

Week 1

Monday, January 11-Friday, January 15

Introduce Yourself

[Introduction to Week 1](#)

[Ohio Governor's Award Presentation](#)

[A reading](#)

from

[To Banquet with the Ethiopians: A Memoir of Life Before the Alphabet](#)

[About My Teaching](#)

from

[By Heart: Reflections of a Rust Belt Bard](#)

Issue Post #1

Introduce yourself. In a video of 10 minutes or less, or a brief essay of 200 words, show us who you are. Perform, read, demonstrate, dance, sing, or describe. Show us something you love to do.

Week 2
Monday, January 18-Friday, January 22

Local Resources

[Introduction to Week 2](#)

[YSU Poetry Center](#)

[Readings and Interviews](#)

[Etruscan Press](#)

[Lit Youngstown](#)

[Penguin Review](#)

[Jenny Magazine](#)

[NEOMFA](#)

Issue Post #2. (200 Words)

Tell us about your experience in poetry. When did you write your first poem? Have you ever shown work to anyone, or submitted work for publication? What was the feedback? Now, interact with one of the organizations listed in “local resources.” Check out their website; if possible, attend a sponsored event. Touch base with an officer or participant. Give us your impression.

Week 3
Monday, January 25-Friday, January 29

National Resources

[Introduction to Week 3](#)

Despite (or because of) the fact that writing is a lonely endeavor, writers, publishers, and editors have formed a number of national organizations. In addition, many regional or interest-group-based organizations have emerged. Some of the most important organizations are the Associated Writers Program ([AWP](#)), Poets & Writers ([PW](#)), [The Poets' House](#), the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses ([CLMP](#)), [Vida: Women in the Literary Arts](#), the Association of American Publishers ([AAP](#)), the Book Industry Study Group (BISG), the Association of American University Presses ([AAUP](#)), [Cave Canem](#), The [Small Press Center](#), [Small Press Distribution](#), [Consortium Distribution](#), and the [Independent Book Publishers Association](#). Some of these organizations hold annual conferences, like the Associated Writers Program Conference, or festivals like [Book Expo America](#) and [The Dodge Poetry Festival](#), where you can parley with publishers and see the newest lists of titles on display. Many cities, such as [Boston](#), [Brooklyn](#), and [Los Angeles](#), host major book festivals. There are also local festivals like [Hippocamp](#) and Lit Youngstown's [Fall Literary Festival](#). Conferences and festivals offer opportunities to survey the writing world, discover the latest trends, and network with fellow poets and writers. In addition to one-time or yearly gatherings, there are reading series. Thousands of venues around the country host regular readings, usually sorted by genre, school, region, or prestige. For instance, the [92nd Street Y](#) offers readings and classes by poets, writers, and artists from around the world. [The Nuyorican Cafe](#) and the [Bowery Poetry Club](#) bring Spoken Word to the stage. Open mics, readings in café's and bars like [KGB](#), regular performances in parks and outdoor venues like [Bryant Park](#), proliferate in cities and towns around the country.

Video

[Dr. Bonnie Culver on the Associated Writers' Program](#)

[Monique Lewis on "At the Inkwell"](#)

[Donna Talarico on Hippocampus](#)

[Siena Oristaglio on Void Academy](#)

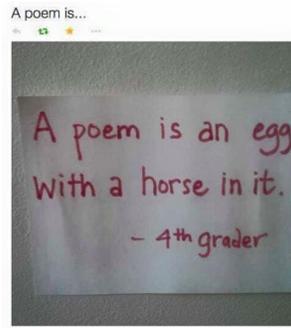
Issue Post #3

Visit, call or review the website of a writers' organization. Interact with the staff or website. Report back on what you find. What resources are available? What did you discover?

Week 4
Monday, February 1-Friday, February 5

What is Poetry?

[Introduction to Week 4](#)



[What is Poetry For \(At AWP Conference\)](#)

[What Makes a Poem...a Poem](#)

[What is Poetry \(by Famous Poets\)](#)

[Galway Kinnell, What Poetry Is](#)

From [Dead Poets Society](#)

From [Derry Girls](#)

[Tim Seibles, "Why Poetry?"](#)

[Stephen Burt, "Why People Need Poetry"](#)

[H.L. Hix from *Demonstrategy*](#)

Issue Post #4 200 Words

Find a poem that you didn't know you needed until you recently found it. Post it on the discussion board. Tell us why you need it, and how it might change you. Make it a poem you do not fully grasp.

Week 5
Monday, February 8-Friday February 12

The Process Essay

With each of the three poems and one revision you will turn in this term, you will submit a process essay, dealing with an issue that you faced as you wrote the poem. In Course Content, you will find a pdf of [*Poems & Their Making: A Conversation*](#), which includes example process essays by 30 American poets.

Tips for the process essay.

Do:

Tell what you discovered in writing the poem.

Address an issue you faced concerning form and craft.

Tell where you think the poem might lead in the future—toward revision? Toward other poems? Toward a new direction in your writing?

Tell what poems influenced your poem.

Don't:

Explain what the poem means.

Defend the poem.

Write exclusively about the experiential origins of the poem.

Issue Post #5

Respond to one of the poems and essays in *Poems & Their Making: A Conversation*. You may ask questions; you may offer additional commentary; you may offer an alternative point of view; you may compare the poem and its making with your own work and process.

Week 6

Monday, February 15-Friday, February 19

Making Poems from Poems

[Introduction to Week 6](#)

[Galway Kinnell reads "Oatmeal"](#)

[Robert Hass Reads translations of Issa](#)

[Seamus Heaney reads his translation of "The Yellow Bittern"](#)

[Mathew Arnold's "Dover Beach"](#)

[Anthony Hecht reads "The Dover Bitch"](#)

Issue Post #6

Choose one of the two assignments from Week 6 Course Packet

Week 7

Monday, February 22-Friday, February 26

What is Poetic Form?

[Introduction to Week 7](#)

Videos

[Stephen Fry, Discussing Poetic Form](#)

[Linda Gregerson, The History of the Sonnet](#)

[What is a Sonnet?](#)

Reading

Week 6 Course Packet

Poems & Their Making: A Conversation pages 3-10

Poem Assignment #1

Compose a Sonnet

Issue Post #7

Imagine that you had never heard of a sonnet before, and had no idea what kind of poem it might be. Using only the poems in the Week 7 packet (not all of which claim sonnethood), make up your own definition of sonnets. Don't focus only on conventions, but on the overall poetic effects.

Week 8

Monday, March 1-Friday, March 5

Form and Originality

[Introduction to Week 8](#)

Videos

[Robert Frost reads "Stopping By Woods On a Snowy Evening"](#)

[Sir Thomas Wyatt, "They Flee from Me"](#)

Readings

Week 8 Course Packet

Issue Post #8

Before listening to the complete [Carrot Song](#), read the first three lines of the song in the course packet, and propose a line to complete the quatrain. Now listen to the song. How did your version differ from the original? Read Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and Jennifer Michael Hecht's "Not Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening" in the course packet and discuss their use of formal surprise.

Or, imagine you are Richard Tottel, editor. You have Wyatt's original "They Flee From Me." You love Wyatt's wildness, his verve, but you wonder if he's not too rough and vulgar. What would you do? What changes would you make? Address this issue as if Wyatt and Tottel were 21st Century figures.

Week 9

Monday, March 7-Friday, March 12

Where it Begins: Children's Verses

[Introduction to Week 9](#)

This week we'll focus on our own personal lives before the alphabet and the orature that enchants those lives. Recalling the fey, [gory and profane children's rhymes](#) and stories that elude anthologies but which are nevertheless relished by generations of children, we seek insight into the font of our own creative impulses. In unlettered children's verse and tale, we will plumb the source of what Yeats called "gaiety"—a generative energy that transfigures dread. What can we learn from our earliest rhythms? Our first forms? Why is our love of the forbidden so deeply embedded in orature? [Why do so many children's poems feature murder and dismemberment?](#) How are these horrors transfigured by the powers of language? And how can these powers be recovered by adult writers?

[Performance of Elizabeth Bishop's "A Visit to St. Elizabeths"](#)

Reading

Week 9-10 Course Packet

Issue Post #9

What transgressive rhymes do you remember from childhood? When did you hear and say them? Why were they thrilling? Include an example here, and discuss its impact on your imagination.

Week 10

Monday, March 15 to Friday March 19

Making forms

[Introduction to Week 10](#)

If poetry first came to us in nursery rhymes, its rhythms and imaginative leaps continue to entrance language in a multitude of forms. This week, we'll look at poetic principles as they infuse many kinds of language, and we'll use these various forms to make new poems.

Reading

Week 9-10 Course Packet

Issue Post #10

Choose two of the poems from the Course Packet Week 9-10 and write two stanzas (one for each poem) using their form, but with another subject.

Poem Assignment #2

Find an extra-literary form: a [nursery rhyme](#), or [a personal ad](#), [a letter](#), [a menu](#), [a recipe](#), [an instruction manual](#), [a form rejection letter](#), a [prayer](#), a [petition](#), a [diagnosis](#), or any extra-literary form you can think of, and use it to make your own poem. Use only the structure—invent your own theme and material, as in any of the poems linked above, or in the course packet poems from weeks 8.

Week 11

Monday, March 22-Friday, March 26

Poetry, Lyrics, Performance, and the Body

[Introduction to Week 11 \(1\)](#)

[Introduction to Week 11 \(2\)](#)

[“The Man of Double Deed” from *Phantom Signs*](#)

[“Redaction” from *To Banquet with the Ethiopians*](#)

[Steve Reese and Kelly Bancroft on Song Lyrics and Poetry](#)

[Steve Oristaglio on Poetry and Rock Music](#)

[H.L. Hix recites “Ode to a Nightingale”](#)

[Robert Mooney recites William Blake’s “the Lament of Enion”](#)

[Angelique Palmer on Spoken Word Art](#)

[Angelique Palmer in performance](#)

[Robert Pinsky, Is Hip-Hop Poetry?](#)

Readings

[Franco Berardi, On Poetry & Finance](#)

Course Packet for Week 11

Issue Post #11

Choose a piece of linguistic art that you have heard but never seen written down, and transcribe it from memory. Now check your transcription against a written version that you look up. Are there any significant changes? What about the lineation? Is yours the same as the original? Finally, choose a piece of linguistic art that you have seen but never heard and learn it by heart. In your issue post, discuss what you learned from this exercise.

Week 12
Monday, March 29 to Friday, April 2

Entwined Traditions

Like other art forms, 20th and 21st century poetry has experienced radical variations in form. The rhymed, metrical verse that dominated the 19th century has given way to “free verse,” where lines do not scan metricaly, although they may have suggest a “ghost” pattern of meter. However, “fixed form” poems have not completely disappeared; metrical verse continues to have a strong presence, represented in movements such as “neoformalism.” As you become more familiar with modern and contemporary poetry, you may find yourself drawn toward some traditions more than others. This week, we will begin that process.

Introductions to Readings:

[Teresa Leo, “Last Call Sestina”](#)

[Betsy Scholl, “Rosebud”](#)

[Joseph P. Woods, “The Woods”](#)

[Michael Waters, “Madrigal” 1](#)

[Michael Waters, “Madrigal” 2](#)

[Diane Raptosh, “Call It, Once More, A River”](#)

Reading

Poems & Their Making: A Conversation

Issue Post #12

Choose two poems and essays of different traditions which we haven’t discussed from *Poems & Their Making* and compare their forms. How do they use form? Are they metrical? Rhymed? How do they appear on the page. How would you describe their effects? What is their relationship to narrative, collage, and fragmentation? Which of their practices appeals more to you? Why?

Week 13
Monday, April 5-Friday, April 9

Making your Poem

[Introduction to Week 13](#)

Poem Assignment #3

This week you will submit your third poem and process essay. There is no formal prompt. This poem should represent the direction that you see yourself taking in poetry. Give thought to the poem's form, length, diction, and overall style. Does the poem come from some authentic place? Does it bear your voice?

Issue Post #13

What have you learned about the making of poems? Now that you have encountered various styles, traditions, and theories, how would describe your own practice? Of those we have read, which poet or group of poets have influenced you the most? Which poets would you like to read more of? Why?

Week 14
Monday, April 12-Friday, April 16

Readings & Performances

From [*Il Postino*](#)

[Seamus Heaney reads "Oysters"](#)

[Amiri Baraka, "Somebody Blew Up America"](#)

[Robert Bly, "Winter Poem"](#)

[Sharon Olds, Dodge Festival](#)

[Ruth Stone, "Where I Came From"](#)

[Tim Seibles, NBA Finals, 2012](#)

[Maya Angelou, "And Still I Rise"](#)

Issue Post #14

Choose five lines or phrases from five of the performances above, and make your own poem from them. You may add only 10 words of your own. (This post doesn't need to be 200 words).

Week 15
Monday, April 19, to Friday, April 23

Celebration of Poetry

[Valedictory Lecture](#)

[Marilyn Chin, "Urban Love Poem" Poetry in America](#)

Recitations must be posted by Thursday, April 22 at 5: PM

Issue Post #15

Choose your favorite issue post of a classmate and repost it here.

Week 16
Tuesday, April 27
Revision and final process essay due.