

Themes of Whitman poetry

- 1) Body and Soul
- 2) Conclusion
- 3) Poetry
- 4) Individualism
- 5) Nature
- 6) The self
- 7) Democracy
- 8) Patriotism
- 9) Politics

The Democratic Self

Whitman celebrates the common man by creating a unified, overarching concept of the self that applies to individuals as well. Whitman often casts himself as the main character in his poems, but the [Walt Whitman](#) he refers to is only partially representative of Whitman's own opinions and experiences.

Individualism

The ideology of individualism is very prevalent in Whitman's work. This concept thrived in America during the early nineteenth century - a democratic response to the new class of industrial wage-workers. Like Whitman, many powerful thinkers, politicians, and writers encouraged everyday Americans to exercise self-ownership and value original thought.

Democratic Nature of Poetry

Whitman saw his poems as more than words on a page - he frequently points out the democratic power of poetry. He felt that form called for vocalization and sharing rather than private, silent consumption of the words - he wrote poetry that he intended to be spoken aloud. In addition to writing inherently communal poetry, he used the medium to celebrate the struggles of the common man. He felt that both the form and the content of his work could sow the democratic spirit in his readers' hearts and minds.

The Natural World

[Walt Whitman](#) often draws his readers' attention to the everyday miracles of the natural world. He believed that nature facilitated connections between human beings over time, distance, and superficial differences. All human beings, no matter who they are or where they are from, interact with the same elements of nature - the water under a boat or the grass growing around a grave. Whitman portrays nature as all powerful because it can form a uniting bridge across any chasm - ideological or physical.