**Maya Angelou: "Caged Bird"**

The free bird leaps  
on the back of the wind  
and floats downstream  
till the current ends  
and dips his wings  
in the orange sun rays  
and dares to claim the sky.  
  
But a bird that stalks  
down his narrow cage  
can seldom see through  
his bars of rage  
his wings are clipped and  
his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing.  
  
The caged bird sings  
with fearful trill  
of the things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill   
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom  
  
The free bird thinks of another breeze  
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees  
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn-bright lawn  
and he names the sky his own.  
  
But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams  
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream  
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing  
  
The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill  
of things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.

**Writing Prompt:** Compare and contrast the caged bird to characters in the story using specific pieces of evidence from the story or the poem.