

GRADE 8, First Quarter

An Expanding Nation

I like to see it lap the miles, And lick the valleys up,
And stop to feed itself at tanks; And then, prodigious,
step Around a pile of mountains, And supercilious, peer
To fit its sides, and crawl between,
Complaining all the while In horrid,
hooting stanza; Then chase itself
down hill... Emily Dickinson, "XLIII"

Word Windows into History

Poems, Songs and Documents

Selected for the Themes and Eras Illuminated through American Art

*Prepared by the DePaul University Center for Urban Education
for the Terra Teacher Lab
Terra Foundation for American Art*

These are examples of songs, poems and documents that illustrate times in US history. You can use them to help students understand that a poem or song is a word picture and can be interpreted just as a painting can be—and that in context it makes more sense as well as providing a window into that context.

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Documents

Susan B. Anthony at the voting polls

A collection of broadsides—several images from the emergence of advertising—is not reprinted in this binder but can be viewed here:

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers_of_persuasion/powers_of_persuasion_intro.html

Poems and Songs

“Come up from the Fields Father”

“The Mountain Cemetery” is not reprinted in this binder but can be viewed here:

<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15386>

Eyewitness

American Originals from the National Archives

Confrontations for Justice

Mr. Beverly Jones - Susan B. Anthony at the Voting Polls, 1872

Susan B. Anthony devoted more than fifty years of her life to the cause of woman suffrage. After casting her ballot in the 1872 Presidential election in her hometown of Rochester, New York, she was arrested, indicted, tried, and convicted for voting illegally. At her two-day trial in June 1873, which she later described as "the greatest judicial outrage history has ever recorded," she was convicted and sentenced to pay a fine of \$100 and court costs.

After Anthony's arrest, which occurred two weeks after the November 5 election, there was a hearing to determine if she had, in fact, broken the law. The three young men who registered her as a voter on November 1, 1872, and accepted her ballot at the polls on Election Day were interviewed at the hearing.

Testimony of Mr. Beverly W. Jones, an election official in Rochester, New York, who was confronted by Susan B. Anthony on November 1, 1872, selected page



In this portion of Jones's testimony, he relates his encounter with Susan B. Anthony on November 1, 1872, when she entered a barbershop that had been set up as an office of voter registration and demanded that her name be added to the list of voters.

National Archives—Northeast Region (New York City), Records of District Courts of the United States

Excerpt:

"... I made the remark that I didn't think we could register her name. She asked me upon what grounds. I told her that the constitution of the State of New York only gave the right of franchise to male citizens. She asked me if I was acquainted with the 14th amendment to the constitution of the U.S. I told her I was."

—From Beverly Jones's testimony

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Excerpt:

"She wanted to know if under that she was a citizen and had a right to vote. At this time, Mr. Warner [the Supervisor of Elections] said, 'young man, how are you going to get around that. I think you will have to register their names'—or something to that effect."

—From Beverly Jones's testimony

Susan B. Anthony, 1870



Courtesy of the Nebraska State Historical Society Photographic Collections, Lincoln, Nebraska

Come Up From the Fields Father

by Walt Whitman

Come up from the fields father, here's a letter from our Pete,
And come to the front door mother, here's a letter from thy
dear son.

Lo, 'tis autumn,
Lo, where the trees, deeper green, yellower and redder,
Cool and sweeten Ohio's villages with leaves fluttering in the
moderate wind,
Where apples ripe in the orchards hang and grapes on the
trellis'd vines,
(Smell you the smell of the grapes on the vines?
Smell you the buckwheat where the bees were lately
buzzing?)

Above all, lo, the sky so calm, so transparent after the rain,
and with wondrous clouds,
Below too, all calm, all vital and beautiful, and the farm
prosperes well.

Down in the fields all prospers well,
But now from the fields come father, come at the daughter's
call,
And come to the entry mother, to the front door come right
away.

Fast as she can she hurries, something ominous, her steps
trembling,
She does not tarry to smooth her hair nor adjust her cap.

Open the envelope quickly,
O this is not our son's writing, yet his name is sign'd,
O a strange hand writes for our dear son, O stricken
mother's soul!
All swims before her eyes, flashes with black, she catches the
main words only,
Sentences broken, *gunshot wound in the breast, cavalry
skirmish, taken to hospital,*
At present low, but will soon be better.

Ah now the single figure to me,
Amid all teeming and wealthy Ohio with all its cities and
farms,
Sickly white in the face and dull in the head, very faint,
By the jamb of a door leans.

Grieve not so, dear mother, (the just-grown daughter speaks
through her sobs,
The little sisters huddle around speechless and dismay'd,)
See, dearest mother, the letter says Pete will soon be better.
Alas poor boy, he will never be better, (nor may-be needs to
be better, that brave and simple soul,)
While they stand at home at the door he is dead already,
The only son is dead.

But the mother needs to be better,
She with thin form presently drest in black,
By day her meals untouch'd, then at night fitfully sleeping,
often waking,
In the midnight waking, weeping, longing with one deep
longing,
O that she might withdraw unnoticed, silent from life escape
and withdraw,
To follow, to seek, to be with her dear dead son.