

Lesson 7: Robert Frost

☐ Getting Started

Today you are going to begin reading a unique novel. One thing that makes the novel interesting is that it is written as if it were a poem.

The narrator of the story is boy who is learning about poetry in his class at school. It is written in first person from the boy's perspective. The book is his side of a conversation he is having with his teacher about poetry.

Stuff You Need

- "Timeline of American History"* (Activity 2 - optional)
- *Love that Dog* by Sharon Creech
- *My America: A Poetry Atlas of the United States* by Lee Bennett Hopkins

Ideas to Think About

- How do poets appeal to the emotions and senses of the readers?
- What relationships and patterns exist among the words in poetry?

Things to Know

- Robert Frost was a famous American poet. Nature was the subject of many of his poems.
- To analyze a poem means to read it very closely and think about its meaning. In an analysis, you try to understand what the poet is trying to communicate through the poem and what literary techniques he or she used.
- An **action verb** shows action.
- A **linking verb** links the subject of the sentence to words about the subject.

☐ Reading and Questions

Read pages 1-21 of the novel *Love That Dog* by Sharon Creech. Answer these questions.

1. How is *Love That Dog* different from other novels you have read?

2. How old do you think Jack (the narrator) is? Why?

3. Read the poem "The Red Wheelbarrow" found in the back of the book. What do you think about the poem?

4. Why do you think Jack does not want his poems read aloud or hung on the board?

Activities

☐ Activity 1: Frost Poems

Read the poems "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and "The Pasture" by Robert Frost. The poems can be found at the back of *Love That Dog*. Analyze both of the poems on the "Frost Poems" page. To analyze a poem means to read it very closely and think about its meaning and what the poet was trying to communicate through the poem. You can also look for literary techniques the poet used.

☐ Activity 2: Who Is Robert Frost?

Robert Frost is one of the most well-known American poets. Most of Frost's poems are about the life and landscape of New England. Read about the life of Robert Frost. You can find information about Robert Frost at the following websites:



Robert Frost

www.beyondthepage.com/link/5424/

**Robert Frost**www.beyondthepage.com/link/5457/**Robert Frost**www.beyondthepage.com/link/5460/

On the "Who is Robert Frost?" page, record ten clues about the man and his life. If you are using the "Timeline of American History," record the date of Robert Frost's birth.

☐ Activity 3: Verbs in Poetry

Careful verb selection can make a poem more compelling. Read the poem "dog" at the back of the book *Love That Dog*. The author of this poem uses interesting verbs to describe the subject of the poem. The poem has many similarities to the poem "Gulls and Buoys" in *My America*. Reread the poem on page 9.

Remember that a verb can be a word that shows action (such as *run* and *think*). A verb can also link two parts of a sentence together or can help another verb. A linking verb implies a state of being or condition for the subject, not an action. It links the subject of the sentence to words about the subject. Linking verbs include *is*, *was*, *am*, *are*, *were*, and *been*. Linking verbs are often not as interesting in writing as action verbs. The author of the poem "dog" used a variety of action verbs to describe the subject. You will notice that poems usually contain few linking verbs.

Complete the page(s), "Verbs in Poetry." Ask your parent which option you should complete.

For the Venn diagram you might want to compare the theme, rhyme, number of lines per stanza, use of metaphor, etc.

Wrapping Up

What did you learn about Jack in the story today? Review the information you learned about Robert Frost. Reread "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and "The Pasture."

Frost Poems

Directions: Analyze two famous poems by Robert Frost.



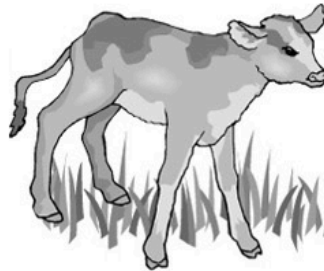
"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"

1. What is setting of the poem?

2. What "promises" do you think the narrator has "to keep"?

3. What is your favorite line in the poem? Why?

4. How many stanzas are in the poem?



*Hint: *cinque*
means five
in Italian

"The Pasture"

1. What is the setting of the poem?

2. Is this poem written in first, second, or third person? _____

3. How many stanzas are in the poem? _____

4. Are the stanzas written in couplets, quatrains, or cinquain*? _____

5. Do you like the poem? Why or why not? _____

Who is Robert Frost?

Directions: Record ten clues about Robert Frost. Include the following information:

- When did Robert Frost live?
- Where did Robert Frost live?
- What was Robert Frost's family like?
- Where did he go to school?
- What were some of his favorite subjects to write about?
- Why are Frost's poems so popular?
- What were some techniques used by Robert Frost?

Clues:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

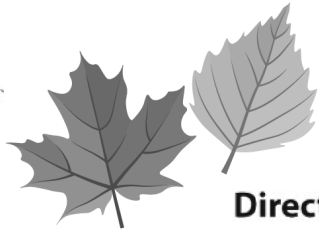
6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____



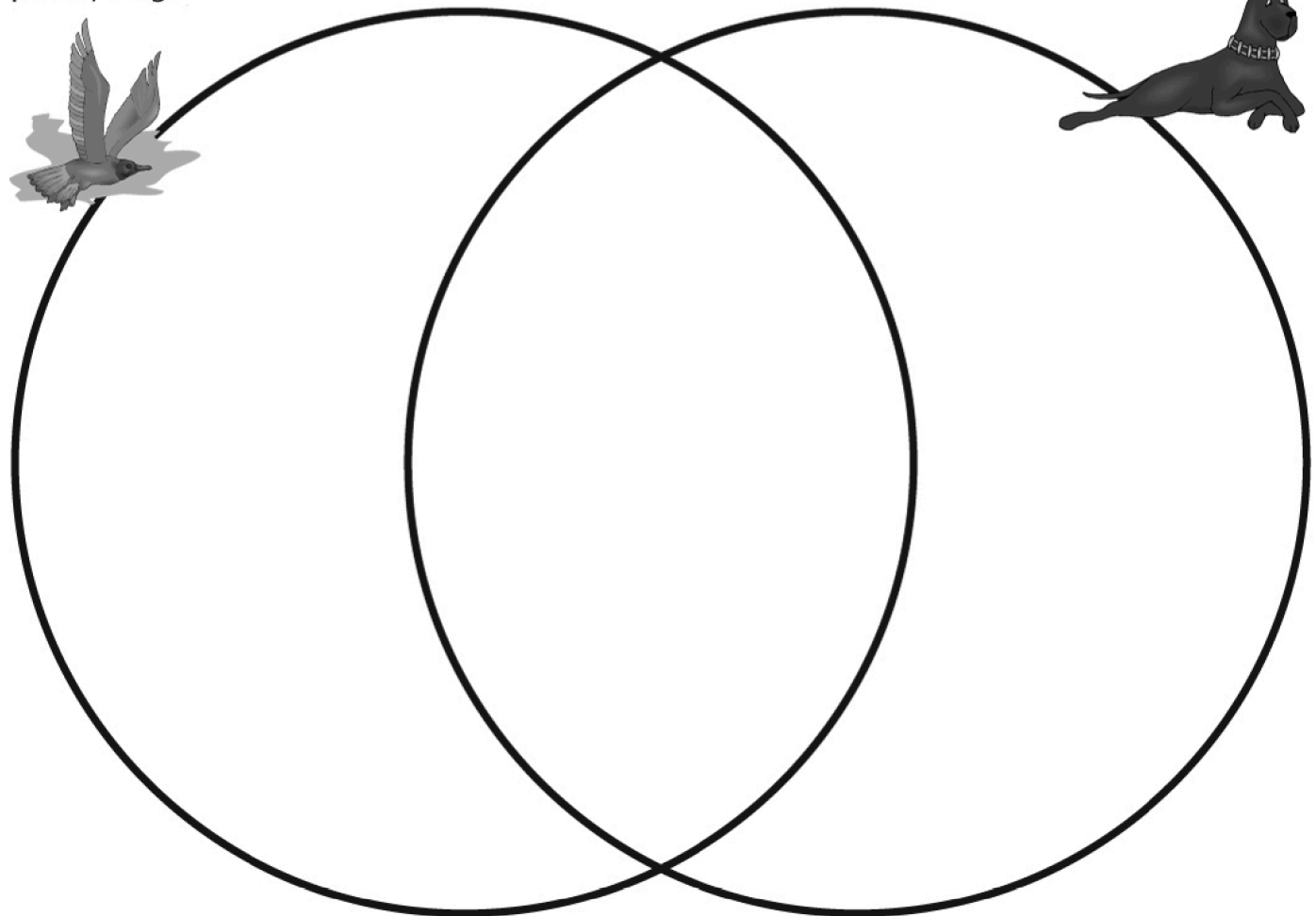
Verbs in Poetry

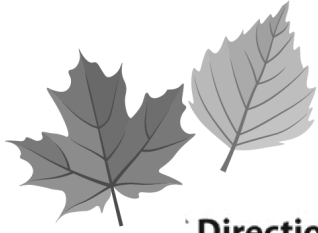


Directions: Record the action verbs found in the poem, "dog."

Action Verbs:

Directions: Use a Venn diagram to compare "Gulls and Buoys" (p. 9 of *My America*) to the poem, "dog."





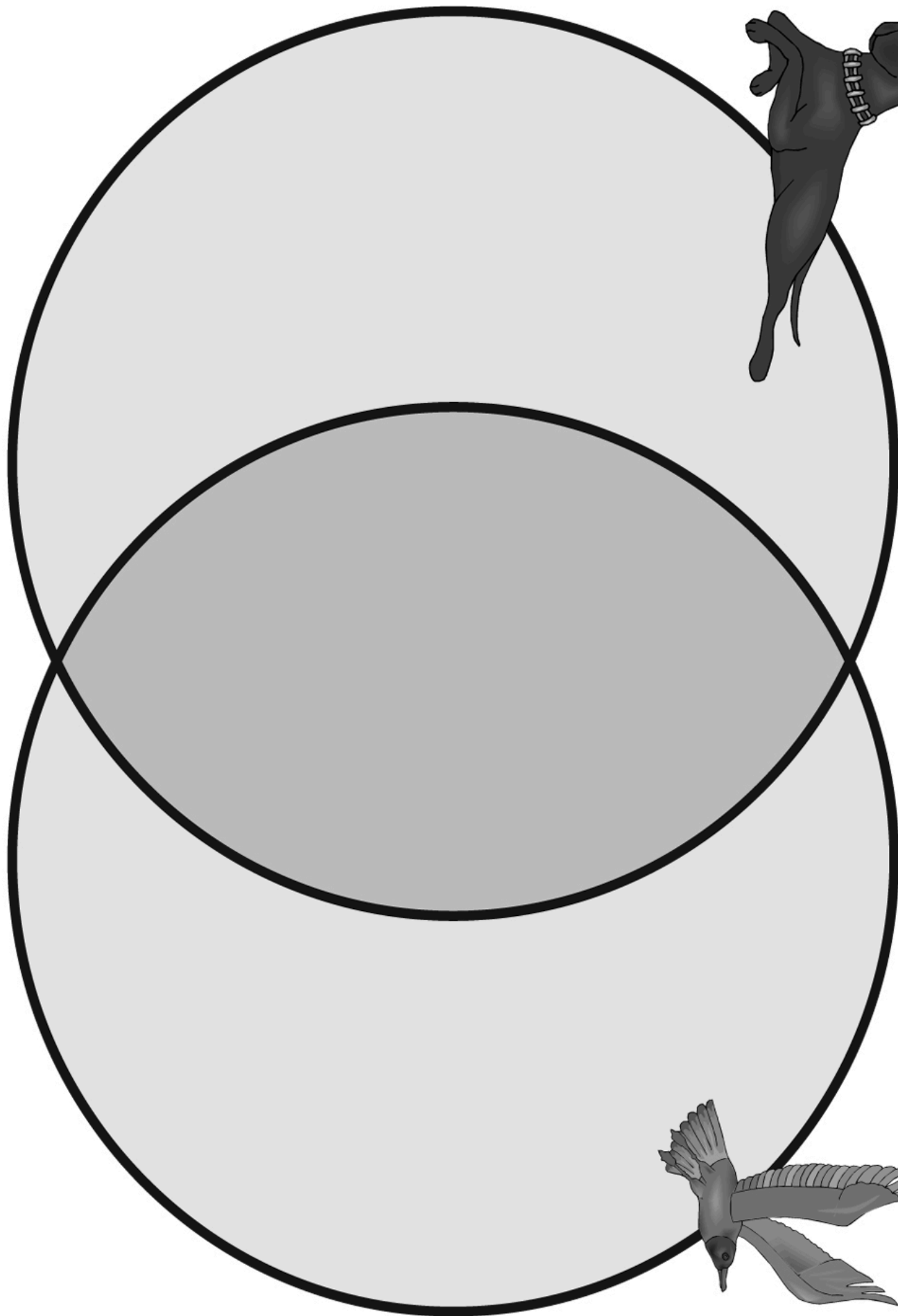
Verbs in Poetry



Directions: Brainstorm a list of action verbs for an animal. Then write a poem about the animal using some of the action verbs on your list.

Action Verbs:

Poem:



Directions: Use a Venn diagram to compare “Gulls and Buoys” (p. 9 of *My America*) to the poem, “dog.”

Lesson 7: Robert Frost

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✿ Ideas to Think About

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⦿ Skills

- Apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. (LA)
- Apply knowledge of language structure, grammar, media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss texts. (LA)
- Identify how language and word choice can reflect regions and cultures. (LA)

Introducing the Lesson

Tell your child that today he is going to begin a unique novel called *Love That Dog*.

Reading and Questions

1. *It is written like a poem.*
2. *Anywhere from 4th-6th grade.*
3. *Answers will vary.*
4. *Answers will vary.*

Activities

Activity 1: Frost Poems

Review your child's analysis of the two Frost poems he read today.

Answer Key:**"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"**

1. Deep in the woods, with no civilization nearby
2. Answers will vary.
3. Answers will vary.
4. Four

"The Pasture"

1. The setting is unclear, since the speaker is telling where he or she is going, not where he or she is.
2. First
3. Two
4. Quatrain — each stanza has 4 lines
5. Answers will vary

Activity 2: Who Is Robert Frost?

Discuss with your child what he learned about Robert Frost through his research on the famous American poet. Some basic information about Robert Frost is as follows:

Robert Frost (1874-1963), was born in San Francisco, California. His father was a journalist and his mother a teacher, exposing him to literature at an early age. When Frost was 11, his father died and Frost's mother moved the family to Massachusetts, where Frost spent his formative years. Frost attended Dartmouth and Harvard but never attained a degree. Frost enjoyed farming and wrote often of nature. Frost's poems didn't become popular until he moved to England and had his first book published at age 39. Frost wrote primarily about life in New England and followed traditional forms of poetry. He often used simple, ordinary language in his poetry, but his poems were filled with drama and emotion.

Activity 3: Verbs in Poetry

Select one of the following options for your child. The first option requires the child to compare two poems using a Venn diagram. The second option requires your child to write his own poem about an animal using action verbs. The first option is the easier of the two.

Wrapping Up**Questions to Discuss**

- Do you think Jack likes poetry? Why or why not?
- Would you have liked to have met Robert Frost? What would you talk with him about?
- Is it true that "Any words can be a poem. You've just got to make short lines"? Why or why not? (No, a lot of thought goes into how the words sound together, the patterns, and the images the words create.)

Things to Review

Review information about Robert Frost. Take some time to read some other Robert Frost poems aloud to your child.