

National Theatre, National Politics Creative Challenge: Poetics of Political Figures

<https://thenationaldcpolitics.org>



Activity Overview

Grade Level: High School (9th – 12th)

Subjects: ELA/Literacy, Creative Writing

Estimated Time: 15-20 min

Materials Needed: Pen or pencil, paper, *I Am Poem* prompts (see below)

Activity Format: Individual or group

Summary: This learning activity will help students process historical information. Students will communicate their ideas through an oral presentation and written poem.

Activity Guide

- Either individually or in groups, instruct students to read either the "Lincoln and Booth" or "Desegregation" section of the *National Theatre, National Politics* website:
<https://thenationaldcpolitics.org>.
- After students have read the webpage they will create an "I Am Poem" to help them process the material. To create an "I Am Poem", students will take one of the phrases listed on the handout below, such as "I feel" or "I wonder", and use it to start their poem. For example, the beginning of an "I Am Poem" could be, "I feel like today will be a great day". In this instance, the prompt was, "I feel" and it was used to start the poem.
- Encourage students to be creative and have fun. They may choose to write their poem from the perspective of a historical figure, or as themselves. Students will share the poems they create and any evaluative comments with the class.
- Some sample "I Am Poems" based off of The National Theatre website are:
 - I wonder what life will be like without segregation
 - I hope I will be able to see president Lincoln at The National Theatre
- Consider the following questions for reflection with your students following the assignment:
 - What was it like to place thoughts and ideas down in the form of a poem?
 - Did you connect to anybody else's poem? If yes, explain why.
 - What worked for you in completing this assignment?

I Am Poem Prompts

I am...

I cry...

I wonder...

I understand...

I hear...

I say...

I see...

I dream...

I feel...

I try...

I want...

I hope...

I pretend...

I touch...

I feel...

I worry...