1. Watch the video of Amanda Gorman reciting her poem “The Hill We Climb” at Joe Biden’s inauguration. What impression did it make on you?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUJolBP2sEQ> [with subtitles]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZ055ilIiN4> [no subtitles]

1. **Work in 4 groups:**
2. Each group reads one part and fills in the missing words (Question 1).
3. One person from each group recites their part for the rest of the class to complete.
4. Groups answer question 2, then share answers with the class.
5. Groups answer question 3, then discuss their answers in class.

The Hill We Climb

1. Fill in the missing words:
2. carry
3. do
4. dream
5. justice
6. peace
7. raised
8. shade
9. unfinished
10. Underline in this part:
    1. a metaphor
    2. a pun (play with words)
    3. an image
    4. 2 pairs of rhyming words
    5. an example of alliteration (repetition of the same sounds)
11. What “loss” does Gorman refer to? Underline the lines that refer to this “loss”.

*By Amanda Gorman*

**PART 1**

When day comes we ask ourselves,  
where can we find light in this never-ending 1) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?  
The loss we 2) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,  
a sea we must wade[[1]](#footnote-2).  
We've braved[[2]](#footnote-3) the belly of the beast[[3]](#footnote-4),  
We've learned that quiet isn't always 3) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
and the norms[[4]](#footnote-5) and notions[[5]](#footnote-6)  
of what just is  
isn't always 4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
And yet the dawn is ours  
before we knew it.  
Somehow we 5) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ it.  
Somehow we've weathered[[6]](#footnote-7) and witnessed  
a nation that isn't broken,  
but simply 6) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
We the successors of a country and a time  
where a skinny Black girl  
descended from slaves and 7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by a single mother  
can 8) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of becoming president  
only to[[7]](#footnote-8) find herself reciting for one.

**PART 2**

And yes we are far from polished[[8]](#footnote-9).  
Far from pristine[[9]](#footnote-10).  
But that doesn't 1) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ we are  
striving[[10]](#footnote-11) to form a union that is perfect.  
We are striving to forge[[11]](#footnote-12) a union with purpose,  
to compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and  
2) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of man.  
And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us,  
but what stands 3) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ us.  
We close the divide because we know, to put our future first,  
we must first put our differences 4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
We lay down our arms[[12]](#footnote-13)  
so we can 5) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ out our arms  
to one another.  
We seek harm to none and 6) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for all.  
Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true,  
that even as we grieved, we grew,  
that even as we hurt, we 7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,  
that even as we tired, we tried  
that we'll forever be tied together, victorious.  
Not because we will never again know defeat,  
but because we will never again sow[[13]](#footnote-14) 8) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
Scripture[[14]](#footnote-15) tells us to envision  
that everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree  
and no one shall make them afraid.  
If we're to live up to[[15]](#footnote-16) our own time,  
then victory won't lie in the blade.  
But in all the bridges we've 9) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,  
that is the promise to glade,  
the hill we climb.  
If only we 10) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. Fill in the missing words:
2. aside
3. before
4. conditions
5. dare
6. division
7. harmony
8. hoped
9. made
10. mean
11. reach
12. Underline in this part:
    1. a metaphor
    2. a pun (play with words)
    3. an image
    4. 2 pairs of rhyming words
    5. an example of alliteration (repetition of the same sounds)
13. What might a hill represent? How can this be relevant to you? (What hill do you – or we – climb?)

**PART 3**It's because being American is more than a pride we inherit,  
it's the past we step into  
and how we repair it.  
We've seen a force that would shatter[[16]](#footnote-17) our nation  
rather than 1) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ it.  
Would destroy our country if it meant delaying democracy.  
And this effort very nearly succeeded.  
But while democracy can be periodically delayed,  
it can never be permanently 2) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
In this truth,  
in this 3) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ we trust.  
For while we have our eyes on the future,  
history has its eyes on us.  
This is the era of just redemption[[17]](#footnote-18)  
we feared at its inception[[18]](#footnote-19).  
We did not feel prepared to be the heirs[[19]](#footnote-20)  
of such a terrifying hour  
but within it we found the 4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
to author a new chapter.  
To offer hope and 5) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to ourselves.  
So while once we asked,  
how could we possibly prevail[[20]](#footnote-21) over catastrophe?  
Now we assert,[[21]](#footnote-22)  
How could catastrophe possibly prevail over 6) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_?  
We will not march back to what was,  
but move to what 7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ be.  
A country that is bruised[[22]](#footnote-23) but whole,  
benevolent[[23]](#footnote-24) but 8) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,  
fierce[[24]](#footnote-25) and 9) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
We will not be turned around  
or interrupted by intimidation[[25]](#footnote-26),  
because we know our inaction and inertia[[26]](#footnote-27)  
will be the inheritance of the next 10) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
Our blunders[[27]](#footnote-28) become their burdens.

1. Fill in the missing words:
2. bold
3. defeated
4. faith
5. free
6. generation
7. power
8. laughter
9. shall
10. share
11. us

2. Underline in this part:

* 1. an image
  2. 2 pairs of rhyming words
  3. 2 examples of alliteration (repetition of the same sounds)
  4. an example of contrast

1. Gorman refers to “a force that would shatter our nation”. What is talking about? Which lines refer to this “force”?

**PART 4**

But one thing is certain,  
If we merge[[28]](#footnote-29) mercy with might,[[29]](#footnote-30)  
and might with 1) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,  
then love becomes our legacy,  
and change our children's birthright.[[30]](#footnote-31)  
So let us leave behind a country  
better than the one we were 2) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with.  
Every breath from my bronze-pounded chest,  
we will raise this 3) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ world into a wondrous[[31]](#footnote-32) one.  
We will rise from the gold-limbed hills of the west.  
We will rise from the windswept northeast,  
where our forefathers first realized 4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
We will rise from the lake-rimmed cities of the midwestern states.  
We will rise from the sunbaked south.  
We will rebuild, reconcile and 5) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
And every known nook[[32]](#footnote-33) of our nation and  
every corner called our country,  
our people diverse[[33]](#footnote-34) and beautiful will emerge,  
battered[[34]](#footnote-35) and beautiful.  
When day comes we step out of the shade,  
aflame[[35]](#footnote-36) and 6) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,  
the new dawn blooms as we free it.  
For there is always 7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,  
if only we're brave enough to see it.  
If only we're brave enough to 8) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ it.

1. Fill in the missing words:
2. be
3. left
4. light
5. recover
6. revolution
7. right
8. unafraid
9. wounded
10. Underline in this part:
    1. an metaphor
    2. an image
    3. 2 pairs of rhyming words
    4. 2 examples of alliteration (repetition of the same sounds)
    5. an example of contrast
    6. an example of repetition
11. What is Gorman’s vision for the future? Refer to specific lines.

**WRITE YOUR OWN POEM**

Choose one of the following:

* Create your own poem, by choosing and rearranging words, phrases or lines from Gorman’s poem.
* Start your poem with a line from “The Hill We Climb.”
* Write your own poem inspired by a news event that moves, angers, saddens or inspires you, e.g. about the Covid-19 pandemic.

**… OR FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE MORE ARTISTIC…**

* Choose a line / some lines and draw a picture. Use the particular line/lines as a caption. Present it to the class.

1. walk with effort through water [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. endured or faced (unpleasant conditions or behaviour) without showing fear [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. being in the middle of a very bad situation or a dangerous place [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. accepted standards or a way of being or doing things; rules [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. ideas, beliefs [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. dealt successfully with a difficult situation or a problem [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. only to do sth: used to express sth surprising or unexpected [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. perfect, refined [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. original and pure; unspoiled [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. trying very hard [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Make, produce something especially with some difficulty [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. weapons [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. put seeds in the ground for a plant to grow [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. sacred writings, the Bible [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. achieve what is expected [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. break suddenly into very small pieces [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. saving or being saved from sin, error or evil [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. beginning [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. successors [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. get control or influence [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. state an opinion confidently, say that sth is certainly true [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. bruise (n): μελανιά / bruised (adj): μελανιασμένος [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. helping people in need [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. strong and powerful [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. threatening, terrorizing [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. lack of activity, unwillingness to make an effort [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. serious, careless mistake [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. combine, join together [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. great power or strength [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. a right a person has from birth, a natural right [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. marvellous [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. corner, a small place that is hidden or sheltered [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. very different, showing variety [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. injured [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. in flames, burning [↑](#footnote-ref-36)