# UR A POET & U DIDN’T KNOW IT

DRAFTING AND REFINING YOUR POETRY

**1. First Draft:**

A poet’s first piece of writing is never their final draft. Always **keep a copy** of your original poem, so you can go back to the ideas in your first draft if you need to.

**2. Second Draft**

Read through your poem looking for areas where you could **refine** your work by using **figurative language**, playing with **structure** or using interesting **rhythm**. Read it at least twice before attempting to alter it. You must **read your poem aloud** so you can get a sense of how its sound and rhythm flow.

**Think about…**

**Experimenting with word choice.**

* Use a thesaurus or search for *synonyms* to find the most effective word for your poem.
* Replace simplistic words with evocative words.
* Use specific language. For example, “bumblebee yellow” creates a better image than just “yellow.”

**When you make revisions, you can cut words but also add them. Be brave! Don’t be precious about your words; they’re safe in your original copy.**

* Look closely at your lines. What words can be taken out to express ideas in fewer words?
* Try removing words, phrases, lines or whole stanzas to see if the poem is more effective.



**Look at your line breaks. The end of a line need not be the end of a sentence.**

* The word out at the end of each line should have special weight, strong words that create emphasis. Think about whether **enjambment** or **end-stops** will be more effective in communicating meaning.
* Use punctuation to help guide the reader to read the poem the way you intended.

**Listen for the rhythm of your poem. Read your poem out loud!**

* Do you have a word with too many syllables or not enough?
* Do you have any alliteration, assonance, or consonance that you want to develop further?

**Use poetic devices to improve your poem:**

* **Simile** – comparison using *like* or *as: his hair was short and spiky like a hedgehog atop his skill*
* **Metaphor** – a direct comparison: *The wind was a howling dog, readying to hunt.*
* **Personification** – giving human qualities to nonhuman things: *The light danced on the surface of the lake.*
* **Tone** – the emotional ‘voice’ your poem has
* **Point of view** – whose point of view is the poem from?
* **Imagery** – creating pictures with words
* **Alliteration**, **assonance**, or **consonance** – repeating the same letters, word or phrases

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