



MINDFUL POETRY MOMENTS

created by
THEWELL

This poetry lesson was created by The Well offering students and teachers alike the chance to pause and reflect on poetry's ability to encounter ourselves, the world, and the mystery of each other.

Poem: "Those Winter Sundays"*
Poet: Robert Hayden, read by Haleh Liza Gafari
Written: 1966

This poem is about feeling grateful for the unnoticed sacrifices and unspoken love we give to one another – in this case, the hard work a father does for his child to take care of them.

DAY 1: Today, let's just settle in and notice: How does this poem make you feel?

DAY 2: In this poem, the poet remembers how his father would keep their house warm for them. As you listen, think about the people who take care of you.

DAY 3: Today, imagine someone who loves you doing something nice for you. Maybe packing your lunch, or giving you a hug at the end of the day.

DAY 4: The poem describes making sacrifices for people you love. In this poem, the speaker's father is cold and tired from work but still works hard to keep the house warm. What sacrifices do you make to help others?

DAY 5: On our last day with this poem, think about how you will spend time with your loved ones over the next few days. Think about something nice you can do for the people you love while you're together.

ABOUT THE POET

ROBERT HAYDEN was an American poet, essayist, and educator. He was the first black writer to be the United States Poet Laureate. This poem, "Those Winter Sundays," is one of the most shared American poems of the 20th century.

POETRY PROMPT

Robert Hayden remembers Sundays in the winter with his father. Write a poem describing a simple thing your loved one does around the house to make your life better.

Focus on **WHEN** they do this. What time of day do they do this? What season? Is it a special day, or is it every week? Does focusing on **WHEN** they do these things for you add to that love?





Those Winter Sundays

BY ROBERT HAYDEN

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather made
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?



