Responding to Comparison/Contrast through Writing:
The Diamond Poem

Two-sentence summary: A diamond poem (or *diamante*—pronounced *dee-uh-mahn-tay*) is a shape poem that requires little knowledge of poetry to create. The diamond poem comes with its own formula that ultimately examines two concepts that are opposites of each other.

Background knowledge needed: Students will need to be shown the format of a diamond poem. Remind students that their job with writing a diamond poem is to show they've learned the most important differences between the two nouns that serve as the "book-ends" in this form of poetry. After three or four diamond poem assignments, you will be surprised at how efficiently and effectively your students can create this simple type of poem.

The explanation and example below will help your students understand the purpose or form of a diamond poem:

The Diamond Poem:	A Diamond Poem Example:
Line1: one noun **Line2:** two adjectives that describe the noun in line 1 **Line3:** three *–ing* verbs the writer associates with the nouns in line 1 **Line4:** four nouns - the first two nouns are associated with the noun in line 1; the other two are associated with the noun in line 7 **Line5:** three *–ing* verbs the writer associates with the nouns in line 7 **Line6:** two adjectives that describe the noun in line 7 **Line7:** one noun that is the opposite of the noun in line 1	*Mountain* *High, rocky* *Flying, looking, killing* *Eagle, power, fear, rabbit* *Living, moving, making noise* *Deep, beautiful* *Valley*

Comparing/Contrasting: Allowing students to write diamond poems without doing some form of pre-writing will lead to shallower explorations of the concepts. By asking your students to complete a Venn diagram or a T-chart on the two concepts first, you will find their diamond poems go to a deeper level of understanding.

Differentiating Instruction Ideas: Require your stronger writers to use stronger adjectives and verbs in lines 2, 3, 5, and 6, and when appropriate, require those same writers to use content-based vocabulary in their diamond poems.

A thought on the writing task: Early in the year, reserve a page in students' journals or learning logs for their diamond poem assignments. Throughout the year, as you encounter topics that lend themselves to the diamond poem format, have students neatly write final drafts of diamond poems on that page. At year's end, your students can have a very nice collection of these poems on many topics.

Two Diamond Poem Examples from Students:

<u>Civilizations</u>

Greece
philosophical, refined
thinking, creating, civilizing
empires rise ----- empires fall
building, adapting, colonizing
practical, robust
Rome

--Seth, 9th grade

<u>Seasons</u>

Winter
Rainy, cold
Skiing, skating, sledding
Mountains, wind, breeze, ocean
Swimming, surfing, scuba diving
Sunny, hot
Summer

--Dana, 4th grade

A Diamond Poem Template:

Title of Poem: _____

Author's Name: _____

_____

_____, _____

_____, _____, _____

_____, _____, _____, _____

_____, _____, _____

_____, _____

_____