CREATIVE WRITING LIST – Poetry

Note: In preparing for the creative writing comprehensive examination, the student is expected to become familiar with most of these works, meaning the student should become broadly aware of their themes and importance. The student is not expected to read all of them, nor is this list meant to serve as a definitive canon. Rather the student should think of it as a starting point for assembling a list of about 40 works in consultation with the major professor. These are also works that have proven influential or inspiring for other writers and thus serve as good springboards for writing.

Single Author Collections

Ai
Vice: New and Selected Poems

Anna Akhmatova
Requiem

W.H. Auden
Selected Poems

John Ashbery
Collected Poems

Ted Berrigan
Sonnets

John Berryman
77 Dream Songs

Frank Bidart
Half-Light: Collected Poems

Elizabeth Bishop
The Collected Poems

Eavan Boland
New Collected Poems

Lucie Brock-Broido
The Master Letters

Gwendolyn Brooks
Selected Poems

Anne Carson
Autobiography of Red
The Beauty of the Husband
Lucille Clifton
*How to Carry Water: Selected Poems*

Robert Creeley
*Selected Poems*

Mark Doty
*My Alexandria*

Rita Dove
*Collected Poems: 1974 – 2004*

Cornelius Eady
*Brutal Imagination*

Carolyn Forché
*The Country Between Us*

Louise Gluck
*Poems 1962 - 2012*

Allen Ginsberg
*Collected Poems 1947-1997*

Seamus Heaney
*Opened Ground: Selected Poems*

Lyn Hejinian
*My Life*

Marie Howe
*What the Living Do*

Jorie Graham
*From the New World: Poems 1976 - 2014*

Joy Harjo
*How We Became Human: New and Selected Poems*

Robert Hayden
*Collected Poems*

Donald Justice
*Selected Poems*

Brigit Pegeen Kelly
*Song*

Galway Kinnell
*Book of Nightmares*
Kenneth Koch
Selected Poems

Yusef Komunyakaa
Neon Vernacular: New and Selected Poems

Philip Larkin
Collected Poems

Li-Young Lee
The City in Which I Love You

Philip Levine
New Selected Poems

Larry Levis
Elegy

Audre Lorde
Collected Poems

Robert Lowell
Selected Poems

W.S. Merwin
Migration

Alice Notley
Grave of Light

Frank O’Hara
Selected Poems

Sharon Olds
Strike Sparks: Selected Poems

George Oppen
Selected Poems

Sylvia Plath
Collected Poems

Claudia Rankine
Citizen

Adrienne Rich
Selected Poems: 1950 - 2012

Theodore Roethke
Collected Poems
Mary Ruefle  
Selected Poems

James Schuyler  
Selected Poems

Charles Simic  
New and Selected Poems

Anne Sexton  
Collected Poems

Frank Stanford  
The Singing Knives

Mark Strand  
New Selected Poems

James Tate  
Selected Poems

Natasha Trethewey  
Monument: Poems New and Selected

Jean Valentine  
Door in the Mountain

C.D. Wright  
Steal Away: New and Selected

Charles Wright  
Country Music: Selected Early Poems
Bye-and-Bye: Selected Later Poems

James Wright  
Collected Poems

Adam Zagajewski  
New and Selected Poems

Anthologies


Contemporary American Poetry, Donald Hall, ed.

The Oxford Book of American Poetry, David Lehman and John Brehm, eds.
Form and Theory

Eavan Boland and Mark Strand
*The Making of a Poem*

Stephen Dobyns
*Best Words, Best Order*

Paul Fussell
*Poetic Meter & Poetic Form*

Louise Gluck
*Proofs and Theories*

Robert Hass
*20th Century Pleasures*

Susan Howe
*My Emily Dickinson*

Richard Hugo
*The Triggering Town*

Mary Oliver
*A Poetry Handbook*

David Perkins
*A History of Modern Poetry, Modernism and After*

Carl Phillips
*The Art of Daring: Risk, Restlessness, Imagination*

Robert Pinsky
*The Sounds of Poetry: A Brief Guide*

Alex Preminger
*Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (as reference)

Mary Ruefle
*Madness, Rack, and Honey*

Barbara Hernstein Smith
*Poetic Closure: A Study of How Poems End*

Michael Theune
*Structure & Surprise: Engaging Poetic Turns*
Ellen Bryant Voigt
The Art of Syntax: Rhythm of Thought, Rhythm of Song

Charles Wright
Halflife: Improvisations and Interviews