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# SHAPING RAINBOWS

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A queer educator's reflection of their personal journey. How their past has informed their perspective, and how they can use this perspective to support and guide their students.

I have been  
defined by a single word  
which carries multiple meanings:  
stupid, wrong  
lighthearted, carefree,  
Gay  
was an insult,  
is a compliment,  
was a curse,  
is a blessing.

I was a glimmer  
that twinkled  
in the vast sky.  
I used to be a speck of white  
light that faded  
and brightened  
with each passing day.  
I felt alone  
like nothing was above me  
but bleak gray clouds.  
Drops shaped me. Falling  
like a downpour  
on an opaque night.

I am a rainbow  
for innocent, glistening eyes.  
I have weathered storms.  
My radiance shines  
through the darkness  
that surrounds my little lights  
I show them  
streams of color.  
shades and hues  
rather than white, black,  
or gray.

**Author Biography**

Blake Overman is committed to collaborating to find ways to reach a wide breadth of students and create impactful instruction and lasting literacies. Placing great emphasis on relevance, he hopes to engage his students to apply themselves in his classroom. He appreciates mutual initiatives amongst unique identities. An avid lover of visual media, particularly film, he is excited to incorporate it into his curriculum. In May 2020, he completed his BA in English Education 6-12 with a minor in Theater at Wichita State University. Blake hopes to pursue his best self, through continued education and his students. He will begin a graduate teaching assistantship in Wichita State's English Department in fall 2020 where he is pursuing his master's degree. Blake can be reached at [baoverman@shockers.wichita.edu](mailto:baoverman@shockers.wichita.edu).