

# FAVORITE POEMS TAMUK

## THE SUMMER DAY

Mary Oliver, 1935-2019

*This is my favorite poem because of the questions that are being asked. The poem is about asking the questions about who made the world and the creatures that live in it. The speaker goes on to say how she doesn't know how to pray, yet in a way she is almost praying because she doesn't know how to pray. This poem means a lot to me because I grew up in the Catholic Church and these are some of the questions that I have had at one point in my life.*

*Amy Ramirez  
Undergraduate student*

Who made the world?  
Who made the swan, and the black bear?  
Who made the grasshopper?  
This grasshopper, I mean  
the one who flung herself out of the grass,  
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,  
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down  
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.  
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face  
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.  
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.  
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down  
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,  
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,  
which is what I have been doing all day.  
Tell me, what else should I have done?  
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?  
Tell me, what is it you plan to do  
with your one wild and precious life?

*Oliver, Mary. "The Summer Day." Pinsky, Robert and Dietz, Maggie, eds. Americans' Favorite Poems. New York: Norton, 2000. 207.*