

Task Title: Interpreting a Poem

OALCF Cover Sheet – Learner Copy

Learner Name: _____

Date Started: _____

Date Completed: _____

Successful Completion: Yes ☐ No ☐

Goal Path: Employment ☐ Apprenticeship ☐

Secondary School ☐ Post Secondary ☐ Independence ☐

Task Description: The learner will read and interpret a short poem.

Main Competency/Task Group/Level Indicator:

- Find and Use Information/Read continuous text/A1.3
- Communicate Ideas and Information/Write continuous text/B2.3

Materials Required:

- Pen/pencil and paper and/or digital device

Learner Information

Secondary and post-secondary students are often asked to interpret poems, stories, novels and other forms of literature. Interpreting writing can include identifying themes, connecting ideas with current events or universal human experiences, or drawing connections between the author's words and one's own experiences.

Read "Wild Geese" by Mary Oliver.

Wild Geese

By Mary Oliver

You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees
For a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.
Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting --
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.

Work Sheet

Task 1: Write a short paragraph of 4 or 5 sentences. Explain what you think Oliver is telling readers about being human.

Answer:

Task 2: Write a short paragraph of 4 or 5 sentences. Explain what you think Oliver is telling readers about nature.

Answer:

Task 3: Write a short paragraph or 4 or 5 sentences. Describe how a theme in this poem connects to something in your life or community.

Answer:
