

Materials and Links for Session 4 Ars Poetica

Process and Craft

Read at least the first group of poems and listen to the audio versions that are listed. Use the Guiding Questions to focus your reading.

Guiding Questions:

What aspect or aspects of the writing process does each poem highlight?

What kind of work does composition seem to be to each poet?

What feelings or tones does each associate with the writing process?

If a poet uses an extended metaphor (as do Caswell, Hughes, Whitman, Guigna and Tate), how effective is this metaphor, in your opinion?

Pope, Alexander “Sound and Sense” (From “An Essay on Criticism”)

<https://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/poetry/sound.html>

O’Hara, Frank “Why I am not a Painter”

<https://poets.org/poem/why-i-am-not-painter>

(Note: The Caswell poem below is a kind of response to O’Hara’s poem “Why I am not a Painter”)

Caswell, Donald “Why I am a Poet”

<https://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/poetry/caswell.html>

Vuong, Ocean “Essay on Craft”

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/142852/essay-on-craft>

Ocean Vuong Reading “Essay on Craft”

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/play/153387>

Hughes, Ted “The Thought Fox”

<https://poetryarchive.org/poem/thought-fox/>

(Note: there is an audio version of this poem on the same webpage.)

Additional Readings FYI (for fun—we will only discuss if we have time)

Tate, James “Teaching the Ape to Write Poems”

<https://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/poetry/ape.html>

Wilbur, Richard “The Writer”

<https://poets.org/poem/writer>

Guigna, Charles “A Poem is a Spider Web”

<https://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/poetry/spider.html>

Whitman, Walt “A Noiseless Patient Spider”

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45473/a-noiseless-patient-spider>