

Writing Personification:

Using the examples below from J. Ruth Gendler's *The Book of Qualities*, select a quality that you can personify. You may select from the list of qualities that follow or select one of your own. Remember, all work for this class is PG-rated. **Qualities:** Worry, Fear, Patience, Confusion, Loneliness, Despair, Judgment, Beauty, Love, Courage, Anxiety, Confidence, Compassion, Faith, Creativity, Honor, Shock, Joy, Grief, Truth, etc.

Consider the following as you prepare to write:

- Is your "character" male or female? Be sure to capitalize the name.
- Do you know a person who exhibits the quality you are personifying? If yes, what does that person do? What does (s)he say? How does (s)he act? Incorporate these qualities into your personification.
- Think of characters in movies, on TV, in books and stories you have read. Incorporate their characteristics into your personification as well.
- Spice it up! Incorporate similes and metaphors in your personifications. Use VIVID VERBS!

Pleasure

Pleasure is wild and sweet. She likes purple flowers. She loves the sun and the wind and the night sky. She carries a silver bowl full of liquid moonlight. She has a cat named Midnight with stars on his paws.

Many people mistrust Pleasure, and even more misunderstand her. For a long time I could hardly stand to be in the same room with her. I went to sleep early to avoid her. I thought she was a gossip and a flirt and she drank too much. In school we learned that she was dangerous, and I was sure she would distract me from my work. I didn't realize she could nurture me.

As I have changed, Pleasure has changed. I have learned to value her friendship.

Uncertainty

I have lived with Uncertainty for a long time. I had thought ours would have been a much briefer affair. I had no idea how intimate we'd become until you showed up.

And now you are asking me to leave him, and there are a few things I need to know. Who are you? What are your motives? Can I trust you? Is it really me you want to spend more time with or Uncertainty you yearn to visit?

Boredom

Does anyone really know what Boredom is like? He rarely goes anywhere without at least one of his friends. He can't stand to be alone. On Sunday afternoons he goes to the bar on the corner and drinks dark beer with Futility, Rage, and Anxiety. They all have such strong personalities. In conversations with that bunch, Boredom tends to get lost. It's not that he doesn't say anything. It is just that what he says never sounds as interesting or vivid or memorable. If you listen carefully, you will see that he actually has some very good ideas. He simply lacks the energy to carry them out.

Power

Power made me a coat. For a long time I kept it in the back of my closet. I didn't like to wear it much, but I always took good care of it. When I first started wearing it again, it smelled like mothballs. As I wore it more, it started fitting better, and stopped smelling like mothballs.

I was afraid if I wore the coat too much someone would want to take it or else I would accidentally leave it in the dojo dressing room. But it has my name on the label now, and it doesn't really fit anyone else. When people ask me where I found such a becoming garment, I tell them about the tailor, Power, who knows how to make coats that you grown into. First you must find the courage to approach him and ask him to make your coat. Then, you must find the patience inside yourself to wear the coat until it fits.

Wisdom

Wisdom wears an indigo jacket. She takes long walks in the purple hills at twilight, pausing to meditate at an old temple near the crossroads. She was sick as a young child so she learned to be alone with herself at an early age.

Wisdom has a quiet mind. She like to think about the edges where things spill into each other and become their opposites. She knows how to look at things inside and out. Sometimes her eyes go out to the thing she is looking at, and sometimes the thing she is look at enters through her eyes. Questions of time, depth and balance interest her. She is not looking for answers.