

Walt Whitman

Walt Whitman, a famous American poet, was born on May 31, 1819 in the West Hills of Long Island, New York. His mother's name was Loisias Van Velsor, of Dutch descent., and amazingly could not read very well, if at all. His dad was an English carpenter who probably could not read his son's poetry. His parent's family consisted of nine children, four of whom had disabilities.

His start in literature came when, at the age of 12, he was withdrawn from school to work as a printer. At this time he began to learn to love reading books. He read whenever he could and was self taught. When he was seventeen, he became a teacher in a small school. Five years later he took a job as a journalist and was the editor of many New York papers. He studied the French language, and many of his poems contain French words.

When he traveled to the New Orleans, he witnessed slavery which in turn "helped him write his poems" according to Walt Whitman. Between 1848 and 1855 he developed the style of poetry he is known for. In 1891 he finished the 30 years of constant writing it took him to write the book Leaves of Grass. The Leaves of Grass basically was his life's work and contained 400 poems. He is known as a poet for the Leaves of Grass. An interesting fact: his opening poem in the Leaves of Grass tells about how he knows he will die soon. It says that "I have walked the roads you will walk" which is telling about how he once was alive just like us. It is a poem that remembers him and speaks to future generations.

Indeed, Walt Whitman is a very interesting poet, and his style is the best in the world.

Sample Poem

In Cabin'd Ships at Sea

In cabin'd ships at sea,
The boundless blue on every side expanding,
With whistling winds and music of the waves, the large imperious
waves,
Or some lone bark buoy'd on the dense marine,
Where joyous full of faith, spreading white sails,
She cleaves the ether mid the sparkle and the foam of day, or under
many a star at night,
By sailors young and old haply will I, a reminiscence of the land,
be read,
In full rapport at last.

Here are our thoughts, voyagers' thoughts,
Here not the land, firm land, alone appears, may then by them be
said,
The sky o'erarches here, we feel the undulating deck beneath our
feet,
We feel the long pulsation, ebb and flow of endless motion,
The tones of unseen mystery, the vague and vast suggestions of the
briny world, the liquid-flowing syllables,
The perfume, the faint creaking of the cordage, the melancholy
rhythm,
The boundless vista and the horizon far and dim are all here,
And this is ocean's poem.

Then falter not O book, fulfil your destiny,
You not a reminiscence of the land alone,
You too as a lone bark cleaving the ether, purpos'd I know not
whither, yet ever full of faith,
Consort to every ship that sails, sail you!
Bear forth to them folded my love, (dear mariners, for you I fold it
here in every leaf;)
Speed on my book! spread your white sails my little bark athwart the
imperious waves,
Chant on, sail on, bear o'er the boundless blue from me to every sea,
This song for mariners and all their ships.

Evaluation

I choose Walt Whitman as my author because I find his poems very interesting. Also they seem to be written in such a way that I can understand or relate to exactly what he tries to convey. Walt Whitman is also good at writing poems that have value or importance in the readers mind. They are entertaining and make the reader want to read the poem.

The above poem is telling of the experience of sailing out to sea many miles. It tells how it is like to sail and what the waves and water look like. It stresses how the ocean is a liquid, unstable flowing pool of water that is constantly moving.