

Name: _____

Preparing for Your Performance

Now that you have finished your WebQuest, in addition to learning the words of the poem, you must consider how your poem will be presented. You will be expected to perform your poem in the manner that best represents its meaning. It is important to think about the speaker (i.e., the narrator of the poem) as well as the audience.

Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper to help prepare for your presentation.

1. Who is the speaker?

What does the poem reveal about the personality of the speaker (or narrator) of the poem? How old is the speaker, what experiences do you think they have had (or are having) based on the poem you selected? Every poem tells a story, and just as in fiction, a writer will reveal the personality of the speaker of the poem through actions or feelings. Determining the speaker of the poem and where he or she is coming from will help you determine how the poem can be performed.

2. Is the speaker addressing a particular person?

How can you tell? If the speaker is addressing a particular person, who is it? Why is the speaker of the poem interested in this person? Sometimes a poem is addressed to a particular person, and sometimes it is for no one specifically, so it relates to everyone (think about songs and song lyrics). Understanding whom the poem is addressing helps you to think about how the poem could be performed. Is it a child talking to a parent, friend to friend, husband to wife? What emotional state does the speaker present (angry, sad, or joyful)?

3. Does the poem have a setting?

What is the setting? Is it in the present or the past, an urban or a rural area? How will the setting affect your performance (language)?

4. From what perspective (or point of view) is the speaker describing specific events?

In your poem, does the speaker recall events that have happened in the past and reflect on them, or are they events that are happening in the speaker's life at the present? What meaning do the events have for the speaker?

5. What was your response to the poem on first reading?

Sometimes your first reaction to the poem best captures the emotional response the writer intended. Did the poem make you angry, sad, or happy? What specific words did you read that contributed to these feelings? What in your own experience related to the experience of the speaker in the poem?