

# **The Writer's Hour: Footprints on the Sands of Time**

## **Lesson Plan**

A resource developed through the *Longfellow and the Forging of American Identity* program

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**Suggested Grade Level:** 3-6

**Subject Area:** Literature, writing, interdisciplinary connections

### **Standards:**

This curriculum includes interdisciplinary lessons that reflect the national and state standards. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was chosen directly from "A Suggestion List of Authors...Reflecting Our Common Literary and Cultural Heritage" in the *Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Frameworks*.

Solid Reading, Writing, and Literature standards are the basis of every lesson. Some of the skills included are...

- Writing on Demand
- Informal Writing
- Conducting Research
- Using New Technologies in Composition and Research
- Listening, Speaking and Viewing
- Reading Comprehension
- Literature Appreciation
- Vocabulary and Spelling
- Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics

### **Time Required:**

Five 1-hour class periods

### **Materials and Resources Required:**

*Document packets for all assignments are available on the lesson plan page at [www.mainememory.net](http://www.mainememory.net)*

### **Lesson Outline with Materials Required:**

#### **I. Be A Curator: Help Identify America's Heritage (document packet includes):**

1. Student worksheet
2. Hollyer image of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
3. Longfellow's original manuscript, "To a Child"
4. Text version of "To a Child"

**II. Poetry Warm Ups**  
**(document packet includes):**

1. Acrostic poems worksheet
2. Haiku worksheets
3. Cinquain poems worksheet

**III. Henry's Highlights**  
**(document packet includes):**

1. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "The Children's Hour"
2. "The Children's Hour at My House" by Elizabeth
3. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "The Village Blacksmith"
4. "Construction Worker" by Elizabeth

**IV. Writer's Round Table: Polish up the Poetry**  
**(document packet includes):**

1. Poetry evaluation
2. Farewell to Castle Craigie

**V. Poems for reading aloud during the "house tour"**  
**(document packet includes):**

1. "A Psalm of Life"
2. "From My Arm-Chair"
3. "Travels by the Fireside"

**Assessment Summary:**

A Writer's Round Table guide sheet helps authors to edit and to revise.

**Learning Objectives:**

Discover Henry Wadsworth Longfellow as a historic role model

Identify how his childhood, home, family, community, and nation influenced his work

Develop an appreciation for the role of curators, the value of museum collections and primary documents

Analyze how classic literature touches our lives today

Learn to brainstorm, write, and revise poetry with a partner

Increase knowledge of poetry forms, rhyming patterns, rhythm, repetition, language

Use web links to find literature

**Overview:**

These lessons will introduce the world-famous American writer and a selection of his work with a compelling historical fiction theme. Students take up the quest: Who was HWL and did his poetry leave footprints on the sands of time? They will “tour” his Cambridge home through young eyes, listen, and discuss poems from a writer’s viewpoint, and create their own poems inspired by Longfellow’s works. The interdisciplinary approach utilizes critical thinking skills, living history, technology integration, maps, photos, books, and peer collaboration.

The mission is to get students keenly interested in what makes a great writer by using Longfellow as a historic role model. The lessons are designed for students at varying reading levels. Slow learners engage in living history with Alice’s fascinating search through the historic Craigie house, while gifted and talented students may dramatize the virtual tour as a monologue. Constant discovery and exciting presentations keep the magic in lessons. Remember that, “*the youthful mind must be interested in order to be instructed.*” Students will build strong writing skills encouraging them to leave their own “*footprints on the sands of time.*”

## PARENTS & TEACHERS

All children deserve an exciting introduction into the rhyme, rhythm, and rich language of the classics. These lessons open the door to classic literature and inspire readers to continue their search for the great writers. In this adventure, students learn to find their own voice and develop as a great writer themselves.

### Five Literary Goals

- Inspire reflective listeners/readers who anticipate the next lines and the character development and use critical thinking skills.
- Develop confident writers who are comfortable in different poetry forms such as: rhyming couplets, acrostic, haiku, cinquain poems
- Train knowledgeable writers who are familiar with the writing process and move through prewriting, drafting, revision, proofreading and publishing.
- Encourage informed readers to explore Longfellow in depth, appreciate his dramatic life stories, and discover links in history.
- Develop lifetime scholars who find joy and creativity in reading/writing on their own for information and pleasure.

### Four Student-Centered Strategies

- Provide an interdisciplinary introduction to one of the world's greatest writers using maps, a virtual house tour, student writing samples, spotlight poems, and extension activities.
- Provide a high-interest opportunity to examine quality editions of the author's writing, artifacts from the period, and related web sites.
- Provide quiet, supportive environment for the students to respond to the author's letter and a Writer's Round Table to edit/share written work aloud.
- Provide community outreach by inviting local authors or editors to visit, hosting a Family Tea, taking a field trip to Longfellow's historic homes, and welcoming parents' support and suggestions.