

Think about a time when you made a great effort to tell a story that conveyed an important or difficult experience. Chances are, you chose your language carefully. When poets tell stories, they select their language to evoke a response in readers or listeners. Consider this statement by William Stafford: “A poem is anything said in such a way or put on the page in such a way as to invite from the hearer or reader a certain kind of attention.” When you are **focusing on language and craft**, you pay attention to the poet’s word choice as well as how poets use their words to evoke a certain kind of attention, or response.

Use the chart below to analyze and compare how you and Stafford use language and craft to tell your stories. You may need to reread your poem and Stafford’s as you complete the chart.

Language and Craft	William Stafford’s poem, “Traveling Through the Dark”	Your poem, “_____”
<p>Describe the vocabulary used. Which words may evoke a strong response in readers or listeners?</p>	<p><i>Words are simple and spare—“stood by the heap”</i></p>	
<p>List sensory words that create visual pictures that make the reader “hear” something or feel a certain emotion.</p>	<p><i>“glow of the tail light”</i></p>	
<p>What is the tone the poet uses (for example, serious, sad, sarcastic, funny)? Describe and give examples.</p>		
<p>How does the poem use language in a way that invites readers to find out what happens? Explain.</p>		

✱ Use the chart to help you write how Stafford’s use of language and craft evokes a response in you as a reader.

✱ Reread and revise your poem, focusing on how you use language and craft to evoke a powerful response from readers. Write the revised poem below.

Title _____

✱ Read your revised poem aloud to a partner, and then discuss the response it evokes in him or her.

What did you learn about language and craft from Stafford that will be useful to you in your own writing?