Hello everyone, I hope this finds you and your family well during this time. I miss seeing you and wish we could do this assignment together, but I know you can do it without me. Please use your phone or a dictionary to look up any words you do not know and remember an author’s perspective is how the person writing or narrating or how a character is feeling about the topic.

_HINT:_ Poetry is best understood when read aloud, so why not read it a few times and then read it aloud to someone? When you do, I think it will be better understood. As always, you can let me know if I am wrong.

**Part I**

_Learning Target:_ Students will be able to summarize the author’s perspective in “The Making of Poems” by Gregory Orr using three details from the text. This assignment may take two hours.

The topic sentence could be: In “The Making of Poems” by Gregory Orr the author’s perspective is...because...

**The Making of Poems** by GREGORY ORR

I believe in poetry as a way of surviving the emotional chaos, spiritual confusions and traumatic events that come with being alive.

When I was 12 years old, I was responsible for the death of my younger brother in a hunting accident. I held the rifle that killed him. In a single moment, my world changed forever. I felt grief, terror, shame and despair more deeply than I could ever have imagined. In the aftermath, no one in my shattered family could speak to me about my brother's death, and their silence left me alone with all my agonizing emotions. And under those emotions, something even more terrible: a knowledge that all the easy meanings I had lived by until then had been suddenly and utterly abolished.

One consequence of traumatic violence is that it isolates its victims. It can cut us off from other people, cutting us off from their own emotional lives until we go numb and move through the world as if only half alive. As a young person, I found something to set against my growing sense of isolation and numbness: the making of poems.

When I write a poem, I process experience. I take what's inside me -- the raw, chaotic material of feeling or memory -- and translate it into words and then shape those words into the rhythmical language we call a poem. This process brings me a kind of wild joy. Before I was powerless and passive in the face of my confusion, but now I am active: the powerful shaper of my experience. I am transforming it into a lucid meaning.
Because poems are meanings, even the saddest poem I write is proof that I want to survive. And therefore, it represents an affirmation of life in all its complexities and contradictions.

An additional miracle comes to me as the maker of poems: Because poems can be shared between poet and audience, they also become a further triumph over human isolation.

Whenever I read a poem that moves me, I know I'm not alone in the world. I feel a connection to the person who wrote it, knowing that he or she has gone through something similar to what I've experienced, or felt something like what I have felt. And their poem gives me hope and courage, because I know that they survived, that their life force was strong enough to turn experience into words and shape it into meaning and then bring it toward me to share. The gift of their poem enters deeply into me and helps me live and believe in living.

Part II: this assignment will take about two hours

Learning Target: Students will be able to analyze the poems below and summarize the author’s perspective using details from the poems.
The topic sentence could be: In the poem ____________, by ______ _____ the author’s perspective is ________________ because _________ and ________________.

April Is a Dog's Dream
BY MARILYN SINGER

april is a dog's dream
the soft grass is growing
the sweet breeze is blowing
the air all full of singing feels just right
so no excuses now
we're going to the park
to chase and charge and chew
and I will make you see
what spring is all about

The Cherry Trees
BY EDWARD THOMAS

The cherry trees bend over and are shedding
On the old road where all that passed are dead,
Their petals, strewing the grass as for a wedding
This early May morn when there is none to wed.
April
Launch Audio in a New Window
BY ALICIA OSTRIKER
The optimists among us
taking heart because it is spring
skip along
attending their meetings
signing their e-mail petitions
marching with their satiric signs
singing their we shall overcome songs
posting their pungent twitters and blogs
believing in a better world
for no good reason
I envy them
said the old woman

The seasons go round they
go round and around
said the tulip
dancing among her friends
in their brown bed in the sun
in the April breeze
under a maple canopy
that was also dancing
only with greater motions
casting greater shadows
and the grass
hardly stirring

What a concerto
of good stinks said the dog
trotting along Riverside Drive
in the early spring afternoon
sniffing this way and that
how gratifying the cellos of the river
the tubas of the traffic
the trombones
of the leafing elms with the legato
of my rivals’ piss at their feet
and the leftover meat and grease
singing along in all the wastebaskets