

Writing Tip: 9-Word Guess Poems

9-Word Guess Poems: Quick & Easy!

WHAT AND WHY: Students who are struggling writers, especially students who use AAC need writing opportunities that are motivating and can be completed in a reasonable amount of time. This simple format produces a poem about a secret topic (e.g., place visited, pet, country, landform) using only 9 words. Partners write down guesses after each set of 3 words is revealed.

- 3 nouns (things you see)
- 3 verbs (actions)
- 3 adjectives (describing words)

These poems can support students:

- Summarizing Information:** For example, Ms. Castillo's class just finished studying Southwest and New England states. Each student picked a state and wrote a 9-word poem, with peers guessing which state they had chosen.
- Identifying and Using Parts of Speech:** In order to complete this poem, students must differentiate between nouns, verbs, and adjectives. This is especially useful for many students who use AAC, as words are often arranged in those categories.
- Making Predictions:** Listeners are active participants in the process, as they must WRITE their predictions, and then revise them as they get more information. The class discusses why predictions are retained or rejected (e.g., 'It can't be Disney because she said quiet, and Disney isn't quiet!')

WHO IS THIS FOR: While 9-Word Guess Poems can be useful for many students, but are especially helpful for:

- Students who are using developmental spelling, as the simple format helps them to be successful.
- Students who use AAC: They may need to use initial letter cueing and work with a partner. Shared knowledge (e.g., action word about a dog, starts with B) helps this be successful, and is a great strategy for students to practice.

WRITING THE POEMS

Model. It is crucial to model this and any other Writing task for your students. Be sure to do Talk Alouds. For example, when modeling a 9-Word Poem about where I went for vacation, I said things such as: 'Okay, nouns. I liked looking at everything. What's a word I can use . . . Got it . . . VIEWS! Hmmmm . . . actions . . . let's see . . . dancing. No, it was a special

NOUNS	views fireflies stars
VERBS	hiking swinging clogging
DESCRIBE	gorgeous quiet relaxing

Answer: MOUNTAINS

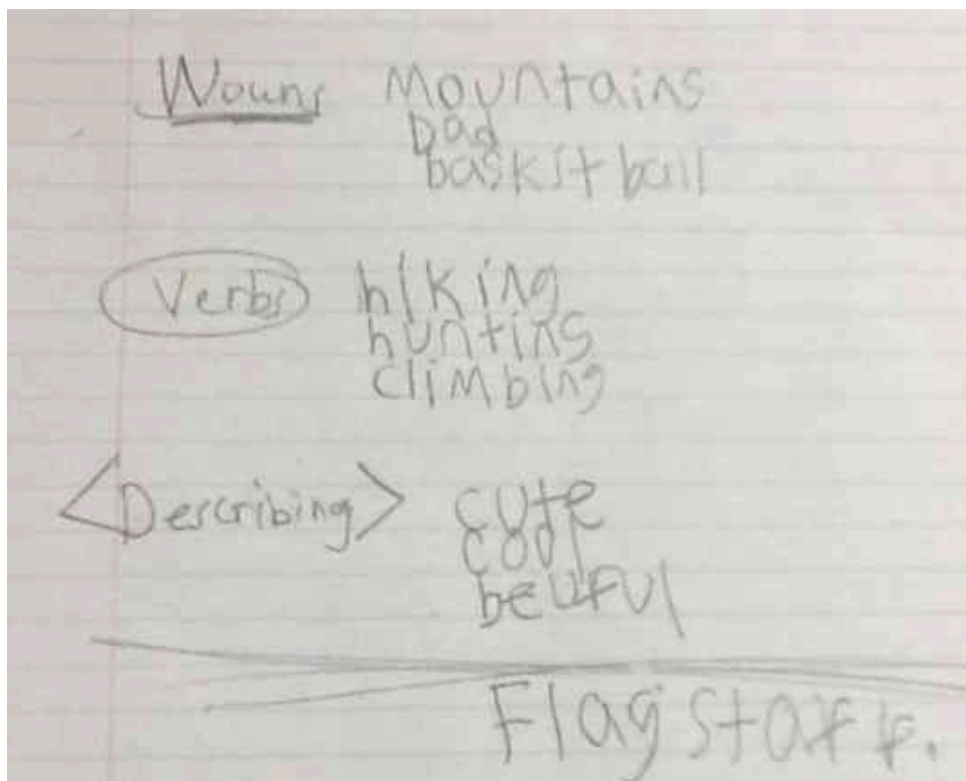
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kind of dancing. I know, I'll write CLOGGING!

Shared Writing – Group Poem: The teacher now works with the group to pick a topic and write together. For example, we were writing about places, so the group chose the beach. Together we brainstormed a set of nouns, verbs, and describing words. They discuss whether each word adds to the poem, or just gives away the answer

Nouns	sand water shells
Verbs	float swim dig
Descriptors	pretty salty sunny
<The Beach>	

Paired or Independent Writing: Students now choose a topic and start developing their list of 3 nouns, 3 verbs, and 3 describing words. Below is a list one student made based on a summer visit to Flagstaff, in the mountains of Arizona.



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SHARING THE POEMS

Putting the 9-Word Poems on Your Communication Device:

For nonspeaking students, poems can be shared quickly via a step-listing device such as Step by Step.



Putting the 9-Word Poems on Your iPad:

Many apps are available for quickly sharing 9-Word Poems, such as:

- Sounding board
- TapSpeak Sequence

Partners listen to the shared poems, and make guesses about the answer!

MODIFYING THE ACTIVITY

For students who struggle to create messages, this could easily be changed to a 6-word poem, or even a 3-word poem.