



# Mount Rainier National Park

## Sister Mountain Project

### Settling

**Grade Level**

8-12.

**Objectives**

After completing this activity the student will be able to interpret and evaluate the language and conventions of the poem

**Timeframe**

1 period.

**Standards**

Washington State G.L.E.s

The Student understands and uses different skills and strategies to read:

1.3: Builds vocabulary through wide reading.

The student understands the meaning of what is read.

1.1 Demonstrate evidence of reading comprehension

1.2 Expand comprehension by analyzing, interpreting, and synthesizing information and ideas in literary and informational text.

The student reads different materials for a variety of purposes

3.4 Read for literary experience in a variety of genres.

**Background**

This poem by Denise Levertov appeals for two reasons. For the vast majority of people living around Puget Sound, Mt. Rainier is seen off in the distance, rarely visited up close. Additionally, Levertov captures the appeal of the mountain from the point of view of a newcomer, a position she shares with many Seattle residents.

**Procedure**

Directions for Students: Listen to the poem read aloud. Now read it back to yourself. Answer the following questions in complete sentences, using the term from the question to help you compose your answer.

What key images does the poet use to capture what she sees?

Make a list of the verbs used in the first stanza. What pattern can you detect?

Why do you think the poet might have chosen to use these words?

1. How would you describe the mood of this poem?

2. How does the poet see Mt. Rainier?
3. Poetry has been described as “the best words in the best order”.  
What do you think is the best line of the poem? Explain your choice

**Settling**

By Denise Levertov

Denise Levertov lived by Lake Washington near Seattle and she could see Mt. Rainier ( The Mountain) from her windows.

I was welcomed here- clear gold  
of late summer, of opening autumn,  
the dawn eagle sunning himself on the highest tree,  
the mountain revealing herself unclouded, her snow  
tinted apricot as she looked west,  
tolerant, in her steadfastness, of the restless sun  
forever rising and setting.

Now I am given  
a taste of the grey foretold by all and sundry,  
a grey both heavy and chill. I've boasted I would not care,  
I'm London born. And I won't. I'll dig in,  
into my days, having come here to live, not to visit.

Grey is the price  
of neighboring with eagles, of knowing  
a mountain's vast presence, seen or unseen.

Reprinted here from Kirk, Ruth, **Sunrise to Paradise, The Story of Mount Rainier National Park**, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1999.