Instructions:

1. Read the text below to yourself two times or more.
2. Mark each line break with a slash / and each stanza break with a double slash //.

Skipping Stones

by Sachiko Murakami (1980 - )

I fling flat stones into the surf, corral my anger in the strangely angled pose. Each beat’s concentric blip a sound so odd it clarifies the brine to mellow blues. My mother’s ex once skimmed his bottle caps

down at the lake; not littering, I thought, the glinting disc’s fourteen discrete hop-hops. Now I trust black, the solid strength of rock. My hand must learn the pebble’s weight, and know which chips will change the shape and spoil the trick; this can’t be accurately guessed, and though some seem to work without my gauging it; I fling them to new ocean bottom homes, and some I leave to dry upon the beach. Skip stones.

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Steps to active reading:

1. Scan the poem and mark the strong and weak beats in each line.
2. Circle syllables and words whose sounds catch your attention.
3. Where does the poem’s form and content mimic the skipping rock? How is this mimicry achieved?
4. Note the rhyme scheme. Where does the poem diverge from its rhyme scheme to include near or sight rhyme.

## Sonnets make arguments.

There are three main variations of the sonnet. Each comprises 14 lines of rhyming iambic pentameter and a “turn” before a resolution.

Petrarchan sonnets are comprise an octave and sestet rhyming abbaabba//cdcdcd. The “turn” occurs at the transition between these portions. The Petrarchan sonnet demonstrates imbalance; its octave should be dense and second quatrain should advance rather than repeat the themes of the first; the rhymed words should add meaning to the verse. The turn may affect a shift in address or rhetorical focus or create a surprise. Fussell (1979) writes, “The octave and sestet conduct actions which are analogous to the actions of inhaling and exhaling, or of contraction and release in the muscular system. The one builds up the pressure and the other releases it” (p. 116).

****Consider the Petrarchan sonnet for describing unequal relationships such as dominant and recessive genes, atoms in covalent bonds, processes of reduction such as condensation.****

Shakespearean sonnets follow the rhyme scheme ababcdcdefef//gg and the “turn” occurs between the third quatrain and the couplet.

****Consider the Shakespearean sonnet when describing**** great effort and condensed output or sudden change: geological production of gemstones, fossilization, the creation of a precipitate, the effect of a catalyst, an experience of surprise, distillation, crystallization following supersaturation.

Spencerian sonnets follow a set rhyme scheme that creates internal rhyming couplets that bind the quatrains together: ababbcbccdcd//ee. The “turn” occurs between the fourth quatrain and the couplet. The Spencerian sonnet contains a structural basis for the tightening of reasoning; the couplets that bind the quatrains, must also add meaning to justify their inclusion.

Consider the Spencerian sonnet when describing ordered pairs, binary relationships, reproduction, eruptions or emersion, structures or matrixes.

## A sestina models “intricate repetition.”

A complex French verse form, usually unrhymed, consisting of six stanzas of six lines each and a three-line envoy. The end words of the first stanza are repeated in a different order as end words in each of the subsequent five stanzas; the closing envoy contains all six words, two per line, placed in the middle and at the end of the three lines. The patterns of word repetition are as follows: 123456// 615243// 364125// 532614// 451362// 246531// (62)(14)(53).

****Consider the sestina for poems describing transmutation, conditional meaning, repurposing or reusing, generations, interactions between multiple parties.****

## A **villanelle** revisits and repeats two ideas over nineteen lines.

The highly structured villanelle is a nineteen-line poem with two repeating rhymes and two refrains. The form is made up of five tercets followed by a quatrain. The first and third lines of the opening tercet are repeated alternately in the last lines of the succeeding stanzas; then in the final stanza, the refrain serves as the poem’s two concluding lines. Using capitals for the refrains and lowercase letters for the rhymes, the form could be expressed as: A1 b A2 / a b A1 / a b A2 / a b A1 / a b A2 / a b A1 A2. (Poets.org, 2004)

****Consider the villanelle for poems describing cycles, orbits, relations between pairs and environments, echoes, repetition with variation.****

## Pantoum

A Malaysian verse form adapted by French poets and occasionally imitated in English. It comprises a series of quatrains, with the second and fourth lines of each quatrain repeated as the first and third lines of the next. The second and fourth lines of the final stanza repeat the first and third lines of the first stanza.

****Consider the pantoum for poems describing amplification, waves, cycles, generation, regeneration, recurrence, sound, repetition with variation.****

## Lesson 1 − Describing a Process Teacher’s Guide

### Topic The Water Cycle

### http://water.usgs.gov/edu/downloads/watercycle/watercycle.jpgImage Illustration by the US Geological Survey Water Science School: <http://water.usgs.gov/edu/downloads/watercycle/watercycle.jpg>.

### Explanation The water or hydrologic cycle, describes the continuous motion of water in relation to the Earth’s surface.

* **Energy from the sun heats the Earth’s surface causing water to evaporate from puddles, rivers, lakes, and oceans.** When water leaves plants as vapor, we call it transpiration. When water leaves animals as vapor, we call it perspiration. These words share a Latin root spīrāre which means to breathe. High winds can evaporate snow without melting it in a process called sublimation. Sublimation also means “The action or process of elevating something to a higher state or plane of existence; transformation into something higher, nobler, or more refined.” [[1]](#footnote-1)
* **As water vapor rises, the water molecules condense to form tiny droplets.** When droplets condense on the ground, we call them dew; just above the ground, we call them fog. When they gather in the air, we call them clouds.
* **As water vapor droplets gather and rise, cool air causes the droplets to condense further. Cool temperatures and condensation combine to trigger precipitation. Precipitation—rain, sleet, or snow—returns water to the Earth’s surface.** The word precipitation also describes the separation of a substance in a solution. The substance that “falls out” of a solution is called a precipitate. The adjective precipitate, describes events that happen quickly, sudden births, hasty actions, sharp drops or falls from a height.
* **Upon reaching the earth, precipitation may infiltrate the soil or flow over the surface as runoff.** Infiltrating water soaks into the ground where it may be absorbed by plants and trees through their roots. Infiltrating water is also drawn by gravity and driven by atmospheric pressure deeper into the earth where it replenishes groundwater.

Keywords evaporation, transpiration, vapor, condensation, precipitation, infiltration, runoff, groundwater, sublimation

### Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=al-do-HGuIk>

### Fun Fact In the ancient near east, Hebrew scholars observed that even though the rivers ran into the sea, the sea never became full (Ecclesiastes 1:7). Some scholars conclude that the water cycle was described completely during this time in this passage: "The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to its circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again" (Ecclesiastes 1:6-7, KJV). Scholars are not in agreement as to the date of Ecclesiastes, though most scholars point to a date during the time of Solomon, the son of David and Bathsheba, "three thousand years ago, there is some agreement that the time period is 962-922 BCE. Furthermore, it was also observed that when the clouds were full, they emptied rain on the earth (Ecclesiastes 11:3). In addition, during 793-740 BC a Hebrew prophet, Amos, stated that water comes from the sea and is poured out on the earth (Amos 5:8, 9:6).

## Lesson 1 − Describing a Process

Topic The Water Cycle

Pre-writing Prepare to draft a poem about the water cycle:

* Collect all the water-related words and phrases you know into a word bank.
* List all of the places you interact with water during its cycle.
* Imagine the places where water goes that you do not. Describe those places.
* List the words you associate with hearing, touching, seeing, tasting, and smelling water during its cycle.
* Build a list of verbs related to travel in the water cycle.
* Review your collection of words and mark the ones you like best. Which words make sounds that please your ears? Which are most precise? Which evoke a sensation? Draw from these words as you draft your poem.

### Prompt Draft a poem depicting the water cycle. Write at least one stanza for each stage of the cycle.

### Revision Step 1: Reread your poem aloud, marking the places where your lines and stanzas emulate the water cycle. Review your notes, asking: Where do your lines grow dense? Where are they diffuse? How do your words arise, gather, and fall?

Step 2: Read your poem aloud, one stanza at a time while thinking about sensory details. Does each stanza convey a sensation that mimics the water cycle? Is your evaporation stanza vaporous? Is your condensation stanza dense?

Step 3: Reread your poem and highlight each verb. Which verbs are strongest? Which can you replace with more effective choices?

Step 4: Reread your poem aloud and mark the words that you repeat. In a poem, repetition should add meaning. Do your repeated words add meaning? Is it meaning you intend? Does it contribute to the effect of your poem?

Additional lessons and resources are available. Check the NAGC convention site for files or email [rachel.haugh@jhu.edu](mailto:rachel.haugh@jhu.edu) after November 7, 2016

1. <http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/192761> definition 4b [↑](#footnote-ref-1)