How to review and improve your poetry



Step 1: Type your work into a word document or google doc (not an email!)

Typing it in a document will allow you to make changes easily … and undo them if you don’t like your changes



Step 1: Type your work into a word document or google doc (not an email!)

It will also make your final work, easier to read and so it will have more impact.

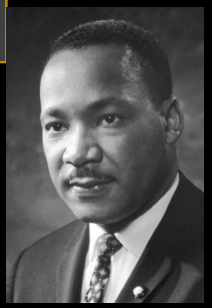


Step 2: Read through the first verse of your poem.



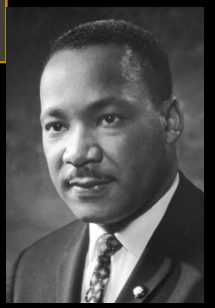
Step 2: Read through the first verse of your poem.

Are there any words or phrases that you think can be improved or that you are not happy with?



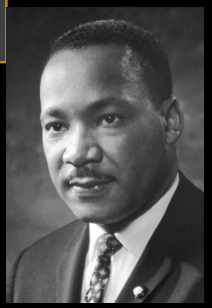
Step 2: Read through the first verse of your poem.

If so, recraft them.
Use an online thesaurus like wordhippo



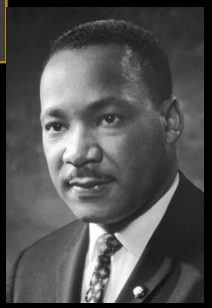
Step 2: Read through the first verse of your poem.

Remember: Sometimes lines can be improved by missing words out!



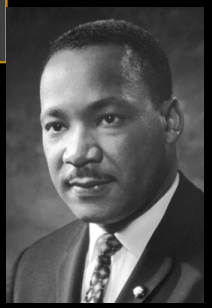
Step 2: Read through the first verse of your poem.

If you are happy – read the verse aloud…



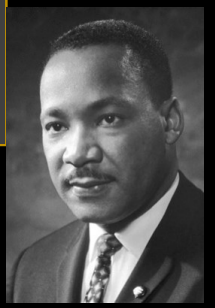
Step 2: Read through the first verse of your poem.

You may find other things that you are unhappy about when you read it out.



Step 2: Read through the first verse of your poem.

Consider whether the lines are ‘balanced’ – does one seem much longer or shorter than others? If so, does it matter?



Step 3: Now repeat step 1 for every other verse!



Step 4: Take a verse and read it aloud.

Then read the first line out, but try switching the order of the next lines.



Step 4: Take a verse and read it aloud.

Does it feel better or worse?
If it sounds better, switch the order.



Step 4: Take a verse and read it aloud.

Now try switching the order of other lines – change the order if it sounds better



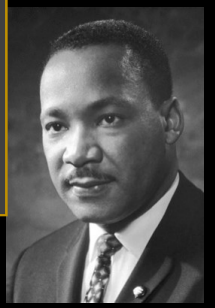
Step 5: Now read through your whole poem



Step 5: Now read through your whole poem

Try switching the order of your verses. It may make a difference.

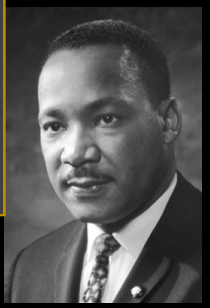
Your most powerful verses should be the first and last



Step 5: Now read through your whole poem

Are there any verses that are not as good?

Sometimes a poem can be improved by deleting a verse



Step 6: Consider the layout of your poem



Is it better to have the text justified in the centre, like this:

I have a dream, that the poor will have cosy, clean clothes to wear during the
howling winters.

That their lips won't have to face the foul water they drink.

That each day they won't have to suffer out upon the streets, huddled in tarnished sheets.

That at nightfall, they can receive comfortable cushions and covers they always needed.



Is it better to have the text justified to the right, like this:

I have a dream, that the poor will have cosy, clean clothes to wear during the howling winters.

That their lips won't have to face the foul water they drink.

That each day they won't have to suffer out upon the streets, huddled in tarnished sheets.

That at nightfall, they can receive comfortable cushions and covers they always needed.

It matters!



Think about the first line of each verse of your poem.

I have a dream, that the poor will have cosy, clean clothes to wear during the howling winters.

I have a dream…
That the poor will have cosy, clean clothes to wear during the howling winters.

Which is better?



Think about the first line of each verse of your poem.

I have a dream, that the poor will have cosy, clean clothes to wear during the howling winters.

I have a dream…
That the poor will have cosy, clean clothes to wear during the howling winters.

Which is better?



Step 7: Your final job…

How will it end?



Step 7: Your final job…

How will it end?

Are you happy with the ending… or does it need something else



Step 7: Your final job…

How will it end?

Have a look at how the writer has finished their poem in the example below the slideshow.

Do you want to do something similar?



Personally, I would want to add something…for example:

These are my dreams
These are my hopes
This is our world
This is our future

They are my dreams, but I want them to be shared by everybody. So I've switched to using 'our' in the last lines.



We have seen such wonderful words in your drafts.

Take the time to perfect your work …it really will make a difference



We can not wait to read your final work…

Don’t forget to send it!

