

The Sonnet

A poetic form popular from Petrarch's era to the present day

Course #	21FSON
Format:	Seminar
Moderator:	Elizabeth Armstrong
Date and Time:	Monday, 9:30-11:30 AM 10 weeks, starting 9/27/2021
Format:	Online
Maximum number of participants:	15
Auditors accepted:	Yes, up to 2

Purpose: We will become knowledgeable about several traditional forms of the sonnet and enjoy a sampling of sonnets from each century including the 21st.

Description: The sonnet is a form of lyrical poetry written in one stanza of fourteen lines in iambic pentameter. It employs one of several possible rhyme schemes and expresses a single thought or idea, often related to love. The name is from the Italian word sonetto meaning little song.

Since rules are meant to be broken, variations are endless; the treatment of the theme can be lofty and serious or humorous and downright silly. Poets from Shakespeare, Milton, through Robert Frost, Edna St. Vincent Millay to Billy Collins have made good use of the form.

Role of participants: Seminar members will read assigned background material, participate in discussions and present an analysis of two or more poems chosen from different eras. Each member can expect to have 40-50 minutes for poem presentation and discussion. Optional activities may include writing a sonnet or memorizing and reciting sonnets in class.

Resources: The moderator will provide a list with recommended book titles, internet resources and suggested poets and poems to study and will be happy to assist in locating poems of interest to any participant.

About the Moderator: Elizabeth Armstrong has moderated many seminars in her 25 year LIR career, most of them in literature.