

Sounds Like . . . Letter-Level Reset
Pre-Workshop Packet

Welcome poets! I'm excited for our class where we'll discuss the sonic possibilities of poems beginning at the letter-level. For the best use of our time, I've enclosed the two poems we'll be reading, along with a few questions as jumping-off points. Please familiarize yourselves with these pieces by Lucie Brock-Broido and Harryette Mullen.

I look forward to your words and ideas. In the meantime, feel free to email me the titles/links to poems whose sounds you love. I'll compile your responses into a list for the entire class.

We'll do two in-class writings. I'll also give you a prompt at the end of our workshop.

Get your eyes, ears, and alphabets set!

Until We Zoom,

Jon Riccio

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P.S. Do you listen to music when writing? Try keeping a log over the next few days . . .

Ex:

- 4/6/21 Beethoven, Ludwig: String Quartet in F Major, opus 59, no. 1
- 4/7/21 Clarke, Rebecca: Sonata for Viola and Piano (1919)
- 4/8/21 Horner, James: *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* Soundtrack
- 4/9/21 Horner, James: *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock* Soundtrack
- 4/10/21 Rodrigo, Joaquín: *Concierto de Aranjuez* for Guitar and Orchestra
 Tangerine Dream: *Exit*

I'll have a more in-depth explanation for how your list may be used to set certain writing goals.

Lucie Brock-Broido
from *A Hunger*

Autobiography

It is only three o'clock & already I'm alone
Listening to the lovers next door
Like Patsy Cline & her Man
Throwing barebacked wooden furniture
Like the real life bicker of true love.
I love that hands-on,
Die-while-you're-dark-haired-still
& young, fists curled to desire,
Take Me kind of love.
They'll make love without apology
& I'll be left to the afternoon
& the autoerotic sounds of my American voice
Getting it all down.

Harrvette Mullen

from *Sleeping with the Dictionary*

Any Lit

You are a ukulele beyond my microphone
You are a Yukon beyond my Micronesia
You are a union beyond my meiosis
You are a unicycle beyond my migration
You are a universe beyond my mitochondria
You are a Eucharist beyond my Miles Davis
You are a euphony beyond my myocardiogram
You are a unicorn beyond my Minotaur
You are a eureka beyond my maitai
You are a Yuletide beyond my minesweeper
You are a euphemism beyond my myna bird
You are a unit beyond my mileage
You are a Yugoslavia beyond my mind's eye
You are a yoo-hoo beyond my minor key
You are a Euripides beyond my mime troupe
You are a Utah beyond my microcosm
You are a Uranus beyond my Miami
You are a youth beyond my mylar
You are a euphoria beyond my myalgia
You are a Ukrainian beyond my Maimonides
You are a Euclid beyond my miter box
You are a Univac beyond my minus sign
You are a Eurydice beyond my maestro
You are a eugenics beyond my Mayan
You are a U-boat beyond my mind control
You are a euthanasia beyond my miasma
You are a urethra beyond my Mysore
You are a Euterpe beyond my Mighty Sparrow
You are a ubiquity beyond my minority
You are a eunuch beyond my migraine
You are a Eurodollar beyond my miserliness
You are a urinal beyond my Midol
You are a uselessness beyond my myopia

Pre-Workshop Questions

Do you have a favorite letter of the alphabet?
What is it and why?

Lucie Brock-Broido's "Autobiography" . . .

- 1) Is the title a good fit for the poem?
- 2) Why do you think she kept this one on the shorter side?
- 3) What sounds make up your autobiography?

Harryette Mullen's "Any Lit" . . .

- 1) What do you think of Mullen's letter patterns?
- 2) Does the poem have a clear meaning or is it an experiment in sound?
- 3) Do you write with an ear toward density/higher diction?