

## I. Read the following self-portrait:

Linda—  
 Honest, carefree, content, and generous,  
 Sister of Fran, Jim, and Elaine,  
 Lover of the freshness of spring, the laughter of a  
 child and the excitement of new green leaves,  
 Who feels joy when traveling, loneliness in the dark, and  
 nervousness in the dentist's chair,  
 Who needs sunshine, Saturdays, and friends,  
 Who gives support, encouragement, and smiles,  
 Who fears pain, snakes, and the end of a good book,  
 Who would like to see respect for our environment, peace  
 in our families, and better housing for the poor,  
 Who lives in a small gray house down on Grover Street,  
 —Moore.

Note that in 11 lines (as poetry is numbered), Linda has captured the main ideas she wants you to know about her. (Number the lines in the left margin.) How has she used parallelism in lines 2, 4, 6, and 9?

Can you find two places that are not quite parallel? Are these acceptable variations? Why or why not?

In line 8, change the arrangement of the three items. Is the line as effective this new way? Why or why not?

In examining the pattern, we find the following structure:

- Line 1. Your first name only, or your nickname—
2. Four traits or qualities that describe you (use adjectives),
3. Brother/Sister of . . . (their names),
4. Lover of . . . (three ideas, groups, people, etc.),
5. Who feels . . . (three emotions),
6. Who needs . . . (three items),
7. Who gives . . . (three items),
8. Who fears . . . (three items),
9. Who would like to see . . . (three items),
10. Who lives . . . (describe briefly where),
11. —Your last name only.

## II. YOUR TURN!



This 11-line poem will give you a chance to write about a person you know quite well: yourself. Do not aim at rhyme, but use lively, colorful, and specific language.

For clarity and style, try to use parallel structure whenever possible. Avoid careless repetition; find another way to express your idea, or find another idea to express.

Although an autobio-poem is personal, it is not private. It is meant for others to read, so put your best effort into it. Reread, revise, and edit!

