Lesson 6: Life Poems
Worksheets

Task 1 – Speaking
Discuss the following questions in pairs or small groups:

- In your culture, what associations do people usually make with bread and wine?
- Are these associations fundamentally different in other cultures you know?
- In your culture, what associations do people usually make with the four elements: earth, water, wind, and fire?
- Are these associations fundamentally different in other cultures you know?

Task 2 - Vocabulary
Match the words. There are many possible associations.

- Bread
- Wine
- Earth
- Water
- Fire
- Wind

- green
day
trees
summer
rose
quicksand
crops
blowing
fruit
force
blood
night
mountain
spring
mouth
rocks
pool
clay
roots
grapes
fountain
love
heaven
stars
worm
hand
oat
sail
vine
sun
break
stream
veins
sap
flower
**Task 3 - Listening**

Listen to two Dylan Thomas poems were the words above are used. Which words are used in each poem? Write the words in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poem 1</th>
<th>Poem 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Task 4 – Reading and speaking**

Read the poems and check your answers for Task 3.

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**This bread I break**

This bread I break was once the oat,  
The wine upon a foreign tree  
Plunged in its fruit;  
Man in the day or wine at night  
Laid the crops low, broke the grape's joy.

Once in this wine the summer blood  
Knocked in the flesh that decked the vine,  
Once in this bread  
The oat was merry in the wind;  
Man broke the sun, pulled the wind down.

This flesh you break, this blood you let  
Make desolation in the vein,  
Were oat and grape  
Born of the sensual root and sap;  
My wine you drink, my bread you snap.

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**The force that through the green fuse**

The force that through the green fuse drives the flower  
Drives my green age; that blasts the roots of trees  
is my destroyer.  
And I am dumb to tell the crooked rose  
My youth is bent by the same wintry fever.

The force that drives the water through the rocks  
Drives my red blood; that dries the mouthing streams  
Turns mine to wax.  
And I am dumb to mouth unto my veins  
How at the mountain spring the same mouth sucks.

The hand that whirls the water in the pool  
Stirs the quicksand; that ropes the blowing wind  
Hauls my shroud sail.  
And I am dumb to tell the hanging man  
How of my clay is made the hangman’s lime.

The lips of time leech to the fountain head;  
Love drips and gathers, but the fallen blood  
Shall calm her sores.  
And I am dumb to tell a weather’s wind  
How time has ticked a heaven round the stars.

And I am dumb to tell the lover’s tomb  
How at my sheet goes the same crooked worm.

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Now read the poems again and discuss the questions below in pairs or small groups:

- Have any of the word associations in the poems surprised you?
- Are there any lines in the poems that you find particularly beautiful/memorable?
- What are the main ideas and themes in each poem? Which lines suggest that to you?
- Are there any images and/or ideas that are common to both poems?
- Which of the two poems do you prefer? Why?

**Task 5 – Language work**

Read the definition of *collocations* in English:

**collocation**

Line breaks: col¦lo|ca¦tion  Pronunciation: /kɒləˈkeɪʃ(ə)n /  noun [mass noun]

- 1 Linguistics The habitual juxtaposition of a particular word with another word or words with a frequency greater than chance: ‘the words have a similar range of collocation’
- 1.1 [count noun] A pair or group of words that are habitually juxtaposed: ‘strong tea’ and ‘heavy drinker’ are typical English collocations

Source: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/collocation

Use an English collocations dictionary and find some common collocations for the words below. Then write some sample sentences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collocations</th>
<th>Sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bread</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Task 6 – Listening and pronunciation

- Listen to the poems again. Pay attention to individual sounds, stress and intonation.
- Choose one stanza from each poem to read aloud.
- Check your pronunciation with your teacher.
- Practise reading the stanzas aloud to your partner.

Homework

Do internet research: look for poems that deal with the four elements (earth, water, wind and fire). Choose one and bring it into your next class to read to your colleagues.

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