



## Pen Your Own Poems

**Read the opening line of three of the poems.**

The goldfish of boredom

The mosquito of worry

The spider of satisfaction

**Look for a pattern.**

Line 1:                    The (animal) of (emotion).

*You are creating a metaphor when you link an animal with an emotion.*

**Read the second line of the same three poems.**

bumps against his bowl

buzzes near the ear

spins her inner song

Line 2:                    (verb phrase with strong action verb).

*You are naming something that the animal does. The goldfish bumps against his bowl.*

*The mosquito buzzes near the ear. The spider spins her inner song.*

**Read the poem below to explore what the poet does after the first two lines.**

The Goldfish of Boredom  
bumps against his bowl  
**starved for something different**  
**doesn't quite know what**



*After the patterns in the opening two lines, notice how the remaining lines extend the metaphor by finding a connection between the animal and the emotion. What does that mean? Let's think about it.*

*What happens when you're bored? Are you tired of doing what you're doing? Do you want to do something else? Lines 3 and 4 of the poem describe what that emotion might feel like for the goldfish, as if he's tired of being cooped up in the little bowl.*

*You might find the connection between the animal and the emotion from your own experience. You can also research the animal and research the emotion that you're writing about. Either your experience or your research will help you extend the metaphor in your poem.*

## ADVENTURING WITH ART

Did you know that writers and artists for picture books rarely meet and communicate? Writers do their thing, and artists do their thing to make meaning of the world.

When artists receive a manuscript, they decide how to bring the writers' words to life. Look at "Egret of Regret." What do the artist's images add to the words?

When you finish writing your poem illustrate it, adding meaning through art. You could also work as a team just like the writer and artist of *Elephant of Sadness, Butterfly of Joy*. Ask someone else to illustrate your words.

### To the teacher:

As you prepare students to write their own poems, engage them first in two verbal exercises:

1. Unpack what a pattern is. Ask the students to find patterns in the room, patterns on clothes, patterns in words. This exercise will prime the students for finding patterns in lines of poetry.

2. Unpack what a metaphor is. A **metaphor** is a way to compare two things that are not the same, so the qualities of one thing are connected to another. A metaphor adds imaginative description to language. Give examples of common metaphors, and challenge the students to explain why you're comparing these two things. such as those in the chart below:

Metaphor	What it means
The moon is a bowl in the night sky.	Both the bowl and moon are round in shape.
His smile is a ray of sunshine.	His smile is bright and happy.
The train snaked along the winding tracks.	The train is moving like a snake.

3. Brainstorm emotions and feelings as a group. The poems in the book can be a starting place. You might enjoy looking online for Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions to help students explore the spectrum beyond basic feelings.

4. After exploring concepts of pattern and metaphor, guide the students through the "Pen Your Own Poems" worksheet.

5. Consider that every writer has writing territories, that is topics and subjects that they enjoy writing about or know a lot about. Students may make their own connections with animals or select their own writing territory, such as connecting emotions with other elements of the natural world. Consider the oak of confidence, the ocean of hostility, the desert of loneliness, the forest of confusion or something else entirely like the tractor of trustworthiness.

6. Sometimes the writing territory begs for further research – whether about animals, about ecosystems, about machines or whatever the topic the writer lands on.

7. When students have written and revised their poems, encourage them to send their poems to the author at [patriciawrites.com](http://patriciawrites.com). Contact from the homepage menu, and send your message. Some poems will be selected to be posted on the website.

**Writing Standards** The following standards offer a focus for instruction to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Each year in their writing, students should demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, from vocabulary and syntax to the development and organization of ideas, and they should address increasingly demanding content and sources.

### **Text Types and Purposes:**

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

1. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically.
2. Develop the topic with facts, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
3. Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., *in contrast*, *especially*).
4. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

### **Production and Distribution of Writing**

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a different approach.

### **Research to Build and Present Knowledge**

Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

Draw relevant evidence from grade-appropriate literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

### **ELA standards for adventuring with art:**

**Integration of knowledge and ideas:** Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g. create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting.)