

**Connect Across Texts**

In “The Pale Mare,” Consuela’s **goal** is to have the **freedom** to be who she really is. What does this poem say about freedom?

# CAGED BIRD

*by Maya Angelou*

A free bird leaps  
 on the back of the wind  
 and floats downstream  
 till the current ends  
 5 and dips his wing  
 in the orange sun rays  
 and dares to claim the sky.

**Interact with the Text**

**1. Inferences**

Circle the words in this stanza that tell about the free bird’s actions. What can you infer about it?

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**2. Analyze Structure: Poetry**

Poems have beats that give each line a certain rhythm. Count the beats in each line of the stanza and write the number of beats at the end of each line. How do the beats give the last line special emphasis?

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**Key Vocabulary**

- **goal** *n.*, a purpose
- freedom** *n.*, the power to do, say, or be whatever you want
- claim** *v.*, to say you have the right to something

**In Other Words**

**current** wind

## Interact with the Text

### 3. Inferences

Highlight the words that the poet uses to describe the bird's cage. What can you infer about the cage?

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### 4. Interpret

Underline the words in the fourth stanza that describe the feelings of the caged bird. What causes the bird to feel this way? Why do you think the bird sings?

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But a bird that stalks  
down his narrow cage  
10 can seldom see through  
his bars of rage  
his wings are clipped and  
his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing.

15 The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill  
of things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
20 on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze  
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees  
25 and the fat worms waiting on a dawn-bright lawn  
and he names the sky his own.

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams  
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream  
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied  
30 so he opens his throat to sing.

#### In Other Words

**rage** anger  
**trill** sound, song  
**longed for** wanted

**5. Analyze Structure: Poetry**

Underline the lines that describe the caged bird's song. What does this symbolize?

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**6. Inferences**

What do you think the poet means by "his tune is heard on the distant hill"?

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The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill  
of things unknown  
but longed for still  
35 and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.



# Selection Review **Caged Bird**

**A.** The poet uses symbols to represent ideas. Make an inference about each symbol's meaning.

**Symbol 1:** the cage

**Symbol 2:** the free bird

1. Inference for Symbol 1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Inference for Symbol 2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

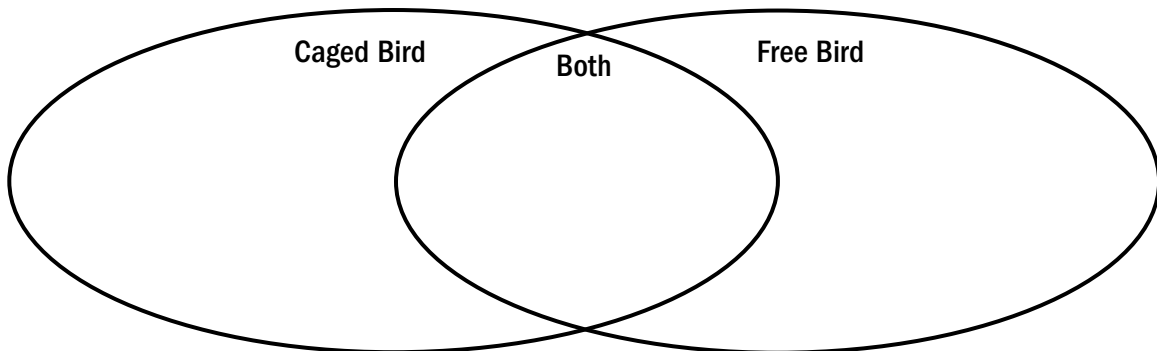
**B.** Answer the questions.

1. How do the rhyme and rhythm of the poem make it enjoyable to read?

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\_\_\_\_\_

2. List the two birds' similarities and differences in the Venn Diagram. Then answer the question.

### Venn Diagram



How are the two birds in the poem alike and different?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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