



Life Cycle Poetry Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

Sandy Hebert LaBry wrote this poem in English and in French to honor not only her grandmother and mother but the tradition of making coffee in a French drip pot or "*la grégue*," a tradition handed down "without a recipe." She learned this way of making coffee by watching and imitating her mother, who learned it from her mother. This kind of traditional learning and teaching happens in all our lives. Answer the questions about the poem, then write your own poem about something you've learned from an older person. You may also write a poem in a language besides English.

La grégue

My grandmother's drip coffee pot
still sits on my stove
a gift of my mother without a recipe
but with an understanding of the ritual
of making coffee in a patient manner
slowly
three teaspoons full of boiling water at a time
and then three more
until the pot is filled
It's just as we have lived our lives
we
my grandmother
my mother
and me
little by little
like making coffee
in the "*grégue*"
La grégue

*La grégue de ma grand-mère
reste toujours sur mon fourneau
un don de ma mère sans recette
mais avec une connaissance des rites
de faire le café dans une manière patiente
lentement
trois cuillères de l'eau bouillante à la fois
et puis trois cuillères de plus
jusqu'à ce que la grégue soit remplie
juste comme nous avons vécu nos vies
nous
ma grand-mère
ma mère
et moi
au fur et à mesure
comme faire le café dans
la grégue*

Answer these questions:

Why do you think the poet calls making coffee a ritual?

What values do you think the poet learned from her mother and grandmother?

Do you think the poet's 12-year-old daughter is aware of this coffee pot and the special way her mother makes coffee? What special traditions or "rituals" have you observed in your home?