

Metamorphosis

By Kristi Bates

A poem for two voices

V1: I am a butterfly.
 V2: I am a moth
 Both: People think we're the same,
 But really we're not
 V1: I spin a chrysalis.
 V2: I spin a cocoon.
 V1: My antennae are straight,
 V2: Mine will be feathery soon.
 V1: I'm awake during the day and sleep when it's night.
 V2: I come out when it's dark and sleep when it's light.
 V1: I rest with my wings straight up in the air.
 V2: When I'm tired my wings are flat down there.
 Both: Why people confuse us,
 We'll just never know!
 We're quite different creatures,
 As this poem does show.
 V1: But wait! I think we have something the same!
 V2: We do? But what it is? Stop playing this game!
 V1: We both go through changes, to get where we are.
 V2: You're right! Four stages will get us this far.
 V1: First, we are eggs, laid in a row.
 V2: Next, we are larvae, we eat and we grow.
 V1: The third stage is when we are wrapped up so tight.
 We stay this way until we're just right.
 V2: The time now has come for us to break free.
 We can fly up so high, as tall as a tree!
 Both: We're finally together,
 And now we can't miss
 Because we've completed
 Metamorphosis!



What If the Score Is Against You?

Author Unknown

What if the score is against you,
And you know defeat is sure?
Keep giving your best
Defeat is a test
To see if you can endure.

Come in on your feet at life's ending,
And the past will feel full and fine.
There's a healthy glow
Only doers can know,
In the sprint at the finish line.



I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

I heard the bells on Christmas day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along the unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head
“There is no peace on earth,” I said,
“For hate is strong and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.”

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
“God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail
With peace on earth, good will to men.”

Till ringing, singing on its way
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound the carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
And made forlorn, the households born
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

NOTE: This hymn was written during the American Civil War, as reflected by the sense of despair in the next to last stanza. Stanzas 6-7 speak of the battle, and are usually omitted.

Tecumseh: I Am a Shawnee

Tecumseh was a chief of the Shawnee Indians who was born about 1768. On August 12th, in 1810, Tecumseh delivered this speech before William Henry Harrison when he was governor of Indiana Territory. While Tecumseh had been away, large tracks of land on both sides of the Wabash River had been sold by the Indians.

It is true I am a Shawnee. My forefathers were warriors. Their son is a warrior. From them I take only my existence; from my tribe I take nothing. I am the maker of my own fortune; and oh! that I could make of my own fortune; and oh! that I could make that of my red people, and of my country, as great as the conceptions of my mind, when I think of the Spirit that rules the universe. I would not then come to Governor Harrison to ask him to tear the treaty and to obliterate the landmark; but I would say to him: "Sir, you have liberty to return to your own country."

The being within, communing with past ages, tells me that once, nor until lately, there was no white man on this continent; that it then all belonged to red men, children of the same parents, placed on it by the Great Spirit that made them, to keep it, to traverse it, to enjoy its productions, and to fill it with the same race, once a happy race, since made miserable by the white people, who are never contented but always encroaching. The way, and the only way, to check and to stop this evil, is for all the red men to unite in claiming a common and equal right in the land, as it was at first, and should be yet; for it never was divided, but belongs to all for the use of each. For no part has a right to sell, even to each other, much less to strangers—those who want all, and will not do with less.

The white people have no right to take the land from the Indians, because they had it first; it is theirs. They may sell, but all must join. Any sale not made by all is not valid. The late sale is bad. It was made by a part only. Part do not know how to sell. All red men have equal rights to the unoccupied land. The right of occupancy is as good in one place as in another. There can not be two occupations in the same place. The first excludes all others. It is not so in hunting or traveling; for there the same ground will serve many, as they may follow each other all day; but the camp is stationary, and that is occupancy. It belongs to the first who sits down on his blanket or skins which he has thrown upon the ground; and till he leaves it no other has a right.

Preamble to the Constitution

Script by Lorraine Griffith

A Choral Reading for a large group or a Reader's Theater for 7 voices

R1: The Constitution

R2: of the United States of America.

All: We the people

R1: The people:

R2: First the Native American,

R3: then a flood of Europeans immigrants,

R4: Africans,

R5: Middle Easterners,

R6: Asian peoples,

R7: South Americans

R1-7: and they keep on coming.

All: We the people of the United States,

R1: The United States:

R2: ALL 50!

R3: From Portland, Maine, west to San Diego, California,

R4: from Fargo, North Dakota, south to El Paso, Texas

R5: Alaska and Hawaii

All: We the people of the United States in order to form a more perfect Union,

R6: That Union seemed perfect, all of the colonies became states as well as the territories to the west,

R7: until the southern states seceded because they wanted States Rights.

R1: But the Civil War ended with a more perfect union of states based upon the belief that all Americans deserved the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

All: We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice,

R2: Even before the established United States, justice was valued.

R3: John Adams had actually defended the British in court after they had attacked and killed colonists during the Boston Massacre. Although he didn't believe in the British cause, he still believed justice was more important than retribution.

R4: Justice was ensured for Americans by following the fairness of John Adams in establishing a Court system beginning with local courthouses and moving up to the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C.

Preamble to the Constitution_(cont.)

All: We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility,

R5: There have been times when our nation's tranquility has been disturbed.

R6: but in spite of Pearl Harbor, December 7th, 1941,

R7: and as recent as the horror in New York City, Washington, D.C; and Shanksville, Pennsylvania, September 11th, 2001

R1-7: we still live in a stable and peaceful country.

All: We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense,

R2: The Air Force. No one comes close! Soar to new heights in the wild blue yonder!

R3: The Army. Be all you can be! Be an army of one! Hoo Ahh!

R4: The Navy, Welcome aboard; Anchors aweigh!

R1: The Coast Guard, Protecting America, It's our job everyday!

R5: and the Marines. The few, the proud. Semper Fi!

All: We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare,

R7: People's basic needs must be met in a country.

R5: Needs for housing, education, transportation, and health care are overseen by our government system.

R6: Labor laws ensure that people work in safe environments and that they are paid fairly for the work that they do.

All: We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves

R1: Jefferson's promise of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of happiness came later for many of the peoples of our nation.

R2: African Americans did not share the rights of whites by law until the Emancipation Proclamation signed in 1863.

R3: Women did not share in the rights of men to vote or own property until 1920 when the Suffrage Act was ratified.

All: We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to

Preamble to the Constitution_(cont.)

R1: That's you and me!

R2-3: And our children!

R4-7: And our children's children.

R1-7: And their children too!

All: We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

R5: The Constitution of the United States of America has stood the test of time.

R6: Although it was signed on September 17th, 1787, it still stands as a ruling document of laws, ensuring our rights and liberties that we still enjoy today.

R7: And so, let us proclaim once again for all the world to hear. . . .

R1: The Preamble to the Constitution of the United States of America.

R2-3: We the people of the United States,

R2-3-4-5: in order to form a more perfect Union,

R2-3-4-5-6: establish justice, insure domestic tranquility,

R1-2-3-4-5-6-7: provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare,

ALL: and secure the blessings of liberty, to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

NOTE: My children love this piece! Taking an historical document and annotating it, is a great way to teach the meaning behind the familiar words. The children were very proud of themselves for memorizing the preamble in the process of learning the script. During a performance for parents on the last part, they all looked up at the audience and recited the preamble from memory. It was very effective.