

Annotation Option 2 | "Allowables" by Nikki Giovanni

Fun Facts: Nikki Giovanni is a professor at Virginia Tech. She has also famously written a lot of poems about hip hop and rappers. You should go check out what else she has written!

Allowables

I killed a spider
Not a murderous brown recluse
Nor even a black widow
And if the truth were told this
Was only a small
Sort of papery spider
Who should have run
When I picked up the book
But she didn't
And she scared me
And I smashed her
I don't think
I'm allowed

To kill something

Because I am

Frightened

- Nikki Giovanni

1. Make a copy of this poem and put it in your weekly poetry template.
2. Read this poem aloud to yourself.
3. What is the main image that jumps out at you in this poem? Add a comment to the title to describe the image you are seeing as you read. Highlight the words that create that image in your mind.
4. Choose either the word "smashed" or "frightened" and create a field guide entry. GO DEEP. What can you discover about this word that you didn't quite know before? (You can discover *something* about any word.)

Add the field guide to your weekly poetry template.

Then, go to the word you chose in the poem. Add a comment. How do the discoveries you've made about that word change or enhance the way you understand the poem?

5. What is Nikki Giovanni saying through this poem? What is she saying about spiders? What is she saying that is *bigger* than spiders? Add a comment to the last word of the poem to explain your thinking.
6. We've spent a few weeks thinking about line breaks, stanza breaks, and structures. Giovanni makes some interesting choices in the last three lines of the poem. Why do you think she does this? Add a comment on Nikki Giovanni's name to explain.