

Form and Theory of Poetry  
English 4953/6953, Spring 2015  
Section 1, 9:00-9:50 MWF

Prof. Robert West  
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BOOKS, ETC.:

Fenton, James. *An Introduction to English Poetry*. (ISBN: 0-374-52889-6)

Koch, Kenneth. *Making Your Own Days: The Pleasures of Reading and Writing Poetry*. (ISBN: 0-684-82438-8)

A supplementary poetry anthology, yet to be determined.

Well-edited websites maintained by the Poetry Foundation ([poetryfoundation.org](http://poetryfoundation.org)), the Academy of American Poets ([poets.org](http://poets.org)), and the Poetry Archive ([poetryarchive.org](http://poetryarchive.org)) offer free access to many classic and contemporary poems; we'll take advantage of those free offerings throughout the semester.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This section of EN 4953/6953 will offer an advanced introduction to prosody (the nuts and bolts of versification) and figurative thought and language. Along the way we'll examine several classic essays on poetics, as well as a number of poems about poetry.

WRITTEN WORK:

There will be two exams, two papers (8-10 pp. each), and a reading journal.

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POET'S WORK

Grandfather  
advised me:  
Learn a trade

I learned  
to sit at desk  
and condense

No layoff  
from this  
condensery

Lorine Niedecker (1903-1970)

SUBSTANTIAL PLANES

It doesn't  
matter

to me  
if

poems mean  
nothing:

there's no  
floor

to the  
universe

and yet  
one

walks the  
floor.

A. R. Ammons  
(1926-2001)

POETRY

I, too, dislike it.  
Reading it, however, with a perfect contempt for it, one discovers in  
it, after all, a place for the genuine.

Marianne Moore (1887-1972)