

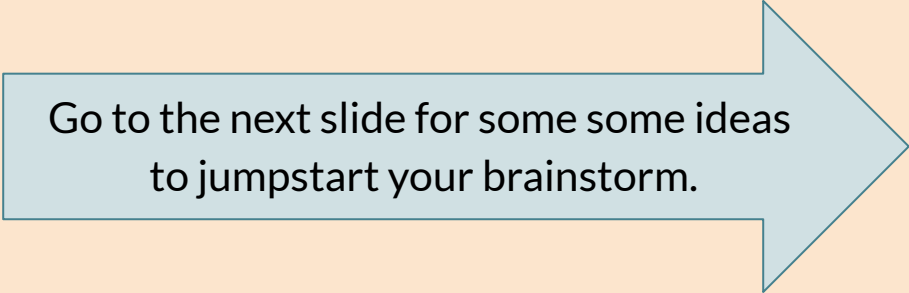
# Poetry Writing Planner



**Directions:** Read the haiku “Characters” by Jason Reynolds. Then follow the directions in this activity to write your own haiku that begins with “I wish.” Use your own paper or document for your writing.

# 1. Brainstorm

At the top of your paper or document, write “I wish \_\_\_\_\_.” Then list different ways you could complete that sentence. Don’t worry about writing a poem right now—just get the ideas down as quickly as you can. After all, Reynolds probably didn’t start “Characters” by thinking “I wish more people would speak in haiku.” He probably started by thinking “I wish people would be more careful about what they say.”



Go to the next slide for some some ideas  
to jumpstart your brainstorm.

# Categories

You can use these ideas to jumpstart your brainstorm.  
But write down anything at all that comes to mind!

**things you wish people in  
general—or a particular  
person or group—would do  
more of or less of**

**things you wish for yourself,  
such as changes you wish you  
could make or things you wish  
would happen to you**

**things you wish for a pet or  
other animal**

**things you wish everyone—or  
a particular person or group  
of people—understood**

**things you wish for  
someone else**

**things you wish about nature  
or the environment**

## 2. Review and Choose

Read through the list you brainstormed. Which idea stands out as something you really care about and are interested in exploring in a haiku? Choose an idea from your list and star it.



### 3. “Dump Out” Your Ideas

In “Meet the Poet,” Reynolds says that for him, writing a poem is like working on a jigsaw puzzle—and the first step is to “dump all the pieces out of the box.” So go ahead and dump! This could mean whatever you want it to, but here are some ideas:

**Write down words and phrases that come to mind when you think about your topic.**

**Write ideas for figurative ways you could express your idea (like how Reynolds expresses the idea of wishing people would be careful what they say through the metaphor of wishing people would speak in haiku).**

**Quickly write a whole bunch of approaches to your haiku until you find one that you want to stick with and work on more.**

## 4. Write Your First Draft

### Guidelines:

- ▶ Give your poem a title.
- ▶ Start your poem with the words “I wish.”
- ▶ Follow the rules for writing a haiku. Your poem must have three lines. The first line must have five syllables, the second line must have seven syllables, and the third line must have five syllables.

## 5. Revise

***When you have your first draft . . .***

Read your poem aloud a few times. Is there anything that doesn't feel quite right? That doesn't sound quite right? Sometimes a small change can make a big difference. Keep making changes, big or small, until you're satisfied with your poem.