

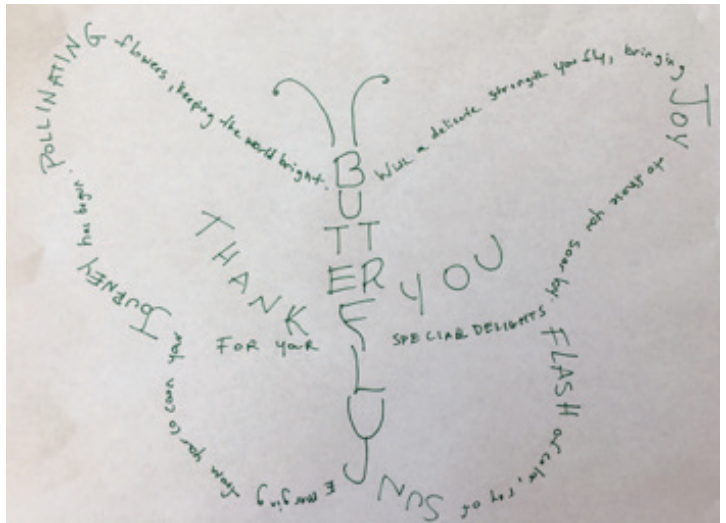
Animal Shape Poem

Designed for grades 5-8

Shape poetry, or concrete poetry, takes the shape of whatever a poem is about. For example, if a shape poem is about bison, the words of the poem will form the shape of a bison. This is a fun way to combine art and poetry, and to think about ways to describe animals that inspire you, fascinate you, or make you smile!

READY Grab your art journal or a white piece of paper, a graphite pencil, and colored pencils and/or markers.

GET SET Choose an animal that you'd like to write a poem about. You might want to take a walk outside to get some inspiration. Think about the tone (the overall attitude or feeling) you want your poem to have: will it be serious, educational with interesting facts, funny, inspiring, or something else? You can choose more than one tone, too! To help you decide on a tone, you might ask yourself: What do I want someone to think or feel when they read my poem?



Start to brainstorm your poem:

Write down 10 or more words that come to mind when you think about your animal.

Here are examples of brainstorming words for the butterfly shape poem above:

Butterfly, light, wings, colorful, joy, pollinate, delightful, smile, sun, summer, flowers, fly, delicate

GO!

Sketch: Start by drawing a very light sketch of your animal on the paper. (Make sure the lines are very light, because you will erase them later.)

Write: On a different piece of paper, start to write your poem. You might want to use some or all of your brainstorming words to help. Your poem can rhyme or not rhyme - it's up to you! Now is also the time to think about the size/length of your poem; make sure it is not too short or too long to fit the size of your animal sketch.



Copy: Now, write your poem onto your animal sketch, using the lines you drew as your guides. It's easier if you write your poem a little bit above the lines so you have room to erase the lines later. You may want some words to be written larger or smaller than others (see example above) or you may want all of the words to be the same size - it's up to you!

Erase: When you are finished copying your poem onto your animal sketch, erase the sketched outline of your animal shape so that only the words are visible.

You can use colored pencils or markers to darken the words of your poem or to color the background of your paper. You may also want to draw a landscape for your poem animal to live in!

Challenge:

Read your poem aloud to yourself or to others! Try reading it with the tone you chose in mind, and then try reading it in a couple of different ways. For instance, you might try: reading it slower or faster, reading it in a voice that sounds different from your normal voice, whispering it, singing it, creating a dance to go along with it, or something else! Does the meaning or the tone of your poem change when you try reading it in different ways?

