



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2017 Volume III: Poetry and Public Life

Poetry as a Dialectic in the Public Sphere

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Various access points are necessary to allow for a diversity of thought in the public sphere. The premise of this unit is to set forth a series of outcomes that will allow students to engage in challenging college level material with the aid of poetry. Poetry will serve as an access point for a deeper analysis of a novel or play that shares a theme, character type, or time period. The unit does this in two main formats. It begins by offering a text set of 6-10 poems for 8 canonical novels that will be read throughout the year in preparation for the Advanced Placement (AP) Literature exam.

As the year progresses poetry will be considered on a weekly basis. A brief discussion of one poem per unit is included to offer you a glimpse of the reasons why a poem might be included. Also included is an analysis of one poem from each of the three categories (theme, character, time period). While the reason for including many poems is oftentimes clear from the beginning, some do require deeper analysis to see the connection to the novel or play with which it is paired. It is in this way that we begin to broaden our horizons to see connections that may have been missed previously.

(Developed for AP Literature, grades 11 and 12; recommended for World History, grades 10-12, and English 4, grade 12)

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