



Exploring Contemporary Canadian Voices

the spoken word

Lorna Crozier



Bio

Lorna Crozier

- One of Canada's best known and beloved poets.
- Author of fourteen books of poetry.
- Winner of the Governor General's Award for Poetry.
- Editor of several anthologies, including: *Desire in Seven Voices* and *Breathing Fire: Canada's New Poets*.
- Chair of the Department of Writing and a Distinguished Professor at the University of Victoria.
- Her latest book is *The Blue Hour of the Day, Selected Poems*.
- Check out [Lorna Crozier's website](#) for more information.



Before Viewing

Lorna Crozier

Before viewing *In Envy of Dogs*:

- Describe some of the times you are tired of being human – when all the responsibilities and anxieties that go along with being you seem overwhelming.
- What animal or object would you rather be?



View *In Envy of Dogs*

1 minute, 3 seconds



After Viewing

Lorna Crozier

After viewing *In Envy of Dogs*:

- What does Crozier envy about dogs? Find three things she mentions that she likes.
- As a 'dog,' how does Crozier react to her human masters? Why would that be enviable?
- From hearing the poem, you can tell what this particular human is missing in her human life. Name at least two things.



Activities

Lorna Crozier

- WRITE a journal entry from the perspective of another creature. What is it like to be in the body of a squirrel, a lion, a cat, an otter, or whatever you have chosen? Write in the first person, as that creature.
- WRITE a poem using Crozier's poem as a model. Start your poem with "I am my own" Use as many details as you can, ones that you have already explored and new ones, that fit the creature you are.
- TRY a poem the other way around! What would your creature say back to you about how to live your life? What advice would you get from a dog, a cat, a lion, a mouse?



Before Viewing

Lorna Crozier

Before viewing *Packing for the Future*:

- Imagine you're taking a trip into your future. What personal objects and emotions would you take with you?
- What obstacles do you imagine you might encounter in this future trip? Who or what might help you on your journey?



View *Packing for the Future*

1 minutes, 54 seconds



After Viewing

Lorna Crozier

After viewing *Packing for the Future*

- Name several things Crozier suggests you pack for the future. Why do you think you might need some of those things?
- What does Crozier suggest you should leave room for? Why do you think these things are important to take with you? Consider the symbolic value of each item. Why socks, for instance?
- Name some of the things Lorna says will block your way.
- Offer some obstacles from your own life that these images might represent. For example, what (symbolic) “mountain” would you have to climb?
- Why do you think you should travel ‘lighter than the heart’? What does the phrase mean to you?



- WRITE your own version of ‘packing for your future.’ What items would you take and what do they represent for you? This is a poem that uses concrete details in order to suggest abstract ideas.
- USE some of the images and items Crozier employs in her poem to draw a picture, like a mind map, of journeying through the future or packing for the future. Add items you think will be of value to you. Include obstacles and people or things that will help you along the way.



Before Viewing

Lorna Crozier

Before viewing *My Last Erotic Poem*:

- What is one of your favourite love poems or love songs?
- Why is it significant for you? What story does it tell?



View *My Last Erotic Poem*

3 minutes, 35 seconds
Mature Content



After Viewing

Lorna Crozier

After viewing *My Last Erotic Poem*:

- Do you think this poem is funny? Why or why not?
- Mention some of the ways that Crozier describes old age (e.g., hearing, eyesight, memory)
- What techniques does Crozier use in her reading to enhance her performance? For example: pauses, modulating volume, memorizing the poem.



Activities

Lorna Crozier

- Write a poem or short story about aging. Suggested topics:
 - ▶ Write a letter to yourself as 40 years older or write to yourself now from the perspective of a person 50 years old. What would you say? What advice would you give?
 - ▶ People magazine named Sean Connery the sexiest man alive at age 59. National Geographic profiled Hal Wright, a 93-year-old pilot who flies his classic aircraft to deliver the Sierra Booster newspaper he produces. At the age of 90, Gladys Burrill is preparing for her fifth consecutive Honolulu marathon. Imagine yourself at 59 or in your 90's. What would you want your life to be like?
 - ▶ If you would like to see some of Lorna's earlier 'erotic' poetry, as a comparison to *My Last Erotic Poem*, do check out [The Sex Lives of Vegetables](#). (2 minutes, 12 seconds)
 - ▶ Notice her use of humour, her light touch with eroticism.
 - ▶ Crozier's poem *Carrots* was chosen by [The Literary Review of Canada](#) as one of Canada's most memorable poems.



Before Viewing

Lorna Crozier

Before viewing *Interview with Lorna Crozier*:

- What do you think it would be like to grow up in a house with no books?
- What important influences help to make a writer?



View *Interview* *with Lorna* *Crozier*

9 minutes, 45 seconds



After Viewing

Lorna Crozier

After viewing *Interview with Lorna Crozier*:

- Who or what influenced her to become a poet?
- How does she shake off her day job concerns to get into a frame of mind for writing poetry?
- What advice does she give to young people who want to be writers?



Credits

Videos – Filmed at the 2007 Words Aloud 4 Spoken Word Festival based in Durham, ON. The videos were produced/directed by Liz Zetlin and Myke Dyer.

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