



Language Arts, Reading

Learning Project **7**

Reading Poetry



This Learning Project deals with poetry; the poem in the Practice Test is “Sympathy” by Paul Laurence Dunbar. In the GED Practice Test, the focal question asks: “How Does the Speaker Relate To The Life Of A Caged Bird?” The first Reading Inquiry Activity (7-1) focuses on the during-reading strategy of asking questions to answer the question posed as the passage title.

At this point, the learner has been introduced to six different during-reading strategies: predicting (LP#2), monitoring (LP#3), summarizing (LP#4), determining importance (LP#5), imaging (LP#6) and asking questions (LP#7).

After the learners have had practice with the asking questions strategy, you might ask those learners who have practiced all the previous strategies to pick one of the other during reading strategies and use it to read this poem, or another you have chosen, and compare and contrast strategies and results.

Inquiry Activity 7-2 introduces all the questions related to the passage. In step 2, Becoming Familiar with the Problem, the learner, alone or in a group, is asked to identify what kind of question each of the question items is. Following this determination, the learners will answer the questions for step 3, Doing the Work.

Poetry is the genre with which most test-takers of the GED have the most difficulty. In part, this may be due to the compression of the language, but other problems may arise from the use of figurative language, or the personal, evocative nature of the genre itself. The Extending section in 7-2 has a number of activities that can be used for a further study of poetry.