

### Activity #1 – Anne Bradstreet Background

After reading the background information about Anne Bradstreet, you will create a 3-question quiz about her. Provide answers to your questions.

### Activity #2 – “To My Dear and Loving Husband” & “Huswifery” (Edward Taylor)

When reading works from the Puritan era, it is important to stop and clarify meaning by rereading and restating difficult passages as needed in order to fully appreciate the literature. Be aware of the following as you read the Puritan poets.

**Archaic language** – words that were once in common use but that are now considered old-fashioned or out-of-date.

**Inverted syntax** – sentence structure in which the expected order of words is reversed.

Make a chart for each poem (“To My Dear and Loving Husband” and “Huswifery”) with a column for Archaic Language and one for Inverted Syntax. As you read both poems, record examples of archaic language and inverted syntax and restate so that they “make sense” to us.

Example from “Upon the Burning of our House”

Archaic Language

Inverted Syntax

“Blest” (blessed)

“when rest I took” (when I took rest)

Answer all of the questions in the margins of both poems in complete sentences.

### Activity #3 – Poetry Pairing

Reread “To My Dear and Loving Husband”. Read the Times article, “Bound by Love and Disability, and Keeping a Vow Until the End”.

Answer the following:

- 1) Why do you think this poem was paired with this article?
- 2) What does the pairing say about life today? Do you think someone looking at it in 25 years from now would “get” the same meaning? What about 100 years?

*Writing Assignment:* Write a dialogue between the poet and the journalist discussing their works.

## Anne Bradstreet

c. 1612-1672



Anne Bradstreet was essentially the first notable American poet, man or woman. Considering that Puritan women were not encouraged to improve their minds—let alone express their ideas—this achievement is remarkable.

**Coming to America** Anne Dudley Bradstreet was born in England and raised on an estate, which her father managed for the Earl of Lincoln. With access to the earl's library, she received a good education. In 1628, 16-year-old Anne married Simon Bradstreet. Two years later, the young couple sailed for Massachusetts.

After her privileged upbringing, Anne Bradstreet was not prepared for the harsh living conditions of colonial America. Her religious faith helped her endure these hardships—as did writing poetry.

**Personal Poetry** Bradstreet focused primarily on the realities of her life—her husband, her eight children, and her house. In 1650, without her knowledge, Bradstreet's brother-in-law had some of her verses published in London in a volume titled *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America*. It was the first book of poetry ever published by an American colonist.

# To My Dear and Loving Husband

Anne Bradstreet

If ever two were one, then surely we.  
If ever man were loved by wife, then thee;  
If ever wife was happy in a man,  
Compare with me, ye women, if you can.  
5 I prize thy love more than whole mines of gold  
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.  
My love is such that rivers cannot quench, **A**  
Nor ought but love from thee, give recompense.<sup>1</sup>  
Thy love is such I can no way repay,  
10 The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray.  
Then while we live, in love let's so persevere<sup>2</sup>  
That when we live no more, we may live ever. **B**

### **A** FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Reread lines 5–7. How does the poet use **hyperbole** in these lines to emphasize her feelings for her husband?

### **B** CLARIFY MEANING

Use conventional word order to restate the **inverted syntax** in lines 11–12. What relationship do the lines suggest between earthly love and eternal life?

### **Analyze Visuals** ▶

Many Puritan women stitched samplers like the one shown here. The samplers often depicted nature scenes or stories from the Bible. What values are suggested by the subject matter of the sampler?

1. **recompense** (rĕk'əm-pĕns'): payment in return for something, such as a service.

2. **persevere**: In Bradstreet's time, *persevere* would have been pronounced pŭr-sāv'or, which rhymes with *ever*.



# Huswifery

Edward Taylor



Make me, O Lord, Thy spinning wheel complete.  
Thy holy word my distaff<sup>1</sup> make for me.  
Make mine affections Thy swift flyers<sup>2</sup> neat,  
And make my soul Thy holy spool to be.  
5 My conversation make to be Thy reel,  
And reel the yarn thereon spun of Thy wheel. **F**

Make me Thy loom then, knit therein this twine:  
And make Thy holy spirit, Lord, wind quills:<sup>3</sup>  
Then weave the web Thyself. The yarn is fine.  
10 Thine ordinances make my fulling mills,<sup>4</sup>  
Then dye the same in heavenly colors choice,  
All pinked<sup>5</sup> with varnished flowers of paradise.

Then clothe therewith mine understanding, will,  
Affections, judgment, conscience, memory;  
15 My words and actions, that their shine may fill  
My ways with glory and Thee glorify.  
Then mine apparel shall display before Ye  
That I am clothed in holy robes for glory. **G**

**F CLARIFY MEANING**  
*Huswifery* means  
"housekeeping." What  
housekeeping activity is  
being described in lines  
1–6?

**G FIGURATIVE  
LANGUAGE**  
What **extended  
metaphor** does Taylor use  
throughout the poem to  
express his relationship  
to God?

- 
1. **distaff**: staff on a spinning wheel for holding the wool or flax to be spun.
  2. **flyers**: parts of spinning wheels that twist fibers into yarn.
  3. **quills**: rods or spindles used to wind and hold yarn.
  4. **fulling mills**: machines that beat and process woven cloth to make it denser and more compact.
  5. **pinked**: decorated.

# Poetry Pairing | 'To My Dear and Loving Husband'

By Rebecca Ruiz November 17, 2011 10:03 am

## Times Selection Excerpt

In an About New York column with the headline "Bound by Love and Disability and Keeping a Vow Until the End," Jim Dwyer writes:

At age 7, Edwin Morales met Noemi Rivera. Three decades later, sitting in a Szechuan restaurant on the Upper West Side, he slipped a ring on her finger. Both families opposed a marriage, and nature itself seemed lined up against them. They used wheelchairs because of cerebral palsy and needed help taking care of themselves. Still, Mr. Morales said, "We made a promise we weren't going to leave each other again."

They eloped and were married in the city clerk's office on a Tuesday afternoon in 1996. Their honeymoon was a day at Coney Island. His family got over being upset; hers remained estranged.

The other night, Mr. Morales, now 53, sat near his wife's coffin at a funeral home on St. Nicholas Avenue and discussed the days of a life that people around them had found amazing — the cooing and the squabbling, the midnight changes of adult diapers, the audacious rocking and rolling through the streets of New York.

They went to the circus every year and had a memorable outing to a salsa concert at Madison Square Garden, and Mr. Morales ventured as far as Flushing, Queens, to cheer on the Mets. They watched videos of "The Little Mermaid" and "Cinderella," and never missed a televised wrestling match. "Two hours before it came on, it was, 'Hon, we got to get the snacks,'" Mr. Morales said. "She'd curse me out for something, and then, 'Oh, hon?'"

... On Thursday afternoon, at a cemetery in Hackensack, N.J., Mr. Morales sat in the warm autumn sunshine, surrounded by generations of the family that spirited him out of Willowbrook half a century ago. He wept.

A white-haired man steered with a cane across the gnarled ground. Mr. Morales looked up at him: Ismael Rivera, the father of Noemi. It had taken him years to get over his daughter's departure.

"I kept my promise," Mr. Morales said. "I took care of her."

"Gracias," Mr. Rivera said, and hugged him.