
3.0 WATER IS LIFE, WATER IS POETRY SEMINAR

WATER IS LIFE, WATER IS POETRY

SEMINAR INSTRUCTIONS

1. Either individually, or as a class, ask students to read one, two, or all of the water-inspired poem selections.
2. As a class discuss one, two, or all of the selected poems.
3. Prompt students to reflect on a memorable experience involving water such as a river-rafting trip, watering a beautiful flower, getting caught in a downpour, or a family trip to a water-park.
4. Next, students will create an illustration demonstrating a memorable experience, favorite use for, or general feelings about water on the top 1/2 of a standard sized unlined piece of paper.
5. Prior to beginning their illustrations, explain that students will also be writing their own poem about water on the lower 1/2 of the paper.
6. Finally, have students create a poem on a separate sheet of paper. Once the poem is finished, ask students to carefully transfer the poem in writing onto the page with their illustration. (Suggestion, if students have trouble creating a poem they may want to try writing a word that describes or relates to water and assigning an adjective for each letter of the word.)

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Going for Water

Robert Lee Frost

The well was dry beside the door,
And so we went with pail and can
Across the fields behind the house
To seek the brook if still it ran;

Not loth to have excuse to go,
Because the autumn eve was fair
(Though chill), because the fields were ours,
And by the brook our woods were there.

We ran as if to meet the moon
That slowly dawned behind the trees,
The barren boughs without the leaves,
Without the birds, without the breeze.

But once within the wood, we paused
Like gnomes that hid us from the
moon, Ready to run to hiding new
With laughter when she found us soon.

Each laid on other a staying hand
To listen ere we dared to look,
And in the hush we joined to make
We heard, we knew we heard the brook.

A note as from a single place,
A slender tinkling fall that made
Now drops that floated on the pool
Like pearls, and now a silver blade.

Drinking Fountain

Ethel Jacobson

At first just a trickle,
Two drops splash and tickle.
And then there's a spurt,
A sudden big squirt,
Right smack in my eye:
The fountain must think
That I need a face-wash
More than a drink!

The Tide Rises, the Tide Falls

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The tide rises, the tide falls,
The twilight darkens, the curlew calls;
Along the sea-sands damp and brown
The traveler hastens toward the town,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

Darkness settles on roofs and walls,
But the sea, the sea in darkness calls;
The little waves, with their soft, white
hands

Efface the footprints in the sands,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.
The morning breaks; the steeds in their
stalls

Stamp and neigh, as the hostler calls;
The day returns, but nevermore
Returns the traveler to the shore.
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

Waterfall at Lu-shan

Li T'ai-po

translation: Hamil

Sunlight streams on the river stones.
From high above, the river steadily plunges—
three thousand feet of sparkling water—
the Milky Way pouring down from heaven.

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Clouds

Aileen Fisher

Wonder where they come from?
Wonder where they go?
Wonder why they're sometimes hanging
high
And sometimes hanging low?
Wonder what they're made of,
And if they weigh a lot?
Wonder if the sky feels bare up there
When clouds are not?

Wind and Water and Stone

Octavio Paz

The water hollowed the stone,
the wind dispersed the water,
the stone stopped the wind.
Water and wind and stone.
The wind sculpted the stone,
the stone is a cup of water,
The water runs off and is wind.
Stone and wind and water.
The wind sings in its turnings,
the water murmurs as it goes,
the motionless stone is quiet.
Wind and water and stone.
One is the other and is neither:
among their empty names
they pass and disappear,
water and stone and wind.

Water is a Lovely Thing

Julia W. Wolfe

Water is a lovely thing—
Dark and ripply in a spring,
Dark and quiet in a pool,
In a puddle brown and cool;
In the river blue and gray,
In a raindrop silver gray,
In a fountain crystal bright;
In a pitcher frosty cold,
In a bubble pink and gold;
In a happy summer sea
Just as green as green can be;
In a rainbow far unfurled,
Every color in the world;
All the year from spring to spring,
Water is a lovely thing.

Flow

Aldo Kraas

Water from the Sea
I hope that
You flow
Back and forth
Because I want to hear
The sound of the water
I find the sound of the water
So soothing

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Ocean

by Ashley (age 12)

Blue, green, and gray.
Silvery smooth on good days.
Restless and unable to choose,
Good or bad,
What do I do?
Starting choppy,
Growing large and wide.
Giant gray waves loom ahead,
Forming a white foamy top
Crash!
Water engulfs me totally,
Soaked down to the bone,
Laughing,
Screaming,
Happiness in the air,
Always there.
Calm and smooth like green, blue glass.
Gliding through the water easily,
In my tiny skiff.
I wish I could be
As calm as the ocean around me

The Water Cycle

Helen H. Moore

When I was young
I used to think
that water came
from
the kitchen sink.
But now I'm older,
and I know,
that water comes
from rain and snow.
It stays there, waiting,
in the sky,
in clouds above
our world so high.
And when it falls,
it flows along,
and splashes out
a watery song,
as each raindrop
is joined by more
and rushes to
the ocean shore,
or to a lake, a brook, a stream,
from which it rises,
just like steam.
But while it's down here
what do you think?
Some DOES go to
the kitchen sink!