Task Prompt: Students will explore habits, strategies, and attitudes of narrative poetry writers. Each student will use imitation strategies as he or she plans and drafts a narrative poem, based on an event from his or her life.

The Stage

after “Mail Call” by Adrienne Jaeger

The stage

It makes me feel free
Like all the weight is lifted off my shoulders
I watch
A thousand eyes on me
Knowing they came for a reason
The bands warming up
The bright lights falling downward
And I turn around
To the crowd that hollers

At first
I may have the jitters
But they all go away
As I step up the steps
And I’m on the stage

I smile
As I look into the sea of people
I have never met before
And just for a split second
I know I’m not nervous anymore

I start
Singing out into the crowd
I look down at my shadow
And start to do my dance
I don’t fear this stance

Off this stage I am not my own
This stage is my home
The show is over
The lights they fade
And a tear appears
On my face
My performance is done
Until next time
When I sing another one
And I’m on the stage
This is an example of an advanced 8th grade narrative poem. The writer grows her own story of being on stage from the structure of a mentor poem and gives credit to that mentor poem. The original mentor poem was about missing mom at camp. This writer uses the same number of stanzas as the mentor poem and she uses the short declarative lines like the mentor poem does. She also uses craft elements that enhance the reader’s experience with the poem. Using a close moment, the writer really puts the reader into her experience on stage. 8th grade writers who use several craft elements and elements that are not the same as the mentor poem help to create advanced work like this.