

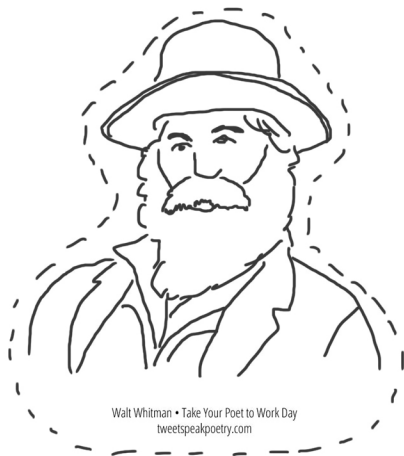
TAKE YOUR POET TO WORK DAY

July 15, 2015

Walt Whitman

Walt Whitman was born on Long Island in 1819 and grew up in Brooklyn. In addition to working as a writer, he also worked as a government clerk, a printer, a teacher, a journalist and an editor.

Whitman published his collection *Leaves of Grass* in 1855. He paid for the publication the collection, which included the 1336-line poem, "Song of Myself," from his own funds. Because of his self-characterization as a member of the working class and his open discussion of sex in his work, as well as his deviation from traditional poetry forms, his poetry was not well received during his lifetime. Along with Emily Dickinson, Whitman is considered one of the most significant American poets. While not the first to write in this style, his prose-like form earned him the title of Father of Free Verse. Ezra Pound considered Whitman to be "America's poet."



*Do I contradict myself?
Very well, then I contradict myself,
I am large, I contain multitudes.*

A paralytic stroke several years before his death led to him to move in with family members and he was cared for by others for the remainder of his life, though he continued to rework *Leaves of Grass* throughout this time, publishing new editions in 1876, 1881 and 1889. Whitman died in 1892.

Want to take your favorite poet to work for Take Your Poet to Work Day?

1. Color your poet
2. Cut out your poet along dotted lines
3. Attach a popsicle stick to the back of your poet with tape or glue
4. Take your poet to work as shown



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