

Phillis Wheatley, Lesson Two

Level: Grades 3-6



Phillis Wheatley wrote poems about all sorts of things. She especially liked writing about people she knew and admired. But she also wrote about the world around her. In this poem called a Hymn to the Evening, she describes what she sees, hears and feels in the evening. This poem was written almost two hundred and fifty years ago so some of the words and phrases she uses may sound unusual to you. But if you look closely, I'm sure you can find some words that you know.

A Hymn to the Evening

Soon as the sun forsook the eastern main
The pealing thunder shook the heav'nly plain;
Majestic grandeur! From the zephyr's wing,
Exhales the incense of the blooming spring.
Soft purl the streams, the birds renew their notes,
And through the air their mingled music floats.
Through all the heav'ns what beauteous dies are
spread!
But the west glories in the deepest red:
So may our breasts with ev'ry virtue glow,
The living temples of our God below!
Fill'd with the praise of him who gives the light,
And draws the sable curtains of the night,
Let placid slumbers sooth each weary mind,
At morn to wake more heav'nly, more refin'd;
So shall the labours of the day begin
More pure, more guarded from the snares of sin.
Night's leaden sceptre seals my drowsy eyes

Would you like to write a poem? A lot of people think writing poetry is really hard. But it's not that hard to write a poem if you open your eyes and ears and minds. When you're ready to give it a try, use the worksheet below. The first questions will help you gather words for your poem. Then you will write some of those words in the blank spaces and then TA DA!! you're a poet. If you would like to share your poem, email it to me at eparker@rosenbach.org. I'd love to see what you create!

Gather Your Words!

Look out a window about 5:30 pm and then open your eyes and ears and minds to observe the world outside your home.

1. Look at the clock and write the time here _____

2. What do you hear? Ringing? The wooshing of the wind? Music? The vroom vroom of a car? Write 2 words that describe the things that you **hear**.

3. What things do you see? The sun? Clouds? Trees? Write 6 things that you **see**.

4. What colors do you see? Write 5 colors that you **see**.

5. What do you feel? Write 2 things that you **feel**.

6. How would you like to feel in the morning? Write 1 word that describes how you want to **feel tomorrow morning**.

Write Your Poem!

Use the words you gathered in the first part of the activity and use them to fill in the blanks below.

My Evening Poem

Your answer to question 1

1 word from question 2

1 word from question 2

1 word from question 3

1 word from question 3

1 word from question 3

1 word from
question 4

1 word from question 3

1 word from question 3

1 word from question 3

1 word from question 5

1 word from question 5

Your answer to question 6