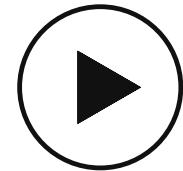


The Caged Bird

Maya Angelou



A VIDEO POEM



Full video, PPTx versions.

Text for reading.

Response and reflection worksheets.

Language organizer.

Comprehension Questions. Answer key.

Biographical research organizer.



A free bird leaps
on the back of the wind
and floats downstream
till the current ends
and dips his wing
in the orange sun rays
and dares to claim the sky.

CAGED BIRD



Maya Angelou

But a bird that stalks
down his narrow cage
can seldom see through
his bars of rage
his wings are clipped and
his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn bright lawn
and he names the sky his own.

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.

What does “freedom” mean to you?

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

REFLECTION

What does the caged bird symbolize in the poem?

.....

.....

Which line in the poem is the most powerful for you? Why?

.....

.....

What emotions do you feel while reading about the caged bird?

.....

.....

What two conditions does the author contrast?

.....

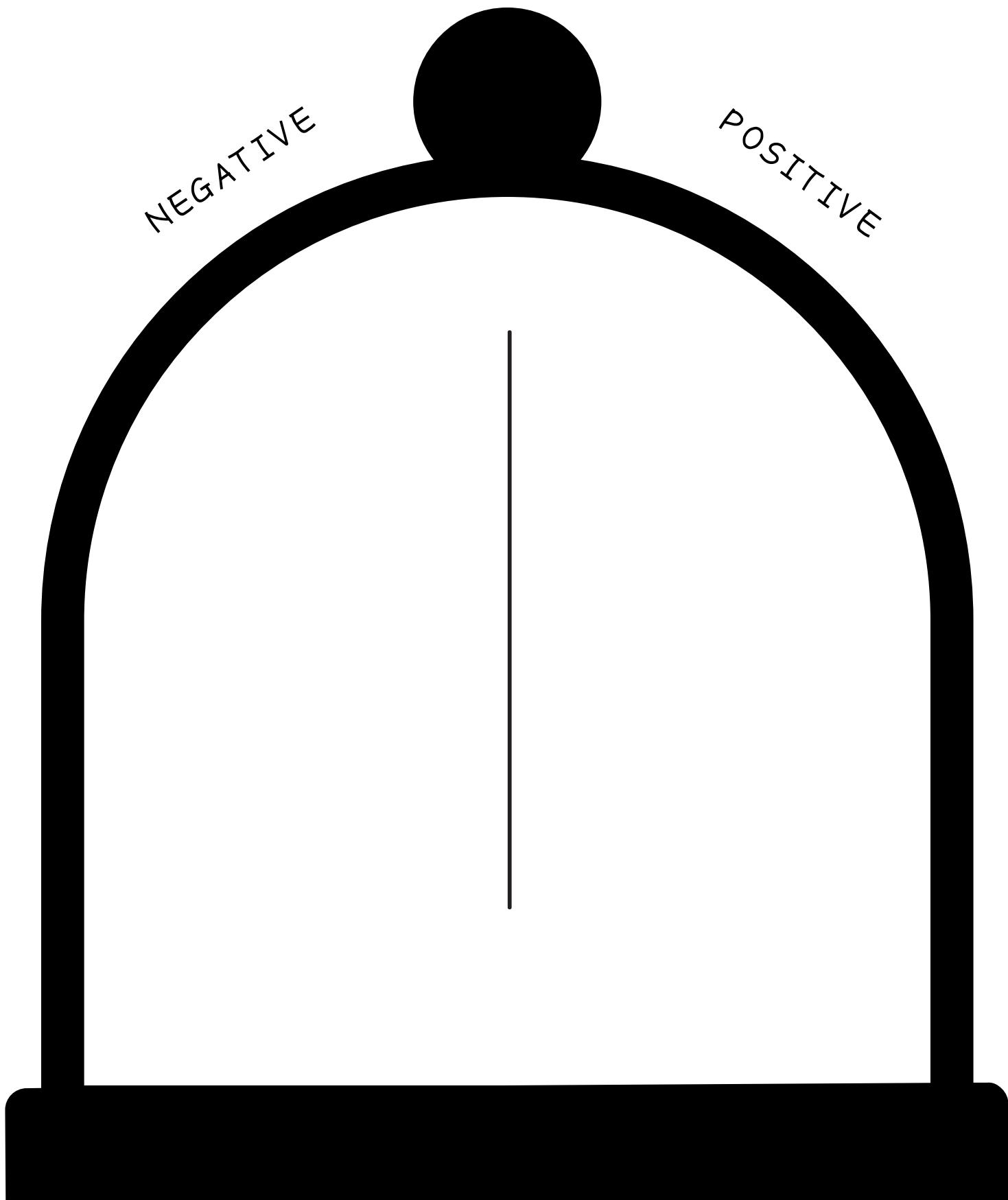
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Have you ever felt like a caged bird? When? How?

.....

.....

THE CAGED BIRD SINGS



MAYA ANGELOU

Research the life of Maya Angelou and complete the following categories describing her life, work, accomplishments and more ...

Biographical Information.

Writing. Creative Work.

Accomplishments.

Interesting Facts.

1. Which lines from the poem show that the caged bird has never been free?
 - A. "his wings are clipped and / his feet are tied / so he opens his throat to sing." (lines 12–14)
 - B. "his tune is heard / on the distant hill / for the caged bird / sings for freedom." (lines 19–22)
 - C. "But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams / his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream" (lines 27–28)
 - D. "The caged bird sings / with a fearful trill / of things unknown / but longed for still" (lines 31–34)
3. Why does the caged bird sing?
 - A. It wants to challenge the free bird.
 - B. It has to make others feel good.
 - C. It wants to entertain people.
 - D. It has only one way to express itself.
5. According to the poem, the free bird can best be described as
 - A. content.
 - B. hungry.
 - C. cautious.
 - D. thoughtful.
7. What is this poem mainly about?
 - A. Freedom and slavery
 - B. The lives of birds
 - C. Joy and singing
 - D. The dreams of birds
2. What does the caged bird's singing reveal about him?
 - A. He is terribly unhappy.
 - B. He does not want to fly.
 - C. He is afraid to be free.
 - D. He does not want to be heard.
4. Read these lines from the poem.

But a bird that stalks
down his narrow cage
can seldom see through
his bars of rage

What do these lines reveal about the caged bird?
 - A. The caged bird has strong feelings.
 - B. The caged bird is aware of its surroundings.
 - C. The caged bird has difficulty flying.
 - D. The caged bird is satisfied with its life.
6. What is the main conflict in this poem?
 - A. The caged bird hates the free bird.
 - B. The caged bird wants the life of the free bird.
 - C. The free bird laughs at the caged bird.
 - D. The free bird cannot sing as well as the caged bird.

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