

REALMS  
*of*  
GOLD

A  
CORE KNOWLEDGE®  
READER



VOLUME ONE

REALMS OF GOLD  
A CORE KNOWLEDGE® READER  
VOLUME ONE

EDITOR: MICHAEL J. MARSHALL

GENERAL EDITOR: E. D. HIRSCH, JR.

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CORE KNOWLEDGE® FOUNDATION  
801 EAST HIGH STREET, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22902  
[WWW.COREKNOWLEDGE.ORG](http://WWW.COREKNOWLEDGE.ORG)

ABOUT THIS BOOK

THE THREE-VOLUME *Realms of Gold* series brings together all the shorter literary works taught in the Core Knowledge Sequence for the middle school grades. Volume One includes those for grade six. Each volume also offers additional classic works in every genre for teachers and students interested in supplementary readings. Speeches and autobiographical excerpts were selected partly for their pertinence to historical topics taught in the Sequence at each grade level.

The Core Knowledge Sequence is based on the work of E. D. Hirsch, Jr. author of *Cultural Literacy* and *The Schools We Need*. It outlines a core curriculum in English/language arts, history and geography, math, science, the fine arts and music for preschool through grade eight. It is designed to ensure that children are exposed to the essential knowledge that establishes cultural literacy as they also acquire a broad, firm foundation for higher-level schooling. Its first version, covering grades one through six, was developed in 1990 at a convention of teachers and subject matter experts in Charlottesville, Virginia, and embodied the best guidance of cognitive scientists and international educational research. It was revised in 1995 to reflect the classroom experience of Core Knowledge teachers, and subsequently content outlines for preschool, kindergarten, and grades seven and eight were prepared. The Sequence is now used in more than a thousand schools across America. Its content is also offered through the Core Knowledge Series of books, *What Your Kindergartner-Sixth Grader Needs to Know*.

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# POEMS

# Maya Angelou

## *Woman Work*

I'VE GOT the children to tend  
The clothes to mend  
The floor to mop  
The food to shop  
Then the chicken to fry  
The baby to dry  
I got company to feed  
The garden to weed  
I've got the shirts to press  
The tots to dress  
The cane to cut  
I gotta clean up this hut  
Then see about the sick  
The cotton to pick

Shine on me, sunshine  
Rain on me, rain  
Fall softly, dew drops  
And cool my brow again.

Storm, blow me from here  
With your fiercest wind  
Let me float across the sky  
'Til I can rest again.

Fall gently, snowflakes  
Cover me with white  
Cold icy kisses and  
Let me rest tonight.

Sun, rain, curving sky  
Mountain, oceans, leaf and stone  
Star shine, moon glow  
You're all that I can call my own

## Charles E. Carryl

*The Walloping Window-blind*

A CAPITAL ship for an ocean trip  
 Was "The Walloping Window-blind;"  
 No gale that blew dismayed her crew  
 Or troubled the captain's mind.  
 The man at the wheel was taught to feel  
 Contempt for the wildest blow,  
 And it often appeared, when the weather had cleared,  
 That he'd been in his bunk below.

The boatswain's mate was very sedate,  
 Yet fond of amusement, too;  
 And he played hop-scotch with the starboard watch  
 While the captain tickled the crew.  
 And the gunner we had was apparently mad,  
 For he sat on the after-rail,  
 And fired salutes with the captain's boots,  
 In the teeth of the booming gale.

The captain sat in a commodore's hat,  
 And dined, in a royal way,  
 On toasted pigs and pickles and figs  
 And gummery bread, each day.  
 But the cook was Dutch, and behaved as such;  
 For the food that he gave the crew  
 Was a number of tons of hot-cross buns,  
 Chopped up with sugar and glue.

And we all felt ill as mariners will,  
 On a diet that's cheap and rude;  
 And we shivered and shook as we dipped the cook  
 In a tub of his胶味 food.  
 Then nautical pride we laid aside,  
 And we cast the vessel ashore  
 On the Gulliby Isles, where the Poohpooh smiles,  
 And the Anagazanders roar.

Composed of sand was that favored land,  
 And trimmed with cinnamon straws;  
 And pink and blue was the pleasing hue  
 Of the Tickletoe-easer's claws.  
 And we sat on the edge of a sandy ledge  
 And shot at the whistling bee;  
 And the Binnacle-bats wore water-proof hats  
 As they danced in the sounding sea.

On rubagub bark, from dawn to dark,  
 We fed, till we all had grown  
 Uncommonly shrunk,—when a Chinese junk  
 Came by from the torriby zone.  
 She was stubby and square, but we didn't much care,  
 And we cheerily put to sea;  
 And we left the crew of the junk to chew  
 The bark of the rubagub tree.

## A Chippewa song

*A Song of Greatness*

WHEN I hear the old men  
Telling of heroes,  
Telling of great deeds  
Of ancient days,  
When I hear them telling,  
Then I think within me  
I too am one of these.

When I hear the people  
Praising great ones,  
Then I know that I too  
Shall be esteemed,  
I too when my time comes  
Shall do mightily.

—TRANSLATED *by Mary Austin*

## Emily Dickinson

*"There Is No Frigate Like a Book"*

THERE IS no frigate like a book  
To take us lands away,  
Nor any coursers like a page  
Of prancing poetry.

This traverse may the poorest take  
Without oppress of toll;  
How frugal is the chariot  
That bears a human soul!

*"A Narrow Fellow in the Grass"*

A NARROW Fellow in the Grass  
 Occasionally rides—  
 You may have met Him—did you not  
 His notice sudden is—

The Grass divides as with a Comb—  
 A spotted shaft is seen—  
 And then it closes at your feet  
 And opens further on—

He likes a Boggy Acre  
 A Floor to cool for Corn—  
 Yet when a Boy, and Barefoot—  
 I more than once at Noon  
 Have passed, I thought, a Whip lash  
 Unbraiding in the Sun  
 When stooping to secure it  
 It wrinkled, and was gone—

Several of Nature's People  
 I know, and they know me—  
 I feel for them a transport  
 Of cordiality—

But never met this Fellow  
 Attended, or alone  
 Without a tighter breathing  
 And Zero at the Bone—

## Paul Lawrence Dunbar

*Sympathy*

I KNOW what the caged bird feels, alas!  
 When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;  
 When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,  
 And the river flows like a stream of glass;  
 When the first bird sings and the first bud opes,  
 And the faint perfume from its chalice steals—  
 I know what the caged bird feels!

I know why the caged bird beats his wing  
 Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;  
 For he must fly back to his perch and cling  
 When he fain would be on the bough a-swing;  
 And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars  
 And they pulse again with a keener sting—  
 I know why he beats his wing!

I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,  
 When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore,—  
 When he beats his bars and he would be free;  
 It is not a carol of joy or glee,  
 But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core,  
 But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings—  
 I know why the caged bird sings!

## Robert Frost

## Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

WHOSE WOODS these are I think I know.  
 His house is in the village, though;  
 He will not see me stopping here  
 To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer  
 To stop without a farmhouse near  
 Between the woods and frozen lake  
 The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
 To ask if there is some mistake.  
 The only other sound's the sweep  
 Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
 But I have promises to keep,  
 And miles to go before I sleep,  
 And miles to go before I sleep.

## George Gordon, Lord Byron

## Apostrophe to the Ocean

—FROM *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*,  
 Canto 4, nos. 178-184

THERE IS a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore,  
 There is society, where none intrudes,  
 By the deep sea, and music in its roar:  
 I love not man the less, but nature more,  
 From these our interviews, in which I steal  
 From all I may be, or have been before,  
 To mingle with the universe, and feel  
 What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean,—roll!  
 Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;  
 Man marks the earth with ruin,—his control  
 Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain  
 The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
 A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
 When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
 He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
 Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields  
 Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise  
 And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields  
 For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,  
 Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,  
 And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray  
 And howling, to his gods, where haply lies »

His petty hope in some near port or bay,  
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls  
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake  
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,  
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make  
Their clay creator the vain title take  
Of lord of thee and arbiter of war,—  
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,  
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar  
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee;  
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?  
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,  
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey  
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay  
Has dried up realms to deserts: not so thou;  
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play,  
Time writes no wrinkles on thine azure brow;  
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form  
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,  
Calm or convulsed,—in breeze, or gale, or storm,  
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
Dark-heaving; boundless, endless, and sublime,  
The image of Eternity,—the throne  
Of the Invisible! even from out thy slime  
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone  
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward; from a boy  
I wantoned with thy breakers,—they to me  
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea  
Made them a terror, 'twas a pleasing fear;  
For I was as it were a child of thee,  
And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
And laid my land upon thy mane,—as I do here.

## Langston Hughes

*Mother to Son*

WELL, SON, I'll tell you:  
 Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.  
 It's had tacks in it,  
 And splinters,  
 And boards torn up,  
 And places with no carpet on the floor—  
 Bare.  
 But all the time  
 I'se been a-climbin' on,  
 And reachin' landin's,  
 And turnin' corners,  
 And sometimes goin' in the dark  
 Where there ain't been no light.  
 So boy, don't you turn back.  
 Don't you set down on the steps  
 'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.  
 Don't you fall now—  
 For I'se still goin', honey,  
 I'se still climbin',  
 And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

## James Weldon Johnson

*Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing*

LIFT EV'RY voice and sing,  
 Till earth and heaven ring,  
 Ring with the harmonies of Liberty,  
 Let our rejoicing rise  
 High as the list'ning skies,  
 Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
 Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us  
 Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us  
 Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
 Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod  
 Bitter the chast'ning rod,  
 Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;  
 Yet with a steady beat  
 Have not our weary feet  
 Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?  
 We have come over a way that with tears has been watered  
 We have come, treading our path thro' the blood of the  
 slaughtered,  
 Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last  
 Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,  
 God of our silent tears,  
 Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;  
 Thou who hast by Thy might,  
 Led us into the light, Keep us forever in the path, we pray. »

Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we meet  
 Thee,  
 Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget  
 Thee;  
 Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand,  
 True to our God, true to our native land.

Rudyard Kipling

*If*

IF YOU can keep your head when all about you  
 Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,  
 If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
 But make allowance for their doubting too;  
 If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
 Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
 Or being hated don't give way to hating,  
 And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;  
 If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim,  
 If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster  
 And treat those two impostors just the same;  
 If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
 Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
 Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
 And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
 And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
 And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
 And never breathe a word about your loss;  
 If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
 To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
 And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
 Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"  
 If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
 Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch, »

If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,  
 If all men count with you, but none too much;  
 If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
     With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,  
 Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
     And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

## Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

### *A Psalm of Life*

TELL ME not, in mournful numbers,  
 Life is but an empty dream!—  
 For the soul is dead that slumbers,  
     And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!  
 And the grave is not its goal;  
 Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
     Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,  
 Is our destined end or way;  
 But to act, that each tomorrow  
     Find us farther than today.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,  
 And our hearts, though stout and brave,  
 Still, like muffled drums, are beating  
     Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,  
 In the bivouac of Life,  
 Be not like dumb, driven cattle!  
     Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, how'er pleasant!  
 Let the dead Past bury its dead!  
 Act,—act in the living Present!  
     Heart within, and God o'erhead! »

Lives of great men all remind us  
 We can make our lives sublime,  
 And, departing, leave behind us  
 Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,  
 Sailing o'er life's solemn main,  
 A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
 Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing.  
 With a heart for any fate;  
 Still achieving, still pursuing,  
 Learn to labor and to wait.

## Edgar Allan Poe

### *The Raven*

ONCE UPON a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak  
 and weary,  
 Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—  
 While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a  
 tapping,  
 As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.  
 “ ‘Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber  
 door—  
 Only this, and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,  
 And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the  
 floor.  
 Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow  
 From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost  
 Lenore—  
 For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name  
 Lenore—  
 Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain  
 Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;  
 So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood  
 repeating  
 “ ‘Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber  
 door;—  
 This it is, and nothing more.” »