

Analyze a Collection of Poetry by Its Cover:

The artwork on the cover of *Following the Silence* is a piece by Caroline Jennings titled "Red Road 2." Students can closely examine the artwork ([found at this link](#)) and read the artist notes at the bottom of the webpage. Students should then discuss the connections between the artwork and the poetry collection and determine why the artwork was chosen for the cover.

Analyze a Collection of Poetry by Its Title:

Students can create a concept map with the various denotations and connotations for both the verb "following" and the noun "silence." After discussing those terms, students should reread the title poem. Finally, students should discuss the collection as a whole and discuss possible reasons why Harshman titled the collection *Following the Silence*.

Analyze a Collection of Poetry by Section:

Teachers can first place students in groups and assign each group a section to analyze (One, Two, or Three). Students should discuss the epigraphs for the section, common themes or motifs, use of figurative language, etc. Groups will then create a poster or presentation with the notes from their discussions.

ZOOM OUT

Compare and Contrast the "Bookends:"

Students can reread and discuss both the opening poem, "August Ghosts," and the closing poem, "Just Here, Where These Horses...". Students can then compare and contrast the two poems using a Venn Diagram or other graphic organizer.

Create a Children's Book:

Harshman is also a beloved author of children's books. For a culminating project, students could take one of Harshman's poems from the collection and retell the story or write a new story with a similar theme in the format of a children's book.

