**Caged Bird** by Maya Angelou

The free bird leaps
on the back of the wind
and floats downstream
till the current ends
and dips his wings
in the orange sun rays
and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks
down his narrow cage
can seldom see through
his bars of rage
his wings are clipped and
his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings
with fearful trill
of the things unknown
but longed for still
and is tune is heard
on the distant hillfor the caged bird
sings of freedom

The free bird thinks of another breeze
an the trade winds soft through the sighing trees
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn-bright lawn
and he names the sky his own.

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

**Discussion Questions for Caged Bird**

1. Paraphrase the poem.
2. What do you think the poem is attempting to do? Educate the reader, create nostalgia, or fear, evoke a mood, etc? Is the poet effective?
3. Who is the speaker? What kind of person is the speaker?
4. Can you identify the author’s intent/purpose? You may also describe this as the theme or “message” of the poem.
5. Discuss the imagery of the poem. What kinds of imagery are used?
6. Point out examples of metaphor, simile, personification, or any other literary device and explain their significance and/ or appropriateness. Also point out significant examples of sound repetition and explain their function.

**The Courage That My Mother Had** by Edna St. Vincent Millay

The courage that my mother had
Went with her, and is with her still:
Rock from New England quarried;
Now granite in a granite hill.

The golden brooch my mother wore
She left behind for me to wear;
I have no thing I treasure more:
Yet, it is something I could spare.

Oh, if instead she'd left to me
The thing she took into the grave!-
That courage like a rock, which she
Has no more need of, and I have.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Define courage in your own words. Provide an example of courage from your own life and/or an example of courage that you witnessed.

2. Reflecting on your own life, what personality trait do you feel people admire about you?

3. Thinking about the people close to you (friends, family, etc), who is someone that you admire? What qualities do you admire about them?