

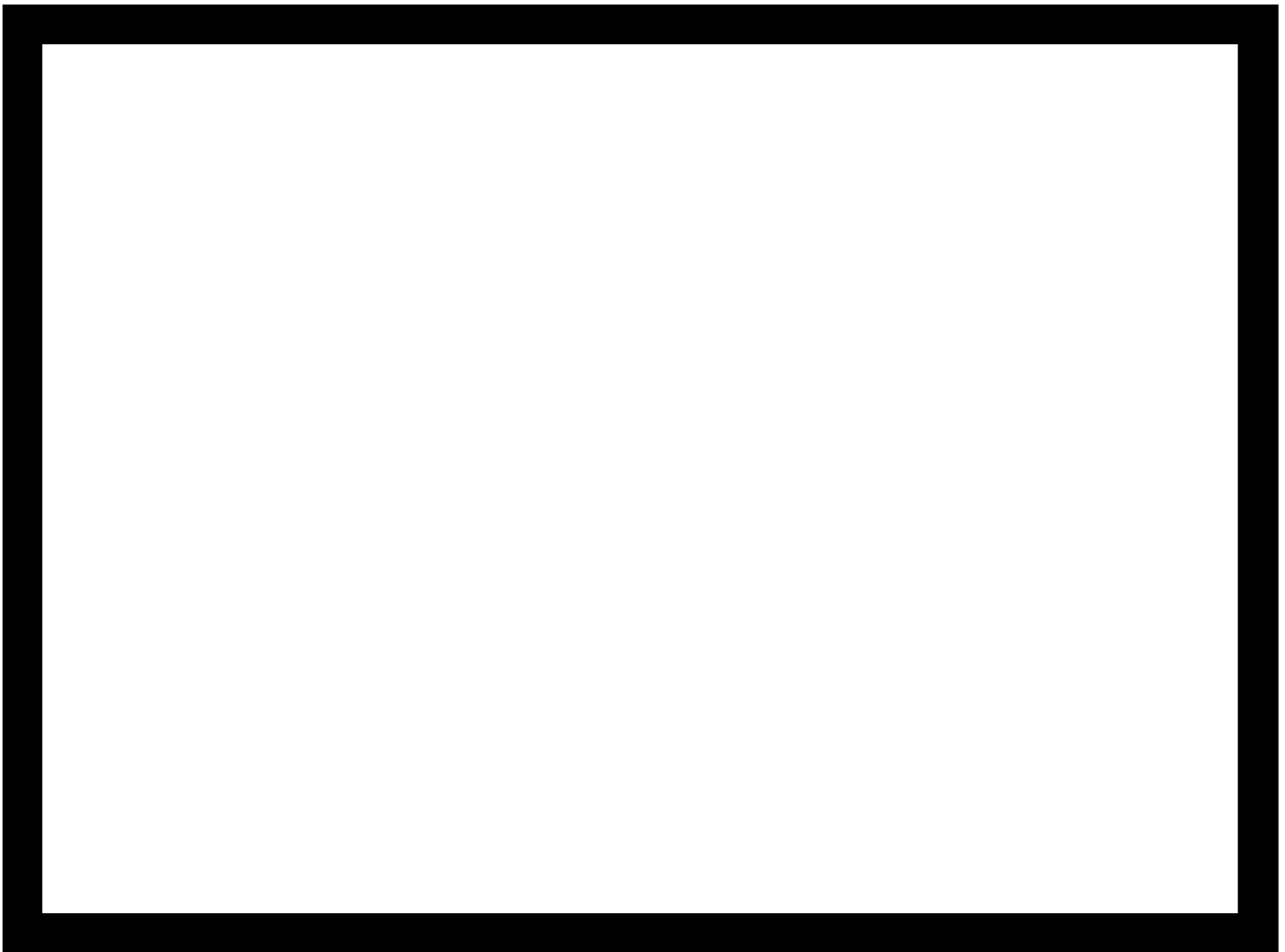
Let's Write...a "Just Because" Poem

THIS POEM EXPLORES AND CHALLENGES STEREOTYPES.

Step 1: EXPLORE STEREOTYPES.

A **stereotype** is a commonly held belief that represents an oversimplified opinion. It is the belief that all people or things with a particular characteristic are the same. For example, "all boys like sports" and "all girls love the color pink."

Use this space to brainstorm some other **examples of stereotypes**.

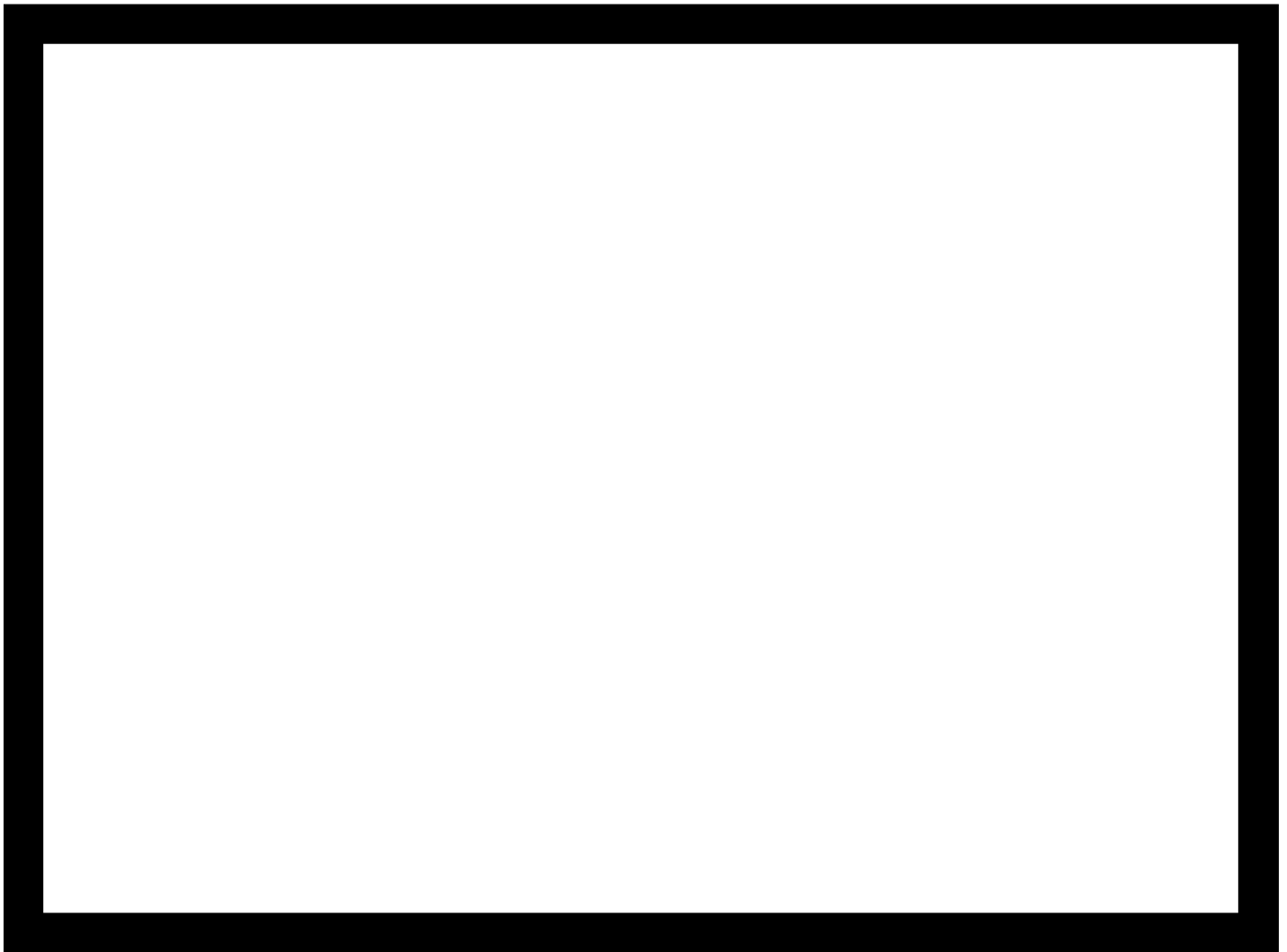


Step 2: CONSIDER WHAT STEREOTYPES MEAN TO YOU.

Do you have a personal connection to any of these stereotypes? What might people who don't know you assume about you?

Choose a topic meaningful to you. Consider these questions:

- What do you want people to know about you?
- How do others see you? How would you like to be seen?
- What do stereotypes prevent others from understanding about you?
- How are stereotypes harmful and hurtful?



Step 3: Make Your Poem.

Fill in the blanks, adding as many **stanzas** (in **blue**) as you like; **end your poem** with the lines in **red**. You don't need to fill in every stanza.

Just because _____

doesn't mean _____

doesn't mean _____

doesn't mean _____

Just because _____

(repeat phrase from line 1)

doesn't mean _____

doesn't mean _____

doesn't mean _____

Just because _____

(repeat phrase from line 1)

doesn't mean _____

doesn't mean _____

doesn't mean _____

Just because _____
(repeat phrase from line 1)

doesn't mean _____

doesn't mean _____

doesn't mean _____

Just because _____
(repeat phrase from line 1)

doesn't mean _____

doesn't mean _____

doesn't mean _____

Just because _____ ,
(repeat phrase from line 1)

let me be me.

Step 4 (OPTIONAL): Enter Your Poem in the Library's Contest.

Visit www.palatinelibrary.org/poetry to submit your poem for a chance to win a prize.