

# Possibilities and Assessment Suggestions for "The Quiet World"— Write Your Own Poem

After discussing the poem and its links to *Among the Hidden*, you may wish to have students explore the theme poetically themselves. If your students haven't had much experience writing poems, it might be helpful to point out some characteristics of "The Quiet World" that they may choose to emulate.

- It is written in everyday language.
- It does not rhyme.
- It is written in complete sentences.
- Each stanza contains one or more sentences.
- The stanzas are not all the same length.
- It uses concrete details ("chicken noodle soup," "thirty-two and a third times").

If you think your students need help getting started, you might consider one of the following ideas:

- Brainstorm possible governmental limits as a class and have them choose one to work with, following the suggestions on the student activity sheet.
- Use the same situation as in "The Quiet World" (a person is allowed only 167 words per day) and ask students to imagine how they might use their words on one particular day (a holiday? their birthday?). After they freewrite their ideas, have them use the suggestions on the student activity sheet to guide their composing process.
- If your students need a great deal of support, you might have them write an imitation poem in which they take their own ideas and plug them into the form of the original. For example, a first stanza might read:

In an effort to get people to waste  
less water than they do now  
the government has decided to allow  
each person to use two gallons of water  
for washing and drinking and flushing.

At the end of the poem, they should sign their names and then write, "With apologies to Jeffrey McDaniel" to indicate that they have used his work as their model.