

When I Grow Up I Want To Be...

1. **Share on the board, and out loud, Chen Chen's poem** *When I Grow Up I Want to Be a List of Further Possibilities*.
2. **Lead a brief discussion on the poem:** *What's is it about, and what techniques does the poet use?* **Answer:** *The poet uses metaphors to imagine what he could be for the important people in his life — it is like he is turning himself into a gift for them to help them feel good. There is also an LGBT and ethnicity subtext in the poem students might pick up on.*
3. **Pupils write down people that they care about and what they could be for that person — encourage concrete objects rather than general feelings! What would make the person they care about feel better, and why?** *E.g. 'To be a paint palette of bright colours for my Mum / to be the sunbeam my Dad calls me'.*
4. **If time, students can extend this metaphor to explore it further.** *E.g. 'To be the sunbeam my Dad calls me / so I can light up his life'.*
5. **Students share back their favourite metaphors.**

Reflection: Why is a specific metaphor a stronger writing technique compared to a general feeling? What inspired your metaphors?

Go Further: Finish the poem by including all the people originally written down, or focus it on one person and all the things you could be for them. What can you be for yourself — and how will you give that to yourself each day?

Imaginative: Making Connections

This encourages students to dig into how metaphors work, and how a specific image can conjure more feeling and understanding. It also asks them to look at how a seemingly simple poem can have more going on under the surface, and asks them to imagine what they could mean to others.