



SELF-AWARENESS

"I Am" Poem



TEACHER/FACILITATOR NOTES

Students/participants will write and illustrate a personalized poem using a series of writing prompts. While this activity can easily be adapted for whole-class use, a small-group setting provides an effective structure for supporting students/participants who will benefit from focused attention on deepening their awareness of themselves and how they connect to others.



DURATION: 45 minutes

GOALS: [Teacher/Facilitator and Student/Participant](#)

Materials:

- ["I Am" Poem Format](#)
- Pencils, crayons, and colored pencils



MAIN POINT: Introducing the importance of Self-Awareness (3 minutes)

- Thinking about the feelings we experience can lead to understanding and managing them effectively.
- Sharing our thoughts and feelings in writing provides an opportunity to better understand ourselves and others.



GUIDING LANGUAGE

Today we're going to create poems together that will help us share some of our feelings and thoughts with others. Poetry gives us a chance to use just a few words, thoughtfully chosen, to tell strong, important ideas. We'll be practicing our Self-Awareness skills, thinking carefully about what we really think is true for us, today.



MAIN POINT: Introducing the writing structure (12 minutes)

- Responding to structured writing prompts can create a sense of safety for naming and sharing important feelings.
- Guide students/participants through the series of prompts, providing support as needed.




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GUIDING LANGUAGE

"We're going to create "I Am" poems that will be a way to think about feelings we have that are important to us. You'll have time to illustrate your final copy of your poem.

I'm going to read some phrases that you will add your thoughts to, creating each line of your poem. You have these phrases printed on your draft paper that you can write on now, putting down your thoughts as I read through them with you.

Let's start with the first line, "I am..." Write your first name, or if you want, your nickname. Whatever you most like people to call you.

Next comes, "Relative of..." You could put son or daughter, and put parents' names down, or you could name another relative connection and put their name. Like "Granddaughter of Donald" or "Little sister of Kathy." You get to choose just what you want to say for each of these categories.

This is a first draft, so just let your ideas flow. Put down as many words as come to mind for each one. In your final draft we're aiming for three words, for each of these next phrases. Whatever is right for you. You're the poet!

Read each, with pauses between for writing.

Who needs...

Who loves...

Who sees...

Who fears...

Who dreams...

Next is "resident of." That means where you live. You can put your city or state, or your neighborhood or street. Whatever place means most to you.

And then your last name—and that's it! Now, read back through this first draft. If you have more than three words for each of the "who" phrases, circle the ones you think are strongest, that you like the best. If you have less than three, think again to see if there's another one you'd like to add.



MAIN POINT: Partner share (6 minutes)

Provide time for students/participants to share their poems with partners.





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GUIDING LANGUAGE

Read your poem aloud to your partner. While you are still in the “speaker” role, your partner will do two things. First, they’ll give a specific appreciation for an idea, word choice, style, and so forth. Second, your partner will ask one clarifying question. For example, the question could start with the phrase “Tell me more about...”



MAIN POINT: Final drafts—individual student/participant work (20 minutes)

Assist students/participants with edits as needed. Then have students/participants copy their poems into final draft form and illustrate or decorate them.



GUIDING LANGUAGE

As you finish your first draft, share it with me so we can make sure you’re publication ready! Once we both agree you’re good to go, you can use this paper and the art supplies to copy your poem and illustrate or decorate it. Take your time, so that you’re very satisfied with it.



MAIN POINT: Reflection and closure

Provide time for students/participants to reflect and to share with partners or the group.



GUIDING LANGUAGE (4 minutes)

Let’s take a moment to step back and admire our work. It’s very powerful to think deeply about what’s important to us! We won’t be sharing these answers aloud, but let’s reflect for a moment. Who you would most like to be able to share your poem with? Pause. Who do you wish would write a poem like this about themselves, so you could get to know them better? Pause.

With a new shoulder partner, take turns reading your poem aloud. When you are the listener, pay special attention to any connections you notice, things you have in common with your partner. When partners finish reading, the listener offers one appreciation and one connection they made when listening to the poem. Then switch roles.



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Teacher / Student Goals

Self-Awareness: A child's realistic understanding of her/his strengths and challenges, with a consistent desire for self-improvement.

My students/participants are able to:

- Say positive things about themselves and others
- Notice and name challenging feelings
- Express looking forward to activities or events

I am aware of my individual students'/participants' abilities to:

- Notice and name positive and challenging feelings
- Describe people and places that are important to them

The environment I create supports my students'/participants' growth related to:

- Developing their abilities to confidently share personal feelings and ideas
- Developing their abilities to respectfully listen to others who are sharing personal information and interests

Student/participant: Self-Awareness goals and demonstrated behaviors

Students/Participants will:

- Reflect on and name important feelings
- ("I can identify my feelings.")
- Reflect on and name valued connections to people and places
- ("I can tell others about parts of my life that are important to me.")
- DESSA Optimistic Thinking: Reflect on and name hopes for the future
- ("I can connect my feelings to my daily life and to my future.")

DESSA SELF-AWARENESS INDICATORS

(Highlighted indicators are directly addressed in this lesson.)

I can:

Make accurate statements about events in my life
Teach another person to do something (extension activity)
Ask questions to clarify what I did not understand
Show an awareness of my personal strengths
Ask somebody for feedback
Describe how I was feeling
Give an opinion when asked

"I Am" Poem

I am _____

Relative of _____

Who needs _____

Who loves _____

Who sees _____

Who fears _____

Who dreams _____

Resident of _____

Last name _____