



## Poetry and Loss: Part II

Recommended Grade Range: High School

### Learning Objective(s)

#### Students will be able to...

- ✓ Consider and articulate the ways that poetry can uniquely remember and pay tribute to the dead.

### Lesson Agenda

#### Do Now

Begin class by showing the FPP videos listed in the “Lesson Resources” section of this lesson plan.

- ◆ Depending on time/group constraints, you may choose to show just one or two videos; or, you may begin class with small groups, and ask each group to watch a different video.
- ◆ As students watch the video(s), ask them to consider what makes the poem(s) a memorial.
- ◆ and hear.

#### Share Out

Students can share out the memorial elements of their poem, either in small groups, as a whole class, or in small groups first and then a whole class.

#### Mini Lesson

Guide the students in a whole class discussion around the following questions/topics:

- ◆ What is the difference between memorializing someone and grieving them?
- ◆ How could the act of writing poetry help someone process grief? How could the act of reading poetry help someone process grief?
- ◆ For whom do we create memorials?
- ◆ What are the elements of an elegy, memorial, and obituary?
  - ◆ What is the purpose of each form?
  - ◆ What does each form contain that distinguishes it from other forms?



### Closing

You may wish to add a creative, culminating project to this lesson, and assign any of the following options in the “Suggestions for Next Steps” section of this lesson plan; in closing, describe the culminating project and prepare students to work on it in a later class meeting.

### Suggestions for Next Steps

- ◆ Write an obituary for a character in “Out, Out —”, “We Real Cool”, or “Facing It.”
- ◆ Write an elegiac poem based on an actual obituary that a student selects; this could be the obituary of a public figure they admire, or one they find for someone they did not know.
- ◆ Write an elegiac poem for a loved one who has passed away.
- ◆ Write a “pre-elegy:” a poem for a loved one who is still alive, but imagines a world in which the loved one has passed away.

### Lesson Resources

#### Favorite Poem Project Videos:

- “Out, Out —” by Robert Frost, read by Elizabeth Wojtusik, Teaching Artist, Humarock, Massachusetts
- “The Holy Longing” by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (tr. Robert Bly), read by Olivia Milward, Retired Teacher, San Francisco, California
- “We Real Cool” by Gwendolyn Brooks, read by John Ulrich, Student, South Boston, Massachusetts
- “Facing It” read by Mike Lythgoe, Foundation Director, Washington, DC

The Favorite Poem Project is a nonprofit organization dedicated to celebrating, documenting, and encouraging poetry's role in our lives.



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