

Beat poetry evolved during the 1940s in both New York City and on the west coast, although San Francisco became the heart of the movement in the early 1950s. The end of World War II left poets like Allen Ginsberg, Gary Snyder, Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Gregory Corso questioning mainstream politics and culture. These poets would become known as the Beat generation, a group of writers interested in changing consciousness and defying conventional writing. The Beats were also closely intertwined with poets of the San Francisco Renaissance movement, such as Kenneth Rexroth and Robert Duncan.

The battle against social conformity and literary tradition was central to the work of the Beats. Among this group of poets, hallucinogenic drugs were used to achieve higher consciousness, as was meditation and Eastern religion. Buddhism especially was important to many of the Beat poets; Gary Snyder and Allen Ginsberg both intensely studied this religion and it figured into much of their work.

<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/5646>

“For the Death of 100 Whales” group poster

Before reading:

1. Vocabulary: Define and provide quote the word comes from
 - steamers
 - reapers
 - kine
 - incense
 - Goya
 - Gnashed
 - D. H. Lawrence

DURING READING:

2. Make a quick 5 frame cartoon about the poem using a quote per frame which shows the action.

GROUP WORK: Choose one on the sections below and add your information to the chart poster. NOTE : Due to the size of the class there may be 2 groups working on the same section.

- a. Allusions – Find out about Goya (hint – look up “The Colossus” and other works) and D.H. Lawrence in connection to the poem. What does each allusion refer to? (Find and print a significant work of Goya as it can be tied to the poem) **(2 people)**
- b. Form and structure **(3 people)**
 - Organization – stanza form, free or blank verse
 - form – look at Kinds of Poetry handout
 - Begins with ... (use a quote as support)
 - Develops by describing ... (use a quote as support)
 - Ends by.... (use a quote as support)
 - Stanza _____ contrasts with stanza _____
 - Font – any unusual use of font? Why?
- c. Poetic voice **(2 people)**
 - Tone? (support with a quote)
 - Persona of the speaker (support with a quote)
 - view the reader should have (quote to support each)
- d. Lexis/word use **(2 people)**
 - formal or informal? Provide an example.
 - Simple or complex? Provide an example.
 - 3 powerful or significant words or phrases
 - 2 sets of contrasting words
- e. Imagery **(3 people)**
 - list the similes, metaphors and personification.
 - Put all of the similes, metaphors and personification into groups/categories (ex. Machine imagery, destructive imagery, etc.)
 - Make an illustration for each category which reflects one quote from this category.
- f. Grammar **(2 people)**
 - find examples of each of the sentence types – interrogative, declarative, imperative and exclamatory.
 - What effect or emotion does each intend to create?
 - Is the poem told in the present, past or future tense? Why?
- g. Phonology **(3 people)**
 - find examples of the sound devices (alliteration, assonance, consonance, euphony, cacophony, onomatopoeia) and list them.
 - Does this poem have a regular rhythm or metre? Why or why not?

Neatness is the key to this class activity. If we can't read what you've got, it's not useful to anyone. You will be assigned a mark to your part depending upon your group's completion as well as the accuracy and thoroughness of your task.

