

A lament is an expression of sorrow. Consider the following poem:

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**Lament for the Non-Swimmers** by David Wagoner

They never feel they can be well in the water,  
Can come to rest, that their bodies are light.  
When they reach out, their cupped hands hesitate:  
What they wanted runs between their fingers.  
Their fluttering, scissoring legs sink under.

Their bones believe in heaviness, their ears  
Shake out the cold invasion of privacy,  
Their eyes squeeze shut. Each breath,  
Only half air, is too breath-taking.  
The dead man's float seems strictly for dead men.

They stand in the shallows, their knees touching,  
Their feet where they belong in the sand.  
They wade as carefully as herons, but hope for nothing  
Under the surface, that wilderness  
Where eels and sharks slip out of their element.

Those who tread water call and see their blurred eyes  
Turn distant, not away from a sky's reflection  
As easy to cross as the dependable earth  
But from a sight as blue as drowned men's faces.  
They splash ashore, pretending to feel buoyant.

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Think of something you can do; something you **like** to do. Write a poem about the plight of a person who does not possess that skill or have that passion. Your poem should appear as a series of four stanzas; each one five lines long. Do not rhyme your poem.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

Lament for	.....a non-dancer	.....a non-Facebooker
	.....a non-driver	.....a non-speaker of a language
	.....a non-meat-eater	.....a non-skier
	.....a non-skater	..... a non-artist
	.....a non-runner	..... a non-[favorite band]-lover

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David Wagoner was born in Ohio in 1929, and as an adult he published several poems and novels. He is well-known for his study and exploration of American nostalgia.