#17-26

Pick and Choose Poetry Collection

We have read and shared poems. Now it is time to write some of your own. Yay! Yippee! Hoorah!

There are many choices for you to make. The goal is to reach 100 points; you choose the combination of poems to do that**. Each type of poem may be used no more than twice**. You must label each poem by type. I have listed the types of poems and the points below. Following the list, I will give an explanation/description and an example of each poem type. Again, you pick and choose which poems to write; the objective is to reach a total of 100 points.

Limerick—5 points

Haiku—5 points

Lune—5 points

Tanka—5 points

Quatrain—5 points

Cinquain—10 points

List Poem—10 points

Walk Poem—10 points

Epistle Poem—10 points

Occasional Poem—10 points

Extended Metaphor—15 points

Parody—15 points

Lyric—15 points

Narrative—20 points

Villanelle—20 points

Sonnet —25 points

Sestina—25 points

**Limerick**—a 5 line poem in which lines 1,2, and 5 contain 3 beats and rhyme, and lines 3 and 4 contain 2 beats and rhyme. Limericks are usually humorous. (5 points)

There was an Old Lady whose folly

Induced her to sit on a holly,

Whereon, by a thorn,

Her dress being torn,

She quickly became melancholy.

**Haiku**—a poem of 3 lines about common, everyday experiences, usually involving nature. (5 points)

The first line should be 5 syllables, the second should be 7 syllables, and the third should be 5 syllables. (Actually, haiku has many variations, but we will stick with this familiar one.)

Together by Paul Holmes

You and me alone  
Madness of world locked away  
Peace and quiet reigns

**Lune**—a short form invented by American poet Robert Kelly. It is a thirteen syllable form. The first line has 5 syllables, the second has 3 syllables, and the third has 5 syllables. (5 points)

thin silver of the

crescent moon

high up the real world

There is a variant form of the lune. It consists of three lines; the first line has 5 words, the second has 3 words, and the third has 5 words.

A raindrop falls.

It falls on my nose—

Delicate, light, transparent.

**Tanka**—from the Japanese for “short poem”; tanka use strong images. The basic form is five lines, the 1st and 3rd quite short, and the 2nd, 4th, and 5th a bit longer. (5 points)

thoughts of her

unendurable, I go there...

the winter night’s

river-wind is chill

and plovers are crying.

By Kino Tsurayki

Is the inlaid box

With a gilt hasp concealing

A letter, a jewel?

Within, a bunch of feathers,

The small bones of a bird.

By Carolyn Kizer

**Quatrain**—a poem (or stanza) of four lines that can be rhymed or unrhymed. If it is rhymed, the rhyme scheme should be *abab, abba, abcb, abac,* or *aabb.* (5 points)

Tyger! Tyger! Burning bright

In the forests of the night,

What immortal hand or eye

Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

By William Blake

**Cinquain**—is a poem in five lines. The first line has 2 syllables, the second line has 4 syllables, the third line has 6 syllables, the fourth line has 8 syllables and the last line has 2 syllables. (10 points)

Laurel in the Berkshires

By Adelaide Crapsey

Sea-foam

And coral! Oh, I’ll

Climb the great pasture rocks

And dream me mermaid in the sun’s

Gold flood.

Untitled

By Lenore Myers

I know

My soul has wings

To shun the cloud and seek

The rainbow shining through the mist

Below.

**List Poem**—(also called a catalog poem) is a very old form of poetry that consists of an itemization(list) of things or events. It can be rhymed or unrhymed. \*\* Dr. Seuss’s poem “Too Many Daves” is an example of a list poem. Shel Silverstein’s “Sarah Sylvia Cynthia Stout” is another. (10 points)

**Crossing**

STOP    LOOK    LISTEN   
 as gate stripes swing down   
  count the cars hauling distance   
    upgrade through town:   
     warning whistle, bellclang,   
      engine eating steam,   
       engineer waving,   
        a fast-freight dream:   
         B&M boxcar,   
          boxcar again,   
           Frisco gondola,   
eight-nine-ten,   
 Erie and Wabash,   
  Seaboard, U.P.,   
   Pennsy tankcar,   
twenty-two, three,   
 Phoebe Snow, B&O,   
thirty-four, five,   
 Santa Fe cattle   
  shipped alive,   
   red cars, yellow cars,   
    orange cars, black,   
     Youngstown steel   
      down to Mobile   
       on Rock Island track,   
fifty-nine, sixty,   
 hoppers of coke,   
  Anaconda copper,   
   hotbox smoke,   
eighty-eight,   
 red-ball freight,   
  Rio Grande,   
   Nickel Plate,   
    Hiawatha,   
     Lackawanna,   
      rolling fast   
       and loose,   
ninety-seven,   
 coal car,   
  boxcar,   
   CABOOSE!

By Philip Booth

**Walk Poem**—surprise, a poem that involves a walk. There are a couple of basic types of walk poems: 1. A poem about what the poet sees during a particular walk 2. A poem about a walk that produces a revelation of some kind. 3. A poem that reflects the way the mind works during the walk. (10 points)

Excerpt from“Class Walk with Notebooks after Storm”

By Bill Zavatsky

“These puddles floating into the rain wet streets

Down the street all eyes and ears

Must lead somewhere.” With ballpoint pens alert

Or so I think to make sense of this town

But don’t tell that’s made them much

The whole third grade of what they are.

Trailing behind me A wandering pooch

Stopped to lean on cars plots afternoon smells.

Or telephone poles i too lead my students

Scrawling their seeing by the nose, exhibiting

On spiral pads everything: the basketball

Or blowy paper sheets. Ogled by a fishtank fish

I want them to stalk In Don’s Hobby Store window;

Their own lives, to see The candy store’s weathered wood

That all of matter matters --“like the gravestones”

And so—outdoors! Arms Notes one melancholy

Flying into sleeves boy I can’t help patting

Down rickety stairs on the head

**Epistle Poem** (also epistolary poem)—a poem that is also a letter to someone. (10 points)

Letter by Langston Hughes

Dear Mama,  
    Time I pay rent and get my food  
and laundry I don't have much left  
but here is five dollars for you  
to show you I still appreciates you.  
My girl-friend send her love and say   
she hopes to lay eyes on you sometime in life.  
Mama, it has been raining cats and dogs up  
here. Well, that is all so I will close.  
    Your son baby  
        Respectably as ever,  
          Joe

Her Letter by Robert Service

“I'm taking pen in hand this night, and hard it is for me;  
My poor old fingers tremble so, my hand is stiff and slow,  
And even with my glasses on I'm troubled sore to see. . . .  
You'd little know your mother, boy; you'd little, little know.  
You mind how brisk and bright I was, how straight and trim and smart;  
'Tis weariful I am the now, and bent and frail and grey.  
I'm waiting at the road's end, lad; and all that's in my heart,  
Is just to see my boy again before I'm called away."  
  
"Oh well I mind the sorry day you crossed the gurly sea;  
'Twas like the heart was torn from me, a waeful wife was I.  
You said that you'd be home again in two years, maybe three;  
But nigh a score of years have gone, and still the years go by.  
I know it's cruel hard for you, you've bairnies of your own;  
I know the siller's hard to win, and folks have used you ill:  
But oh, think of your mother, lad, that's waiting by her lone!  
And even if you canna come -- just write and say you will."  
  
"Aye, even though there's little hope, just promise that you'll try.  
It's weary, weary waiting, lad; just say you'll come next year.  
I'm thinking there will be no `next'; I'm thinking soon I'll lie  
With all the ones I've laid away . . . but oh, the hope will cheer!  
You know you're all that's left to me, and we are seas apart;  
But if you'll only say you'll come, then will I hope and pray.  
I'm waiting by the grave-side, lad; and all that's in my heart  
Is just to see my boy again before I'm called away."

**Occasional Poem**—poem written for a specific occasion or event such as a wedding, a funeral, a birthday, a battle, a championship game. (10 points)

**At the Un-National Monument along the Canadian Border**

By [William E. Stafford](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/william-e-stafford)

This is the field where the battle did not happen,

where the unknown soldier did not die.

This is the field where grass joined hands,

where no monument stands,

and the only heroic thing is the sky.

Birds fly here without any sound,

unfolding their wings across the open.

No people killed—or were killed—on this ground

hallowed by neglect and an air so tame

that people celebrate it by forgetting its name.

sisters by Lucille Clifton

for elaine philip on her birthday

me and you be sisters.

we be the same.

me and you

coming from the same place.

me and you

be greasing our legs

touching up our edges.

me and you

be scared of rats

be stepping on roaches.

me and you

come running high down purdy street one time

and mama laugh and shake her head at

me and you.

me and you

got babies

got thirty-five

got black

let our hair go back

be loving ourselves

be loving ourselves

be sisters.

only where you sing

i poet.

“The Charge of the Light Brigade” by Alfred, Lord Tennyson is another (long) example of an occasional poem.

**Extended Metaphor**—a metaphor is a direct comparison or connection of two unlike things (for example “his hand is a wet fish”,or from Dickens “his ferret eyes”). An extended metaphor lasts through several lines or even throughout the entire poem. (15 points)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | ***Steam Shovel*** by Charles Malam |  | |
| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  | | --- | | The dinosaurs are not all dead. I saw one raise its iron head To watch me walking down the road Beyond our house today. Its jaws were dripping with a load Of earth and grass that it had cropped. It must have heard me where I stopped, Snorted white steam my way, And stretched its long neck out to see, And chewed, and grinned quite amiably. | | |

**Parody**—an exaggerated imitation, usually humorous, of a work. (15 points)

**Little Miss Muffet**

Little Miss Muffet  
Crouched on a tuffet,  
Collecting her shell-shocked wits,  
There dropped (from a glider)  
An H-bomb beside her –  
Which frightened Miss Muffet to bits.

-Paul Dehn

## The Builders

by Sara Henderson Hay

I told them a thousand times if I told them once:  
Stop fooling around, I said, with straw and sticks;  
They won’t hold up; you’re taking an awful chance.  
Brick is the stuff to build with, solid bricks.  
You want to be impractical, go ahead.  
But just remember, I told them; wait and see.  
You’re making a big mistake. Awright, I said,  
But when the wolf comes, don’t come running to me.

The funny thing is, they didn’t. There they sat,  
One in his crummy yellow shack, and one  
Under his roof of twigs, and the wolf ate  
Them, hair and hide. Well, what is done is done.  
But I’d been willing to help them, all along,  
If only they’d once admitted they were wrong.

**Lyric Poem**—shorter poems that express personal feelings of one speaker, often the poet, and give a feeling they could be sung. (15 points)

***Song***by Christina Rossetti  
When I am dead, my dearest,  
  Sing no sad songs for me;  
Plant thou no roses at my head,  
  Nor shady cypress tree:  
Be the green grass above me  
  With showers and dewdrops wet;  
And if thou wilt, remember,  
  And if thou wilt, forget.  
  
I shall not see the shadows,  
  I shall not feel the rain;  
I shall not hear the nightingale  
  Sing on, as if in pain:  
And dreaming through the twilight  
  That doth not rise nor set,  
Haply I may remember,  
  And haply may forget.

**Annabel Lee**

By [Edgar Allan Poe](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/edgar-allan-poe)

It was many and many a year ago,

   In a kingdom by the sea,

That a maiden there lived whom you may know

   By the name of Annabel Lee;

And this maiden she lived with no other thought

   Than to love and be loved by me.

*I* was a child and *she* was a child,

   In this kingdom by the sea,

But we loved with a love that was more than love—

   I and my Annabel Lee—

With a love that the wingèd seraphs of Heaven

   Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,

   In this kingdom by the sea,

A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling

   My beautiful Annabel Lee;

So that her highborn kinsmen came

   And bore her away from me,

To shut her up in a sepulchre

   In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in Heaven,

   Went envying her and me—

Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,

   In this kingdom by the sea)

That the wind came out of the cloud by night,

   Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love

   Of those who were older than we—

   Of many far wiser than we—

And neither the angels in Heaven above

   Nor the demons down under the sea

Can ever dissever my soul from the soul

   Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams

   Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes

   Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side

   Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,

   In her sepulchre there by the sea—

   In her tomb by the sounding sea.

**Narrative Poem**—a poem that tells a story. \*\*“The Highwayman” is an example of a narrative poem. (20 points)

THE COWBOY’S LAMENT  
Anonymous

As I walked out in the streets of Laredo,  
As I walked out in Laredo one day,  
I spied a poor cowboy wrapped up in white linen,  
Wrapped up in white linen and cold as the clay.

“Oh beat the drum slowly and play the fife lowly,  
Play the Dead March as you bear me along;  
Take me to the graveyard, and lay the sod o’er me,  
For I’m a young cowboy, and I know I’ve done wrong.

“I see by your outfit that you are a cowboy,”—  
These words he did say as I boldly stepped by.—  
“Come sit beside me and hear my sad story;  
I was shot in the breast and I know I must die.

“Let sixteen gamblers come handle my coffin,  
Let sixteen cowboys come sing me a song,  
Take me to the graveyard and lay the sod over me,  
For I’m a poor cowboy and I know I’ve done wrong.

“My friends and relation they live in the Nation,  
They know not where their boy has gone.  
He first came to Texas and hired to a ranchman,  
Oh, I’m a young cowboy, and I know I’ve done wrong.

“Go write a letter to my gray-haired mother,  
And carry the same to my sister so dear;  
But not a word shall you mention  
When a crowd gathers round you my story to hear.

There is another more dear than a sister,  
She’ll bitterly weep when she hears I am gone.  
There is another who will win her affections,  
For I’m a young cowboy, and they say I’ve done wrong.

“Go gather around you a crowd of young cowboys  
And tell them the story of this my sad fate;  
Tell one and the other before they go further  
To stop their wild roving before ‘t is too late.

“Oh muffle your drums, then play your fifes merrily;  
Play the Dead March as you bear me along.  
And fire your guns right over my coffin;  
There goes an unfortunate boy to his home.

“It was once in the saddle I used to go dashing,  
It was once in the saddle I used to be gay;  
First to the dram-house and then to the card-house:  
Got shot in the breast , I am dying to-day.

“Get six jolly cowboys to carry my coffin;  
Get six pretty maidens to bear up my pall;  
Put bunches of roses all over my coffin,  
Put roses to deaden the clods as they fall.

“Then swing your rope slowly and rattle your spurs lowly,  
And give a wild whoop as you bear me along;  
And in the grave throw me, and roll the sod over me,  
For I’m a young cowboy, and I know I’ve done wrong.

“Go bring me a cup, a cup of cold water  
To cool my parched lips,” the young cowboy said.  
Before I turned, the spirit had left him  
And gone to its Giver—the cowboy was dead.

We beat the drum slowly and played the fife lowly,  
And bitterly wept as we bore him along;  
For we all loved our comrade, so brave, young, and handsome;  
We all loved our comrade, although he’d done wrong.

**Villanelle**—this type of poem has six stanzas; the first five stanzas are three lines long and the last stanza is four lines long. The first line and the last line of the first stanza take turns repeating as the final line of the next four stanzas, and then are rejoined as the last two lines of the poem. The poem has a rhyme scheme of *aba* throughout, except in the last stanza, which has a slight variation. (20 points)

**Do not go gentle into that good night**

[Dylan Thomas](https://poets.org/poet/dylan-thomas) - 1914-1953

**Do not go gentle into that good night,** A1  
Old age should burn and rave at close of day; b  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light. A2  
  
Though wise men at their end know dark is right, a  
Because their words had forked no lightning they b  
**Do not go gentle into that good night.** A1  
  
Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright a  
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay, b  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light. A2  
  
Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight, a  
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way, b  
**Do not go gentle into that good night.** A1  
  
Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight a  
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay, b  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light. A2  
  
And you, my father, there on the sad height, a  
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray. b  
**Do not go gentle into that good night.** A1  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light. A2

The House on the Hill by Edwin Arlington Robinson

They are all gone away, A1  
The house is shut and still, b  
There is nothing more to say. A2  
  
Through broken walls and gray a  
The winds blow bleak and shrill: b   
They are all gone away. A1  
  
Nor is there one today a  
To speak them good or ill: b  
There is nothing more to say. A2  
  
Why is it then we stray a  
Around the sunken sill? b  
They are all gone away. A1  
  
And our poor fancy-play a  
For them is wasted skill: b  
There is nothing more to say. A2  
  
There is ruin and decay a  
In the House on the Hill b  
They are all gone away, A1  
There is nothing more to say. A2

**Sonnet**—a fourteen line poem usually in two “parts”: an ocatve (8 lines) and a sestet (6 lines). The most common rhyme scheme is *abab cdcd efef gg* (Shakespeare); William Wordsworth often used this rhyme scheme *abbaaccb dedeff.* There is no hard and fast rule on rhyme scheme, but sonnets are rhyming poems. See the sonnet by Robert Frost below. \*\* “Those Winter Sundays” by Robert Hayden is another example of a sonnet (25 points)

Sonnet 18 by William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day? a  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate. b  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May, a  
And summer’s lease hath all too short a date. b  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines, c  
And often is his gold complexion dimmed; d  
And every fair from fair sometime declines, c  
By chance, or nature’s changing course, untrimmed; d  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade, e  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow’st, f  
Nor shall death brag thou wand'rest in his shade, e  
When in eternal lines to Time thou grow'st. f  
    So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see, g  
    So long lives this, and this gives life to thee. g

**The Oven Bird**

By [Robert Frost](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/robert-frost)

There is a singer everyone has heard,

Loud, a mid-summer and a mid-wood bird,

Who makes the solid tree trunks sound again.

He says that leaves are old and that for flowers

Mid-summer is to spring as one to ten.

He says the early petal-fall is past

When pear and cherry bloom went down in showers

On sunny days a moment overcast;

And comes that other fall we name the fall.

He says the highway dust is over all.

The bird would cease and be as other birds

But that he knows in singing not to sing.

The question that he frames in all but words

Is what to make of a diminished thing.

**Sestina**—a poem with six unrhymed stanzas of six lines each in which the words at the ends of the first stanza’s lines recur in a rolling pattern at the end of all the other lines. The sestina then ends with a three line stanza (tercet) that also uses all six end-words, two to a line. (25 points)

In the diagram, the letters A-F stand for the six end-words of the sestina:

Stanza 1

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_A

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_B

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_C

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_D

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_E

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_F

Stanza 2:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_F

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_A

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_E

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_B

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_D

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_C

Stanza 3:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_C

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_F

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_D

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_A

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_B

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_E

Stanza 4:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_E

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_C

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_B

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_F

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_A

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_D

Stanza 5:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_D

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_E

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_A

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_C

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_F

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_B

Stanza 6:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_B

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_D

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_F

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_E

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_C

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_A

Tercet:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_A\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_B

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_C\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_D

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_E\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_F

For the example below:

A: good-bye

B: flowers

C: offering

D: light

E: strength

F: dying

Offering by Charlotte Hertig Snider

I arrive unprepared for good-bye. (A)

In a mason jar I carry flowers, (B)

Daisies, a simple summer offering. (C)

You sit chilled in the flickering light. (D)

I call the nurse, she calls you honey, unaware of your strength. (E)

You are returned to bed, returned to the business of dying. (F)

A slow, concentrated effort is this dying. (F)

You are certainly no stranger to a good-bye. (A)

The many farewells must have tested your strength. (E)

Pain and regret were used to fertilize your flowers (B)

That grew in the curative light. (D)

A brave surrendering is a kind of offering. (C)

Purple Sweet William, majestic purple iris were your offering (C)

Never mind they’d soon be dying, (F)

These pretties are resurrected in the light. (D)

A visit to Grandma’s didn’t come to good-bye (A)

Until we were given plucked and pampered flowers (B)

That taught us the probability of fragile strength. (E)

Your Irish laughter was a strength (E)

That made us remember the offering (C)

Of possibilities as we remembered flowers. (B)

There was never talk of dying (F)

No time for any but the briefest good-bye. (A)

In summer, we’d come again, the porch light (D)

Beckoning for our return. We’d enter the light (D)

And a flurry of greetings that revealed the strength (E)

Of your arm’s length love. We were better at hello than good-bye, (A)

Not understanding the simple offering (C)

You gave to us. You were not dying (F)

Then. You taught us the power of tending flowers. (B)

“How lovely,” you rasp at the proffered flowers, (B)

Then your eyes turn to an inward light. (D)

I didn’t realize the act of dying (F)

Would take so much effort and strength. (E)

I wish for a grandmotherly offering (C)

Before we say good-bye. (A)

Our good-bye was said with flowers.

Daisies were the offering that held the sunlight

And gave me strength as you were dying.

Whew! That is a lot of information.

The number of poems that you write will depend on your choices. If you need some more information or some encouragement, please send me a message on livegrades or you can email me at [cwoodford@k12.wv.us](mailto:cwoodford@k12.wv.us).