Poetry-Writing Exercises for world *Poetry Day*

Exercise #1 – Lists

This exercise requires you to write a title at the top of your page, and then create a list down to the bottom of the page. You may find the beginnings of a poem, or a wonderful line, in some of your lists. Here are some examples:

Frustrations

- Feeling tired
- Not having enough time
- Being misunderstood
- Not able to speak clearly
- Having a disagreement
- Being late
- Feeling incompetent
- Feeling depressed

Firsts

- The first time…I was scared when home alone;
- First time I felt comfortable crying in public;
- First time we kissed;
- First time we kissed and it meant something;
- First apartment, the craziness;
- First time I said, "I love you;"
- First time someone told me "I love you;"
- First pair of glasses, with the black frames;
- First hangover…oh, yeah…

Now you try...

Make a list of fears, losses, happy memories, accomplishments, dreams—whatever you can think of. All of these present an opportunity for a poem.

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

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Exercise #2 – Making Similes

A simile is a phrase that uses a comparison to describe usually using the words "like" or "as". Look through a book of poems you like, and find a few similes to use as inspiration. Now go someplace where you can observe nature, people, traffic, or something. Based on what you notice, begin listing some similes. They don't have to make complete sense. Don't think about what else you would write with them. Just write whatever you think of.

Some inspiring similes from Stacie Naczelnik of *Hobby Lark*:

- "Sounds of leaves moving overhead like so many whispered conversations." –Jane Kenyon
- "He slumps like the very meaning of surrender." –Ted Kooser
- "Lawyers encircled the farm like a fence." –Ted Kooser

Now, start making your own. Some from Stacie's journal:
- Ivy creeping like silent footsteps.
- A breeze as gentle as a child awakening.
- Leaves rustling like distant voices.
- Leaves falling like men on a battlefield.
- Breath from her mouth like a wave of seawater.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____