

## **“The Border: A Double Sonnet” Worksheet**

*You’re going to read a poem by Alberto Ríos called “The Border: A Double Sonnet.” Alberto Ríos was born in Nogales, Arizona to a mother from England and a father from Mexico. Ríos grew up speaking both Spanish and English, and spending time on both sides of the border, which at the time could be crossed freely. He got two degrees at the University of Arizona. In 2013, he was named the Arizona Poet Laureate, and he teaches at ASU.*

1. Read the poem twice. The first time, read it out loud to yourself. The second time, underline or circle lines that stand out to you. You can find the poem here: <https://poets.org/poem/border-double-sonnet>

2. On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions:

- What did you notice about this poem? Are there any lines that stood out to you? Why did they stand out?
- What details does Ríos use to describe the border? What senses (look, smell, touch, see, hear)?
- What poetic techniques or literary devices does Ríos use to write the poem? Why do you think he uses these techniques?
- How does this poem make you feel?

3. On a separate sheet of paper, write your own poem using repetition and metaphor, copying the style that Ríos uses in “The Border: A Double Sonnet.” Choose a place that is part of the region where you live. (Examples for students in Tucson: “the border,” “the desert”, “Tucson”, “Barrio Hollywood”, “Mt. Lemmon”, “Nogales.”) Write at least 7 lines—if you’re feeling ambitious you can make it fourteen!

5. Congratulations--you’ve just written a poem!