

# Poetry Revision Activity

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

**STEP 1 – “DRAW INSPIRATION”** – Reading other people’s poems can help you see what others are doing, and may give you some ideas for what you want to add to your poem. Find AT LEAST three people’s poems to read. As you read, look for phrases, words, or things they did in their poem that you liked. Tell them what you liked about it!

Poem I read:	What I liked about it:
1.	
2.	
3.	

## STEP 2 – “PROVE IT!” - IMPROVING YOUR ADJECTIVES.

An adjective is a word that describes another word. Go through your poem and UNDERLINE all of your adjectives that may be vague or need improvement. (Here are some vague adjectives that aren’t very specific: Huge, Hot, Awesome, Good, Pretty, Smart, Small, etc.) Find AT LEAST three.

Vague Adjectives that need improving:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Now in the space above next to your vague adjectives, write an additional line or two that PROVES IT. For example, if you wrote: “The witch is ugly.” You might underline the word, “ugly” as a vague adjective, because it isn’t very specific. It doesn’t create a picture for the reader. You could then write some additional descriptions “proving” how ugly the witch is. For example, you might write: *The witch is ugly. Her stringy hair looks like the wet, dirty mop propped against the wall in my garage. Her snaggletooth grimace reveals a thin slimy green film and several missing teeth. She has a huge carbuncle on her left cheek with a long gray hair growing out of it. Her chin is pointy and hairy, her nose is bumpy and snotty, and her neck looks like limp crepe paper.*

Now consider, do any of these descriptions work to enhance your writing? Could you select one or two of those descriptions and replace your vague adjective? You may end up adding some lines like this:

*Her stringy hair a wet dirty mop  
Her snaggletooth grimace revealing a thin slimy green film of teeth  
Her cheek covered with a carbuncle and a long protruding gray hair  
Her chin pointy and hairy  
Her nose bumpy and snotty  
Her neck like limp crepe paper*

When writing poetry, consider rhythm and meter. Look at the most powerful nouns, adjectives and verbs, and consider beginning and/or ending your lines with those words. That could help enhance the rhythm of your poetry and make it sound and feel less like prose and more like poetry.

### STEP 3 – “DEPTH CHARGE” – IMPROVING YOUR NOUNS.

A noun is a person place or thing. Go through your poem and put a BOX around all of your nouns that may need improvement. If you have a bland noun that doesn't paint a specific image, consider adding depth to it. Do the following “Depth Charge” strategy on at least three nouns from your poem.

Vague Nouns that need improving:

1.

2.

3.

Now, write an additional sentence giving further detail or description based on that word. Then looking at the new sentence, select a word or phrase in that sentence to expand, and repeat the step. After repeating the step several times, you may decide to add some of the revised sentences or none at all.

Here's an example: *Once I won a Toni Doll.* (Circle “doll.” Write some more about “doll”) *Dolls were never my thing; I preferred reading or active games like hopscotch.* (Circle “active.”) *Reading activated my mind, but games like hopscotch, jacks, and ball blocks kept me moving.* (Circle “moving.”) *With dolls you dressed them and mostly sat around with them.* (Circle “dolls.”) *So what was I going to do with a Toni doll?*

### STEP 4 – “SHOW; DON'T TELL.” – IMPROVING YOUR VERBS.

Verbs are action words. Some of the most bland and boring action words are called “to be” verbs, or “state of being” verbs. There are 8 “to be” verbs: am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been. If you use one of these as a verb in your sentence, odds are you are TELLING instead of SHOWING. Go through your poem and circle every “to be verb.” Find AT LEAST three. (If you didn't use any, great! But if you don't put any in here, and then I find them in your poem, you're in big trouble!).

Phrases that use “To Be” verbs that need improving:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Once you've written the phrase above that uses a “to be” verb, re-write the phrase using a more active verb. For example: Don't *tell* the reader “I *was* hungry” ... instead, **SHOW** the reader how “My stomach pounded and wrenched, screaming for sustenance.”

**STEP 5 - FINAL DRAFT** - Make changes to your poem considering the above revision activities. You don't HAVE to make all of them, but consider making the ones that improve your poem. Staple this activity on top of your first draft of your poem. Then make changes to your poem, and print a clean final draft and staple that draft on top of the packet.

#### **ORDER TO STAPLE YOUR FINAL POEM:**

- Final Draft Typed (on top)
- Poetry Revision Activity Sheet
- First Draft
- Half-page Assignment Sheet/Scoring Rubric