Tales of the Heart

Fourth Grade Unit 1

**Poems**

**They Were My People**

They were those who cut cane  
to the rhythm of the sunbeat   
  
They were those who carried cane  
to the rhythm of the sunbeat   
  
They were those who crushed cane  
to the rhythm of the sunbeat   
  
They were women weeding, carrying babies  
to the rhythm of the sunbeat   
  
They were my people, working so hard  
to the rhythm of the sunbeat - - long ago  
to the rhythm of the sunbeat.

* Grace Nichols

**Monday’s Child Is Fair of Face**

Monday's child is fair of face,  
Tuesday's child is full of grace;  
Wednesday's child is full of woe,  
Thursday's child has far to go;  
Friday's child is loving and giving,  
Saturday's child works hard for its living;  
But the child that is born on the Sabbath day  
Is bonny and blithe, and good and gay.

* Mother Goose

**Dreams**

Hold fast to dreams  
For if dreams die  
Life is a broken-winged bird  
That cannot fly.  
Hold fast to dreams  
For when dreams go  
Life is a barren field  
Frozen with snow.

* Langston Hughes

**Humanity**

If I am blind and need someone  
To keep me safe from harm,  
It matters not the race to me  
Of the one who takes my arm.  
If I am saved from drowning  
As I grasp and grope,  
I will not stop to see the face  
Of the one who throws the rope.  
Or if out on some battlefield  
I’m falling faint and weak,  
The one who gently lifts me up  
May any language speak.  
We sip the water clear and cool,  
No matter the hand that gives it.  
A life that’s lived worthwhile and fine,  
What matters the one who lives it?

* Elma Stukey

**On the Way to School**

I'll tell you why I'm tardy and I hope my excuse will do.  
I stopped to view upon a leaf a spider and some dew.  
She spun a web before my eyes with a soft and silver hue,  
And when she looked, I looked at her and whispered, "Peekaboo!"

I think I may have startled her and so I waved good-bye,  
But when I turned around to go, I met a butterfly!  
I almost caught him in my hand to bring to class for you,  
But when I tried to peek inside, away my treasure flew.

And that is how I'm tardy, but I had to tell you why.  
It's all the fault of a spider's web and a sneaky butterfly!

* Charles Ghigna

**The Drum**

daddy says the world is  
a drum tight and hard  
and i told him  
i'm gonna beat out my own rhythm

* Nikki Giovanni