

ESOL Poetry Selections

14-30 lines

First Name:

Last Name:

ESOL HS Intermediate

NGAPANDIE

by Felicia Gonzalez

("Ngapandie" is a word from the Mazatec language of the indigenous people of Oaxaca in southern Mexico. It means "world" in the sense of "in this world".)

I cleared the kitchen table
set out the red bowls
with the incised pattern

poured strong coffee into one
poured honey into the other

I sat and waited for appetite
remembering the unwilling anticipation of having
my second ear pierced when barely one week old

poured my thoughts into the brilliant pressed gold
of my grandmother's earrings

let slip this thread of memory from her hands,
through my mother's,
into mine

I drank the coffee and whispered into the bowl with honey
that it would have to swallow the bitterness

ESOL Poetry Selections

14-30 lines

First Name:

Last Name:

ESOL HS Intermediate

Sea Fever

by John Masefield

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

ESOL Poetry Selections

14-30 lines

First Name:

Last Name:

ESOL HS Intermediate

The Summer Day by Mary Oliver

Who made the world?

Who made the swan, and the black bear?

Who made the grasshopper?

This grasshopper, I mean-

the one who has flung herself out of the grass,

the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,

who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down-

who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.

Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.

Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.

I don't know exactly what a prayer is.

I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down

into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,

how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,

which is what I have been doing all day.

Tell me, what else should I have done?

Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?

Tell me, what is it you plan to do

with your one wild and precious life?