



Poetry Recitation & Copywork

Poetry Selections

Instead of a featured poet for this session, we have picked poems from various writers that capture the rich history and wonder of Ancient Egypt. Additionally, there is a Pyramid Poem activity for your family's enjoyment. We've included six poetry selections for your kids and teens to read, listen to, memorize, and recite. They are:

- Ozymandias
- To the Nile (by Shelley)
- To the Nile (by Keats)
- A Thought of the Nile
- Prancing Horse
- The Harper's Song for Inherkhawy

For copywork, we have included Zaner-Bloser style handwriting sheets for primary, elementary, and cursive, as well as college-ruled for older students. The poem we chose is:

- Ozymandias

"A beautiful thing is never perfect."

~ Egyptian Proverb

Pyramid Poem Activity

In honor of the Great Pyramid of Giza, you might want to have your kids and teens write a “pyramid poem.” A pyramid poem is a fun way to learn alliteration. It consists of four lines in which the first line has one word, the second line has two words, the third line has three words, and the fourth line has four words. Each word of the poem must begin with the same sound. For example:

**Pink
Polly Pig
Picked Pretty Pansies
Playfully Plucking Purple Petals**

Directions:

1. Pick which sound you want to start with.
2. Brainstorm ideas and themes.
3. Choose words with various parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) to create a short poem.
4. You may need to switch words around or change tenses so the poem will make better sense.

Egyptian Poetry Selections

*Note- the poem "Ozymandias" is referring to a statue of the Ancient Egyptian pharaoh, Ramses II.

Ozymandias

by Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said—"Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal, these words appear:
My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;
Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

To the Nile

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Month after month the gathered rains descend
Drenching yon secret Aethiopian dells,
And from the desert's ice-girt pinnacles
Where Frost and Heat in strange embraces blend
On Atlas, fields of moist snow half depend.
Girt there with blasts and meteors Tempest dwells
By Nile's aerial urn, with rapid spells
Urging those waters to their mighty end.
O'er Egypt's land of Memory floods are level
And they are thine, O Nile--and well thou knowest
That soul-sustaining airs and blasts of evil
And fruits and poisons spring where'er thou flowest.

Egyptian Poetry Selections

To the Nile

by John Keats

Son of the old Moon-mountains African!
Chief of the Pyramid and Crocodile!
We call thee fruitful, and that very while
A desert fills our seeing's inward span:
Nurse of swart nations since the world began,
Art thou so fruitful? or dost thou beguile
Such men to honour thee, who, worn with toil,
Rest for a space 'twixt Cairo and Decan?
O may dark fancies err! They surely do;
'Tis ignorance that makes a barren waste
Of all beyond itself. Thou dost bedew
Green rushes like our rivers, and dost taste
The pleasant sunrise. Green isles hast thou too,
And to the sea as happily dost haste.

A Thought of the Nile

by Leigh Hunt

It flows through old hushed Egypt and its sands,
Like some grave mighty thought threading a dream,
And times and things, as in that vision, seem
Keeping along it their eternal stands,—
Caves, pillars, pyramids, the shepherd bands
That roamed through the young world, the glory extreme
Of high Sesostris, and that southern beam,
The laughing queen that caught the world's great hands.
Then comes a mightier silence, stern and strong,
As of a world left empty of its throng,
And the void weighs on us; and then we wake,
And hear the fruitful stream lapsing along
Twixt villages, and think how we shall take
Our own calm journey on for human sake.

Egyptian Poetry Selections

**Note- the following selections are poems that have been found dating back to Ancient Egyptian periods. Due to this, their authors are currently unknown.*

Prancing Horse

Ancient Egyptian love poem, author unknown

Would that you come (to your beloved),
(Swiftly) as the king's horse,
Thoroughbred among all steeds,
The champion of the stable,
Cosseted in its feed,
Whose sovereign recognizes its pace.
Hearing the crack of a whip, It cannot be held back.
No warrior can subdue it.
How knowing is the heart of the beloved,
That he is not far from (his) beloved.

Prancing Horse Papyrus Chester Beatty I, Chester Beatty Library

The Harper's Song for Inherkhawy (Excerpt)

Ancient Egyptian poem, author unknown

So seize the day! hold holiday!
Be unwearied, unceasing, alive
you and your own true love;
Let not the heart be troubled during your
sojourn on Earth,
but seize the day as it passes!

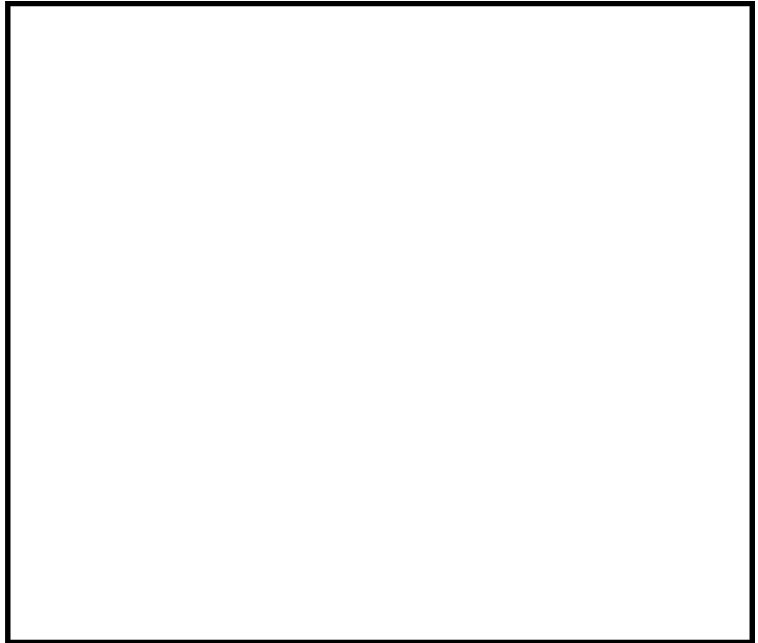
(Translated by J.L. Foster)

Poetry Study

Title:

Type of Poem:

Use the box to at right to draw a picture of what the poem brings to mind.



Write one thing you liked and did not like about the poem:

Write three adjectives about the poem.

Compose a few lines of your own poem inspired by this work
