

# “Thanatopsis”

Means “thoughts on death”

# William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878)

- One of the Fireside Poets
- Was raised as a conservative Puritan, but in his later teens/young 20s, he rejected those beliefs in favor of Deism (belief in a supreme being who does not interfere in the universe)
- Wrote “Thanatopsis” when he was just 17.



# Directions

- After reading “Thanatopsis,” annotate the poem. Use the questions I give you to guide you in your annotations, but . . .
  - look up any unfamiliar words and note their definitions on your copy.
  - mark any literary devices you see.
  - mark anything you find interesting or have questions about.

If you don't do this....you will be lost on Monday. 😊

# Lines 1-30

- Lines 1-17: What thoughts might bring you down? What is the “narrow house” in line 12? What should you do when you feel down?
- Lines 22-30: What is going to happen to you when you die?

# Lines 31-67

- What are some of the “perks” of death?  
(Consult the whole stanza.)
- What does Bryant mean in lines 48-50 “All . . . bosom”?

# Lines 68-end

- How should we approach death?