

# Creative Writing *for poets*

---

## Reading List for the Comprehensive Examination

### Master of Arts in English, Pittsburg State University

You must read all items on this list, making the two choices in consultation with your faculty mentors\*. The comprehensive exam will cover these items. The Graduate Advisor, you, and your two faculty mentors should each keep an electronic copy of your choices. Please also refer to the CW Comps Guide.

## Primary Works in Poetry

---

1. Robert Frost "Home Burial," "The Witch of Coös," "Birches," "Departmental," "Design," "Out, Out," "The Gift Outright," "Directive," "Acquainted with the Night."
2. Anne Sexton from *Selected Poems of Anne Sexton*: "Her Kind," "Unknown Girl in a Maternity Ward," "The Moss of His Skin," "Ringing the Bells," "Lullaby," the entire contents of "From All My Pretty Ones" as collected in this volume, "And One for My Dame," "Flee on Your Donkey," "Somewhere in Africa," "Consorting with Angels," "Walking in Paris," "Menstruation at Forty," "Little Girl, My Stringbean, My Lovely Woman," the entire contents of "From Love Poems" as collected in this volume, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," "Rapunzel," "Dreaming the Breasts," "The Silence," "from Death of the Fathers," "Angels of the Love Affair," and "from The Furies."
3. William Carlos Williams from *Selected Poems* "Danse Russe," "The Great Figure," "Spring Strains," "Pastoral [The little sparrows]," "Queen Anne's Lace," "The Widow's Lament in Springtime," "To Waken An Old Lady," "Spring and All," "To Elsie," "The Red Wheelbarrow," "Portrait of a Lady," "This Is Just to Say," "Proletarian Portrait," "To a Poor Old Woman," "The Young Housewife," "Raleigh Was Right," "A Sort of a Song," "The Dance ['In Breughel's great picture']," "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus," "The Sparrow."
4. Elizabeth Bishop from *The Complete Poems*: "The Map," "The Imaginary Iceberg," "The Man-Moth," "The Weed," "Over 2000 Illustrations . . .," "Monument," "The Fish," "The Armadillo," "Questions of Travel," "Sestina," "The Filling Station," "12 O'Clock News," "One Art," "The Pink Dog," "Sandpiper," "In the Waiting Room," "Crusoe in England," "The Moose," "Rainy Season; Sub Tropics: Giant Toad, Strayed Crab, Giant Snail."
5. Lucille Clifton *Blessing the Boats: New and Selected Poems 1988-2000*.
6. **Ríos**: "The Purpose of Altar Boys," "A Photograph from the Revolution: Guayamas to Nogales," "Indentations in the Sugar," "Dressing for Dinner," "Teodoro Luna's Two Kisses," "Day of the Refugios"; **Stafford**: "Travelling Through the Dark," "At the Bomb Testing Site," "Ask Me," "At Fourth and Main in Liberal, Kansas"; **Simic**: "Charles Simic," "Fork," "Poem ['Every Morning']," "Toy Factory," "The Big War," "Crazy about Her Shrimp"; **Weigl**: "Song of Napalm," "Burning Shit at An Khe," "Snowy Egret"; **Ginsberg**: "Howl."

7. **Dove:** "Daystar," "Dusting," "Parsley," "After Reading Mickey in the Night Kitchen for the Third Time Before Bed," "Grape Sherbet"; **Nye:** "The Travelling Onion," "The World in Translation," "Arabic," "Famous," "Arabic Coffee"; **Collins:** "A Portrait of the Reader with a Bowl of Cereal," "To a Stranger Born in Some Distant Country Hundreds of Years from Now," "Picnic, Lightning," "Taking Off Emily Dickinson's Clothes"; **Hirsch:** "For the Sleepwalkers," "Omen," "Wild Gratitude"; **Ginsberg:** "America," "Supermarket in California."
8. **Choice: Circle a single volume** by one of these poets (preferably something you have not read for a class):

**Ai** Cruelty/Killing Floor or Sin; **Mark Doty** My Alexandria or Atlantis; **Norman Dubie** from *Selected and New Poems*; **Martin Espada** A Mayan Astronomer in Hell's Kitchen; **Carolyn Forché** *The Country Between Us*; **Carol Frost** Chimera or Pure; **Alice Fulton** Cascade Experiment or Felt; **Edward Hirsch** Wild Gratitude or For the Sleepwalkers; **David Lee** The Porcine Canticles; **Phillip Levine** What Work Is; **Jo McDougall** Towns Facing Railroads or Dirt; **Sharon Olds** Satan Says or The Dead and the Living; **Greg Orr** from *The Caged Owl*; **Alberto Ríos** Teodora Luna's Two Kisses; **W.D. Snodgrass** from *Not for Specialists: New and Selected Poems*; **James Tate** from *Selected Poems*.

We hope to have these in the library under reserve Laura Lee Washburn, along with the volumes above and below.

### Primary Works in Fiction

1. Flannery O'Connor from *Everything That Rises Must Converge*: "Everything That Rises Must Converge," "Greenleaf," "A View of the Woods," "The Lame Shall Enter First," "Revelation," "Parker's Back," and from other texts: "A Good Man is Hard to Find," "Good Country People," and "The Artificial Nigger."
2. **Circle group A. or B.**  
**A. Baldwin:** "Sonny's Blues; **Bambara:** "The Lesson"; **Erdrich:** "Fleur"; **Barth:** "Lost in the Funhouse"; **Mukherjee:** "A Wife's Story"; **O'Brien:** "The Things They Carried"; **Pailey:** "A Conversation with My Father."  
**Or**  
**B. Mason:** "Shiloh"; **Ford:** "Rock Springs"; **J. Williams:** "Taking Care;" **Adams:** "Barcelona"; **Updike:** "A&P"; **Faulkner:** "Barn Burning" **Boyle:** "Greasy Lake."
3. Raymond Carver from *Where I'm Calling From: Selected Stories*: "Nobody Said Anything," "Bicycles, Muscles and Cigarettes," "They're Not Your Husband," "Fat," "Neighbors," "Are These Actual Miles," "Little Things," "Why Don't You Dance," "What We Talk About When We Talk about Love," "So Much Water So Close to Home," "Chef's House," "Feathers," "Cathedral," "A Small Good Thing," "Elephant."
4. Jeffrey Eugenides *Middlesex*.
5. Gabriel Garcia Marquez from *Collected Stories*: "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings," "The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World," "Blacamán the Good, Vendor of Miracles," "The Incredible and Sad Tale of Innocent Eréndira."

Creative Writing students must test in Creative Writing, American Literature, and a revised shorter (@ 20 item) British Literature list each created with the advisement of the student's faculty mentors. The lead mentor on the American and Creative Writing Comprehensives Committee must be a Creative Writing faculty member.