

“I Am” Poetry

Subject: English Language Arts/Social-Emotional Learning

Grades: 1-3 (option #1) and 4-6 (option #2)

<p>Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Writing● Critical Thinking● Empathy● Communication● Emotional vocabulary building● Community building <p>Connections to Maine Learning Results listed below</p>	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Template below● Paper● Pencils or markers● Option #1: A copy of <u>Be You!</u> (or you can view Peter Reynold read the book aloud <u>here</u>)● Option #2: <u>Looking Like Me</u> by Walter Dean Myers.
--	--

Goal:

The goal of this lesson is to build community in the classroom. This would be a great activity to start off the school year but would work at any time. Students will explore and share their own identities through poetry. By sharing the completed poetry at the end of the lesson, students' identities will be seen by classmates and teachers. Students will discover similarities and differences between themselves and others and this will provide an opportunity for open discussion. This open discussion with guidance from teachers helps create community in the classroom.

Instructions:

Option #1 (Grades 1-3)

1. Begin the lesson asking: What are you really good at? What do you struggle with sometimes? What do you worry about? What makes you really happy? What makes you special? What makes you sad? What does it mean to be you?
2. Read aloud [Be You!](#) By Peter H. Renyolds
3. After finishing the book ask the students again “What does it mean to be you?” Encourage students to reflect on what makes them each unique.
4. Introduce the “I Am” poem template below. You can use the sample provided or complete one together as a class, modeling how to complete the poem.
5. Have each student complete the poem and share with the class.
6. After sharing follow up questions for discussion can include:

Did you learn something new about another classmate today? Did you find anything surprising? How did hearing about others make you feel? Would you like to learn more about someone? Did you learn something new about yourself?

Extension Activity

Have students draw a self portrait to accompany the poem. Display the portraits and poems around the room.

Option #2 (Grades 4-6)

1. Begin the lesson by giving each child a piece of paper. On the board write “When you look in a mirror what do you see?” Give students 2 minutes of silent writing time.
2. Introduce the book Looking Like Me by Walter Dean Myers and read aloud to the class.
3. Following the read aloud, ask students: What are the different ways Jeremy sees himself? What are ways others see Jeremy? How do you think Jeremy feels each time someone gives him a “BAM”?
4. Now give students 2 more minutes to answer the question again “When you look in a mirror what do you see?” Encourage them to think beyond a physical description. Follow up with “What do others see when they look at you?”
5. Introduce the “I Am Me” poem template (credit: Welcoming Schools, a project of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation)
6. Have each student complete the poem and share with the class.
7. After sharing follow up questions for discussion can include:

Did you learn something new about another classmate today? Did you find anything surprising? How did hearing about others make you feel? Would you like to learn more about someone? Did you learn something new about yourself?



Extension Activity

Have students draw a self portrait to accompany the poem. Display the portraits and poems around the room.

*This activity also pairs well with our “Inside Me/Outside Me” lesson

Maine Learning Results Standards:

English/Language Arts Anchor Standards: L.1-.5; SL.1-.2; R.2-.8; W.2-.3



I AM

I am _____

I wonder _____

I hear _____

I see _____

I want _____

I am _____

I pretend _____

I feel _____

I touch _____

I worry _____

I cry _____

I am _____

I understand _____

I say _____

I dream _____

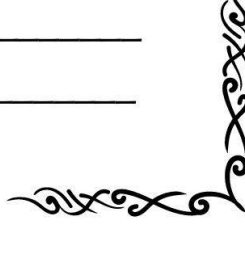
I try _____

I hope _____

I am _____



Written by: _____





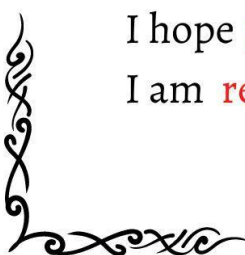
I AM

Template


I am 2 special characteristics you have
I wonder something you are curious about
I hear an imaginary sound
I see an imaginary sight
I want an actual desire
I am repeat line 1

I pretend something you actual 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 make you sad
I am repeat line 1

I understand something that is true
I say something you believe in
I dream something you dream about
I try something you really make an effort at
I hope something you actually hope for
I am repeat line 1



Written by: _____





I AM

Sample

I am **smart and funny**.

I wonder **what is at the end of the rainbow**.

I hear **owls at night outside my room**.

I see **more books than I could ever read**.

I want **to travel the world**.

I am **smart and funny**.

I pretend **I can understand what my dog says**.

I feel **like magic could be real**.

I touch **my cats soft fur**.

I worry **about my children being happy and safe**.

I cry **at the end of every sad movie**.

I am **smart and funny**.

I understand **tomorrow is a new day**.

I say **everyone is the same on the inside**.

I dream **about singing in an opera**.

I try **really hard to understand math**.

I hope **I will leave the world a better place**.

I am **smart and funny**.



Written by: _____



I AM ME

Template

I am **Full name that you want to be called**

I am a **Ways that people might see you**

I am from **What do you like doing? What are you good at?**

I am a **Name relationships to people important to you**

I am from **People who are important to you, family, people who take care of you, close friends**

I am from **Family traditions or customs**

I am from **Favorite foods or special foods you like from home**

I am from **Important things that have happened in your life**


I am from **Names of books or types of books you like**

I am from **Names of movies, TV shows or video games you like**

I am from **Name of the place you live**

I am **Full name that you want to be called**





I AM ME

Sample

I am Mrs. Smith

I am a mom and a teacher.

I am from reading, swimming and riding my bike.

I am a mother, wife, aunt, cousin and friend.

I am from parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles,
friends.

I am from parades on the 4th of July, football on
Sundays and silly songs around a campfire.

I am from pasta, chicken, cookies and cake

I am from graduating, getting married, having
children, moving away

I am from fantasy and historical fiction books.

I am from Star Wars and Harry Potter.

I am from Maine

I am Mrs. Smith





I AM ME

I am _____

I am a _____

I am from _____

I am a _____

I am from _____

I am from _____

I am from _____

I am from _____

I am from _____

I am from _____

I am from _____

I am _____

