

College Guild
P.O. Box 6448, Brunswick, ME 04011

POETRY CLUB

Unit 5 of 7

PART 1

The format from now on will be different than in the first four Units. Included in the Appendix are six poems, all by prisoners, four of whom are/were College Guild students. In commenting on these, try to step into the shoes of a College Guild teacher.

1. Give your general impression of any four of the six poems. What is the strength of each, and what is its weakness? I leave it to you to choose what to focus on, but consider more than just the subject of each poem.

You have had feedback on many of your poems by now. You know what has been helpful. For Question #2, pretend you are providing feedback just the way one of your readers would.

2. Pick any one of the six poems and discuss it as if you were a College Guild reader. The poet is counting on your honest, thorough feedback!

PART 2

3. Write three original poems. For each, take your lead or inspiration from some aspect of one of the six poems included here. It can be absolutely anything – subject, format, voice, language, rhyme scheme, metaphor, etc.

4. Explain what you chose as the leads or inspirations and how they influenced each of your three poems. (Avoid just using the same subject for each.)

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

APPENDIX A

A young boy fascinated with the rails
 how the East met with the West
 through desert, rough mountainous terrain
 of cowboy's lonely hearts and teary trails,
 dreamed of the trains.

APPENDIX C

A dark cold night
 A witness looks out
 He watches with fright
 At a crime and a shout

A crowd gathers around
 At the scene of the crime
 A knife was found
 But it wasn't mine.

The witness talks about it all
 About the monster that did this
 The story gets out of control
 The truth is lost in the mix

Hate increases in the witness' mind
 As he sees the victim's family cry
 For this case justice was blind
 For the witness told a lie

APPENDIX E*Forgotten Snow*

I am the wind of many seasons past,
 yet only for a time I live –
 only to return again.
 The physical remains of my birth
 lie upon unfallowed ground...
 as the children race to embrace
 this ephemeral stage of a winter's day,
 yet I leave you with the memory
 of still another snowy array.

APPENDIX B

When fear is gone
 life is gone.
 What do we have left,
 should we continue
 to worry...to fear?
 It doesn't matter
 the end is near.

APPENDIX D*Judge Ye Not*

I dreamed death came the other night,
 And heaven's gate swung wide.
 With kindly grace and a warm sweet smile,
 Angels ushered me inside.

There to my astonishment,
 Stood folks I'd known on earth.
 Some even I had judged unfit,
 Scums of little worth.

Indignant words rose to my lips,
 But never were set free,
 For on every face showed stunned surprise,
 Ha, ha – no one ever expected me!

APPENDIX F*The Run Away*

By choice

By chance

By circumstance, on city streets
 In dark doorways, quite discreet
 A knowing glance,

A few

words passed

The question asked,
 From a two-bit room to the

streets again,

Sweet sixteen come June...