# Audio file – “I Hear America Singing”

[29-Track-29.mp3](https://neagov-my.sharepoint.com/personal/travisd_arts_gov/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/29-Track-29.mp3)

Dana Gioia

When you talk about free verse, the conversation inevitably comes around to Walt Whitman. His long, rhapsodic lines have no specific meter, but they're full of rhythmic energy. Here writer Richard Rodriguez recites a classic poem by Walt Whitman.

Richard Rodriguez

“I Hear America Singing”

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,

Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,

The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,

The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,

The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand singing on the steamboat deck,

The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands,

The wood-cutter’s song, the ploughboy’s on his way in the morning, or at noon intermission or at sundown,

The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of the girl sewing or washing,

Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,

The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly,

Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.