

BIOPOEM STRATEGY for
A Wrinkle in Time
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PURPOSE:

This is a post-reading strategy to be used after completion of *A Wrinkle in Time*. Biopoems provide a structure that aids beginning writers and students in writing and in playing with words. For *A Wrinkle in Time*, students will compose biopoems about any character in the novel. These character sketches will allow students to more deeply explore the characteristics of characters in the novel, and to synthesize their learning about the novel.

DIRECTIONS:

Teachers will need to give students the format of the bio-poem. This will be done by modeling sample biopoems, and then giving students an assignment sheet that informs them of each step they should take in completing their poem.

Steps:

1. Present the bio-poem by giving examples of it to your students.
2. Explain to students that the assignment sheet gives them directions for what should be included in the bio-poem; however, students need not feel restricted by the structure. Other variations are acceptable (see *Content Area and Reading*, Vacca and Vacca, pgs. 254-255 for other ideas).
3. Inform students that word choice and accuracy of character traits will be important in their poems.
4. Remind students about the creative use of white space. Students should feel free to experiment with fonts, graphics, layouts, etc.
5. Allow students be creative, and tell them to use their imaginations as they write. Remind them that lists need not merely be lists of words, but also of phrases, sentences, or complete ideas.
6. Instruct students that these poems will be collected at the end of the class period.

Biopoem Format:

- Line 1: First name
Line 2: Four traits describing the character
Line 3: Relative (brother, sister, daughter, etc.) of _____
Line 4: Lover of _____ (list three things or people)
Line 5: Who feels _____ (three items)
Line 6: Who needs _____ (three items)
Line 7: Who fears _____ (three items)
Line 8: Who gives _____ (three items)
Line 9: Who would like to see _____ (three items)
Line 10: Resident of _____
Line 11: Last name

Example:

MEG

Graceless, bold, fiercely loyal,
Sister to Charles Wallace
Lover of science, logic, and rationality
Who feels the pressure of uniformity, the awkwardness of adolescence and the
ruthlessness of small towns
Who needs a happy medium, a different perspective through ancient spectacles, and
Who fears the ugliness of the Black Thing, the horrific nightmare of Camazotz, and the
vulnerability of emotion
Who gives heart, spirit, and devotion
Who would like to see her father rescued and home and happy,
To see her own potential beauty,
And perhaps Aunt Beast, just one more time.
Resident of the Universe

MURRY

Assessment:

When grading these poems make sure that the poem implies the student's sincere understanding of the character. For example, if they have written incorrect descriptors, or information that is "out of character," the teacher may choose to mark off points. This assignment will help to determine whether or not students understand the language and story of the text.