

3. One device a writer can use to get a point across is **metaphor**, a comparison of two dissimilar objects or ideas that does not use the words *like* or *as*. Thoreau uses metaphor extensively in "Civil Disobedience." Notice, for example, what he compares *machinery* to, or how he uses *gaming* metaphorically. Select one or two metaphors and explain, citing specific examples from the text, how they help Thoreau's central idea become more vivid for his readers.
4. How do you think Thoreau wanted his readers to react to "Civil Disobedience"? What did he want them to feel? think? believe? do? How do you know? Again, point to specific places in the essay that help you determine Thoreau's purpose.

Eavan Boland, "It's a Woman's World" (published 1982)

The text appears on pages 237–239. Discuss the following ideas in your small group, or choose one and write a well-developed essay of your own. Remember that poetry depends so much on sound for its message that you should listen to someone read "It's a Woman's World" aloud or read it aloud yourself.

1. Create a character description for the speaker in the poem. What might she look like? What kind of work does she do? What are some words in the poem that suggest how she feels about women and their roles? What clue does the title give you about her attitude?
2. Consider the speaker's *ethos*. How does she make herself believable? Find specific places in the poem where you hear the speaker establishing her own right to speak. Notice especially how she uses pronouns. Why is it important that she uses first-person plural?
3. One striking feature of this poem is the way that the speaker uses details. Pick a few of the details she uses, and comment on how they contribute to the meaning of the poem and to the attitude of the speaker toward her subject. Pay attention to the way she uses verbs and the way she makes verbs out of nouns—for example, in "milestone our lives"—as she creates these details.
4. Repetition is an especially useful strategy for poets, since it aids both in stressing meaning and in creating rhythm. Find places where repetition helps reinforce the speaker's purpose or create effect.
5. Explore how the speaker makes connections to her readers. What does she want readers to feel at the end of the poem? Are there particular words in the text that suggest how she wants readers to react?

Alice Walker, "Everyday Use" (published 1973)

The text appears on pages 239–246. In a discussion with a group of your classmates, or in a well-organized essay, address one or more of the following questions.

35 or getting the recipe
for a good soup
to appetize
our gossip.

40 And it's still the same:
By night our windows
moth our children
to the flame

of hearth not history.
And still no page
scores the low music
of our outrage.

45 But appearances
still reassure:
That woman there,
craned to the starry mystery

50 is merely getting a breath
of evening air,
while this one here—
her mouth

55 a burning plume—
she's no fire-eater,
just my frosty neighbor
coming home.

A Short Story

Alice Walker



Alice Walker was born to African American sharecroppers in Eatonton, Georgia, in 1944. From this beginning, she went on to make her mark on American poetry, nonfiction, and fiction. In her writings, Walker explores the victories of black women over the physical and psychic violence they suffer because of racism and sexism.

*Walker has won many honors, including a Pulitzer Prize and an American Book Award for *The Color Purple*. Among her other heralded works have been *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose*; *Meridian*; *The Same River Twice: Honoring the**

Difficult; *The Temple of My Familiar*; *The Third Life of Grange Copeland*; and *You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down*. "Everyday Use" comes from Walker's 1973 book, *In*

and religion. She also writes about relationships between the sexes as the subject of this poem.

Eavan Boland**"It's a Woman's World"**

Our way of life
has hardly changed
since a wheel first
whetted a knife.

5 Well, maybe flame
burns more greedily
and wheels are steadier
but we're the same

10 who milestone
our lives
with oversights—
living by the lights

15 of the loaf left
by the cash register,
the washing powder
paid for and wrapped,

20 the wash left wet.
Like most historic peoples
we are defined
by what we forget,

by what we never will be:
star-gazers,
fire-eaters.
It's our alibi

25 for all time
that as far as history goes
we were never
on the scene of the crime.

30 So when the king's head
gored its basket—
grim harvest—
we were gristing bread

