



The Grammar Dog Guide to Song of Myself by Walt Whitman

**All quizzes use sentences from the poem.
Includes over 250 multiple choice questions.**

About Gramwardog

Gramwardog was founded in 2001 by Mary Jane McKinney, a high school English teacher and dedicated grammarian. She and other experienced English teachers in both high school and college regard grammar and style as the key to unlocking the essence of an author.

Their philosophy, that grammar and literature are best understood when learned together, led to the formation of Gramwardog.com, a means of sharing knowledge about the structure and patterns of language unique to specific authors. These patterns are what make a great book *a great book*. The arduous task of analyzing works for grammar and style has yielded a unique product, guaranteed to enlighten the reader of literary classics.

Gramwardog's strategy is to put the author's words under the microscope. The result yields an increased appreciation of the art of writing and awareness of the importance and power of language.



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SAMPLE EXERCISES - SONG OF MYSELF by Walt Whitman

EXERCISE 5 COMPLEMENTS

Identify the complements in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

d.o. = direct object

p.n. = predicate nominative

i.o. = indirect object

o.p. = object of preposition

p.a. = predicate adjective

- ___1. The atmosphere is not a perfume, it has no taste of the distillation, it is odorless.

- ___2. Clear and sweet is my soul, and clear and sweet is all that is not my soul.

- ___3. Loaf with me on the grass, loose the stop from your throat.

EXERCISE 6 PHRASES

Identify the phrases in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

par = participial

ger = gerund

inf = infinitive

appos = appositive

prep = prepositional

- ___1. I loaf and invite my soul, I lean and loaf at my ease observing a spear of summer grass.

- ___2. Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?

- ___3. The spinning girl retreats and advances to the hum of the big wheel.

EXERCISE 9 STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Identify the figurative language in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

p = personification

s = simile

m = metaphor

o = onomatopoeia

h = hyperbole

- ___1. Only the lull I like, the hum of your valved voice.

- ___2. . . . *What is the grass?* . . . I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven.

- ___3. The wild gander leads his flock through the cool night, Ya-honk he says, and sounds it down to me like an invitation.

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EXERCISE 12 STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS

Identify the type of allusion in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

a. mythology b. religion c. astronomy d. death e. folklore/superstition

- ___1. You shall no longer take things at second or third hand, nor look through the eyes of the dead, nor feed on specters in books.

- ___2. And I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own, and I know that the spirit of God is the brother of my own, and that all the men ever born are also my brothers, and the women my sisters and lovers.

- ___3. The orchestra whirls me wider than Uranus flies.

EXERCISE 13 STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

A child said What is the grass? fetching it to me with full hands,
How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is any more than he.
I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven.
Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,
A scented gift and remembrancer designedly dropped,
Bearing the owner's name someway in the corners, that we may see and remark, and say Whose?
Or I guess the grass itself a child, the produced babe of the vegetation.
Or I guess it is a uniform hieroglyphic,
And it means, Sprouting alike in broad zones and narrow zones,
Growing among black folks as among white,
Canuck, Tuckahoe, Congressman, Cuff, I give them the same, I receive them the same.
And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves. (6)

Read the passage a second time, marking figurative language, sensory imagery, poetic devices, and any other patterns of diction and rhetoric, then answer the questions below.

- 1 A child said *What is the grass?* fetching it to me with full hands,
- 2 How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is any more than he.
- 3 I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven.
- 4 Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,
- 5 A scented gift and remembrancer designedly dropped,
- 6 Bearing the owner's name someway in the corners, that we may see and remark, and say *Whose?*
- 7 Or I guess the grass itself a child, the produced babe of the vegetation.
- 8 Or I guess it is a uniform hieroglyphic,

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9 And it means, Sprouting alike in broad zones and narrow zones,

10 Growing among black folks as among white,

11 Canuck, Tuckahoe, Congressman, Cuff, I give them the same, I receive them the same.

12 And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves.

- ___ 1. Metaphor is used to compare grass to ALL of the following EXCEPT . . .
a. child b. Congressman c. handkerchief d. hair
- ___ 2. The underlined words in Line 5 are an example of . . .
a. assonance b. consonance c. alliteration d. rhyme
- ___ 3. ALL of the following poetic devices are used in Line 6 EXCEPT . . .
a. assonance b. consonance c. repetition d. rhyme

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