

Category C – Individual Poem - Grades 7 & 8

**Gregory Kies**

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**“Poet to Poet”**

A child came forth bearing the name of Walter.  
He came forth on May 31 from the world of the unknown and the nebulous,  
To the world of being and life.  
A child came forth in 1819 on the rolling, western green hills of Long Island.

A child came forth to the books and the world of literature.  
A child came forth to the doctors and the lawyers, to ennui.

A child came forth to the classroom and to children,  
To the wood-scented school and the old rickety stool.  
A child came forth to a place full of sadness.

A child came forth to adulthood bearing the name of Walt.  
A child came forth to the typesetters and to the journalists.  
And to fame, for his work rose above him.

A child came forth to the horrors of war,  
A child came forth to the air of soldiers.  
A child came forth to show the needless suffering.

A child came forth, now an old man with a grizzled beard.  
He came to the bookstores and to the schools,  
To the poets, the men, and the women and the children.

On one sad day the old man again went forth,  
He went to the world of the unknown and the lost on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March of 1892.  
Many more children came forth after that day, bearing many other names.  
But those children came forth to a world that was changed by writing,  
By a child who came forth, bearing the name of Walter Whitman.