



O Me! O Life!

O Me, O Life!

- ▶ Oh me! Oh life! of the questions of these recurring,
- ▶ Of the endless trains of the faithless, of cities fill'd with the foolish,
- ▶ Of myself forever reproaching myself, (for who more foolish than I, and who more faithless?)
- ▶ Of eyes that vainly crave the light, of the objects mean, of the struggle ever renew'd,
- ▶ Of the poor results of all, of the plodding and sordid crowds I see around me,
- ▶ Of the empty and useless years of the rest, with the rest me intertwined,
- ▶ The question, O me! so sad, recurring—What good amid these, O me, O life?
- ▶
- ▶ *Answer.*
- ▶ That you are here—that life exists and identity,
- ▶ That the powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse.

- 
- ▶ The poem is made up of 2 stanzas a question and an answer.
 - ▶ The poem is structured in free verse like most of his other poems.
 - ▶ He repeats "of" at the beginning of most sentences to make the reader think from his perspective.

- 
- ▶ This poem is about Walt Whitman questioning his own purpose in life.
 - ▶ In his answer he says we all contribute a verse in a powerful play. By this he means we all contribute something in our lives.
 - ▶ He structures it as a question and then answers it with what he believes everyone's purpose is.
 - ▶ He subverts our expectations by answering the question when most poems pose a question without any form of an answer.