

## Poem for Two Voices *(cont.)*

### Discussion Questions

- ▶ What differences did you identify between the points of view?
- ▶ What did you learn by creating your poems?
- ▶ What did you learn by listening to poems read in two voices?
- ▶ What could you add to a poem you heard?
- ▶ How did the poetic form bring ideas to life?

### Specific Grade-Level Ideas

#### Grades K–2

To provide students with other examples of poems for two voices, gather several of the books in Mary Ann Hoberman's *You Read to Me, I'll Read to You* collection and explore the poems included.

As a class, act out the characters in a familiar read-aloud before creating a collaborative poem for two voices. For example, using the book *Fireflies!* by Julie Brinckloe, you might have students infer and act out the points of view of the fireflies and of the boy who catches them. Create a poem as a class.

Additionally, students might compare and contrast topics of study, such as two different living things in an ecosystem, animal habitats, weather events, the main characters from two versions of the same fairy tale or folktale, or the jobs and roles of two different community members. Students learning their letter sounds might compare and contrast two letters and their sounds. For example, one voice might be things that start with the *b* sound (birds, box, bubbles, beach) while the other voice might be things that begin with the *s* sound (star, spider, sand, sock).

## Poem for Two Voices *(cont.)*

### Specific Grade-Level Ideas *(cont.)*

#### Grades 3–5

Share informational texts with the compare-and-contrast structure, such as *Is My Dog a Wolf? How Your Pet Compares to Its Wild Cousin* by Jenni Bidner. Have students demonstrate their understanding of the similarities and differences between different yet related topics by writing a poem for two voices.

With students, brainstorm a list of topics that you are exploring in the classroom. Invite students to create poems for two voices to compare and contrast concepts. Topics may include two planets in the solar system, two historical figures, two inaugural poets, two types of insects from an informational text, and more.

#### Grades 6–8

Have pairs of students find two different perspectives from a newspaper article or primary source. Invite pairs to take on the different perspectives, and have them go back and forth, creating a poem for two voices in the moment as they respond to one another. After creating lines that explore the issue and rehearsing the poem orally, have students revise and record their poems in written form or using technology.

#### Grades 9–12

Have students research and use evidence in texts to create poems around current issues and how they are portrayed in relation to point of view, assumptions, and biases. To do so, have students review different media (newspapers, advertisements, political cartoons, news broadcasts, social media postings, and more) to inform the development of their poems. Students will investigate how point of view can shape the way that information is conveyed.

Students also can explore historical contexts and the voices that have been marginalized or are dominant over time. Consider listening to oral histories to inform the perspectives of the poem. Poems for two voices can use quotations or exact words and phrases drawn from primary sources and can be performed in ways that include vocal tone and dramatic tension for heightened impact. These poems are powerful vehicles for activism and exploration of social and environmental justice issues.

Learn more about using primary sources with poetry by viewing *Teaching with Primary Sources*, a short video guide at the Academy of American Poets website ([poets.org](http://poets.org)). This video features a discussion between Education Ambassador, Richard Blanco, and Educator-in-Residence, Dr. Madeleine Holzer.