



IF YOU
Believe
IN YOURSELF
Anything
IS POSSIBLE

UGTRB ENGLISH
UNIT-10
NON DETAILED POETRY

TODAY'S CLASS

- MAYA ANGELO *STILL I RISE*
- GLADY CARDIFF – *Combing*
- GWENDOLYN BROOKS – *A Sunset of the City*

MAYA ANGELO

STILL I RISE



- Maya Angelou (1928–2014) was an influential **African-American poet**, autobiographer, and civil rights activist. Her work is renowned for its **strong, rhythmic voice, directness, and use of African American vernacular language**

MAYA ANGELO

Angelou's style combines **metaphor, simile, rhetorical questions, and repetition**. She received the **Presidential Medal of Freedom** and multiple awards for her literary and social contributions.



POEM

You may write me down in history Does my sassiness upset you?
With your bitter, twisted lies, Why are you beset with gloom?
You may trod me in the very dirt 'Cause I walk like I've got oil
But still, like dust, I'll rise. wells
Pumping in my living room.

POEM

Just like moons and like suns,

With the certainty of tides,

Just like hopes springing high,

Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?

Bowed head and lowered eyes?

Shoulders falling down like
teardrops,

Weakened by my soulful cries?

POEM

Does my haughtiness offend you?

Don't you take it awful hard

'Cause I laugh like I've got gold
mines

Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,

You may cut me with your eyes,

You may kill me with your
hatefulness,

But still, like air, I'll rise.

POEM

Does my sexiness upset you?

Does it come as a surprise

That I dance like I've got diamonds

At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame

I rise

Up from a past that's rooted in pain

I rise

I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,

Welling and swelling I bear in the
tide.

POEM

Leaving behind nights of
terror and fear

I rise

Into a daybreak that's
wondrously clear

I rise

Bringing the gifts that my
ancestors gave,

I am the dream and the
hope of the slave.

I rise

I rise

I rise.

STANZA 1

You may write me down in history

With your bitter, **twisted lies**,

You may **trod** me in the very dirt

But still, **like dust, I'll rise.**

Angelou opens with the assertion that she **rises above** attempts to define or belittle her through **historical lies and negative actions**.

She immediately establishes resilience, **challenging oppression by likening her**

STANZA 1

You may write me down in history

With your bitter, **twisted lies**,

You may **trod** me in the very dirt

But still, **like dust, I'll rise.**

Figures of Speech:

Simile (“like dust”),

anaphora (“YOU MAY”).

STANZA 2

Does my sassiness upset you?

Why are you beset with gloom?

'Cause I walk like I've got oil
wells

Pumping in my living room.

The speaker questions why her **self-assurance unsettles others**, subtly mocking those who **resent her inner wealth**.

Her confidence is depicted as “**oil wells**,” symbolizing **self-worth and abundance**

STANZA 2

Does my sassiness upset you?

Why are you beset with gloom?

'Cause I walk like I've got oil
wells

Pumping in my living room.

➤ Simili(“ Like oil wells
pumping”)

➤ Rhetorical question (“Does my
sassiness upset you?”)

STANZA 3

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Angelou likens her ability to rise to the **predictable movement of celestial bodies**, implying inevitability. Nature's cycle becomes **a metaphor for human resilience**; her rising is unstoppable.

STANZA 3

Just like moons and like suns,

With the certainty of tides,

Just like hopes springing high,

Still I'll rise.

- Simile (“like moons and like suns”),
- repetition (“I’ll rise”).

STANZA 4

Did you want to see me broken?

Bowed head and lowered eyes?

Shoulders falling down like
teardrops,

Weakened by my soulful cries?

She asks if **her oppressors want**

her broken and defeated,

describing postures of sadness.

The imagery conveys suffering,

but the rhetorical question makes

clear **she refuses to be subdued.**

STANZA 4

Did you want to see me broken?

Bowed head and lowered eyes?

Shoulders falling down like
teardrops,

Weakened by my soulful cries?

- Imagery and Similie
 (“shoulders falling down like
teardrops”

STANZA 4 AND 5

Did you want to see me broken?

Bowed head and lowered eyes?

Shoulders falling down like
teardrops,

Weakened by my soulful cries?

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Don't you take it awful hard

'Cause I laugh like I've got gold
mines

Diggin' in my own backyard.

STANZA 5

- The speaker notes her pride is seen as **offensive, equating joy to possessing “gold mines.”**

Happiness and confidence in the oppressed **challenge the norm, and Angelou reclaims her own narrative.**

Figures of Speech:

- Similie(“ Like gold mines in my backyard”), rhetorical question.

STANZA 6 AND 7

You may shoot me with your words,

You may cut me with your eyes,

You may kill me with your
hatefulness,

But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?

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That I dance like I've got diamonds

At the meeting of my thighs?

STANZA 6

- The poem lists acts of **violence** (“shoot me...cut me...kill me”), yet she always rises.
- Parallelism intensifies adversity; **rising “like air”** suggests her spirit is untouchable.
- Figures of Speech: Parallelism, simile (“like air, I’ll rise”)

STANZA 7

- She asks if her **confidence and sensuality** are disturbing, referencing her “diamonds.” The stanza affirms her intrinsic worth, with symbolic richness in “**diamonds at the meeting of my thighs.**”

Figures of Speech: Metaphor (“diamonds in thighs”), rhetorical question.

STANZA 8

Out of the huts of history's shame

I rise

Up from a past that's rooted in pain

I rise

I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,

Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

STANZA 8

- Angelou rises from the **suffering of enslaved ancestors**, characterizing herself as a “black ocean.”
- She connects **personal resilience with a collective history**, using powerful water imagery.

Figures of Speech: Symbol (“black ocean”), metaphor (“welling and swelling”)

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear

I rise

Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear

I rise

Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,

I am the dream and the hope of the slave.

I rise

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I rise.

•

THEMES

- **Resilience and Triumph**
- **Racial oppression and historical injustice**
- **Feminine power and self-confidence**

THEMES

- **Identity, pride, and self-worth**
- **Resistance against hatred and prejudice**
- **Transformation: pain → power**

SYMBOLS

- **Dust** → resilience, rebirth
- **Oil wells / gold mines / diamonds** → inner wealth, self-worth
- **Sun & moon** → natural, unstoppable rise

- **Black ocean** → vast power of Black identity
- **Daybreak** → new beginnings
- **I rise** → ultimate symbol of empowerment

Which poetic device dominates the refrain “I’ll rise”?

- A) Epistrophe
- B) Anaphora
- C) Irony
- D) Metonymy

Professor Academy

Which poetic device dominates the refrain “I’ll rise”?

- A) Epistrophe
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- C) Irony
- D) Metonymy

- *Repetition at the line’s start strengthens theme of resilience.*

The "black ocean" imagery in Angelou's poem most strongly symbolizes:

- A) Isolation
- B) Ancestral pain
- C) Collectivity and empowerment
- D) Wealth

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- A) Isolation
 - **B) Ancestral pain**
 - C) Collectivity and empowerment
 - D) Wealth
-
- *"Black ocean" unites historic struggle and power*

Combing
BY GLADYS CARDIFF

- Gladys Cardiff is a Cherokee poet known for themes that **blend personal memory, family tradition, and Native American heritage.**
- Her style features lyricism, imagery, and direct observation, winning honors like the **Washington State Governor's Award**

STANZA 1

Bending, I bow my head
and lay my hands upon
her hair, combing, and think
how women do this for
each other. My daughter's hair

curls against the comb,
wet and fragrant— orange
parings. Her face, downcast,
is quiet for one so young.

STANZA 2

I take her place. Beneath

my mother's hands I feel

the braids drawn up tight

as piano wires and singing,

vinegar-rinsed. Sitting

before the oven I hear

the orange coils tick

the early hour before school.

STANZA 3

She combed her grandmother

Mathilda's hair using

a comb made out of bone.

Mathilda rocked her oak wood

chair, her face downcast,

intent on tearing rags

in strips to braid a cotton

rug from bits of orange

and brown. A simple act

Preparing hair. Something

women do for each other,

plaiting the generations.

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STANZA 1

- The poet describes combing her daughter's "wet and fragrant" hair, reflecting on **the tradition of women caring for each other.** Tenderness and generational care are introduced, **emphasizing closeness through physical touch.**

STANZA 2

I take her place. Beneath

my mother's hands I feel

the braids drawn up tight

as piano wires and singing,

vinegar-rinsed. Sitting

before the oven I hear

the orange coils tick

the early hour before school.

STANZA 2

- Cardiff recalls having her hair **braided tightly by her mother**, evoking childhood morning rituals before school.

The details “piano wires,” “vinegar-rinsed” capture the **intensity of the process and its emotional warmth**.

Figures of Speech: Similie (“braids drawn up tight as piano wires”), auditory imagery (“oven tick”).

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STANZA 3

- The poem shifts to memories of the grandmother combing hair as **she prepares a rug, blending practical work with tradition and care.**

The act extends to generational continuity, showing how **nurturing links past and affection**

SYMBOLS

- **Hair** → ancestral memory, tradition, cultural identity
- **Combing** → healing, connection, storytelling
- **Length of hair** → historical depth, generational passage
- **Mother's body** → source of identity, cultural root
- **Repetition of the act** → continuity and permanence

In Cardiff's poem, which device best conveys intergenerational caring?

- A) Irony
- B) Symbolism
- C) Hyperbole
- D) Alliteration

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 - **B) Symbolism**
 - C) Hyperbole
 - D) Alliteration
-
- *Hair combing acts as symbol of tradition and*

The phrase “braids drawn up tight as piano wires” is an example of

- A) Simile
- B) Metaphor
- C) Personification
- D) Apostrophe

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- A) **Simile**
 - B) Metaphor
 - C) Personification
 - D) Apostrophe
-
- *“As piano wires” directly compares tightness.*

A close-up photograph of a bouquet of flowers. In the center, a white rectangular card is placed diagonally, featuring the handwritten text "All the best!" in a black, cursive script. The bouquet includes large, light pink roses, clusters of small purple flowers, and bright green moss. A faint, diagonal watermark reading "Professor Academy" is visible across the card and the flowers.

All the
best!