

Connecting Poetry to Life Stories in Aphasia Group Sessions

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THE LEAGUE
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, INC.

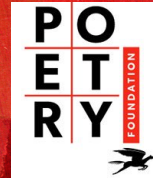
DISCLOSURES

- ▶ Heather A. Tomlinson, M.Sc.(A), R.SLP, S-LP(c)
 - ▶ Financial:
 - ▶ Employed (part-time) at the Association for the Rehabilitation of the Brain Injured (ARBI)
 - ▶ Casual instructor, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT)
 - ▶ Non-Financial:
 - ▶ Chairperson, Calgary Aphasia Centre's steering committee; receives no compensation as a steering committee member

LEARNER OUTCOMES:

- Create **supportive materials** to provide access to poetry to people with aphasia
- Use **themes in poetry** to facilitate **personal discussions** in aphasia groups
- Explain **poetry forms, content, structure** in aphasia-friendly terms
- **Apply skills** used to analyze poetry in a variety of aphasia groups

WHERE TO FIND POEMS:



Poetry Foundation



Poets House

poets.org

Academy of American Poets



The Poetry Archive



STRUCTURING THE POETRY SESSION

- ▶ Preview: Themes, Central Vocabulary, Pictures, Literary Devices - Depends on the poem
- ▶ Poet's Background: Birth, Death, Location, Common themes in writing, Inspirations
- ▶ Read Poem: Line-by-Line, Stanza-by-Stanza
- ▶ Group Discussion: Review Themes, Did you like the poem?, Expand on ideas, Connect ideas to your life, Think about poem as a whole

SUPPORTS FOR LITERARY DEVICES:


► Rhythm and Rhyme












Rhythm

the beat of the poem

sounds like a drum

weak beat 

strong beat 

When you are old and grey and full of sleep

Rhyming

words that sound the same

What rhymes with.....

sleep

- 1) click
- 2) deep
- 3) fair
- 4) loud

Rhyming

words that sound the same

Circle the words that rhyme in our poem

sleep
book
look
deep

grace
true
you
face

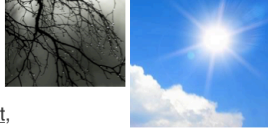
bars
fled
overhead
stars

SUPPORTS FOR READING THE POEM:

1

Good Timber
By Douglas Malloch

The tree that never had to fight
For sun and sky and air and light,
But **stood out** in the **open plain**
And always got its **share of rain**,
Never became a **forest king**
But lived and died a scrubby thing.



2

The man who never had to toil
To gain and farm his patch of soil,
Who never had to **win his share**
Of sun and sky and light and air,
Never became a **manly man**
But lived and died as he began.



3

Good timber does not grow with ease,
The stronger wind, the stronger trees,
The further sky, the greater length,
The more the storm, the more the strength.
By sun and cold, by rain and snow,
In trees and men good timbers grow.



4

Where **thickest** lies the **forest growth**
We find the **patriarchs** of both.
And they hold counsel with the stars
Whose **broken branches** show the **scars**
Of many **winds** and much of **strife**.
This is the common law of life.



SUPPORTS FOR READING THE POEM:

Life goes on grinding up
glass, wearing out clothes
making fragments
breaking down
forms
and what lasts through time
is like an island on a ship in the sea,
perishable
surrounded by **dangerous fragility**
by **merciless waters** and **threats**.



What is **perishable**? What is **merciless**? What is **fragility**?

What lasts through time is **fragile**. What does that mean?