**“Introduction to Poetry” Notes and Reading**

*Directions:* Please review the background information below. Then, read the poem. Finally, complete the prompts that follow.

**Background Info.:**

* Metaphor
  + A comparison between two unlike things without using like or as
  + At times, a metaphor may not even seem like a comparison at all

**“Introduction to Poetry”**

By Billy Collins

I ask them to take a poem  
and hold it up to the light  
like a color slide

or press an ear against its hive.

I say drop a mouse into a poem  
and watch him probe his way out,

or walk inside the poem's room  
and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want them to waterski  
across the surface of a poem  
waving at the author's name on the shore.

But all they want to do  
is tie the poem to a chair with rope  
and torture a confession out of it.

They begin beating it with a hose  
to find out what it really means.

**After Reading:**

1. Write 3 questions or thoughts you have about the poem.

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1. Underline each metaphor in the poem as we go through it as a class. Make notes in the margin about what each metaphor means.
2. What is the poet saying in this poem? What does he mean? Answer in a couple of complete sentences.

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1. What do you think of the poem? Give your opinion and explain it with a logical reason related to the text of the poem itself.

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**Louder than a Bomb: Spoken Word Poetry**

*Directions:* Please watch and listen to the videos of spoken word poetry that are played for the class. As you watch, answer the following questions.

**“If I should Have a Daughter” By Sarah Kay**

1. What is this poem about?
2. What does Kay add to the poem by performing it aloud? In other words, how would it be different if we just read it off the page?
3. What is your opinion of the poem? Why?

**“Letter to My 16 Year Old Self” By George Watsky**

1. What is Watsky’s point in this poem? How does he make this point?
2. What do you think makes this a poem?
3. What is your opinion of the poem? Why?

**“Apartment on Austin” by Nova Venerable**

1. What is this poem about? Where did Nova get the inspiration for it?
2. Why do you think Nova chose to write and perform this poem?
3. What is your opinion of the poem? Why?

**“Counting Graves” By the Steinmenautz**

1. What is this poem about?
2. How is this poem different from the other ones?
3. What is your opinion of the poem? Why?