



Writer's Workshop

Women in the Alphabet

An Alphabet Poem offers writers a unique way to construct a poem on a topic, in this case 'women', in a fairly straightforward way.

Alphabet poems can be written with 26 lines, a line for each letter of the alphabet, or they can consist of five lines starting with five consecutive letters of the alphabet. The poem can focus on imagery associated with a person, feeling or mood. Sometimes these poems rhyme, but they don't have to.

Write an Alphabet Poem together as a group.

Choose the method you would like to use. Either the poem with 26 lines, or 5 lines using letters in consecutive order.

Next, choose the theme that you would like to use. Consider the following as possible poem ideas:

Women that have impacted my life

Great women in history

What makes a good mother?

Or choose one person everyone knows or knows of and write a poem about her.

Keep in mind that if you choose the 5-letter approach to writing a poem the letters need to be in alphabetical order. This will encourage participants to reach for words.

Example:

A Poem about Artist Georgia O'Keeffe

Artist of flowers

Bringing color into every room

Canvas filled with wonder

Dried cow skulls become things of beauty

Everyone is better because of Georgia

Tips for writing poetry with a group:

- Be sure that everyone in the group has an opportunity to give input.
- Before you begin constructing the poem, encourage writers to think of imagery that might describe the topic.
- Think of key words you can use in the poem.
- Choose words that begin with letters that you choose for the poem. They can be any 5 letters, as long as they are in consecutive order.
- Each line should focus on building upon the central topic of the poem, creating a specific picture in the reader's mind.
- Write more than one poem if time allows.
- Snap a picture before you erase the poem and print a copy for the community newsletter or bulletin board.

**This activity offers a fun and creative cognitive workout and can be used again and again. An alphabet poem can be written on any topic.*

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