**Writing An Emulation Poem**

Pay special attention to the mentor poet’s ***rhetorical moves****.*Start with the first line:  What is the poet doing in the first line? How does the poet move into the second line?  Copy or emulate the key lines or images – these stay the same.  Then Change up ending parts of the line to portray your own speaking voice.  Can you do the same thing but as your own speaker with your own message.  Continue as far as you can through the poem.

1. Start with the **Mentor Poem open next to**you and **an empty page** of paper in front of you. You should have already annotated and have notes written on the Mentor Poem.

**2. Underline the key phrases**. **Study the rhetorical move**s of the poem — the way the writer uses language and moves through the poem.  For example, In “What’s That Smell?” — Notice that Marge Piercy starts with the key lines “All over America…”  then she moves into 5 images or lines of American cities and a popular dish associated with that place.  Notice that Billy Collins starts with a sentence that is a simile:  “The whole idea of it makes me feel like \_\_\_\_\_\_.

3. Then you **emulate (copy) that rhetorical move copying key phrases**, keeping the beginning part of the line and changing up the ending part.

**Example:**

*Title: What’s That Smell in the Kitchen?*Your Emulation Poem title should be Q starting What?

All over America  \_\_\_\_                              COPY THIS LINE   then

It’s \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_(city); it’s \_\_\_        5 places with foods, so you do 5 things

in\_\_\_; it’s \_\_\_in \_\_\_\_;

\_\_\_in\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_in\_\_\_\_

**Example:**

*Title: On Turning Ten*                                    Your Emulation Poem title should be ON \_\_\_\_\_

The whole idea of it makes me feel         COPY THIS LINE   then…

like \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_                                        simile using like

something worse than \_\_\_\_\_                 2 bad aches, so you do 2 things

or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_                                     3 serious childhood illness,

a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_                                                 so you do 3 things more serious than the 2

a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Continue studying/noticing the **rhetorical moves** of the Mentor Poem and doing the same for your Emulation Poem.

5. You should have the same number of lines as the Mentor Poem and you should arrange your line breaks and your stanzas similarly.  The structure of the Mentor Poem should be visible in your Emulation Poem.

**6. NOTE:**  Your objective in the Emulation Poem is **NOT** to emulate the message of the Mentor Poem.  Instead, you study the poem and transfer the intention to your Emulation Poem.  You will be emulating the structure, the format, the lines. You do **NOT** take on the voice of the depressed mother, the boy turning 10, the angry housewife in the kitchen, the person on the train or the citizen looking out on to his/her devastated city. You will emulate the **rhetorical moves of the poem**, not the speaker voice, not the identity of the poem.  **You will create your own speaking voice with your own message, with your own identity but following the structure of the Mentor Poem.**

Again, I share Student Adrian Coree’s post on why he chose “On Turning Ten”:   I chose to emulate this poem because it captures the intimidating reality one has to face with the passage of time. The reality being that everything has an end. The poem explains the end from the perspective of a child, but it can be applied to the end of any chapter in a persons life.

1. **NOTE**: In our morning pre-class gatherings, we have been discussing the spate of violence erupting around our country.  I encourage you to consider writing a protest poem about a social justice issue that your community is facing.  As citizens we have a right to speak up about issues that concern us and raise public consciousness about an issue that you feel strongly.  If we don’t speak up, who will and when will this stop?  Awareness can lead to change.

There are so many important crises we are facing as Americans:  Anti-Asian hate crimes, Police Brutality, Black Lives Matter, Mass Shootings / Gun Violence and more. What about emulating Marge Piercy’s What’s That Smell? to take on the issue of Anti-Asian Hate Crimes and the killings in Atlanta, the accidents on the city streets where Asian seniors have been pushed to the ground resulting in their deaths?  What about the police killings of Black people **All over America** (see how easily this issue lends itself to Marge Piercy’s poem)?  What about the killings at the grocery store in Boulder Colorado, the killing at the elementary school in Sandy Hook Connecticut, the killing at the Tree of Life Jewish Temple in Pittsburgh, the killing at the Marjory Douglas High School in Parkland Florida.

The research is easily available because these topics are covered in the NYTimes every day.  I encourage you to channel your creative juices to take on a serious issue.

As you analyze the**mentor poem, think about:**

* Whose identity is being explored through the **speaker**’s voice? How would you characterize the **speaker** (give descriptive adjectives)? Is the speaker representing a larger community? If yes, what community?  Is there a communal feeling to this poem?
* If there are two speakers, what is the relationship between these two voices?
* Who is the speaker speaking to? **(the audience/reader)**How do you know?
* How would you describe the speaker’s **tone**? What is the **mood** conveyed? How does the poem make YOU feel? Explain. (some example of words for tone: angry, sad, serious, humorous, amused, playful, cheerful, joyful, free, gloomy)
* Explain **images or lines (at least 3**) that are significant.

Image:  Are there **patterns**of imagery? Discuss any CSD descriptive images that clue you in on the speaker’s state of mind.

Line:  Is there a **pattern**?  Are there significant repeated words or lines?  What does this repetition emphasize?

* Is there an action/**drama**/conflict enfolding? If yes, what is this action?
* Is there a change in the speaker?
* Explain the title.
* What is the **point or the overarching message** of the mentor poem? What is the poet’s **purpose** in writing this poem**?**

**Then think about how you will emulate these points in your own poem.**