

## LIST POEMS INSPIRED BY DAILY LIFE

### LESSON PLANS

In this poetry lesson T&W writer in residence [Melanie M. Goodreaux-Fiedler](#) encourages students to draw inspiration from their daily lives. Following a reading of a Walt Whitman's "There was a Child went Forth from Leaves of Grass, students think about what they have seen that becomes part of them, and practice describing these things with as many details as possible as they organize their thoughts into list poems.

**Grade(s) Taught:** 2nd

**Genre(s) Taught:** Poetry

#### Common Core State Standards:

(Refer to [English Language Arts Standards > Writing > Grade 2](#))

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.3  
Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.8  
Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

#### Guiding Questions:

- Do you realize that you can use the "eye of your imagination to remember"?
- What was the first "object" you "looked upon" today like the poet, Walt Whitman describes?
- What other objects and experiences were a part of your day and are a part of your life that "became a part of you"?



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## LESSON

### **Introduction:**

Read aloud an excerpt from Walt Whitman's "There was a Child went Forth" Talk about the poem, asking students: What did you like? What is happening in the poem?

### **Main Activity:**

Use the guiding questions to get into the creative zone. Ask students to complete the following prompt:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, went forth today and everything became a part of me.

Now, please list in detail all of the objects and experiences you saw or had today that became a part of you. Remember that when your nouns are alone, they start to "groan." Please use lots of descriptive words so that we can fully understand all that became a part of you.

### **Closing:**

Share your poems.

### **Materials:**

"There was a Child went Forth," Walt Whitman

### **Vocabulary:**

Experience, descriptive language, memory

### **Multi-Modal Approaches to Learning:**

This lesson engages students who learn **aurally** (hearing the poem read aloud); **visually** (visualizing the imagery in their poem as well as their own memories); **logically** (following a structure and organizing systematically in list form); **interpersonally** (class discussion about the poem); and **intrapersonally** (independent writing and reflection).

“103. There was a Child went Forth”

Walt Whitman

THERE was a child went forth every day;  
And the first object he look'd upon, that object he became;  
And that object became part of him for the day, or a certain part of the day, or for many years, or stretching cycles of years.

The early lilacs became part of this child,  
And grass, and white and red morning-glories, and white and red clover, and the song of the phoebe-bird,  
And the Third-month lambs, and the sow's pink-faint litter, and the mare's foal, and the cow's calf,  
And the noisy brood of the barn-yard, or by the mire of the pond-side,  
And the fish suspending themselves so curiously below there—and the beautiful curious liquid,  
And the water-plants with their graceful flat heads—all became part of him.

The field-sprouts of Fourth-month and Fifth-month became part of him;  
Winter-grain sprouts, and those of the light-yellow corn, and the esculent roots of the garden,  
And the apple-trees cover'd with blossoms, and the fruit afterward, and wood-berries, and the commonest weeds by the road;  
And the old drunkard staggering home from the out-house of the tavern, whence he had lately risen,  
And the school-mistress that pass'd on her way to the school,  
And the friendly boys that pass'd—and the quarrelsome boys,  
And the tidy and fresh-cheek'd girls—and the barefoot negro boy and girl,  
And all the changes of city and country, wherever he went.

His own parents,  
He that had father'd him, and she that had conceiv'd him in her womb, and birth'd him,  
They gave this child more of themselves than that;  
They gave him afterward every day—they became part of him.