

# 30 Poems: A Celebration of Poetry

What is the best part of you? Write a descriptive poem about your favorite part of you. Here are a few bullet points to get you started.

- describe what your best part looks like — size, color, shape, texture
- tell what your best part allows you to do that you enjoy
- state the words, *the best part of me*, somewhere in your poem

What if children ruled the world? Write a poem that imagines this scenario? Consider making this phrase repeat two or three times in the poem.

**Write a poem about someone from a distant place and/or time (past or future) as though you were that person.**

Poetry is about noticing the poems resting in pockets of your day or hiding in plain sight. Write a poem about something you noticed over the weekend or something that you notice today. Use the poem to take a closer look.

You have learned a lot in your lifetime. I bet you have some advice to give that would, if not make life easier for another, comfort another in their journey to make sense of this world. If you are up for it today, write an advice poem. If not, write about anything you wish.

<p>We all have secrets. Some are serious and life altering and some might be fairly inconsequential -- still, carrying a secret can take its toll. If you're up for it, confess today in a poem.</p> <p>Of course, you may and are encouraged to write about anything you wish.</p>	<p>People say that music is the universal language. It's the one language everyone can understand, regardless of whether you speak English, Spanish, or Chinese. Think about the role of music in your life, and maybe use one of the following questions to get you writing.</p> <p>*How does music make you feel?</p> <p>*When do you need it the most?</p> <p>*What does the music you listen to say about you?</p> <p>*Imagine the world without it...</p> <p>Challenge: Include a link to a song you want us to listen to as we read your poetry!</p>	<p>We all know this world is made up of so many different types of people. As teachers, we try to help you celebrate these differences &amp; practice acceptance. Write about the different "types" of people you know. Maybe start your poem with one of the following lines:</p> <p><i>There are two types of people in this world...</i></p> <p><i>The opposite of me is...</i></p> <p><i>I celebrate the differences in...</i></p> <p><i>The difference between acceptance and tolerance is...</i></p>	<p>In school, we study courageous figures in history, courageous characters in the novels we read, and courageous people in our world right now. Do we talk enough about the courage within YOU? When was the last time we asked you to share stories of your courage? Have you ever heard about our courageous moments?</p> <p><i>On this cold Saturday, write about the COURAGE within you.</i></p>	<p>Often writers use images, paintings, or photographs to inspire writing. Today, pick one of the following pictures to write about.</p> <p>Consider one of the following ideas:</p> <p>*Write from the perspective of one of the people.</p> <p>*Tell the story of the image. What is happening?</p> <p>*Pick an object, and write from its perspective.</p> <p>*Personify a feeling, object, idea, feeling from one of the images.</p>
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<p>Write a poem about family. Try using one of the following questions to get you started:</p> <p>*What do you know about your family roots?</p> <p>*If you could speak to an ancestor you never met, what would you ask?</p> <p>*Begin with a phrase you hear your parents/siblings/grandparents always say.</p>	<p>An <b>ode</b> is a poetry form that originated in Ancient Greece. Odes typically celebrated great athletes or public figures, memorable events, or wondrous places, and people often sang them publicly. Writers still compose odes today as a way to celebrate the worth and beauty of people, places, and things. You'd be surprised how some writers celebrate the most ordinary things in extraordinary ways. Give it a shot.</p> <p><b>Try the following tips when working on your odes:</b>  <b>Pick an ordinary place or thing.</b>  <b>Give your subject praise or thanks. (<i>Oh, _____!</i>)</b>  <b>Speak directly to the object.</b>  <b>Use adjectives to describe it.</b>  <b>Use verbs to bring that object to life. (<i>Personification</i>)</b>  <b>Use repeated lines.</b></p>	<p>Our days are filled with people coming and going, quick remarks, a "how are you" without waiting for the real answer, and oftentimes a comment that moves us to smile or hurt.</p> <p>Write a poem that begins with the last thing you can remember someone saying to you today or yesterday. See if you can use that line two or three times.</p>	<p>There is poetry in ritual and routine. For example, if you love baseball, you might talk about the game itself and then why it is so important to you or our country (or if you are a Cub/Sox fan, why it is important to Chicago). If you are a musician, you may have a ritual for preparing your reed to play the clarinet. If you are a dancer, the warm-up has movement that is the stuff of poetry. If you are superstitious in any way for any activity, you may find a poem in the superstitious sequence of success.</p> <p>Write a poem about the ritual of a sport or activity and its importance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include the objects you need</li> <li>• describe the movements you make</li> <li>• use the lines and line-breaks to take you from the beginning to the end of the ritual</li> </ul>	<p>Poems can have many voices swimming around in the black and white spaces of the poem. And poems can be written by many hands shaping those spaces. Today, consider writing a poem with two or more voices or grab a friend a poem together.</p>
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<p>Weekends are a time of lists. We make lists of things to buy, places to go, people to see, and things we need to bring to fill all those lists (drinks, snacks). There is poetry in those lists if you look closely, and there can be poetry in other kinds of lists: lessons learned, gratitude lists, favorite songs, and, of course, bucket lists.</p>	<p>Today, look to your hands for inspiration. Our hands have such power to work but also to heal and to hurt. Whose hands have helped you, hurt you? How have you used your hands to help or hurt? Look closely at your hands. What story can your hands tell of the life you've lived, want to live?</p>	<p>Look to food for writing inspiration today. A poem might be hiding in a picnic, a perfect scoop of ice cream, or a recipe. Write about a memorable meal (e.g., family dinner that was lovely or went wrong). Write about how you prepare your favorite food (e.g., perhaps you prepare it with a loved one- parent, child, friend, grandparent). Write about a recipe you learned from your grandparent</p>	<p>Today, we encourage you to write a poem about a place you have traveled to. It could be a road trip you took to Florida, a camping trip to Wisconsin, a day trip to Six Flags, a weekend trip to visit your uncle, a summer stay with your <i>abuelo</i> and <i>abuela</i> in Mexico, etc.</p> <p>Try to include sensory language. This means you weave in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did you see?</li> <li>• What were the smells?</li> <li>• What tastes do you remember?</li> <li>• What were the sounds?</li> <li>• What did you feel?</li> </ul>	<p>Gifts are a way for us to make others know we care. A gift can be as simple as an origami dinosaur you made for your little brother or as big as a new gaming system. Write about a memorable gift you gave or received. Or, perhaps try one of the following challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the gift without <i>telling</i> us directly what it is</li> <li>• Think about one of the people you care about the most. Describe a situation where you give them something special &amp; irreplaceable.</li> <li>• Set up your poem as a debate -- <i>one side for / other side against gifts</i></li> <li>• What is your dream idea for a gift? Worst gift idea?</li> <li>• Is there such thing as a gift you cannot see?</li> <li>• Bring us into a moment from your childhood. <i>You are opening a gift and...</i></li> </ul>
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Today you're encouraged to play "Connect the Words." What this means is that you will see a list of words, and you must string them together to create a narrative poem (telling a story). For example, if you pick #5, you'll want to find a way to place *path*, *marking*, *window*, *sky*, *light* and *white* together somewhere in your poem. Perhaps *italicize* them as you use them in your piece. Have fun!

1. cry, grip, red, box, secret, cord
2. wonder, gold, web, border, track, glimpse
3. float, song, frame, balloon, calm, purple
4. chair, shadow, dial, repair, candle, cup, yellow
5. path, marking, window, sky, light, white
6. fear, snow, crystal, sky, glow, footprints, run
7. courage, frame, sharp, cold, metallic, wire, slump
8. rise, platform, cries, thunder, stone, path, danger
9. water, sleep, blue, fragile, reach, late
10. book, scratch, far, wonder, wooden, end

Today is Earth Day! In honor of this day, and the planet we call home, please find a picture that you think captures something beautiful, mysterious, curious, perplexing, etc. about our home. Then, write a poem about that special thing we should celebrate about Earth!

"Gratitude": *noun*, the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness. Today, write a gratitude poem. Perhaps you will begin by making a list of all the things for which you are thankful -- include people, experiences, objects, abilities. This could be your poem, or perhaps one entry really resonates with you and asking for you to say more about why it is on your list. Or, perhaps you will write your gratitude poem in the form of a letter of thanks to someone or something.

Where were you when ... ? Have you witnessed something amazing and knew it was special or history-in-the- making -- on TV or in person? Have you witnessed any national or large-scale tragedy? Have you witnessed something and thought *This is a miracle* or *This is going to change things*? There's a poem in that memory. Describe where you were and what you were doing when you learned the news. Describe what you first thought and how you felt. What do you remember most?

Write a break up poem - names are optional. It might be a break up with sweetie, but it could be about breaking up with a bad habit. Your break up poem might be sad, but it can also be an ode or a celebration of your time "together." One technique is to use apostrophe (not the punctuation mark) to talk to the object/subject directly. Give this a go, or go in another direction today. By now, after twenty-five days, you are a poet and you know what helps you find the flow.

<p>In 2011, <i>Steve Jobs</i> was eulogized the world over as a leader, innovator and risk-taker whose mantras included the Apple motto "Think different."</p> <p>Einstein said, "Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value."</p> <p>Wayne Gretzky said, "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take."</p> <p>Amelia Earhart said, "The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity."</p> <p><i>What are your own guiding principles? What beliefs do you follow? If you'd like some ideas, read this <a href="#">list of 100</a>. There is a poem there. Share it in the comment section below!</i></p>	<p>Today we ask you to think about writing a poem about something you'd like to see changed in the world. Create a sense of urgency and call us into action.</p> <p>Challenges:</p> <p>1) opening stanza(s) could describe the problem you see</p> <p>2) then create a shift where you communicate what we can do to bring about change</p> <p>Hope this inspiration sounds interesting to you. Remember, you are always free to post an original poem idea. Happy writing!</p>	<p>As writers, we often experience the magic of escaping our own lives when we change our perspective and step into the shoes of someone else. Today we challenge you to write a poem from another person's point of view. You will be amazed to see what you discover about others when you put your life on the shelf for a bit.</p> <p><u>Point of View Ideas:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An old person</li> <li>• A character from a movie or book you are reading</li> <li>• One of your parents</li> <li>• A historical figure in history you are studying</li> <li>• Your grandchild</li> <li>• A bully / a victim</li> <li>• An animal</li> <li>• An emotion (love, fear, worry, regret, jealousy, etc.)</li> <li>• In object in your house</li> </ul>	<p>Today we want to have you ponder about the different reasons we laugh and cry. These are actions we all experience and it's through such universal understandings that we feel connected to one another. Check out the following challenges to get you started;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think of a time you laughed or cried</li> <li>• What do laughter and crying have in common?</li> <li>• Personify Laughter and Cries (give them human characteristics and use words like <i>breathes, fights, taunts, worries, whispers, etc.</i> to create personification)</li> <li>• Describe someone's laughter</li> <li>• What do you feel when others laugh or cry?</li> </ul>	<p>We have shared this space for 30 days, 30 days of words, phrases, images, and lines borrowed from lives lived and imagined. Today, we'd like to encourage you to select a day from our blog and reread the poems looking for lines you can borrow to make a new poem, a poem that honors and celebrates other poets who've shared their lives with us this past month. After your poem, write a thank you to the poets who inspired your verse.</p> <p>Of course, on this last day, you may have more poems to write, perhaps saving them for the just-right day. Well, today is the just-right day. Share.</p>
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