

English Literature Activities



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Poetry by Pablo Neruda

 First read the small text about the author's life and answer the questions that follow:

Pablo Neruda was one of the most important poets of the 20th century. He was born in Chile in 1904, and his real name was Ricardo Eliecer Neftalí Reyes Basoalto. He chose the name Pablo Neruda as a pen name when he began writing poetry and later, he made it his legal name.

He started writing poems as a teenager and his work quickly became popular, especially because of his romantic poetry. One of his most famous books is *Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair*, published when he was only 19 years old. His poems often explore deep emotions like love, sadness, and hope, using powerful images from nature.



However, he was more than a love poet. He was also deeply involved in politics because he believed in social justice and spoke out for the rights of poor and working-class people. At one point, he was elected as a politician in Chile. Because of his political views, he had to leave the country and live in exile for some years.

In 1971, he received the Nobel Prize in Literature for his poetry and his contribution to peace and justice. He died in 1973, shortly after a military coup in Chile.

Today, people around the world still read and admire Neruda's poetry. His writing is known for its honesty, emotion, and beauty. Many of his poems have been translated into different languages, so people everywhere can enjoy his work. His poems speak to the heart and the mind, and they continue to inspire readers of all ages.

After reading the text, answer the questions:

1. What themes did Neruda often write about in his poems?



2. Why did he have to leave Chile for some time?
3. What important award did Neruda win in 1971?
4. What political role did Neruda have in Chile?
5. Why is Pablo Neruda still remembered today?
6. Are you interested in reading poetry? Why/why not? What about listening to poetry? Do you feel the same or differently about that?

"I like for you to be still", a poem by Pablo Neruda narrated by Glenn Close



Listen to the narration of the poem and fill in the missing words

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEnIkB6wLVg>

I like for you to be still
it is as though you were,
And you hear me from away
and my voice does not touch you.
It seems as though your eyes had flown away
And it seems that a had sealed your mouth.
As all things are filled with my soul
You emerge the things,
filled with my soul.
You are like my soul,
a of dream,
And you are like the word Melancholy.

I like for you to be still,
and you seem far away.
It sounds as though you were lamenting,
a butterfly cooing like a
And you hear me from far away,



I like for you to be still:
it is as though you were,
Distant andof sorrow
as though you had died.
One then, one smile, is
And I am happy,
happy that it's not true.

Now write your own love poem. You can decide if you want the lines to rhyme or if you will have free verse. You can also decide about the length of each line and the whole poem.

[illegible]

1. What themes did Neruda often write about in his poems?

He wrote about love, sadness, hope, and nature.

2. Why did he have to leave Chile for some time?

He had to leave the country because of his political views.

3. What important award did he win in 1971?

He won the Nobel Prize in Literature.

4. What political role did he have in Chile?

He was elected as a senator.

5. Why is Pablo Neruda still remembered today?

He is remembered for his emotional, honest poetry and his work for peace and justice.

I like for you to be still
it is as though you were **absent**
And you hear me from **far** away
and my voice does not touch you.
It seems as though your eyes had flown away
And it seems that a **kiss** had sealed your mouth.
As all things are filled with my soul
You emerge **from** the things,
filled with my soul.
You are like my soul,
a **butterfly** of dream,
And you are like the word Melancholy.

I like for you to be still,
and you seem far away.
It sounds as though you were lamenting,
a butterfly cooing like a **dove**
And you hear me from far away,
and my voice does not reach you:
Let me **come** to be still in your silence.
And let me talk to you with your silence
That is **bright** as a lamp,
simple as a **ring**
You are like the night,
with its stillness and **constellations**
Your silence is that of a star,
as remote and candid.

I like for you to be still:
it is as though you were **absent**
Distant and **full** of sorrow
as though you had died.
One **word** then, one smile, is **enough**
And I am happy,
happy that it's not true.





The recitation of the poem by the actress [Glenn Close](#) was part of the extended soundtrack album that accompanied the 1994 film "[Il postino](#)" dedicated to the life of the poet [Pablo Neruda](#). The music of the film was written by [Luis Bacalov](#).

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