**Anne Bradstreet Poems:** *Upon the Burning of Our House; To My Dear and Loving Husband*

Below are the main points for this piece. As we read and discuss, take notes of the material.

**Puritan Plain Style:** The use of uncomplicated sentences and the use of everyday words from common speech. There was a desire to not look arrogant before God or seem as though one was trying to be “too smart” (remember Adam and Eve ate from the tree of knowledge) so the Puritans went to great lengths to be direct and unornamented in their writings.

**Rhyme Scheme**: the pattern of rhyme in a poem

**Paradox:** a statement that appears self-contradictory but reveals a kind of truth

**Hyperbole:** a figure of speech that uses an incredible exaggeration, or overstatement, for effect

Reminder: we have open-notebook quizzes AND a notebook check!!!

**Before Reading:**

* Historical Context: Remember Anne Bradstreet was a female poet in Puritan America. Consider what we know of their religious beliefs, roles of women at the time, and types of literature from that time period. What can we assume about each poem?
* Examine the titles: Discuss what each poem might be about and what the tone of each piece may be, based solely on the titles.

**During Reading:**

**“Burning” (found on page 29)**

1. What is the rhyme scheme used by Bradstreet?
2. What is her first reaction to the fire (lines 7-10)?
3. What is her second reaction (lines 11-15)?
4. What can we surmise about Anne Bradstreet from this reaction?
5. How is she able to thank God for burning her house down (line 17)?
6. Lines 21-36 occur at some point later in time, after the fire. She is walking by the ruins of her house.
   1. How does she feel as she walks by?
   2. What material items does she miss in particular?
   3. What are some things her house will never have or experience again?
7. The literal translation of “adieu” is “I commend you to God.” Why does that matter?
8. In lines 43-50, Bradstreet thinks about another house that she hopes to one day inhabit. Where is this house? Who is the “Mighty Architect” who designed it?
9. How does this poem compare and contrast to Puritan values?

**“To My Dear and Loving Husband” (poem below)**

**THEMES:**

“Burning”

1.) Material possessions are not as important as family and belief in God and His plans.

2.)

3.)

“Husband”

1.) The love Anne and her husband share will last beyond their time on earth.

2.)

3.)

If ever two were one, then surely we.   
If ever man were lov'd by wife, then thee.   
If ever wife was happy in a man,   
Compare with me, ye women, if you can.   
I prize thy love more than whole Mines of gold   
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.   
My love is such that Rivers cannot quench,   
Nor ought but love from thee give recompence.   
Thy love is such I can no way repay.  
The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray.   
Then while we live, in love let's so persever  
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

1. What examples of figurative language (metaphors, hyperbole, etc) do you see in the poem?
2. Find an example of Puritan Plain Style. Explain why you selected the passage and how it is an example of Puritan Plain Style.
3. Paraphrase and explain the meaning of the following lines: *Then while we live, in love let's so persever/That when we live no more, we may live ever*.
4. How does this poem compare and contrast to Puritan values and ideals. Consider the love she shares for her husband and the comparisons she makes for it.
5. Does Anne Bradstreet’s poem reflect your ideas of marriage today? Why or why not? Be sure to include in your answer what her views are of marriage and what yours are!