

REAY-ELLERS, ZOE

Zoe Reay-Ellers

Age: 16, Grade: 11

School Name: Interlochen Arts Academy, Interlochen, MI

Educator: Brittany Cavallaro

Category: Poetry

Oxford English

Name /nām/ *noun*

a word or set of words by which a person, animal, place, or thing is known, addressed, or referred to

three weeks after being born my parents
realized that they couldn't put baby in
place of a name on my birth certificate so
my dad dug out an old notebook and
they decided not to stand back up until I was
defined but titles are the hardest part
of a book and neither of them are writers

they couldn't use Tracy or Corey
or Sam because my mom had to cover their shifts
at the hospital a few months ago with only
a day's notice and also because Tracy always does her nails
during lunch and while mom was pregnant with me she always
threw up at the acrid scent of nail polish so that's
three less possibilities and my parents didn't like the letters A-R
and there aren't any good girl's names
that start with U-Y and Tracy starts with a T so that
really only left S and Z

they smiled because that was the hard part finished right
but realized their folly the moment they opened
the 20\$ lightly used baby name dictionary it stared back
at them with 836 S names and 301 Z names so
my dad closed his eyes and pointed at

Zoe /zoh-ee/ *noun*

a female given name: from a Greek word meaning "life"

I didn't question my name for a long time didn't mind the
two syllables liked how I shared a first letter with zucchini
zesty zeppelin didn't like how there were three other girls
in my class with the name Zoe except theirs was spelled with a y at
the end which I thought looked stupid but then I was the odd one out and
I became Zoe-without-a-y and that was the end
of it except it wasn't because suddenly Zoe was too small to contain
hair too short shoulders not broad enough
and yes I know that's cliche but sometimes that's ok right
because other people's words have become my bible recently
and I've been memorizing verses with abandon

Instants of Graham 10:14 - Thou shalt state thy pronouns in thy profile

Except I don't know what to put and

Female /'fē.māl/ adj.

1. of or denoting the sex that can bear offspring or produce eggs, distinguished biologically by the production of gametes which can be fertilized by male gametes
2. why doesn't this fit

Reddithians 13:5 People whose gender is not male or female use many different terms to describe themselves, with non-binary being one of the most common

for some reason I've been diagramming defining this sentence in the context of the sum of my parts and I have a circular slot in my brain girl is square and boy is rectangular and this is a diamond isn't it but it's warming shifting in my hands

Male /māl/ adj.

1. of or denoting the sex that produces small, typically motile gametes, especially spermatozoa, with which a female may be fertilized or inseminated to produce offspring
2. why doesn't this fit

The Answers of Yahoo 5:18 - Thou shalt use nonbinary if thou feels comfortable it is an umbrella term and encompasses genderqueer agender bigender trans-identifying and more

Agender /ə'jendər/ adj.

1. denoting or relating to a person who does not identify themselves as having a particular gender
2. why does this fit

I stopped wearing dresses and realized that
I never really liked them I've been watching
Youtube tutorials on how to use contour to
look more masculine balance out my body but
I was lifeguarding last month and a little kid called
me sir and it's better than ma'am and does that mean I'm a
boy do jeans broad shoulders square jaw make me
male I didn't like barbies or hair clips as a kid trains
and dinosaurs were cooler but didn't everyone
think that I used to play with the boys at recess because
they were cooler less drama played soccer instead
of chasing after crushes I could run faster than most of them
and curve the ball into the goal during
penalty kicks so they didn't mind me tagging along

I still paint my nails wear mascara
eyeshadow lipstick I'm not uncomfortable
in femininity I look like a girl or did look like a girl
do look like a girl in hips and chest and nose I pay
too much mind to those parts of me but that's being a
teenager I think I like horses and disney movies
and my favorite color is purple I don't know how to play
video games or football I like Legally

Blonde in theory and practice I am a girl I have to wear
a skirt to my tutoring job and go into the bathroom with
a stick figure wearing an oversized upside-down
dog cone I tried to pee standing up as a kid but I stopped
because it was harder and my mom told me not to and everyone
else it was just a phase I stopped playing soccer
with the boys and traded trains and dinosaurs for card games
but what gender are card games for

short hair	
ear green eyes ear	
small nose	
lips	
square jaw	
chin	
neck	
hand wrist arm broad shoulders arm wrist hand	
black hole	
torso	
hips hips hips	
thigh	thigh
calf	calf
ankle	ankle
foot	foot

Pick one:

- Boy
- Girl

and I was talking about names wasn't I
you look in the mirror for
hours trying to add up the sum of your
parts but you're missing the right equation
and you're no Einstein:

name - last letter = name?
google + time = name?
dictionary + closed eyes = name?

everyone says it'll click
and you'll know I learned to drive stick shift last year and stalled
every ten seconds now I can switch gears without
thinking but that took four months and I've been
searching for my horizon my meaning
for three years are we meant to remain
in motion am I supposed to return
to being two weeks and six days old

