

College Guild

P.O. Box 6448, Brunswick, ME 04011

POETRY CLUB II**Unit 1 of 7****Poems by Prisoners**

Welcome to another Poetry Club. We commend you for your dedication to this writing format! In each unit, you will have four poems to read. It is your responsibility to read them carefully several times, thinking about what you can learn from every poem, as well as enjoying the poet's craft. As you discuss the poems in each unit, keep in mind some of the elements of poetry that helped to guide your critiques and discussions in Poetry Club I. These elements include, but are certainly not limited to, those in the list below.

- The poet's message and how successfully it is conveyed
- Creativity of subject and presentation
- Emotional impact
- Clarity
- Flow
- Choice of format
- Choice of words and phrases
- Meter (the "beat" and number of syllables in a line)
- Rhyme (if appropriate) and smoothness of fit into lines
- Visual presentation
- Line breaks
- Punctuation

1. Discuss each of the four poems included with this unit.

2. Write four original poems of your own.

Tightrope

Each footstep carefully calculated,
 I tread on the brink of calamity,
 A paltry slip to a great fall.
 Crowds don't gather below me,
 only a few friends, some family,
 soon all but a couple will flee,
 so helpless, unable to watch any longer.
 How did I possibly end up here?
 I do recall some of the climb,
 a crowded and noisy ascent,
 now on the rope so quietly alone.

- James Murphy

Untitled

I've often wondered in
 the course of things I wonder
 about, why are manatees so dumb?
 Fat, happy sea cows floating
 chewing what they chew and
 eating what they eat getting
 hit by boats, backs carved up
 by whirling propellers.
 Nothing but aquatic speed bumps.
 But then I empathize
 because I too have been
 run over by life's ship.

- Dan Grote

Dry Graveyard

Through me
 many have wandered.
 I cover their
 hard trails
 with a dry kiss.
 Day after day
 the mighty sun
 places his
 impressive weight
 on my back.
 I laugh.
 I am not a forest.
 The fear of fire does not pierce my soul.
 But I envy the sea
 who has abundance
 of water.
 So I dream mirages
 and build an oasis.

- Carlos Bellamy

The Mountains Weep

The magnificent peaks are the hands of the earth,
 futilely outstretched toward a withdrawing creator.
 "Don't leave me!" they cry,
 as fingertips brush the clouds
 for one last touch.

- Alan Houghton

Remember: First names only & please let us know if your address changes