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**Purpose**

To become familiar with hearing poetry spoken out loud. To explore the meaning of a poem by translating it.

**Exercise 1)**

Listen to poets read their own work out loud. There are a ton of websites that allow people to listen to poetry for free. Or, you can attend a poetry reading online or in-person. Here are some places that you can hear them online:

- [“Poem-a-Day” from the Academy of American Poets](#)
- [“A Poetry Channel” on YouTube](#)
- [“Audio Recordings” from the Library of Congress Poetry & Literature](#)

To complete this exercise, I browsed 2riverview.org until I landed on a poem that I found interesting. I listened multiple times and was not afraid to pause the audio. Letting the poem sink in gave me more ideas about what the words meant to me.

[The 2River View 25.1 \(Fall 2020\)](#)

Below are some of the questions to think about and try to answer while/after listening

How are the words spoken?	What do I hear?
What do I see? Taste? Touch? Smell?	Is there a single time and place or many?
What questions do I have?	What does the poem mean to me?
What words stick out?	Why does this poem work?

**Comments by Cody Lake on [Susan Landgraf \*The Cello\*](#)**

It’s an incredible poem that took me a couple times. I hear Landgraf musically shape the poem. Landgraf speaks each word with an even pace and makes no attempt to stress any of the lines.

This is vocal storytelling. *The Cello* is a poem that asks to be read out loud. I appreciate this writing and reading because I felt really encouraged to speak. Right away, I noticed the repetition of “*there’s a ...*,” followed by descriptions of the scene.

Each stanza flows. I noticed that the word “cello”, in the title, and “cellist” at the top of stanza 4 are the only **cheh** syllables. These are the only places that the syllable is available for the ear. The sound cocoons the player and instrument in the poem.

This comes after really sitting on the poem for some time. The ability to forget about time and get lost in a poem is a great way for me to relax. The repetition and the imagery lend themselves to time and place sort of melting into one another.

## Poetry: Listen and Translate To Spanish

The music encompasses the whole river. Upon reading it feels like I have escaped to another physical location. Maybe, the music coming from the cello is creating the sound of water and animals. That's the power of a poem. The river can indicate both a body of water and the flow of music.

With poetry, we can go through various realms that are connected. I love the ingenuity of a frog knowing the well water taste.

I also appreciate how short the poem is without being abrupt. It is a poem that I definitely want to emulate and turn into my own iteration

Poetry: Listen and Translate To Spanish

Translating *The Cello* by Susan Landgraf

**The Cello**

*El Cello*

There's a river in there  
and a jumping frog that knows  
the taste of wells.

*Ahí dentro está un río  
y algunas ranas saltan  
desde el gusto del pozo*

There's an occasional  
gator and coffin or two, one  
of the coffins knowing  
how deep the ground goes.

There's a boat that wants  
a crossing.

*Ahí dentro está un caimán a veces  
o un cajón a la sepultura,  
De los cuales un conoce  
el fondo de la tierra,*

Poetry: Listen and Translate To Spanish

*Allí está una barca  
pensando en pasarse.*

There's a cellist singing  
the sap, old trees talking  
down the hollows  
until the clouds empty.

*Aquí dentro el cantante con su cello  
Llorando de savia,  
árboles viejos hablan  
en el bosque  
desde las nubes salen de la vacuidad.*

There's a river in there  
with rapids and pools  
and a well-worn boat  
that thinks it's a fish.

*Aquí dentro está un río  
con rápidos y charcos  
Y un barco muy desgastado  
que se considera como pececillo*

## Poetry: Listen and Translate To Spanish

### **Exercise 2)**

Translate a poem of your own. Maybe you don't know another language but you have insider knowledge of another topic. Is there a way to translate the poem you choose by using different words or phrases in the same language?