

SELF DETERMINATION



Among our people a spirit name is bestowed upon those from our tribe who embark upon a spirit quest. Today, bestow upon yourself a fitting spirit name that best describes who you are in this moment.

- Teacher of the law of indigenous peoples (from the Ute Nation) speaking to the assembled learners of these laws, circa 1982.

What name would befit one who is without a true nation to call his own,

who is embarked upon a journey without direction,

who is drawn forward towards an as-yet unknown destiny

who is driven by a life force emanating from within and without

who is utterly alone in a crowded world

who is pursued by other humans bent on conquest and

who aspire to the annihilation of a species of creature

who touches his heart as if beating within his own breast?

- *Swimming Sperm Whale.*

SELF DETERMINATION

DAY 26 PROMPT: Write a self-portrait poem without using the word "I".

CREDITS/BIBLIO: Image: [Diving with Sperm Whales](#) DEEP DIVE : PREPARE TO BE HUMBLLED (Untold Story). Authors note: based on actual events when the author was attending law school and a visiting professor teaching a course on Federal Indian Law offered students to use self-designated spirit names in lieu of their social security numbers, as was then part of the blind grading system used to grade final exams at the University of Florida School of Law.

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You can see many examples of self-portrait poems by famous poets [here](#). The word self-portrait is usually in the title, but it doesn't have to be, and it certainly doesn't need to be the only thing in the title. Some self-portrait poems are very clear and easy to follow, while many others take a more abstract or experimental approach. **Craft Tip:** Try to keep your use of the word "I" in this poem to a minimum. This is generally a helpful tip in personal poems, period. It forces the writer to be a little more creative.

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[Dead Sperm Whales Washed Up On Sea Shores. What Was Found In Their Stomachs Is An Absolute Nightmare](#)

Mercy for Whale Scene:

<https://youtu.be/waMiKmhXVxo>

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<iframe width="750" height="421"
src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/waMiKmhXVxo" title="In the Heart of the
Sea (2015) - Mercy for the Whale Scene (10/10) | Movieclips" frameborder="0"
allow="accelerometer; autoplay; clipboard-write; encrypted-media; gyroscope;
picture-in-picture; web-share" allowfullscreen></iframe>
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Gregory Peck:

SELF DETERMINATION

<https://youtu.be/NMPW4R727QQ>

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allowfullscreen></iframe>
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Documentary

<https://youtu.be/DT-TDegf-Xo>

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<iframe width="750" height="421" src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/DT-TDegf-Xo" title="Sperm
Whales Dealing : With The Unexpected - Wildlife Documentary" frameborder="0"
allow="accelerometer; autoplay; clipboard-write; encrypted-media; gyroscope; picture-in-picture; web-
share" allowfullscreen></iframe>
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