

I Am Poem

Objective: To follow the I Am poem's structure so that even a reluctant writer can write a poem in a relatively short time.

Pre-writing

Think about who you are. In reality. Or in your dreams. Though Line 1 asks for "one special characteristic," say, "I am faster than a speeding bullet." Or, "I am movie star beautiful." Line 1 can also be about a hope or a dream. "I will be the first person in my family to earn a Ph.D." Or an exaggeration. "I am the heir apparent to LeBron James."

Or Line 1 can be about your personality. "I am quiet, but I'm also smart."

So, who are you? That's Line 1. Think about it, then fill in Line 1.

Structure:

It's crucial to follow the structure of the I Am poem. This poem is composed of:

- 3 stanzas
- Each stanza contains 6 lines.
- Each stanza ends by repeating the very first line of the poem. So, Lines 1, 6, 12 and 18 are identical. No changing them in any way.

And remember...

Whatever you write in Line 1, every line thereafter is about Line 1. Every other line builds a world around Line 1.

So, if your first line is, "I am a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle."

Your second line focuses on that.

So - I am a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle.

I wonder, if I'll still be a teenager 30 years from now.

I hear sea turtles making fun of me.

You get the idea.

Now try it.

Warning - Often students rush through this and complete a draft within minutes. The hope is that after the first draft is done, students will be encouraged to go back and rewrite and try to infuse the poem with descriptive language, and perhaps even some dialogue.

I Am Poem template on the following page.

I Am Poem

I am _____
(One special characteristic)

I wonder _____
(Something you are curious about)

I hear _____
(An imaginary sound)

I see _____
(An imaginary sight)

I want _____
(A desire you have)

I am _____
(The first line of the poem repeated)

I pretend _____
(Something you pretend to do)

I feel _____
(A feeling about something imaginary)

I touch _____
(An imaginary touch)

I worry _____
(Something that bothers you)

I cry _____
(Something that makes you sad)

I am _____
(The first line of the poem repeated)

I understand _____
(Something you know is true)

I say _____
(Something you believe in)

I dream _____
(Something you dream about)

I try _____
(Something you make an effort on)

I hope _____
(Something you hope for)

I am _____
(The first line of the poem repeated)