

BECOMING A PHYSICIAN: VOICES OF MEDICAL STUDENTS IN POETRY

- I. Overview of session
 - A. Nature of medical education
 - B. Writing as reflection and critique
 - C. Why poetry is special
 - D. Read a medical student poem
 - E. Learn a few ideas about writing a poem
 - F. Write a poem!/share with partner
 - G. Reflect on writing (Group discussion)
 - H. Session evaluation
- II. Medical Education is Overwhelming
 - A. Exhausting, confusing: Burn-out
 - B. Moral distress
 - C. Devaluing of personal identity; discounting of personal experience
 - D. Easy for patient to become other
- III. **MS Writing as Reflection and Critique**
 - A. Reflective writing is a way of processing your experience, a way to both reflect and at times critique**
 - B. Reflective writing enables you to consider:**
what is happening to you; what you see happening to those around you; from a human perspective
 - C. Telling stories one way you can examine your experience /understand its possible meanings**
 - D. Writing helps you see which aspects of your socialization you wish to retain and which you wish to discard**
- IV. **No One Likes Poetry – Bank Robber’s Story – Put your hands in the air and be quiet. I just want to read you some of my poems!**
- V. **Special Features of Poetry**
 - A. Alternative to language of science**
Expresses emotion
Express particular, subjective experience
 - B. Helps us understand oblique narratives of ourselves and others**
 - C. Boundary-crossing and transgressive**
Offers critique of what is
 - D. Insight**
New ways of seeing
Metaphor, imagery
 - E. Stress-reduction**

VI. Let's Read a Poem (1st poem issues of identity; 2nd poem moral distress)

VII. Poetry: What Is It? Definition

What's important is that poetry is intense, concentrated, and imaginative
Uses language in distinct ways

VIII. Poetry is a lot about form – so many different kinds – but not this time!

IX. Today anything is a poem!

We are not learning to be professional poets, just to explore different aspects of self
It can rhyme, it can be free verse, it can have rhythm or none at all. There is even
something called a prose poem which is written in a paragraph.

Don't write an essay, be creative, but remember anything is a poem!

X. The Exception - Haiku

XI. Writing a Poem

A. Find a central image or scene

Some aspect of your life NOW

Memorable patient or family member encounter

Something wise/shocking attending said to you

Some other aspect of your life

B. Write down words that associate to that image

C. Put them together

Pay attention to imagery, metaphor, word choice, language

Use rhyme scheme, meter, or free verse

XII. Tips for Writing Poetry

A. Know your goal

B. Avoid clichés

C. Avoid sentimentality

D. Use images

E. Use metaphor and simile

F. Use concrete words

G. instead of abstract ones

H. Show (don't tell) your feelings

I. Subvert the ordinary