

Name:

## Day One

# Being Heard

### Part 1: Silent read

➔ Can slam poetry change teens' lives? Read silently.

Slam poetry can be strong. It lets people share their experiences. It gives people a chance to be heard. *To Be Heard* is the name of a documentary about teens discovering the power of slam poetry. It shows New York City teens in a program called Power Writing.

One of the teens, Pearl, told the *Daily News* that Power Writing helped her feel more confident. "I realized, wow, I can stand on a stage and I can spit my truth," she said.

How does slam poetry work? Poets have just three minutes on stage. They use only their voices and their bodies. Poets might chant or howl. To share a feeling, they might shake a fist or shed a tear. They memorize the poem. Pearl said this helps poets speak from their hearts. "When you're not reading off a piece of paper, you are a force to be reckoned with," she said.

"You need your body for slam," Pearl went on. "You're saying, 'I'm not just saying words—I have lived this life, and I want you to understand the journey I've been on.'"

Pearl is a student at University Heights High in the Bronx. She has seen bad things in her daily life. To be successful in life, she must beat the odds. But Pearl is optimistic.

Teachers say slam poetry helps teens take control. One teacher told the *Daily News*, "When you find your voice, it's empowering to stand up and sing your own song."

Source: "'To Be Heard' IFC documentary features University Heights high school students, spoken word," *Daily News*, October 12, 2011.



# Day One Being Heard

// one minute

## Part 2: First timed read

WPM \_\_\_\_\_

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## Part 3: Comprehension and discussion

How does slam poetry help teens feel more powerful?

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What are the rules of slam poetry?

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## Day One

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### Part 4: Phrase-cued reading

- Read the passage **out loud** in phrases to your partner.
- Pause at each / mark for a phrase.
- Also pause at each // mark that shows the end of a sentence.

Slam poetry can be strong. // It lets people share their experiences. // It gives people / a chance to be heard. // *To Be Heard* / is the name of a documentary about teens / discovering the power of slam poetry. // It shows New York City teens / in a program called Power Writing. //

One of the teens, / Pearl, / told the *Daily News* / that Power Writing helped her feel more confident. // “I realized, / wow, / I can stand on a stage / and I can spit my truth,” / she said. //

How does slam poetry work? // Poets have just three minutes on stage. // They use only their voices / and their bodies. // Poets might chant or howl. // To share a feeling, / they might shake a fist / or shed a tear. // They memorize the poem. // Pearl said / this helps poets speak from their hearts. // “When you’re not reading off a piece of paper, / you are a force to be reckoned with,” / she said. //

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I read the passage in phrases out loud to my partner.