

Teaching *The Pearl* Curriculum Guide: Writing an I AM Poem

Grade level: 3rd Grade and Up

Instructions:

Poetry is a creative form of writing that allows people to express their feelings and ideas through the use of distinctive style and rhythm. Use the “I AM” model below to craft a poem from the point of view of a character from John Steinbeck’s novels or short stories. You can also choose to write one after a literary character that you read about recently. The poem should be no longer than one page. Study the poem on the second page to give you a better idea of how your poem can look like.

Let’s celebrate National Poetry Month together by show us your dramatic reading abilities and recording yourself (with your parent/guardian’s permission) reading it out loud portraying the character you chose and hash tagging #Steinbeckfromhome for a chance to be featured in our social media accounts. Be creative and have fun!

I am _____ (two special characteristics you have)

I wonder _____ (something you are actually curious about)

I hear _____ (an imaginary sound)

I see _____ (an imaginary sight)

I want _____ (an actual desire)

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

I pretend _____ (something you actually pretend)

I feel _____ (a feeling about something imaginary)

I touch _____ (an imaginary touch)

I worry _____ (something that really bothers you)

I cry _____ (something that makes you very 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 actually dream about)

I try _____ (something you really make an effort about)

I hope _____ (something you actually hope for)

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

Figure 25—"I AM" Sample Poem

The Tracker

(sample poem)

From John Steinbeck *The Pearl* - Chapter 6

I am a tracker.

I come from inland.

I can follow the trail of big horn sheep

In the stone mountain.

I can read a broken straw or a

little tumbled pile of dust.

I scuttle over the ground like an animal

following the hunted.

I am hunting the pearl diver and his family.

My partner and I crouch over the signs of the

family in the desert.

Behind us on horseback is the man with a rifle.

My clothes are white and ragged.

Circling, searching, peeping, stooping:

finding the tracks of life in the desert.

Circling, searching, peeping, stooping:

I am a tracker.