***Poetry Unit: Overview & Assignments***

**1) An original “chapbook” of poetry: 70 marks (see rubric)**

You are to compose **10 original poems in a chapbook style** (folded 8.5” x 11” paper with two staples in the center). Choose an elegant font and buy some bond paper (you’ll only need 4-8 pages so “sharing” a package of paper with 2 other class members is a good option) to enhance your presentation of the poems.

**Evaluation:**  Instructor will take into consideration:

* included elements of poetry (you will be given notes on the mechanics of poetry)
* overall tangible effect of your original verse.

***“Craft” is very important here, and we will work in class to show how it can be honed and polished, through numerous examples in upcoming weeks***

**2) Personal Poem: An “Inventory of Being”**   
*(Should be featured in your chapbook “Centre-Spread”)*

This is a personally revealing free verse poem, written in the same style as the original we will study in class. You are aiming for a mix of concrete and abstract descriptions of yourself: your personality, interests, enigmatic traits, and idiosyncrasies!

**Other exercises in this unit:**

# 3) A mimic poem, “in the style of…”

# *(Should be included in your chapbook – making sure you give credit to the original creator)*

To help you focus on poetic craft and style, this assignment asks you to produce a poem that mimics the style of one of the poets presented to you by your instructor. ***Your finished poem should announce “in the style of” (insert mimicked poet’s name here) at the top of the page. On the right side of the page (or bottom) you should include the original poem.*** Your poem should attempt a similar style, tone, use of literary devices, line/stanza form as the original.

**4) ‘Poetry Sweatshop’**

*(Poem can be included in your chapbook)*

A class long contest for a poem written on the spot. Topics to be supplied by your friendly instructor. Style and length completely optional. You volunteer to read, class gets to judge! Prizes are a possibility!

**5) Free Verse Poem – Class Exercise**:   
(Poem can be included in your chapbook)

**A Primer on “Diction”:**

***Diction:*** *word choice/arrangement; the apt selection of words.*

4 LEVELS OF USE: **Formal Informal Colloquial Slang**

\*\* The accepted diction of one age often sounds unacceptable to another; the formal sounds archaic, the informal too formal, the colloquial and slang usage foreign or at least “dated”.\*\*

**Form and Diction:**

**Conventional:** ideal pattern or shape that precedes content (e.g. sonnet, haiku)

Words are “forced”, creatively, to fit confines of pattern.

**Organic:** form develops because of content, including diction, and helps shape

Meaning (e.g. free verse, broken line, “unjustified” spacing/layout)

**Abstract:** sound poems, analogous to impressionist painting; words used for colour texture

**The Mechanics of Diction:**

**Alliteration**: consecutive consonant sounds:   
 *seven silly seagulls*

**Consonance:** repetition of consonant sounds in a line:

*glistens nastily with fat*

**Assonance:** repetition of vowel sounds in a line:

*The water foamed and roared*

**Cacophony:** harsh or discordant, grouped phonetical sounds:

*squawked and clobbered in guttural clanging*

**Euphony:** use of words with pleasing/melodic sounds, often using the “softer” consonant sounds: *the mellow slumber of the winsome lass*