Diamante Poem Writing Assignment

Martin Luther King, Jr. chose powerful words to communicate his message to the people assembled around the Lincoln Memorial for the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The power of his words is immediately obvious in the fact that most of us recognize the phrase "I have a dream" while fewer of us would recognize the name "March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom." The words from Dr. King's speech have become more meaningful than the specific name of the event where it occurred.

To explore the power of the words from Dr. King's speech, we will write some short poems, diamante, which are based on contrasting words or ideas and shaped like a diamond (The word *diamanté* is from the French, meaning decorated or sparkling like a diamond). Diamante consists of seven lines, which move from one concept to the opposite, following this pattern:

Line 1	Noun	opposite of line 7
Line 2	Adjective, Adjective	description of line 1
Line 3	Participle, Participle, Participle	*-ing* or *-ed* words describing line 1
Line 4	Four words OR a four-word phrase	first two about line 1; second two about line 7 OR a phrase that describes the relationship between line 1 and line 7
Line 5	Participle, Participle, Participle	*-ing* or *-ed* words describing line 7
Line 6	Adjective, Adjective	description of line 7
Line 7	Noun	opposite of line 1

Consider this example.

<div align="center">

Freedom
Precious, Exclusive
Appreciated, Loved, Protected
Jewel, Right, Restraint, Hate
Confined, Controlled, Condemned
Expensive, Heartless
Discrimination

</div>

Writing Activity
Choose a word pair from the list of opposites generated during the class discussion as the focus for your poem. Alternately, you may choose a word from one of the other lists we created while exploring the speech and choose a synonym for this word for your second word.

As you write, check the lists of powerful words that we've compiled for descriptive words that you can add to your poem. Remember that powerful, passionate words will make the contrast. Your finished diamante should capture the powerful relationship between the two words that you've chosen as your focus.