

Creative Strand: Stimulus 9

Still I Rise - Dr Maya Angelou

*You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may tread me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.*

*Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.*

*Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.*

*Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops.
Weakened by my soulful cries.*

*Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own back yard.*

*You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.*

*Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?*

Out of the huts of history's shame

I rise

Up from a past that's rooted in pain

*I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.*

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear

I rise

Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear

I rise

*Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.*

I rise

I rise

I rise.

On the Artist

An acclaimed American poet, storyteller, activist, and autobiographer... Angelou had a broad career as a singer, dancer, actress, composer, and Hollywood's first female black director, but became most famous as a writer, editor, essayist, playwright, and poet. As a civil rights activist, Angelou worked for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. She was also an educator and served as the Reynolds professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University. By 1975, wrote Carol E. Neubauer in *Southern Women Writers: The New Generation*, Angelou was recognized "as a spokesperson for... all people who are committed to raising the moral standards of living in the United States." She served on two presidential committees, for Gerald Ford in 1975 and for Jimmy Carter in 1977. In 2000, Angelou was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Bill Clinton. In 2010, she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honour in the U.S., by President Barack Obama. Angelou was awarded over 50 honorary degrees before her death.

Points to unpack

- Poem can be looked at in part or in full
- Poem, as spoken word, can be used as an accompaniment
- Civil rights
- Emotive words
- Action words
- Enslaved *people(?)*
- Strength and resolve
- Adversity and resilience
- Equality

Source - [Poetryfoundation.org](https://www.poetryfoundation.org)