

Name: _____ Date: _____

Preparing to Write: Ode to a Shirt

Directions: After reading the story "Good Enough" and the poem "Ode to My Shoes," complete the activity "Analyzing Poetry." Then follow the directions below to write an ode either to an Orion shirt or to the knockoff Orion shirt that Dori receives for her birthday. Write your ode from Dori's point of view.

- 1** An ode is a type of poem that expresses the writer's thoughts and feelings about a specific person, place, or thing. Usually, an ode is written to praise or celebrate the person, place, or thing that it's about. Think about what Dori might praise about the real Orion shirt and what she might praise about the knockoff. Jot your ideas down in the spaces provided.

**WHAT DORI MIGHT PRAISE ABOUT
A REAL ORION SHIRT**

**WHAT DORI MIGHT PRAISE ABOUT
THE KNOCKOFF ORION SHIRT**

Asking yourself these
questions might help you
come up with ideas:

- Does the shirt make Dori think about something good?
- Did the shirt teach Dori something?
 - Does Dori admire something about the shirt?
 - Does the shirt help Dori with something?
- Does Dori like the way the shirt looks, feels, fits, etc.?

- 2** Now that you've spent a little time brainstorming, it's time to decide: Which shirt will you write your poem about? Put a check on your choice.

a real Orion
shirt

the knockoff
Orion shirt

- 3** Brainstorm a list of adjectives that Dori might use to describe the shirt you chose.

ADJECTIVES

Think of words that

- describe the shirt physically.
- describe the personality Dori might imagine the shirt having, in the way that poet Francisco X. Alarcón describes his shoes as being cheerful and relaxed.

- 4** In "Ode to My Shoes," Francisco X. Alarcón describes his shoes at a particular time (night), in a particular place (under his bed), and doing a particular action (falling asleep and dreaming). Choose a time, place, and action for the shirt. The action you choose doesn't need to be something a shirt actually does; you can use personification as Alarcón does. You may write more than one idea in each box.

TIME

PLACE

ACTION

- 5** Now it's time to write the first draft of your ode. Use the ideas that you brainstormed—but let your mind be free. You might come up with new ideas as you start to write, which is great.

Write your poem on your own piece of paper. Here are some things to think about:

- Remember that you are writing about the shirt from Dori's point of view. Your poem should reveal something about what the shirt means to Dori.
- Something that is unique about "Ode to My Shoes" is that there are four lines in each stanza, and no line has more than four syllables. Do you want to try using this structure? You don't have to, but it could be a fun challenge.
- Take a look at the last stanza of Alarcón's poem. He describes an action the shoes do and then lists three adjectives (*cheerful*, *relaxed*, and *soft*) to describe the shoes, adding the word "so" before the last one. Do you want to conclude your poem in a similar way?