

Name _____

Date _____



Walt Whitman

Today we're going to talk about Walt Whitman...in just a minute.

Born on Long Island in 1819, Walt Whitman received little _____ schooling growing up in Brooklyn. At age 12, he began working in the printing industry, where he discovered his love of literature. He would go on to become a teacher, a journalist, and a newspaper editor.

In 1855, Whitman published his first poetry collection, *Leaves of Grass*. Inspired by _____, Whitman's poems explored themes of nature, individuality, and _____. Some also contained sexual references, which scandalized 19th-century readers. Still, Whitman continued to _____ and expand the book, publishing eight more editions during his lifetime.

When the Civil War began, Whitman moved to Washington, DC, where he _____ to wounded Union soldiers in military hospitals. The brutality of the conflict affected him profoundly, and in 1865, he released a poetry collection reflecting on his experiences, called *Drum-Taps*. Later editions of the book contained the most popular poem Whitman would publish during his lifetime: "O Captain! My Captain!," an _____ for the assassinated president Abraham Lincoln.

Whitman died in 1892, his work having been largely overlooked. Today, however, he's recognized as a defining literary figure, hailed by the Poetry Foundation as "America's world poet—a latter-day _____ to Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Shakespeare."

What parallels do you see between Walt Whitman and these other poets?