

Poems about Heroes: Daily Launch Day 19

Get Ready to Write a Hero Poem

Over the next two days you'll be crafting your own poems about a hero. You can write about one of the heroes we've learned about in this unit:

- The Black Panther*
- "Navajo Code Talkers"
- "The Tuskegee Airmen"
- Cesar Chavez



—or you can write a poem about the hero you are learning about for your independent project. This is a chance to show off your creativity! Don't shy away from discussing difficult topics. Difficult topics can make for deep and meaningful poetry.

Start your thinking process by answering as many of these questions as you can. Don't worry if you don't finish all of them now.

Write the **name** of the hero (or group of heroes) you plan to write a poem about here:

What are some **words** that come to mind when you think about this hero? List them here:

What **images** or **word pictures** come to mind when you think about this hero? Note them here:

What **mood** or **feeling** do you want your poem to create? (*more* than just happy or sad...)

What deep **lesson** or **idea** do you want to convey through this poem?



Poems about Heroes: Daily Launch Day 20

Whole-Class Introductory Activity: Free Verse

Have students look at their Do Now sheets. Slowly read aloud the poem based on the text from *Black Panther* (below), pausing at appropriate places, as students follow along. Then, invite one or two student volunteers to read it as well.



T'challa flew toward Mount Bashenga,
also known as the Great Mound.

It was the major natural source
of Wakanda's
vibranium.

A large cliff face was on one side,
dropping
off
steeply;

the other was littered with sloping hills.

At the top stood
an impressive
laboratory
that seemed to be built from the ground
itself, incorporating the vibranium deposits
there into its architecture.

Ask students:

- How does changing the way the lines are broken up change the way we read the text?
- How does it change the way the text looks on the page? How does the way the text looks on the page match the scene it describes?

Explain to students that one feature of poetry is that the **form** of the text (the visual appearance and/or the sound of the words when read aloud) matters, just as much as the meaning itself! Ask students to give you a short sentence to work with (any sentence will do), and with their help, write it on the board in different ways that create different emphases. For example, the sentence "I want to go home" can take such forms as the following:

I want	I want to go	I	I want
To go home.	Home.	Want	To go
		To go home.	Home

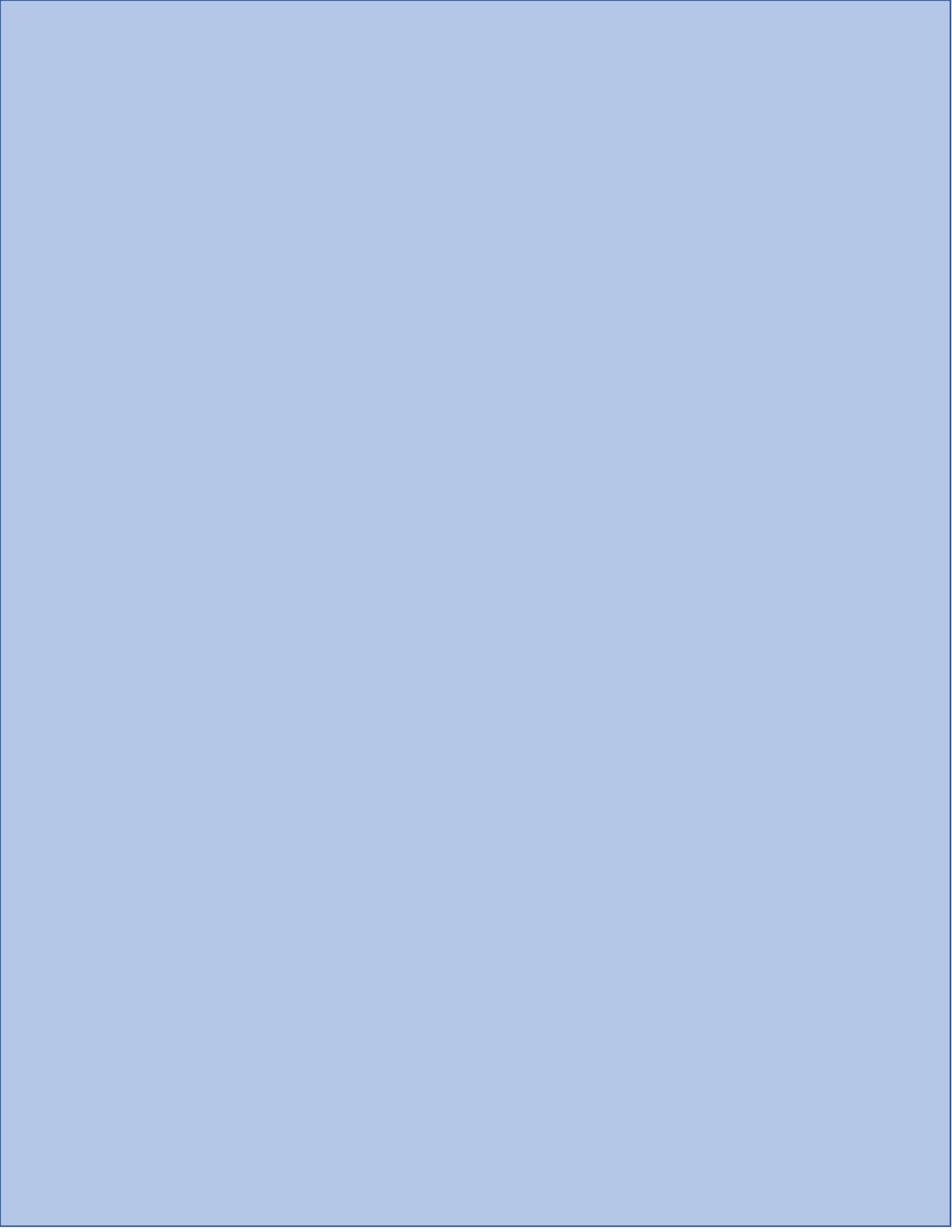
Encourage students to experiment with different ways of arranging lines in the poems they are writing about heroes from this unit.

Heroes Days 19 and 20

In the space below, write **ONE** sentence about the hero you chose to write a poem about.

Now, write the **same sentence again**, but break up the lines so that the sentence is on at least three lines (it could be more!). Try to break the lines in a way that creates an interesting rhythm, or that draws attention to important words.

Read your sentence again. If you like it, you could use it in your poem!



On September 11, 2001, two hijacked airplanes crashed into the World Trade Center skyscrapers in New York City. Each tower was over 1,260 feet tall and included 110 stories. When the planes hit the towers, they caught fire and began to collapse. Thousands of people rushed to the stairways trying to escape. Many were not successful. Among the 2,763 people who died in the attack were 343 firefighters and paramedics and 60 New York City and Port Authority police officers. These heroes entered the burning buildings to rescue people trapped on higher floors. The following poem honors the memory of the firefighters who lost their lives. It is on display at the New York City Fire Museum.*

If They Could Speak

By Rosanne Pellicane

Please don't be afraid.

Yes, life is different now but remember when it was beautiful?

Well, it will be again, though not the same.

The wounds will heal, your tears will dry and though scars remain,
I know you are strong enough to live through the pain.

Do not grieve and linger in the shadows of graves.

Go out into the sunshine and tell everyone that I was here.

Let our enemy know that when we were together we lived, and worked and loved.
And though I am gone, you will carry on for me because you must.

Tell my family how much I loved them and still do.

Remember the good we shared, the life we created, and
walk forward with noble dreams.

God can't fill a shattered heart or a clenched fist.

Let fear die and let love flow again like a river.

So as the smoke rises high above the ash
gather all your strength and rebuild some new, something better.

It's not impossible.

It's essential.

It's what I would do for you.

Just one last thing, surely you must know,
I never wanted to leave you.

I was captured by fate,
escorted by angels.

And though you might feel you are alone,
you are not and neither am I...

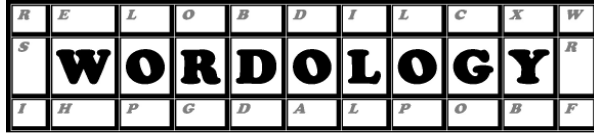
Love always



New York City Firefighter.
U.S. Navy Photo: Journalist
1st Class Preston Keres - ID
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*Used by permission of the New York City Fire Museum.





Media Madness

Day 19: Write Your Own Poem (Step 1)

Instructions: Do Step 1 on Day 19 (in either the Wordology or Media Madness station). Do Step 2 on Day 20 (in the other station).

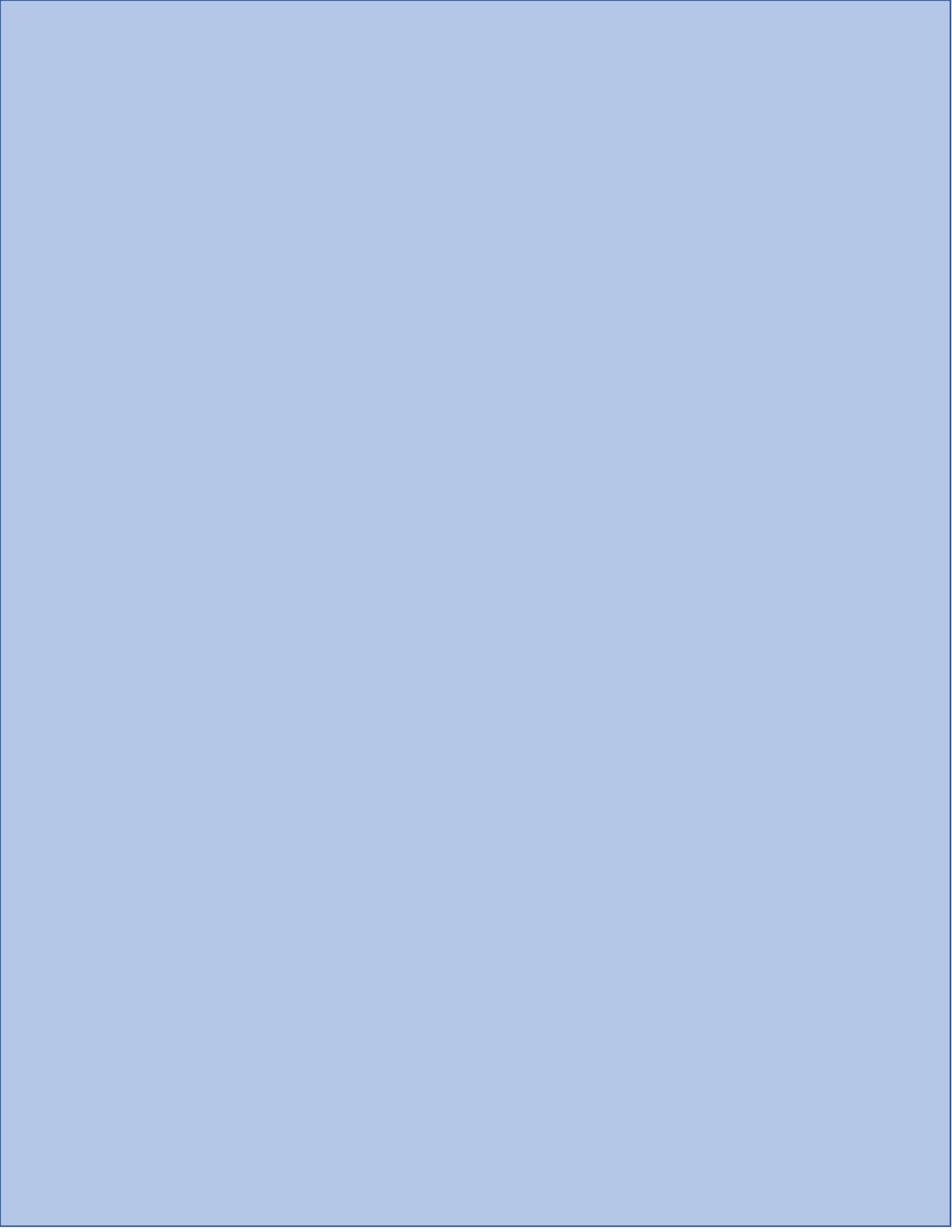
Step 1a. Look at the words and ideas you jotted down on your Day 19 Do Now. Think about what kind of poem you want to write about your hero. You may find it helpful to check one or more of the boxes below as you decide what kind of poem you're aiming for.

- A **rhyming** poem?
- Free verse:** a poem that doesn't rhyme?
- A **narrative** poem? (A poem that tells a story; it can rhyme or not rhyme.)
- An **acrostic** poem (the first letters of each line spell out a word or name)? Write the word or name here: _____
- A **haiku**? (a short, three-line poem: the first line has 5 syllables, the second line has 7 syllables, the third line has 5 syllables)

Step 1b. Now, write down some words, phrases, or sentences about your hero that could fit in your poem. (You don't have to put the sentences in order... you're just brainstorming here.)

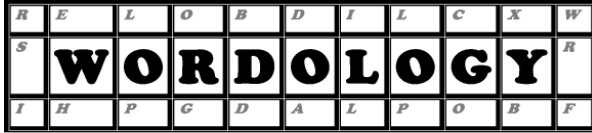
Did you include some **imagery** (word pictures) to help your reader see, hear, taste, or smell?

Step 1c. If you have time: start making connections. If you want your poem to **rhyme**, which words can you use to make the rhymes? If you are creating an **acrostic** poem, how can you change your phrases so they begin with the letters you need? If you are writing a **haiku**, which short phrases are important enough to include in this very short poem?



Name _____ Date _____

Heroes Days 19 and 20




Media Madness

Day 20: Write Your Own Poem (Step 2)

Step 2a. Begin to arrange your poem in the space below. Make whatever changes you need to:

- Break the lines of the poem in a way that fits the form you are using and makes the poem look and sound good!
- You can also change the type of poem you were aiming for, if you decide that another kind of poem will work better.
- Feel free to change some of the words to make it sound better, create stronger images, or create the mood you want.
- You can use extra paper if you need to.

Step 2b. When you are happy with the way your poem looks and sounds, copy it on the lined sheet of paper provided. Remember to include a title and your name!



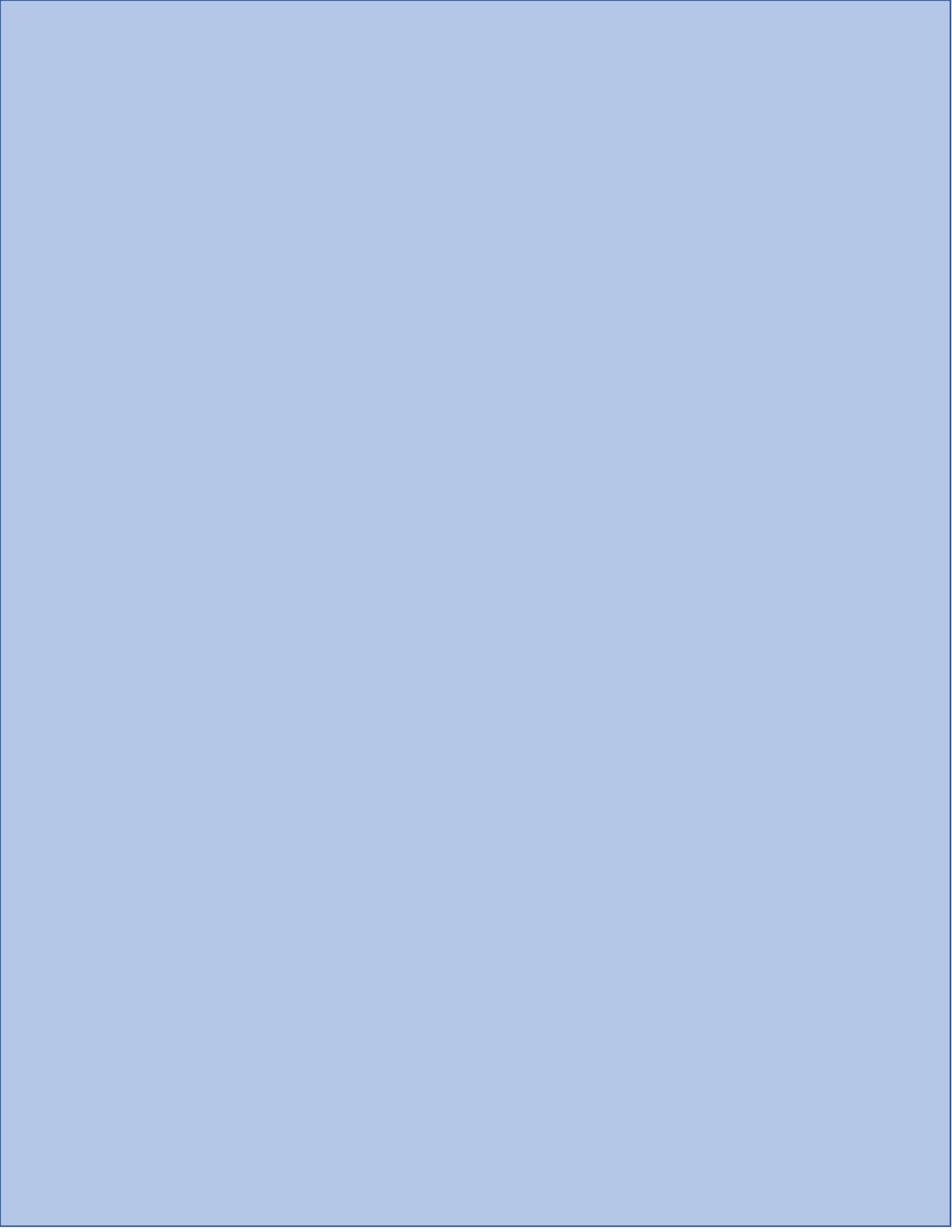
R	E	L	O	B	D	I	L	C	X	W
S	W	O	R	D	O	L	O	L	O	G
I	H	P	G	D	A	L	P	O	B	F

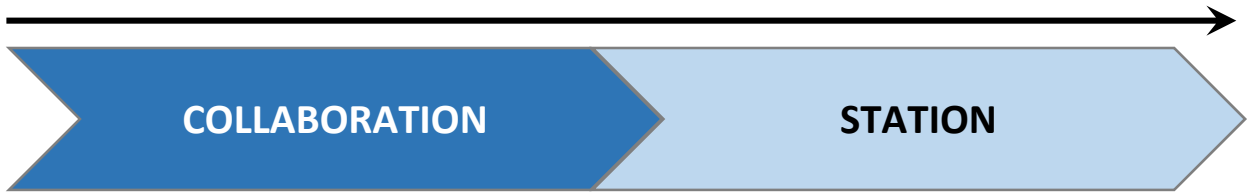


Media Madness

Poem Title: _____

By: _____





Collaboration Station

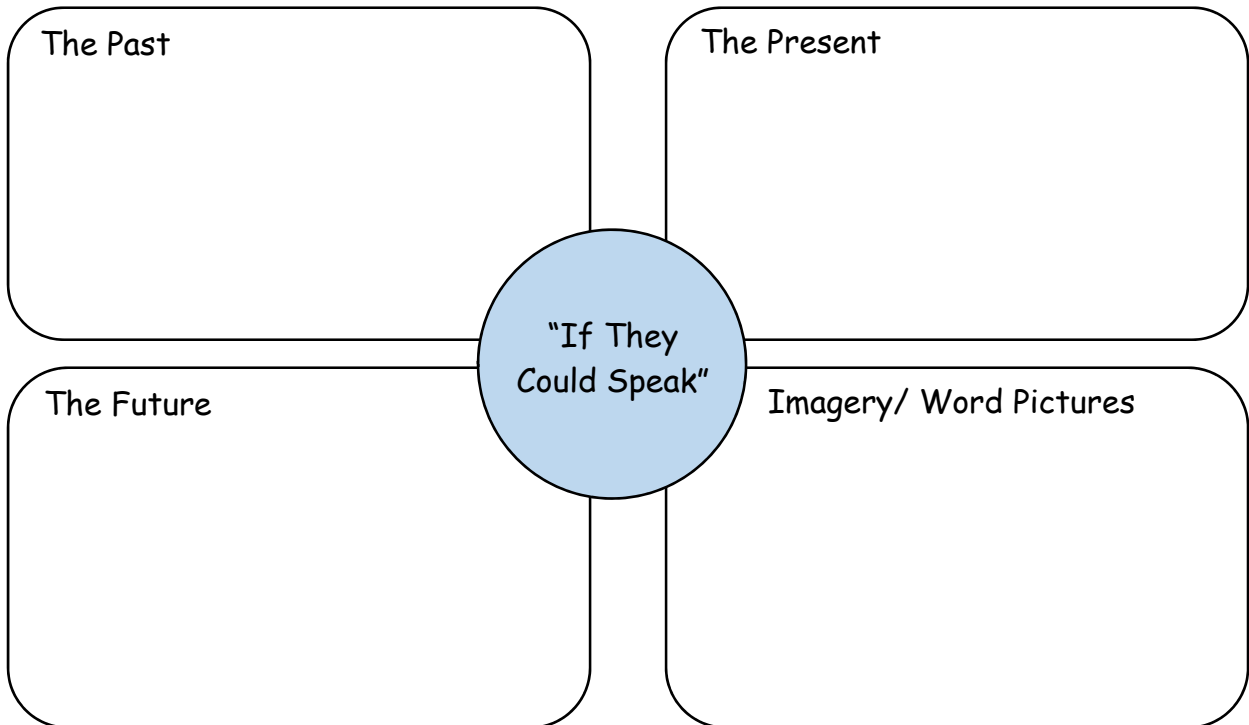
“If They Could Speak” Graphic Organizer

First, read the poem “If They Could Speak” silently. Then, read the poem again with your team (take turns reading the different stanzas). Discuss with your team members how you could fill in the graphic organizer below. Then, fill out the organizer on your own.

Who is speaking in this poem? _____

Who is the intended audience (who is it written for)? _____

Note words and phrases that belong in the following boxes:



What is the deep meaning or message of this poem?

Bonus: this poem was written in response to a tragedy that occurred in 2001. How can its deep meaning or message speak to you today?



