**The Masks of Love (Alden Nowlan)**

**Before Reading**

This lyric poem is about an ordinary event but it expresses a moment of intense

emotion for the speaker.

Although the words “mask” and “love” will not appear in the poem, they are used in the title. What do masks do? How and why do we use our facial expressions to mask our true feelings?

**During Reading**

Read the poem once silently.

Now consider where the speaker is in this poem and the question he is asked.

Who do you think “they” are? Why would “they” think the speaker is crazy? Why would the speaker have to wear a “mask” in front of “them”?

**After Reading**

With a partner, role-play the answer the speaker might give to “them” and how “they” might respond. Why did you enjoy or not enjoy this poem?

What role *should* parents play in love?

Ask yourself:

1. What are the specific qualities that describe the perfect lifelong mate for you?
2. What are specific qualities that you think your parents want for you to find in a lifelong mate?

Ask your parents/guardians:

1. What specific qualities do you hope your son/daughter finds in a lifelong mate?
2. What qualities do you think your son/daughter values most in a lifelong mate?

**“Real Love”**