

Why some people think

Walt Whitman

makes chocolate candy.

KIDS DON'T GET ENOUGH ART THESE

DAYS. Not in school. And not at home. They don't get enough access to theater, the ballet or literature. So no wonder some of them mistake America's most revolutionary poet for a box of chocolates. At least you don't have to taste each and every Walt Whitman poem to know which one you like.

Poet, teacher, nurse, abolitionist and delegate of the American spirit — hardly sounds like someone your kid should grow up to ignore.

WHITMAN HUGGED TREES, NOT

CHOCOLATES.

Born on Long Island in 1819, the son of a Quaker carpenter, Walt

Whitman grew up with an affinity for nature. This, combined with his awe of New York City during a time of rapid growth, inspired him to write a new and different kind of verse the likes of which America had never seen.

Whitman is best known for 1855's *Leaves of Grass*, a collection of poems that he would reinvent constantly throughout his career. But due



Walt Whitman satisfied his sweet tooth with rich, wave-like verse.

to its hedonistic, sensual, even narcissistic nature, the poems were often banned. This guy pushed the envelope, all right, before most folks even knew there was one.

BEFORE WE HAD "BOHO CHIC," WE HAD

WALT. Whitman not only changed poetry, but he also influenced an entire generation. And though he lived long before the summer of love, he was the original beatnik. An inspiring example for

writers like Ginsberg and Kerouac, Whitman's life and works were truly ahead of their time.

MY CAPTAIN AND YOURS.

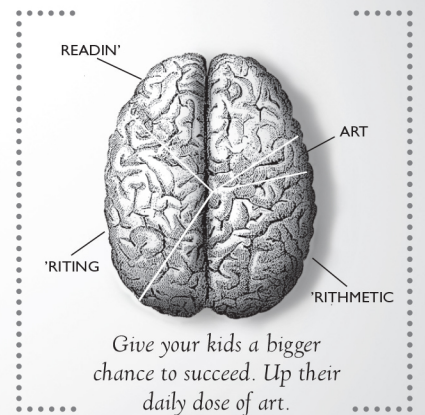
Leaves of Grass may be Whitman's most well-known work, but who doesn't recognize the cries of "O Captain! My Captain!" — the tear-jerking Whitman poem that inspired a catch phrase? American culture and Walt Whitman will be forever intertwined: both fiercely independent, individual and known for exploring the unknown. Paralysis forced Whitman to give up writing, but it doesn't mean we have to stop reading. Only you can give your child more access to art.

So make sure your kids get their daily dose. Take them to a musical. Or a poetry reading. Who knows? Maybe they'll grow

up to write a poem of their own someday. For *Ten Simple Ways* to get more art in your kid's life, visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org.



Too much of Whitman's art won't give you a stomachache.



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