Coming of Age

Fifth Grade Unit 6

**Poems**

**Freedom**

Freedom is not following a river.

Freedom is following a river

though, if you want to.

It is deciding now by what happens now.

It is knowing that luck makes a difference.

No leader is free; no follower is free--

the rest of us can often be free.

Most of the world are living by

creeds too odd, chancy, and habit-forming

to be worth arguing about by reason.

If you are oppressed, wake up about

four in the morning; most places

you can usually be free some of the time

if you wake up before other people.

* William Stafford

**I’m Nobody! Who are you?**

I'm nobody! Who are you?  
Are you nobody, too?  
Then there's a pair of us -- don't tell!  
They'd banish us, you know.   
  
How dreary to be somebody!  
How public, like a frog  
To tell your name the livelong day  
To an admiring bog!

* Emily Dickinson

**Dreams**

i used to dream militant dreams  
of taking over america  
to show these white folks how it should be done  
i used to dream radical dreams  
of blowing everyone away  
with my perceptive powers of correct analysis  
i even used to think  
id be the one to stop the riot and negotiate the peace  
then i awoke and dug  
that if i dreamed natural dreams  
of being a natural woman  
doing what a woman does  
when shes natural  
i would have a revolution

* Nikki Giovanni