

## For literature lovers

by Laura Flores and Gabriela Kaplan.

This section of the Urutesol newsletter has been conceived as a space for the presentation, discussion, creation, generation of ideas that may be used in the classroom, or that have been produced in a classroom, with the particularity that all these ideas are in intimate contact with other texts, which are called literary.

Every person who reads or writes has a personal concept of what literature is. In this section the limits will be broad and thus, we shall consider literature as any text in written form (even though it might have been originally imagined for its oral presentation), in which the creator has been careful to produce not just characters, plots, ideas and feelings but also a form. Form is relevant in literature and in language because it has to do with the way in which words are put to interact with each other producing different sounds, movements and rhythms.

For a first contact with the Urutesol newsletter readers, we decided to use a poem as part of a lesson plan. The main aim of this lesson is for learners to read a poem and to respond in poetic form as well, and may be used with any level of students and for every age.

I have eaten

The plums

That were in

The ice-box

And which

You were probably

Saving

For breakfast

Forgive me

They were delicious

So sweet and so cold.

William Carlos Williams.

In our experience this lesson works beautifully. Everybody reacts to the easily imagined sense of impotence and frustration at seeing this 'note' hanging on the refrigerator or waiting for us on the kitchen table when we come home tired and thinking of those plums with eagerness. Since the idea is that students will respond with a poem, it would be helpful to see with them how the poet has arranged the words, how he makes the speaker move from stanza one, in which he states the fact: he has eaten the plums, to the beginning of a forgiveness in stanza two, which

is completely forgotten in stanza three, and instead of guilt or asking for forgiveness what the speaker is really doing is rubbing in the very nose of the addressee the fact that he will never see/taste/enjoy ever again the 'sweet and cold' plums he was so much looking forward to indulging in.

Whenever we have worked with this poem, we have asked students to work individually, but that is something which each teacher decides on her own, and then the same students vote for the best answer, the one that has conveyed with most accuracy the feelings and thoughts of the 'avenger'. Should the possibilities be available it might be positive to have the winner or winners published somewhere in the school or even in the classroom.

We were also thinking that the quality and worth of such section as this one will certainly depend on your (you, reders) contributions. We can try to use it as a space to exchange practical work, ideas that can be directly taken into the classroom, or for more theoretical discussions. As we have imagined this so far, it can also include from the connections between language and literature, the different ways to approach literature and reasons for it, to reflections or even essays on different texts. We have often found that we received extremely interesting work from students at IPA that was worth publishing but we did not have where. Perhaps, here can be the suitable place, if we see that this is interesting and it leads to thought-provoking exchanges.

We think that the best way of loving literature is just enjoying it, and we would really be happy and proud if we could awaken more pleasure and deeper thought form our (yours also, of course) reading. You could even send us literary texts, published or not, famous or not, so that other readers could then send us their response, their ideas or any comment of any length, in connection with it.

We are eager to receive your ideas and suggestions in an attempt to make some room for good reading and a share of it.

And to finish, naturally, some more good reading/writing:

"I celebrate myself, and sing myself,

And what I assume you shall assume,

For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

---

I believe in you my soul, the other I am must not abase itself to you,

And you must not be abased to the other.

---

I pass death with the dying and birth with the new-wash'd babe,

and am not contain'd between my hat and boots.

---

For me lips that smiled, eyes that have shed tears,

---

In me the caresser of life wherever moving, backward as well  
as forward sluing,  
To niches asides and junior bending not a person or object  
Absorbing all to myself and for this song.

---

I am of old and young, of the foolish as much as the wise,  
Regardless of others, ever regardful of others,  
Maternal as well as paternal, a child as well as a man,  
Stuff'd with the stuff that is coarse and stuff'd with the stuff that is fine.

---

I resist anything better than my own diversity,  
Breathe the air but leave plenty after me,  
An am not stuck up, and am in my place.

---

In all people I see myself, none more and not one a barley-corn less,  
And the good or bad I say of myself I say of them.  
I know I am solid and sound,  
To me the converging objects of the universe perpetually flow,  
All are written to me, and I must get what the writing means.

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Do I contradict myself?  
Very well then, I contradict myself,  
(I am large, I contain multitudes).  
Excerpts from "Song of Myself"