

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

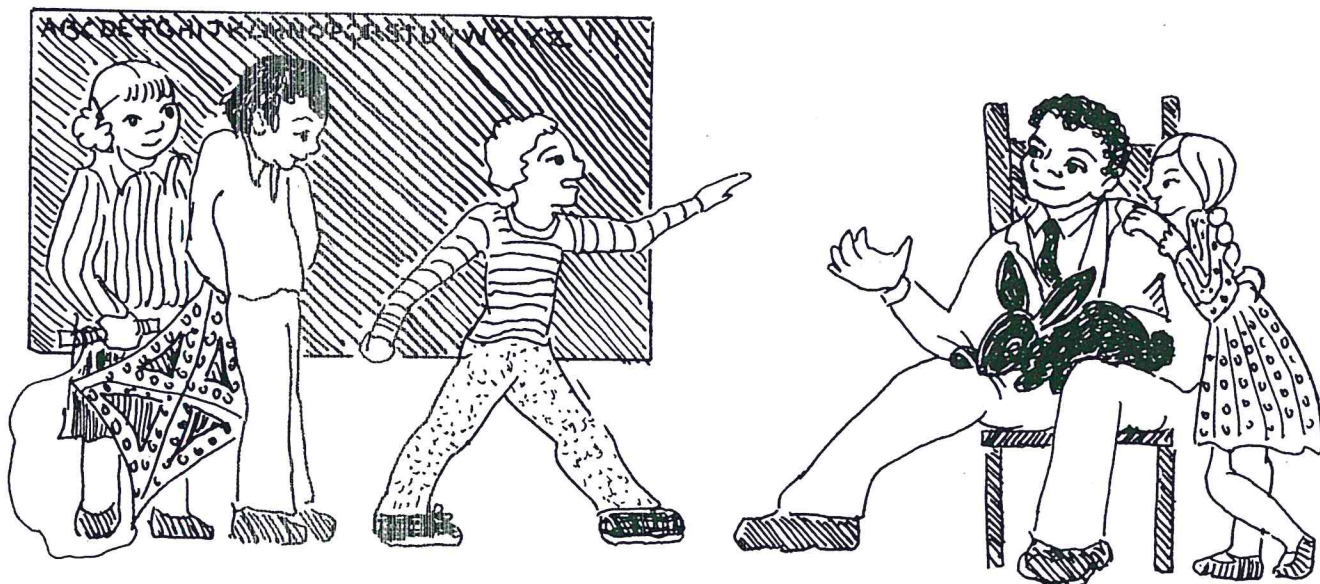
### DEFINITION POETRY (SINGLE CONCEPT POETRY)

★ Definition poetry is a form of free verse which uses a selection of succinct phrases to define an idea or a concept. These are arranged in a particular pattern which appears in a later example.

Sometimes it is fun to take an idea, a concept, or even an object and brainstorm for all the images and emotive language this one theme evokes in the minds of all students. It is important to encourage picturesque, sensitive phrases which are brief and have a good balance of images and expressions of feeling. In teacher workshops, this technique can be used with the word "teacher" as the concept to explore. After filling the chalkboard with ideas from the group, write,

What's a teacher?

on the board. Now, ask the group to select a phrase from the board which would make an interesting second line. When selected, write it as the second line, but indent it five spaces. Then seven or eight more lines are selected and each is written on a separate line keeping the margin established by the second line. The group is then asked to think about tone and rhythm after the selection of each line. When finished, the ending line, "That's a teacher," can be written keeping the same margin as the *first* line. The completed definition poem looks like the following:



Teacher

What's a teacher?

a friend and companion  
a sharer of knowledge  
dependable and caring  
fun to be with  
judge and arbiter  
referee and coach  
a planner, a designer  
a warm, sympathetic listener  
a human being worth knowing

That's a teacher!

Single concept poetry is fun to do with the entire class. There is an opportunity for vocabulary development and concept clarification with this free verse poetry. A fascinating discussion can evolve in the process of developing such a poem.

Here are topics that generate much discussion and call to mind many images and expressions of feeling. Perhaps some will be just right for your class.

fear	grandparents	night
grown-ups	a storm	love
war	a desert	racing
friendship	Hawaii	hockey
brother/sister	an argument	a friend
school	spring	courage
happiness	loneliness	a factory

DEFINITION POETRY

An easy way to write free verse is to pick a topic and define it by using short, colorful phrases. Such poetry is called definition poetry or single concept poetry.

1. Here are some ideas you may want to explore in writing your own definition poetry. Pick a topic or write in your own selection on the blank line.

- |                   |            |              |               |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| a monster         | fear       | baseball     | _____         |
| a nightmare       | loneliness | swimming     | (your choice) |
| a cemetery        | friendship | snowmobiling |               |
| an amusement park | peace      |              |               |

2. Now think of at least twelve, short, poetic phrases and expressions for your topic.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Read your expressions carefully. Change them, if you need to, so that they are clear, strong expressions. Now select six of the best and complete this definition poem.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Title)

What's \_\_\_\_\_?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

That's \_\_\_\_\_!

By: \_\_\_\_\_

