-pane,
5 And chirps again, and hops along,
To call my notice to its song;
But I work on, nor **heed** its lay,¹
Till, in neglect, it flies away.

So birds of peace and hope and love
10 Come fluttering earthward from above,
To settle on life's window-sills,
And ease our load of earthly ills;
But we, in traffic's rush and din
Too deep engaged to let them in,
15 With deadened heart and sense plod on,
Nor know our loss till they are gone

1. **lay** *n.* song.

Comprehension Check

Complete the following items after you finish your first read. Review and clarify details with your group.

TURTLE WATCHERS

1. What are the “hungry watchers” doing?
2. What happens years later?

“NATURE” IS WHAT WE SEE—

1. What does the first stanza say nature is?
2. What does the second stanza say nature is?
3. What does the third stanza say nature is?

THE SPARROW

1. What does the speaker do in response to the bird beside his or her window?
2. According to the speaker, how do we “plod on”?

RESEARCH

Research to Explore Choose one unfamiliar detail mentioned in one of the poems. Briefly research that detail. For instance, you might research the life cycle of the sea turtle. In what way does the information you learned affect your understanding of the poem? Explain.



POETRY COLLECTION

TIP

GROUP DISCUSSION

When you work in your group to answer the Analyze the Text questions, be sure to support your opinions and ideas with evidence from the text.

WORD NETWORK

Add interesting words related to people and the planet from the text to your Word Network.

STANDARDS

Reading Literature

Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure contributes to its meaning.

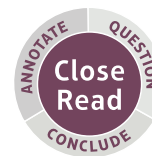
Language

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word.

Close Read the Text

With your group, revisit sections of the text you marked during your first read. **Annotate** what you notice. What **questions** do you have? What can you **conclude**?



Analyze the Text

CITE TEXTUAL EVIDENCE
to support your answers.

Notebook Complete the activities.

- Review and Clarify** With your group, reread the poems. Analyze each poem, and determine the theme about nature that each poem suggests.
- Present and Discuss** Now, work with your group to share the lines from the poems that you found especially important. Take turns presenting your lines. Discuss what you noticed in the poems, what questions you asked, and what conclusions you reached.
- Essential Question: *What effects do people have on the environment?*** What have these poems taught you about the effects people have on the environment? Discuss with your group.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Concept Vocabulary

ancestors wisdom heed

Why These Words? The concept vocabulary words from the poems are related. With your group, determine what the words have in common. Write your ideas and add another word that fits the category.

Practice

Notebook Use each concept vocabulary word in a sentence that demonstrates its meaning. Read aloud your sentences to a partner, and discuss any differences in your understandings.

Word Study

Etymology The etymology, or word origin, of the word *ancestors* can help you understand and remember its meaning. *Ancestors* was formed from the Latin prefix *ante-*, meaning "before," and the Latin verb *cedere*, meaning "go." Thus, *ancestors* literally means "those who have gone before us." With your group, discuss "Turtle Watchers." How does understanding the etymology of the word *ancestors* deepen your understanding of the poem?

Analyze Craft and Structure

The Speaker in Lyric Poetry When you read a poem you can “hear” a voice speaking to you. That is the voice of the poem’s **speaker**. Like the narrator in a story, the speaker in a poem is an imaginary voice created by the poet. The speaker presents a unique view that expresses his or her thoughts, feelings, personality, and attitude toward the subject. Although they sometimes overlap, the speaker’s point of view is not necessarily the point of view of the poet.

All three poems in this collection are examples of lyric poetry. A **lyric poem** expresses the thoughts and feelings of a speaker about a setting, a moment, or an idea, such as nature. In this form of poetry, a poet typically uses vivid, musical language to express the speaker’s observations, feelings, and insights. As a consequence, the reader’s understanding is filtered through and shaped by the speaker’s perceptions.

Practice

CITE TEXTUAL EVIDENCE
to support your answers.

Work with your group to analyze the poetry in this collection. Answer the questions and use the chart to examine the similarities and differences in approach in each of the poems.

QUESTIONS	Turtle Watchers	“Nature” is what We see—	The Sparrow
What is the poem’s subject and the speaker’s attitude toward the subject?			
What vivid words and descriptions are used?			
What is the speaker saying about people’s relationship to nature?			



POETRY COLLECTION

STANDARDS**Reading Literature**

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

Author's Style

Diction and Tone An author's word choice, or **diction**, includes not only the specific words but also the phrases and expressions an author uses. In poetry, a poet's word choice plays an important role in creating poetic language, which is specific, imaginative, and rich with emotion. A poet's use of language helps to develop the **tone** of a poem, or the poet's attitude toward his or her subject.

To achieve these effects in a poem, a poet often chooses words not only for their **denotations**, or dictionary definitions, but for the connotations the words evoke in readers. **Connotations** are the ideas and feelings a word brings to mind. Although, two words may have similar denotations, a poet may choose one word over another because of the connotations associated with the word. Consider the following lines of poetry:

- They rolled over the swells until they slid ashore.
- They slammed over the waves until they hit land.

Both examples convey roughly the same information. However, in the first example, the words *rolled*, *swells*, and *slid* have calming connotations and create a peaceful tone. In the second example, the words *slammed*, *waves*, and *hit* have harsher connotations and create a dangerous, anxious tone.

A poet's word choice and tone help develop meaning in poem. Analyzing a poet's word choice and tone can help you to **make inferences**, or educated guesses, about the **theme** of a poem, or the insight about life that it suggests.

Read It

Notebook Work with your group to identify specific word choices in each poem, and note how these choices affect meaning and tone. When you have completed the chart, discuss the possible themes your examples suggest.

POEM	WORD OR PHRASE	EFFECT ON MEANING OR TONE
Turtle Watchers		
"Nature" is what We see—		
The Sparrow		

Write It

Notebook Using your notes from the chart and your discussion, work individually to write a brief paragraph about the theme of each poem. In each paragraph, support your ideas about the theme with the specific examples you gathered while working with your group. To ensure you describe your thoughts accurately and concisely, consider the connotations of the words you use.



Speaking and Listening

Assignment

Using the analysis you have done so far, work with your group to create an **oral presentation** that highlights the theme of one of the poems in the collection. Choose from the following options:

- ☐ a **dramatic reading** in which you use multimedia, such as music, props, and costumes, to convey the meaning and theme of the poem
- ☐ a **digital multimedia presentation** in which you use videos, images, and other digital media to convey the meaning and theme of the poem

Project Plan Assign roles for each member of your group. For groups who have chosen the dramatic reading, roles can include speakers to recite the poem, a sound person, a costume designer, and a person to identify and organize visuals and music. For groups who have chosen the digital multimedia presentation, roles can include a speaker, a multimedia researcher, and a person to organize the information for the presentation.

Plan and Practice Your Delivery To project confidence and a positive attitude, plan and practice your delivery both individually and as a group. As you practice, use the following strategies to refine your presentation techniques:

- **Check equipment.** If your presentation involves use of audio or video, practice your presentation along with the media. Work on the timing of media and how it relates to the rest of the performance.
- **Use your voice well.** Be energetic, but speak clearly and precisely. Enunciate every word. Vary the pitch and speed of your voice to keep listeners engaged. Make sure you are speaking loudly enough to be heard by the entire class.
- **Make eye contact.** Memorize as much of your part of the presentation as possible. Doing so will enable you to make eye contact with your audience more frequently.

Present and Evaluate Once you have rehearsed, present your work to the class. After the presentation, invite comments and feedback from your classmates. Be prepared to answer their questions.

When other groups present their work, listen attentively. Evaluate their performance, and provide feedback to them in a respectful way.

EVIDENCE LOG

Before moving on to a new selection, go to your log and record what you learned from “Turtle Watchers,” “Nature’ is what We see—,” and “The Sparrow.”

STANDARDS

Speaking and Listening

- Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.