When it comes to poems, there is always something about great poets that are worth mentioning. They create a world of art in splendid words. William Butler Yeats is definitely somebody that everyone needs to acknowledge.

William Butler Yeats was born in Dublin, Ireland on June 13th, 1865. His father tried to be an attorney, but became a painter eventually. Yeats’ mother came from a wealthy family which had a prosperous milling and shipping business. He spent a lot of time in London and Sligo, a beautiful county on the west coast of Ireland, where his mother had grown up and which he later depicted in his poems.

The poetry and writing written by Yeats are a display of his passion for mysticism and were published in various publications, which earned him the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1924. Nevertheless, what is more important was his desire to understand the unknown.

Yeats took his last breath in 1939 in France. However, he would be long remembered by those in the world of literature who think and strive for greater knowledge. Yeats’ coffin was supposedly taken to Sligo in 1948, but there is some doubt as to the authenticity of the bones.

It is a pleasure to appreciate Yeats’ poems and the following poem is one of his most distinguished poems. Please read it out loud to get into Yeats’ world.

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*poem [ˈpɒm] n. 詩
splendid [ˈsplendid] adj. 華麗的；極好的
* acknowledge [əkˈnɔːldʒ] v. 知道；公認
attorney [ˈətərni] n. 律師；法定代理人
eventually [ɪnˈvɛntʃʊəli] adv. 終極地
* prosperous [prəˈspɔːrəs] adj. 繁榮的；興盛的
milling [ˈmilɪŋ] n. 碾磨
depict [dɪˈpɪkt] v. 描述
display [dɪˈsple] n. 顯現；表現
*mysticism [ˈmɪstɪsɪzm] n. 神秘主義
various [ˈvɜːrɪəs] adj. 不同的
strive [strʌv] v. 努力
coffin [ˈkɒfɪn] n. 棺木
supposedly [ˈsɔːpədəli] adv. 大概；可能
*authenticity [ɔːθəntɪsəti] n. 可信賴性
*distinguished [dɪˈstɪŋgwɪʃt] adj. 著名的
Sailing to Byzantium
first published in 1928

That is no country for old men. The young
In one another’s arms, birds in the trees
— Those dying generations—at their song,
The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,
Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long
Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.
Caught in that sensual music all neglect
Monuments of unaging intellect.

An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
For every tatter in its mortal dress,
Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence;
And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium.
O sages standing in God’s holy fire
As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,
And be the singing-masters of my soul.
Consumes my heart away; sick with desire
And fastened to a dying animal
It knows not what it is; and gather me
Into the artifice of eternity.

Once out of nature I shall never take
My bodily form from any natural thing,
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
Of hammered gold and gold enameling
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
Or set upon a golden bough to sing
To lords and ladies of Byzantium
Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

Byzantium [bɪˈzaentɪəm] n. 拜占庭
mackerel [ˈmækərəl] n. 鰤
flesh [fleʃ] n. 肉體；肌肉
fowl [fəul] n. 家禽
commend [kəˈmend] v. 稱讚；表揚
sensual [ˈsɛnʃʊəl] adj. 官能的；肉體上的
neglect [nɪɡˈlekt] v. n. 忽視
monument [mənˈjʊmənt] n. 紀念碑；紀念塔
paltry [ˈpɔltrɪ] adj. 沒有價值的
tattered [ˈtætʃəd] adj. 衣衫蹙褸的
mortal [ˈmɔrəl] adj. 會死的；凡人的

Holy [ˈholi] adj. 神聖的
Sage [sedʒ] n. 聖人；賢人
Mosaic [məˈzeɪk] n. 馬賽克
Gyre [ˈdʒaɪr] n. 旋迴
Consume [kənˈsəm] v. 消耗；費盡
Fasten [ˈfætn] v. 繫緊
Artifice [ˈɑrtɪfɪs] n. 靈巧
Eternity [ɪˈtɜrnəti] n. 永恆；永世
Enameling [ɪnəˈmeɪlɪŋ] n. 上釉術
Drowsy [ˈdraʊzɪ] adj. 昏昏欲睡的

*magnificence [ˈmægənˈfɪsəns] n. 壯麗；高尚
*drowsy [ˈdraʊzɪ] adj. 昏昏欲睡的

Graphic Organizer

William Butler Yeats

Background
Yeats was born in Ireland, and he spent a lot of time in London and Sligo.

Belief
Yeats was wrapped up in mysticism and strove in pursuit of knowledge.

Masterpiece
Sailing to Byzantium can be regarded as the most famous poem of Yeats. He had written a lot of writings and won a Nobel Prize.
I. True or False: Mark T for a true statement and F for a false statement.

1. William Butler Yeats’ father was a lawyer and came from a wealthy family.  
   **F**
2. Yeats loved his mother’s hometown and mentioned it several times in his works.  
   **T**
3. Yeats was nothing but a poet.  
   **F**
4. Sailing to Byzantium can be inferred to be a work when Yeats was young.  
   **F**
5. Yeats was buried in London, England.  
   **F**

II. Multiple Choice: Choose the best answer based on the reading.

1. What is the main idea of this article?
   (A) How Yeats created so many poems and writings.  
   (B) An introduction of Yeats’ works that earned him the Nobel Prize of Literature.  
   (C) A brief biography of Yeats and his famous work.  
   (D) The romance of Yeats’ father and mother.  
   **C**
2. Which of the following statements is true?
   (A) Yeats showed his talent in literature when he was four years old.  
   (B) Yeats loved his mother’s hometown and mentioned it in his poems many times.  
   (C) Yeats died in Ireland and was buried in Sligo.  
   (D) Yeats loved art but had no interest in gaining knowledge.  
   **B**
3. Which word does not mean “prosperous”?
   (A) successful  (B) fortunate  (C) bankrupt  (D) thriving  
   **A**
4. What is the meaning of the sentence—“An aged man is but a paltry thing, a tattered coat upon a stick, unless?”
   (A) It means that everyone will get old and degrade one day.  
   (B) It means that people should make good use of our time.  
   (C) It means that old men should put on worthless clothes.  
   (D) It means that a stick is a necessity for an old man.  
   **A**
5. What can we infer from the poem?

(A) Art is long, life is short.
(B) A person is nothing but a piece of clothes.
(C) Never put a cart in front of a horse.
(D) A contented mind is a perpetual feast.

III. Match the words: Fill in the blanks using the following words.

prosperous poem eventually mortal gyred acknowledge poets distinguished paltry artifice

What is a poem? A _______poem______ ends in an exclamation mark but begins with a question mark. A poem is like a picture that records all the famous and ______distinguished____ events in the history. A poem creates a free and ______prosperous____ world without evil. A poem starts with an idea or an aspiration and it is completed with rainbow-like emotions and visions. A poem springs from a dot of the words, connects words and thoughts and ______eventually____ forms a dimension of genuine feelings and true emotions. A poem is like a needle which displays a great of ______artifice____ when it sews the moments into a unique life blanket. A poem which is ______gyred____ like wrinkles is full of joyfulness, bitterness, wonders, regret, the good old days, and the sorrowful past. Therefore, a poem is ______acknowledged____ as the inner voices to the outer world. Being a ______mortal____, I think everything in the world is ______paltry____ without poems and their creators, ______poets____.
主題閱讀文章中譯：

威廉巴特·葉慈

當提到詩詞，總是會有一些偉大詩人值得提起。他們用華麗的詞藻創造了藝術的世界。威廉巴特·葉慈絕對是值得每一個人都知道的重要詩人。

威廉巴特·葉慈 1865 年 6 月 13 日在愛爾蘭的都柏林出生。他的爸爸嘗試著要成為律師但最後當了畫家。葉慈的媽媽來自於一個富有的家庭，擁有非常興盛的碾磨和運輸生意。他的大半生都在倫敦和斯萊戈渡過，後者是一個位於愛爾蘭西岸的小鄉鎮，是他的母親的故鄉，也在他的作品之中多次提及。

葉慈的詩及文章展現出他對於神祕主義的嚮往，也多次出現在不同的出版物中，並在 1924 年贏得了諾貝爾文學獎。然而，最重要的還是他對於追求未知的渴望。

葉慈 1939 年時在法國嚥下了最後一口氣，然而他將永遠被渴求知識和文學世界的人們所記得。葉慈的靈柩大概在 1948 年被運往斯萊戈，但是後世對於那是否是他真正的骨骸還存有疑問。

欣賞葉慈的詩是非常愉悅的事情，而下面介紹的這首是他最有名的作品之一。請大聲朗讀並進入到葉慈的世界：

航向拜占庭
1928 年首次出版
那非為老者的國度。年輕人
在彼此懷抱，鳥在樹上
－那些將死的世代－揚著歌聲，
紅鮭瀑布，鯖魚擁擠的海域，
水族，走獸，和羽禽，讚頌整個夏天
極稱盈育，成長，以及死亡。
沉緬於感性官能的音樂，而漠視
並遺忘那見證智慧不朽的碑石。

衰朽的老人不就是卑微瑣碎的東西，
像是細棍子上懸掛的一件破衫，除非
其靈魂擊掌長吟，愈歌愈激楚，
替其龍袍衣裳歌詠著，
然而那兒並無歌教之坊，
僅有碑表所記彼等自身專屬的榮耀；
因此我飄洋過海一路航行
來到神聖的都城拜占庭。

啊於上帝神火堆裡屹立的聖徒們
儼然昭顯於牆壁金飾的錦繡形象，
請自神火攸降，迴轉於環繞之中，
為我靈魂歌吟詠唱的大師。
請將我心死傷損耗；病於懇念
束縛於一匹瀕死的野獸
它已經不復認識自我；請將我整肅
檢點，交付永恆的技藝
既已和自然相違我就不再
從自然色相襲取形似驅體，
惟古希臘巧匠錘鍊黃金與璀璨
琺琅的形體適足以
教睡眼惺忪的帝王清醒；
或者棲止於黃金的枝枒之上
對著拜占庭的貴胄仕女們歌吟
細說過去、現在，和未來。