# Audio file – “Introduction”

[01-Track-01.mp3](https://neagov-my.sharepoint.com/personal/travisd_arts_gov/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/01-Track-01.mp3)

N. Scott Momaday

O thin men of Haddam,

Why do you imagine golden birds?

Do you not see how the blackbird

Walks around the feet

Of the women about you?

Rita Dove

But let the world dream otherwise,

We wear the mask!

John Lithgow

“And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?

Come to my arms, my beamish boy!

O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!”

Speaker 4

To drive free! to love free! to dash reckless and dangerous!

Anthony Hopkins

I should have been a pair of ragged claws  
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

Alfred Molina

Do not go gentle into that good night.

Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Dana Gioia

Welcome to Poetry Out Loud. The National Recitation contest, a new program created by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. I'm Dana Gioia, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. We've put together this special CD for teachers and students to help you master the art of performing poetry.

To create the CD, we asked some of America's best writers and actors to recite their favorite poems and to discuss what poetry means to them. You'll hear some of the greatest verse ever written in English, but first I want to talk to you about how poetry might just change your life.