

PROUD POETRY

TALENTED

Two all with two minutes 'til
time.

Tenacious and tricky as he
tirelessly tackles the other
team.

Takes the ball up the turf.

Taps it to his team-mates.

Takes it back and tries...

What a tremendous goal!

Full-time.

The trophy is theirs.

What a talent!

Showoff (page 95) is an alliterative poem about Jordan Bell's skills and talents on the basketball court. Use alliteration to write a poem about something you are really good at.

Writing Tips

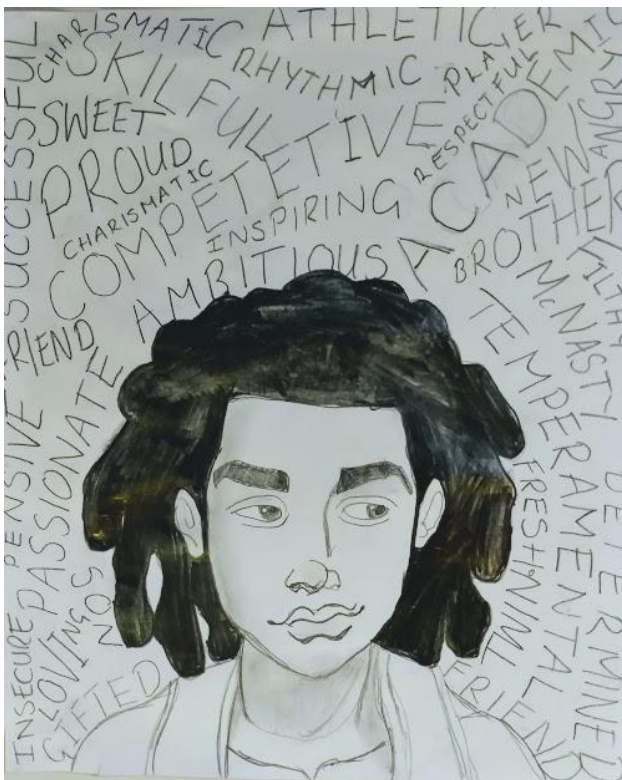
Think about all aspects of your talent and the context in which you use it.

Make a list of nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs which link to the theme of your poem.

Use word generators online. For example, search '*adjectives beginning with t*' or '*football words beginning with t*'.

Write your poem in free verse.

Play around with the order of the lines and punctuation until you are happy with it.



WORD PORTRAIT

The protagonist and narrator, Josh Bell, introduces himself on pages 4 to 9 with a poem about his basketball play. As the story develops, we learn a lot more about Josh and his life on and off the court: the confident, determined side of his character when he plays basketball but also his insecurities as he displays his changing feelings and emotions towards his brother.

Create a portrait of Josh which shows all the different aspects of his character. Start by making a list of nouns and adjectives to describe him. Then, copy or trace a picture of him. Finally, surround

the picture with the words, thinking carefully about the size, placement and orientation of each one.

More Poetry Ideas

Get creative with words and have a go at writing your own poems, based on some of those in *The Crossover*. You can find definitions and examples of poetic forms and devices on the CLPE website: clpe.org.uk/poetry/poetic-forms-and-devices.

1. Page 33: Imagery Poem

Write a free verse poem to describe a setting in a particular moment. Include some sensory description (smells, sounds, sights) and metaphors to evoke vivid images for the reader.

2. Page 43: Ode to my Hair

Before Jordan cuts it, Josh's hair is his pride and joy. Write an ode to something which is special to you. It could be part of your identity, a possession, or about someone you love. Use two line stanzas and assonance like in Kwame's poem.

3. Page 45: The Game is Tied.

Use this as a model to write a poem about a tense moment which you have witnessed or experienced.

4. Page 58: Basket Ball Rule #2

Write a two-word verb poem about a sport of your choice, describing how it is played and using only two words per line.

5. Page 105-106: Ironic

Choose your own word and write a definition followed by a free verse poem with three stanzas. Use the refrain 'As in:' at the beginning of each stanza, like Kwame does in this poem and the other vocabulary poems throughout the novel.

6. Page 141: This Week I

Write a list poem to summarise what you have done in the past week.

7. Page 177: At Noon, in the Gym, with Dad.

Using this poem as a model, write a two-word list poem about a significant event or experience from your own life.

8. Choose a poem from the book to perform to an audience. You could try rapping or saying it to music like in the trailer for the book, which can be found at www.hmhbooks.com/series/the-crossover-series.

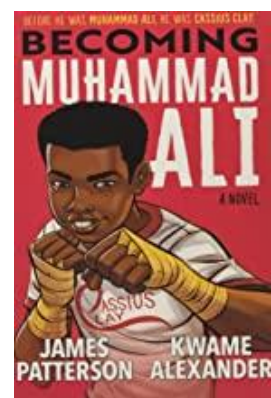
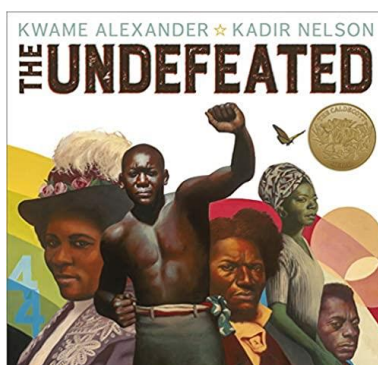
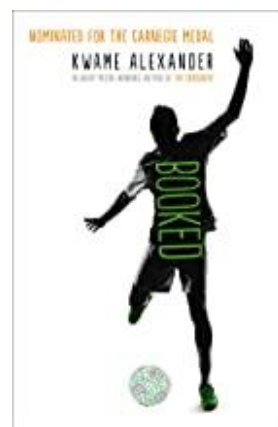
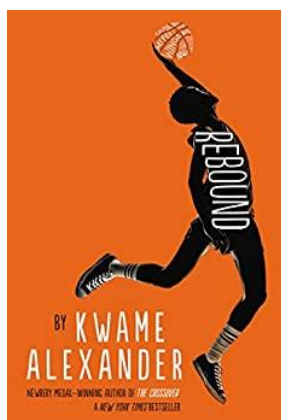
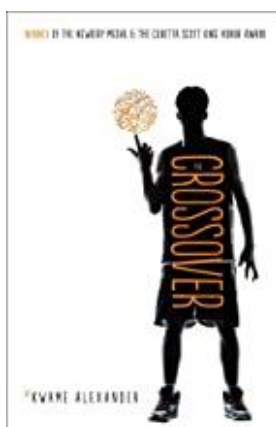
9. Collect all of the onomatopoeic words from the novel and use them in a poem.

10. Write a Play-by-Play commentary about a sports match or competition of your choice.

Further Activities to Try

1. Create a soundtrack for the novel, including songs and artists which are referred to in the book.
2. Rewrite a section of the graphic novel as prose. Look carefully at what the images convey about the setting, characters, atmosphere and action. How will you translate this into words?
3. Design a new kit for The Wildcats.
4. Draw a map of the area in which the Bell Brothers live. Include all of the significant settings which have appeared throughout the story.
5. Make an illustrated glossary of terms using all of the vocabulary definitions which Kwame includes throughout the novel.
6. In The Crossover, Chuck Bell imparts life lessons to his sons, in the form of ten basketball rules. Josh suggests that his dad should write a book of these rules. Create the book, illustrating each one to show how the rules relate to both the court and to real-life.

More Books by Kwame Alexander



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