

WRITERS' WORKSHOP SERIES

SECOND EDITION

HOW TO TEACH POETRY WRITING: WORKSHOPS FOR

AGES 5–9



A David Fulton Book

MICHAELA MORGAN

How to Teach Poetry Writing: Workshops for Ages 5–9

Now in a fully revised second edition, *How to Teach Poetry Writing: Workshops for Ages 5–9* is a practical, activity-based resource of poetry writing workshops for teachers of primary-age children. Each workshop provides enjoyable activities for pupils, aimed at building a thorough understanding of what poetry is and how to write it. Aiming to encourage speaking and listening skills, this book includes:

- three new workshops – Feelings, Licensed to Thrill and The Jumblies;
- redrafting and revising activities;
- poetry writing frames;
- traditional and contemporary poems from varied cultures;
- children's own poems on their favourite subjects;
- guidance on how to write poems;
- word games and notes on performing poetry;
- an A–Z guide to poetry.

Updated to include cross-curricular links and a new expansive bibliography, this book provides teachers with a wealth of material and the inspiration to create a class of enthusiastic and skilled poetry writers.

Michaela Morgan is a practising poet, children's author, writer and former teacher. She runs workshops and courses in the UK and internationally.

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How to Teach Poetry Writing: Workshops for Ages 5–9

Second edition

Michaela Morgan

First published 2003 as *How to Teach Poetry Writing at Key Stage 1*
by David Fulton Publishers

This edition published 2011
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
270 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2011.

To purchase your own copy of this or any of Taylor & Francis or Routledge's
collection of thousands of eBooks please go to www.eBookstore.tandf.co.uk.

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Morgan, Michaela.

How to teach poetry writing : workshops for ages 5–9 / by Michaela Morgan. — 2nd ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

1. Poetry—Study and teaching (Elementary) 2. Creative writing—Study and teaching. I. Title.

PN1101.M64 2011

372.62'3044—dc22

2010028390

ISBN 0-203-83368-6 Master e-book ISBN

ISBN13: 978-0-415-59013-6 (pbk)

ISBN13: 978-0-203-83368-1 (ebk)

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Acknowledgements

This book is dedicated to the children and teachers throughout the country who have tried these workshops.

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Introduction: Writers' Workshop

Poetry should, above all, be a pleasure – a pleasure to hear, a pleasure to say, a pleasure to invent. Most young children are fortunate enough to have some knowledge of verse – nursery rhymes, chants, skipping rhymes, advertising jingles, action rhymes and songs. These are the foundations on which we can build.

At this stage I feel the emphasis in poetry teaching should be on listening and speaking – joining in with the words, actions or rhythms, and extending known rhymes. For this reason I have included several poems to share, both traditional and contemporary.

A poetry workshop does not have to lead to actual writing. Listening, speaking, honing the ear, enjoying the sounds of words and rhythm are important in themselves.

Writing poetry at this early stage is more successful as a group or whole-class activity with teacher or poet as scribe. This releases children from the mechanics of writing and allows them greater freedom in composing, imagining and finding strong words and images.

I include some writing frames in this book and recommend that they be used as whole-class or group frames – modelling the process of writing. Some children may move on to using the frames individually or writing completely independently. When using frames, feel free to adapt them – they are meant as a support, not as a straitjacket.

Making a start

Listening to and enjoying poetry is the essential first step

Reading a poem immediately before a break, or to start or finish the day, will not eat into your time and will help to hone the ear and increase the breadth of acquaintance with poetry. The book or an enlarged copy of the individual poem used should be readily available for those who want to re-read the day's poem.

Encourage children to find favourite poems or rhymes, and to say or read them aloud to you, the class or each other. Enjoy the music of language as well as its meaning.

Oral and traditional poetry

Make an effort to build up a store of verse and develop familiarity with traditional chants. Titles of useful collections are given in the bibliography, but do not forget to use the children and their friends and families as a resource. If you teach children who speak languages other than English, make a special effort to include their rhymes and chants. Joining in with verse is not only for the younger children.

Practise honing the ear and all the senses

From time to time, take a few moments to listen or to stand and stare. Ask the class to say what you and they can see, hear, touch or smell, and try to find a descriptive word or a simile to capture these observations. Complete silence in the classroom is necessary for the listening time. Silence is ‘when you hear things’. Note the smallest of noises – also what you can imagine you hear (e.g. *I hear a ticking – tick tick tick – the clock? or the teacher’s pen? or my brain clicking as it thinks?*). Teachers should join in this activity – being seen quietly concentrating, scribbling, crossing out etc. provides a good role model – and you will enjoy the activity!

Making a word hoard and writing together

Gather words and ideas in a whole-class or group session. Jot down all suggestions on a flipchart or board, and link words that go together because of their rhyme, alliteration etc. If you use an interactive white board for this, you can keep a record of your word hoards which you can revisit, adapt or add to.

Compose whole-class poems together. Sometimes, take existing poems and omit words or phrases. Discuss what would be good words or phrases to insert.

Reading aloud

To really enjoy a poem it should be read aloud. Read poems and verses aloud on a regular basis. From time to time, miss out a rhyming word or line, giving the children a chance to call it out. Gradually they will learn entire poems.

Reading aloud is an excellent chance to hear how/if the poem is working. This is a chance to consider making changes to poems written in class. Listen to rough drafts, applaud them and consider revisions.

Perform final versions of poems (see performance hints in Workshop 14, ‘Licensed to Thrill’).

Poetry as reading material

With its patterning, repetitions and rhythms, poetry makes wonderful early reading material. Poems can contain stories told very economically. They can be learned with relative ease, shared and recited together. They benefit from repetition. Never be afraid of reading the same poem over and over again. Sometimes just read it to enjoy the sounds and the rhythms – other times use it as a springboard to an activity or an investigation of patterns, sounds or feelings.

Redrafting and revising

The first drafting of a poem is a beginning; changes and improvements can be made. Do whole-class or group redrafting sessions on whole-class poems. Demonstrate the process of crossing out and changing, discussing reasons for the changes. Things to

consider here are: deleting unnecessary words; changing words for more powerful or onomatopoeic or alliterative ones; tightening rhythm or rhyme; altering word order to put emphasis on important words or to avoid having to stretch for a rhyme; and punctuating.

Being more specific and detailed can help a poem. Instead of 'we sat under a tree', consider what *sort* of tree – 'we sat under the willow', or 'we sat under the oak'.

Redrafting a poem is less painful than redrafting a story. Writing poetry encourages experimentation with word choice and word order.

Making a collection

Making a class anthology is an enjoyable activity that allows 'ownership' of the poems. You can choose a theme or poetic form, or just allow children to find any poem that they particularly like. Children can then copy out their poem (or key it in). Copying a poem sharpens the understanding of the poem. You often notice much more about a piece when you have to write it exactly as the poet has written it – why is that punctuation there? Why is the line broken there?

If the children are copying a poem in their own writing, this can encourage good presentation skills and handwriting practice. Alternatively, have the children key the poems into a computer and use this as a chance to develop their ICT skills.

Each child can read his or her chosen poem out loud and try to explain what they like about it. Illustrating the poem can help to make it more memorable and personal.

Some children could learn their poem 'by heart'. The heart is a good place to keep a poem.

Put on a poetry performance

To accompany the class collection, make a recording of the children reading verses – individually or in groups. Performances can be accompanied by music or props or images. Poems can be performed individually or in groups. Children can be encouraged to learn a poem by heart and practise their performance. They can be recorded or filmed. The resulting recording or film can be kept just for classroom use or shown to the school. It could be shown on the school website. (See also the 'Perform a Poem' website: <http://performapoem.lgfl.org.uk>. This is an e-safe site established by Michael Rosen.)

The BBC organised a popular competition, *Off by Heart*. Children were given a selection of poems – of varying length and complexity, and with varied cultures represented. Children then chose a poem to learn by heart. They performed the poem of their choice. Schools could participate in or replicate this contest, which generated a lot of interest and enjoyment. Try this weblink: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/teachers/offbyheart/>

Invite a poet

Consider inviting a poet to the school. Try to find a poet whose work you have enjoyed. Approach him or her through the publisher, through local bookshops or through the contacts given at the end of this section.

The children can then hear a poem in the poet's voice, and they will enjoy it even more. Perhaps the poet could run a workshop or sign copies of his or her books.

Prepare for the visit and follow it up. Allow children to buy copies of the books, if possible – to make the poems their own. If this is difficult, you should ensure that the poems are purchased and are available to all in the library or classroom.

Some useful contacts to help you find a poet to visit your school:

- Contact an Author: www.contactanauthor.co.uk
- Class Act: www.classactagency.co.uk
- NAWA (directory of writers): www.artscape.org.uk
- The Poetry Society: www.poetrysociety.org.uk
- www.authorsabroad.com

Your local library service, arts organisation or bookshop may also be able to offer help.

Tools of the trade

Equip the classroom with the tools of the trade – a rhyming dictionary, thesaurus and, above all, a large selection of books of verse and poetry, including rhyming and unrhyming poetry, classic and contemporary.

And finally... Why write poetry?

We do not necessarily expect all the children we teach to become poets but, by immersing them in poetry, we are making them aware of words, developing their language skills, and helping them to become sensitive to imagery and feelings.

The skills involved in writing poetry are transferable to all types of writing. All writing benefits from careful selection of words, detailed and keen observation, use of the senses, thoughtfulness and awareness. Word games and verse writing hone specific writing skills.

Writing poetry requires revision and redrafting. All writers, particularly young ones, can become downhearted at the thought of revising longer pieces of writing. The brevity and focus of poetry makes redrafting more appealing and more achievable. Poetry is playful – it encourages experimentation.

And it is fun!

Almost Everything You Need to Know about Poetry Workshops: A–Z

A

Acrostic

A very popular poetic form in schools. The title of the poem (e.g. 'Holiday') is written vertically and provides the initial letter of each line.

H
O
L
I
D
A
Y

If you are going to write an acrostic, do some examples as a whole-class activity first and demonstrate the gathering of ideas before writing each line. Consider what makes an holiday; for example: resting, lying in bed late, sunny days, ice cream and lollies, taking it easy. . . Then try to include some of the things you want to say in the acrostic.

Happiness is our hope
On our holidays.
Lying in bed all day,
Idling, lazing, dreaming
Dozing . . .
All the time in the world . . .
Yes!

You can make cross-curricular links by writing acrostics linked to your studies of Geography, History, Science etc. For example, a whole-class acrostic on mini-beasts could be done for creative fun and also to evaluate prior knowledge of the subject or to evaluate what has been learned.

Advertisement poem

Advertising agencies think very carefully about their ads. Some of them have poetic qualities (rhyme, rhythm, alliteration and onomatopoeia are particularly popular devices). Look at advertisements, then try writing ones to tempt the reader to eat oranges, go swimming, read a book etc.

Cross-curricular links can be made by writing advertisements linked to topics e.g. healthy eating.

Alliteration

Words beginning with the same sound (not necessarily the same letter – as in ‘free phone’ or ‘one wonderful wombat’). Used frequently and to enormous effect by the Anglo-Saxons, alliteration remains widely used today in poetry and song. It is an effective way of binding words together and making music with them (see Workshop 7, ‘Monster Meals’).

Alphabet poem

The well-known alphabet chant

**ABCDEFGH
HIJKLMN
OP
QRS
TUV
WXY and Z**

is a valuable introduction and reinforcement of the letter names and order. Add a final line (*nod your head/go to bed/that’s what I said*) for added fun and variety.

To write an alphabetical poem, you can take a subject and write an A to Z of it, for example, taking ‘cat’ as your subject, your poem could be composed of just adjectives:

**athletic, balletic, cosy cat
daring, energetic, furry cat**

or verbs:

**I am Cat,
I attack, I bite, I curl, I dance . . .**

(See also Workshop 7, ‘Monster Meals’ for another approach linking in with alliteration.)

Cross-curricular links can be made by writing an A to Z of your current topic.

Ambiguity

Deliberate ambiguity – an excellent device in poetry. Unintentional ambiguity (*the secretary went down to the kitchen and brought up her dinner*) can have quite a different effect!

Assessment and evaluation

An initial brainstorming and collection of words can be useful in evaluating the children’s prior knowledge of a subject. A final class discussion and whole-class poem-writing session (e.g. writing an A to Z poem of your current topic) can provide some evaluation or reinforcement of learning.

Assonance

Subtler than rhyming, this is a repetition of sounds to make a half-rhyme (e.g. *crying time*).

B

Ballad

The Robin Hood ballads or ‘Sir Patrick Spens’ are examples of traditional ballads. They tell a story in a regular, usually four-lined (quatrain), form with a regular rhyme scheme (usually *ab ba*). A modern example of a ballad is ‘Timothy Winters’ by Charles Causley.

Brainstorming

When brainstorming for words, accept all offerings and note them. Then select from those submitted, giving reasons for your choice (e.g. ‘*This has a sharp sound*’ or ‘*I like the alliteration here*’).

C

Calligram

The formation of the letters, or the font, represents something of the word’s meaning (e.g. **SHOUT!** or *whisper*). (See Workshop 6, ‘All Join In’.)

Cinquain

Five lines and a total of 22 syllables, in the sequence 2, 4, 6, 8, 2. When the children have the hang of counting syllables, you could link a haiku workshop with a cinquain workshop to help children grasp syllable counting.

Concrete poem

Also known as shape poem. The layout of the poem takes the shape of the subject. (See Workshop 8, ‘Chips’.)

Confidence

An essential! Try not to decry even ‘silly’, ‘rude’ or ‘nonsense’ suggestions during brainstorming times. Out of mischief creativity can creep.

Nonsense is to be valued, if not always used. Acknowledge successful poems, or lines or even words. Be tactful with revision suggestions.

Joining in with saying poems will increase speaking confidence, and writing poems as a whole class will increase writing confidence. Writing frames also provide helpful support.

As a teacher or teaching assistant, make sure you build up your own confidence too! Try out the workshops and have a go at writing a poem yourself.

Conversational

Many (most) poems are in a particular poet’s voice, as if the poet is having a conversation with you. Read Michael Rosen’s work for examples of poems that capture the rhythms and vocabulary of everyday language, situations and conversation.

Couplet

Two consecutive rhyming lines, e.g.:

**Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.**

D

Dialogue

Dialogue can be included in poems: in fact, entire poems have been made of dialogue. Try 'Ghosts' by Kit Wright, in *Rabbiting On* (published by Young Lions).

Diary poem

Try a diary of a goldfish – plenty of scope for repetition, refrain and changing word order to make slight differences! A 'days of the week' poem provides a supportive structure and can be linked to a variety of topics, e.g. food, clothes, countries:

**On Monday I wore comfy brown shoes.
On Tuesday I wore big red clown shoes ... [etc.]**

**On Monday I ate a crunchy apple.
On Tuesday I ate a juicy pear ... [etc.]**

**On Monday I danced in France.
On Tuesday I had a pain in Spain.
On Wednesday I felt so twittery in Italy ... [etc.]**

E

Elegy

A lament, usually for the loss or death of someone. Try an elegy for a favourite teddy bear or lost sock

Empathy

To stand in the shoes of someone else, and to imagine and write how it would feel. Poetry taps into the imagination, creativity and empathy of human beings in a way that transcends anything you can target or assess. However, if you are ever in the position of having to justify a poetry session, you can clearly make links with PSHE.

Epic

A long story or poem about an heroic endeavour; not to be seriously attempted in class unless you have a year or two to spare!

Epitaph

An attempt to sum up a life in a few words. They usually start with ‘Here lies . . .’ You will find a wealth of them in *The Faber Book of Epigrams and Epitaphs*, where you will note that they are often used to humorous or critical effect, and many use word play for that effect. The Earl of Rochester’s epitaph on King Charles II is fairly typical:

**Here lies our Sovereign Lord, the King,
Whose word no man relies on;
Who never said a foolish thing,
Nor ever did a wise one.**

Probably best attempted as the summation of the life of a typical figure representing a profession (e.g. teacher, Ofsted Inspector) rather than an individual. They can be cruel, as is this one I prepared earlier:

**Here lies a footballer,
whistle blown on his last game.
He kicked the bucket, not the ball,
and was never seen again.**

F**Figurative language**

Use of simile, metaphor and similar devices.

Form

Providing a form for writers to follow can act as a release and a starting point for writing – but feel free to adapt the form – it should be a supporting framework, not a straitjacket.

Free verse

Verse freed from the need to rhyme or to have regular rhythm. See Workshops 9, ‘The Robin’, and 10, ‘The Poem Hunt’.

G**[Have a] GO!**

Poetry is all around us and is one thing everyone can have a go at. Even those who ‘don’t like writing’ can love poetry – though they may not know it. Anyone who can enjoy word play in jokes; anyone who enjoys rhythm and sound in music; anyone like this can write a poem – and enjoy it!

H***Haiku***

A traditional Japanese form of poetry that encourages the careful choice of words, economy and an awareness of syllables. Every word counts in a haiku. Every line-break has to be carefully considered. A very brief form, it can help jolt a writer away from usual rhythms, pounding rhymes and well-used vocabulary. It is an exercise in making careful choices with language.

A haiku always has 17 syllables. It consists of three lines only. Line one has five syllables, line two has seven, and the third and last line has five. A brief moment in time is captured in a clear visual image. Link a haiku workshop with a cinquain workshop to help children grasp syllable counting.

I***Idiom***

Everyday figures of speech.

Imagery

Use of language to capture or create an image or picture.

Internal rhyme

Rhyme within the line, as in ‘*You peel and you grapple with orange or apple*’. Internal rhyme can be within a word – as in *hubbub*.

J***Jokes***

Jokes and word play alert us to language. Jokes can rely on puns, homophones or spoonerisms for their effect. They, and tongue-twisters too, are little steps towards poetry. (See Workshop 11, ‘Playing Around’. See also word game suggestions on <http://www.everybodywrites.org.uk/writing-games/primary/>)

K***Kenning***

Found in Norse and Old English poetry; similar to a riddle, as the thing described is not named but described in compound expressions, usually of two words (e.g. *fast forgetter*, *ankle-biter*).

Cross-curricular links can be made by linking the writing of kennings to your topic, e.g. a kenning about rivers or the wind to link with Geography.

L

Limerick

A light-hearted exercise best done as a group or class activity. The finest examples are probably those of Edward Lear. The famed *Anon.* also produced a remarkably large number of limericks!

Line-breaks

The place where one line ends and another begins. Children often need a lot of practice in this. Scribe nursery rhymes and well-known verses for the class – demonstrating where the line-breaks are.

Rewrite a well-known nursery rhyme or verse without the line-breaks. Discuss where it would be good to break the poem and then rewrite with the appropriate breaks. Do this from time to time to help develop some understanding of line-breaks.

List poem (also ‘thin’ poem)

Think of a subject and list its qualities:

Christmas is ...

Dark nights

Bright lights

Rising hopes ...

... and so on.

If you keep to a carefully controlled number of words on each line you have a ‘thin poem’ too!

Encourage children to include unexpected, witty or well-described things in their lists.

Cross-curricular links can be made by writing list poems on your current topic, e.g. for Festivals, a Christmas list poem (see above) or a Diwali list poem.

Literacy Hour

Poetry fits wonderfully into the Literacy Hour. A whole poem rather than an extract from a book can be read as a starting point. Writing can be a whole-class, group or individual activity, and the plenary time is a perfect opportunity to read aloud, perform, listen attentively, applaud and consider revisions and improvements.

M

Metaphor

A figure of speech in which one thing is said to be another, e.g. ‘*The sea is a hungry dog.*’

Monologue

A poem can be written as a monologue – one person or one animal or one object talking.

Cross-curricular links can be made by writing a monologue by a historical figure (e.g. a Viking speaks or a Roman or Florence Nightingale etc.).

N

Narrative

A narrative poem tells a story.

Near-rhyme

Near- or half-rhymes can give a wider choice and more subtle effect than full rhymes (e.g. *summer/dimmer*).

Nonsense

Nonsense poems are wonderfully liberating. I suggest ‘Jabberwocky’ by Lewis Carroll, who invented *portmanteau* words in this *tour de force* – and poems by Spike Milligan or Edward Lear. (See Workshop 15, ‘The Jumblies’.)

O

Observation poem

Poem based on observation. Take the time to stand and stare – to really look, hear, taste . . .

Onomatopoeia

An interesting word in itself! Made up of two Greek words for ‘name’ and ‘make’. Words, like ‘hiss’ that make the sound they are describing are onomatopoeic. (See Workshop 6, ‘All Join In’.)

Oral poetry

Children will be acquainted with a range of oral poetry of which they can be reminded – jingles, playing songs, nursery rhymes. All poetry was once oral – epics and ballads were composed as poetry to make them more memorable before writing became widespread. The oral tradition continues strongly today. (See Workshop 1, ‘Rhyme Time’.)

Oxymoron

An apparent contradiction, as in *bitter-sweet* or *gloomily gambolling*.

P

Performance

Saying your own or other writers’ poems aloud is a great way to increase enjoyment

and understanding of poems. Michael Rosen has set up a website (<http://performapoem.lgfl.org.uk>) specifically to encourage poetry performance.

Personification

Language that gives objects human emotions or attributes (e.g. ‘*The trees drooped with sadness . . .*’).

To make a cross-curricular link, write a poem linked to your topic of study, e.g. weather. Think of a weather condition (e.g. wind). Collect ideas and words to describe what the wind does, then write a poem about the wind as if it is a person .

I am Wind. I rip. I tear. I swoop down and whisk you away. I howl . . . I whisper . . .

Poem

A poem is many many, things, some of them contradictory. It can be direct – a quick connection to the heart, the memories, the senses. It can be indirect, subtly hinting. It can be moving, mysterious, sad, serious, comic, crazy, funny. It can be nonsensical. It can explode. It can whisper. You can join in and clap and sing, or whisper it softly in your own quiet mind.

Coleridge defined a poem as ‘the best words in the best order’. In a poem, language is used with awareness; it’s not just what you say but how you say it. Poetry is generally (but not necessarily) economical with language. The main thing it is a source of delight!

Practical

Poetry provides the opportunity for close inspection of a text. It is ideal for focusing on an aspect of language – a grammar point, punctuation, a spelling pattern. I have seen a teacher making a spelling point memorable by the use of rap. Copying or writing out completed work encourages care in presentation. Poetry is obviously *much* more than this – but its practical possibilities should not be overlooked.

Q

Quatrain

A four-line stanza.

Question-and-answer poem

Ask everyone to write a question (a wide-ranging one such as *What is the sun?*). Then try to answer the questions – not factually!

R

Rap

A type of performance poem that features regular rhyme, strong rhythm and fast pace. Children enjoy them because they are so full of life, and contemporary in feel.

Redrafting and revising

Understandably, many children find revising their own work unappealing and difficult. A more tempting approach is to revise whole-class poems in a whole-class redrafting session. In this way, children see the redrafting process modelled for them.

Repeat and refrain

Having a repeated refrain in a poem can help to bind it together.

Rhyme

Reading poetry of all sorts will demonstrate that it doesn't have to rhyme. That said, rhyme does have an enormous attraction. But if you are in danger of being forced into writing something pointless or silly, something that breaks the mood or lets the poem down – abandon the rhyme. The poem should say what we want it to say – rhyme is an extra. (See Workshops 8, 'The Robin', and 9, 'The Poem Hunt'.)

Rhymes for remembering

As with the classic 'Alphabet Song' or '30 Days Hath September' or 'I before E except after C', rhymes help us to remember. Use well-known rhymes as a base and make up your own.

Rhythm

All poetry has rhythm – but not necessarily a regular thumping rhythm. Familiarise children with rhythm by encouraging them to tap out a strong rhythm with their fingertips. You may occasionally let them loose with percussion instruments to really drive the rhythm home. Children could discuss which instrument best represents the mood of the poem. Sometimes an irregular, subtle rhythm or cadence is much more suited to the mood of a poem.

Riddles

A great tradition spanning *The Exeter Book* (Old English poetry) to *The Beano*. W. H. Auden memorably wrote that 'one of the elements of poetry is the riddle. You do not call a spade a spade.' (See Workshop 12, 'Playing Around'.)

Cross-curricular links can be made by writing riddles about the topic you are studying, e.g. light, animals, weather.

S**Senses**

Using sensory description will enliven poetry and prose. Children need to practise noticing with all their senses and finding words to capture what they have experienced. (See Workshop 10, 'The Poem Hunt'.)

Draw a hand. On each finger write one of the senses – to help children remember the five senses.

Take an object into the class (e.g. a piece of fruit, or a sweet). Ask for descriptions using each of the senses. Rework and revise the whole-class description. When refining the descriptions, consider alternative words, putting in line breaks to make a whole-class poem.

Shape poem (see also **Concrete poem**)

In a shape or concrete poem the layout of the words reflect the subject. (See Workshop 4, Chips’.)

Simile

Something is described as being ‘like’ (or ‘as’) another. (See Workshop 10, ‘The Poem Hunt’.)

Stanza

The approved word to use for ‘verse’.

Syllables

Tapping out syllables/beats in well-known words (e.g. *classroom*, *playground*, *book*) or children’s names can help children gain a concrete understanding. (See also the definition of Haiku on p. 10.)

T

Tanka

An extended form of Haiku comprising five lines in 5, 7, 5, 7 and 7 syllables. It is a word picture similar to a haiku but its extended form means that it can also contain some story element.

Thin poem

Also known as ‘List poem’. One word or two words per line. Set an arbitrary limit and stick to it.

U

Understanding

‘But what does it *mean*?’ Sometimes you cannot explain the meaning of a poem. That’s part of the point of poetry – it has meanings behind and beyond its initial meaning. Sometimes, just let a poem wash over you – don’t try to understand it, just enjoy the sounds, the mood. The understanding of it might creep up on you bit by bit over time. Sometimes there is no meaning – it is rhythm and sound, nonsense and magic.

V**Verse**

Often used to mean *stanza* (as in ‘the poem has four verses’), but properly used to mean something slightly less than poetry. I write verse and sometimes I write poetry – sometimes my writing has the higher attributes of poetry – sometimes it has the rhyme, rhythm etc. associated with poetry, but it is of a lesser order.

Voice

Poems gain strength from being written in the poet’s particular voice – the poet’s own individual way of expressing themselves with words, images and language that is real and rooted in the poet’s own life. Allow children to use their everyday language within their poems. Poetry should not be kept on a pedestal.

W**Word play**

Free the mind, focus on a skill or start the creative process by playing a word game. Excellent ideas may be found in *Word Games* by Sandy Brownjohn and Janet Whitaker (published by Hodder & Stoughton). There are many excellent word game suggestions on <http://www.everybodywrites.org.uk/writing-games/primary/>

Writing frame

Some are provided, or you can make your own by taking a poem and blanking out a word or words, a line, a simile. Do a line from time to time just as a quick activity. Take ‘I wandered lonely as a cloud’ and try as:

I _____ lonely as a _____.

X

Excitement! Exultation! Exhilaration! Exclamations! (excusing myself from finding something beginning with X!).

Y

Yes! Yippee! and Yabbadabadoo! Feeling positive, feeling confident, having fun with words, writing a poem with . . .

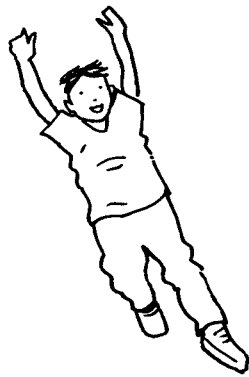
Z

Zest and Zip and ZING!

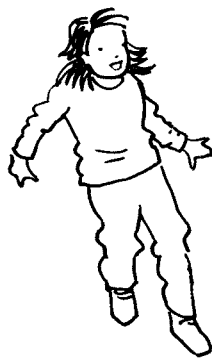


Rhyme Time

Vizzery, vazzery, vozery vem,
Tizzary, tazzary, tozery, tem
Hiram, Jiram, cockrem, spirem,
Poplar, rolling, gem.

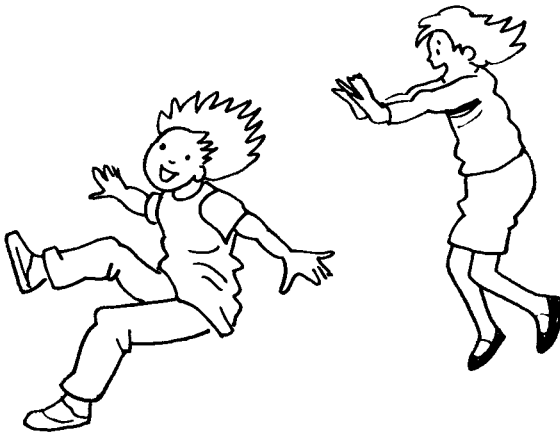


Inty, tinty, tethery, methery,
Bank for over, Dover, ding
Out goes YOU!

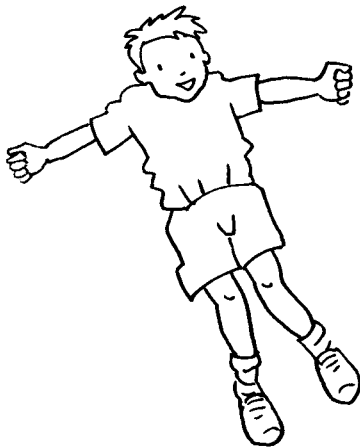




Eeny meeny mackaracka
 Ero dominacka
 Chickerbocker
 Lollypopper
 Om pom push
 Out you must go.

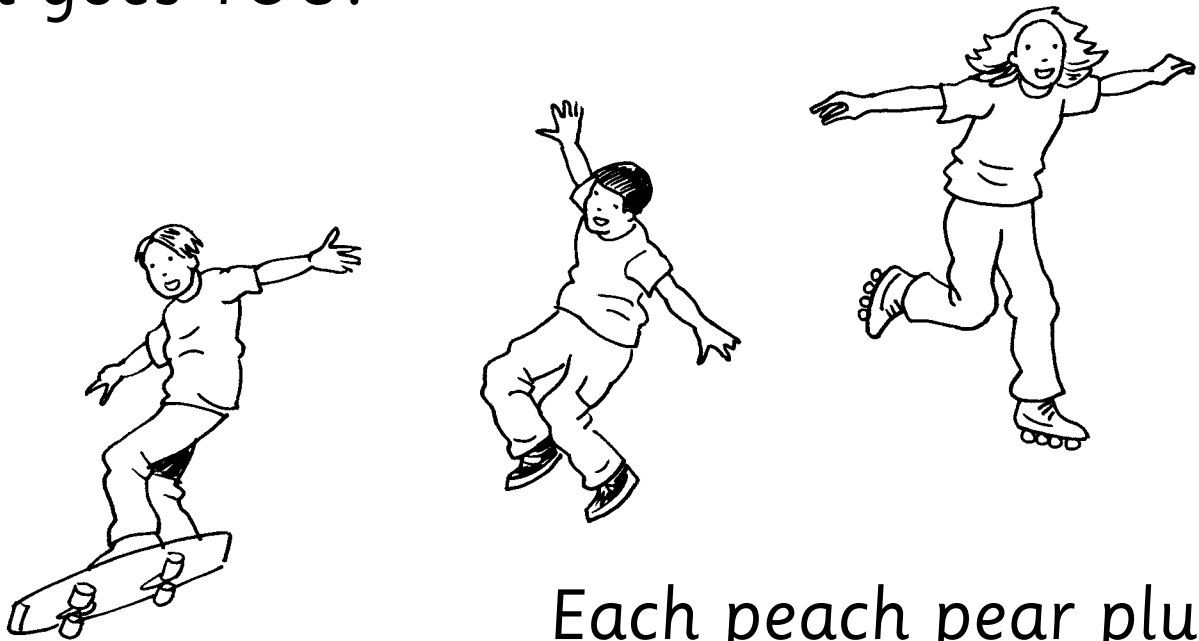


Eenie meenie miney Mo
 Catch a tiger by its toe
 If it hollers let it go
 Eenie meenie miney MO!

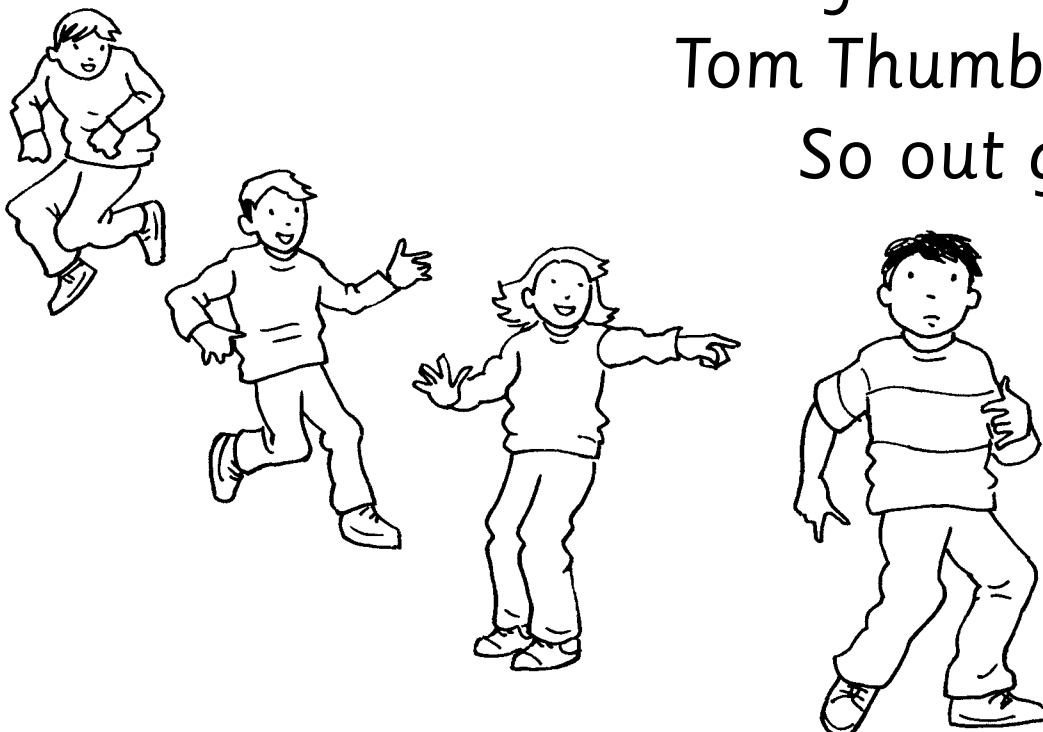




Ip dip, my blue ship
bobbing on the water
like a cup and saucer
Out goes YOU!



Each peach pear plum
Out goes Tom Thumb
Tom Thumb won't do
So out goes YOU!





Discuss counting out and dipping rhymes you already know and write in your own favourite in this space provided.

Workshop 1: Rhyme Time

Nursery and modern rhymes.
Chants.

Speaking and listening

- Enjoy saying the rhymes. Say one or several of the rhymes out aloud. Children can join in with the words.
- Ask children if they are familiar with any of these rhymes or if they know other rhymes.

They may know different versions of these rhymes. You may notice that in the 'Eenie meenie' rhyme I have taken the less-offensive option of 'Catch a tiger by its toe'. There is no definitive version of any of these rhymes; they vary from district to district, country to country, and time to time. Many contemporary children may not have played with these rhymes at all but they may know television jingles. Accept advertising jingles as a modern-day version of playground chant if offered. Scribe extra rhymes that the children already know. If some rhymes they suggest display questionable attitudes, use them as an opportunity to discuss the subject that arises and raise awareness.

You will find many more traditional rhymes in the famous Opie collections (see bibliography). These rhymes are folk rhymes that have been used by generations of children for making choices or counting out. Their nonsense qualities seem to make them magical to children. Gathering these from the children makes the point that they already know a lot of poetry. Children can make it up. It is playful.

- Play with rhyme. Take a rhyming family word (e.g. *hop*) and ask children to come up with rhyming words.
- Collect counting-out rhymes, playground rhymes etc. by asking children which ones they know. Do their parents or grandparents know any?
- Make a recording or performance of them. A film of skipping and dipping rhymes in action would be fun to make. A filmed performance can be put on the school website or on the e-safe Perform a Poem website, or it can be shown to the school in assembly.
- Try to get rhymes from different cultures and other languages (there are some examples in the bibliography, but it may be that the children or their friends and relatives can come up with their own).

Reading and writing

- Write out a favourite rhyme on a large piece of paper, pointing to the words as everyone joins in.
- Read *Each Peach Pear Plum* by Allan and Janet Ahlberg. This picture-book uses the traditional rhyme as its starting point.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Use a counting-out rhyme as an aid to choosing children for a particular task, leaving the classroom for break etc. Use them in PE or at playtime.
- Make a collection of traditional rhymes.
- E-mail other schools in other parts of the country or in other countries to add to the collection.
- Take the first lines of some traditional chants that may not be known by the children and see if you can invent extra lines orally – nonsense is fine!
Here are some to start with:

Inky pinky ponky... [e.g. My daddy had a donkey]

Etum peetum penny pie...

Ickle ockle bluebottle...

Ip dip...

- Use this frame to make up a class rhyme:

Run and hop,

_____.

Jump and skip,

_____.

One, two, three,

_____.



Action Time

Mrs Sprockett's Strange Machine

Mrs Sprockett has a strange machine.
It will thrill you through and through.
It's got wheels and springs and seven strings
And this is what they do.

Pull string number one...

... it begins to hum mmmmmmmmmmmmm

Pull string number two...

... it goes Cock-a-Doodle Doo.

Pull string number three...

... it will buzz like a bee zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz

Pull string number four...

... it will start to rrrrRRoarrrrrr.

Pull string number five...

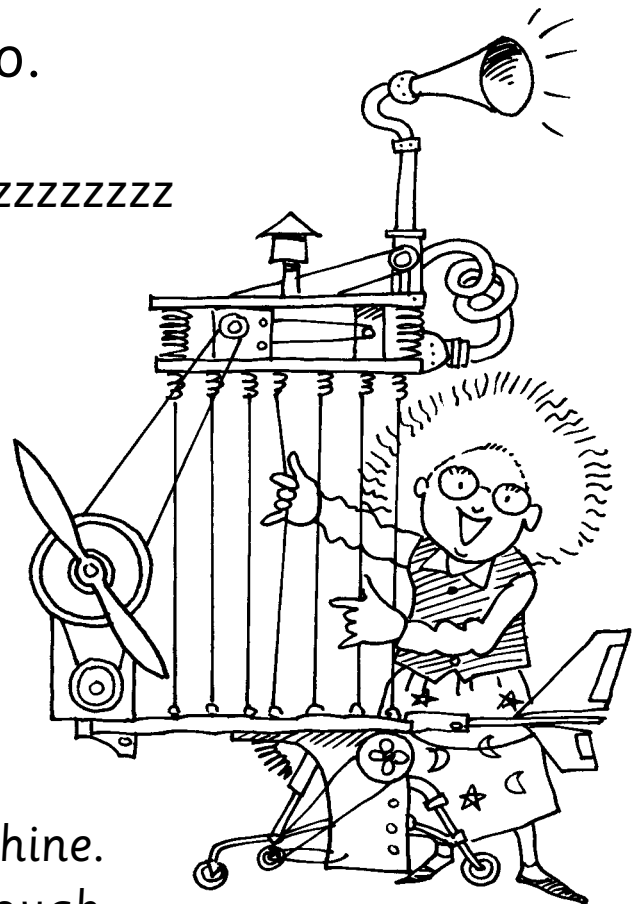
... it will dip and dive.

Pull string number six...

... it will play silly tricks.

Pull string number seven...

... it will fly up to heaven.



Mrs Sprockett has a strange machine.
It will thrill you through and through.
It's got wheels and springs and seven strings
And... I WISH I HAD ONE TOO!

Michaela Morgan

Workshop 2: Action Time

Action verse.
Predictable structure and patterned language.
Substituting and extending patterns.

Speaking and listening

- Display the poem so that the whole class can see it. Keep a printed copy on display so that children can look at it in their own time.
- Enjoy saying the rhyme together.
- Work out suitable actions and make them as you chant the rhyme.
- Rehearse a performance, taking into account appropriate expression, volume and actions. Perform in different ways. Different children or groups of children could perform each string. The whole class makes the sound effects. Speaking aloud, taking turns and joining in will all help children to gain confidence in speaking and being listened to. It will also help to develop a sense of rhythm.

Reading and writing

- Display the poem so that all the class can see it.
- Use it as reading practice.
- Display the writing frame so that the whole class can see it. Then make a class version of the rhyme.

Some ideas:

String number one – let's start the fun/it will fall on its bum/sing rumpy tumtum/tickle its tum.

Two – what will we do?/it will cry boo hoo hoo/whisper to you.

Three – it will climb up a tree/hop like a flea/sit on your knee.

Four – it will go out the door/fall on the floor/offer its paw.

Five – it will jump and jive/sit in a hive/call itself Clive.

Six – It will stir and mix/get in a fix/eat choccy bix.

Seven – go off to Devon/call itself Kevin/fly up to heaven.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Children can perform the rhyme in assembly.
- Children can illustrate or make a model of Mrs Sprockett's strange machine.

- They can record or film their performance and/or make a Big Book version of their rhyme.
- Further work and cross-curricular links can be built on the sounds 'm', 'r', 'oo' used in the rhyme.
- Links can be made with subjects studied (e.g. forces – push and pull).
- For a selection of other poems to join in with, see the bibliography.



Mrs Sprockett's Strange Machine

Mrs Sprockett has a strange machine.
It will thrill you through and through.
It's got wheels and springs and seven strings
And this is what they do.

Pull string number one . . .

Pull string number two . . .

Pull string number three . . .

Pull string number four...



Pull string number five...

Pull string number six...

Pull string number seven...

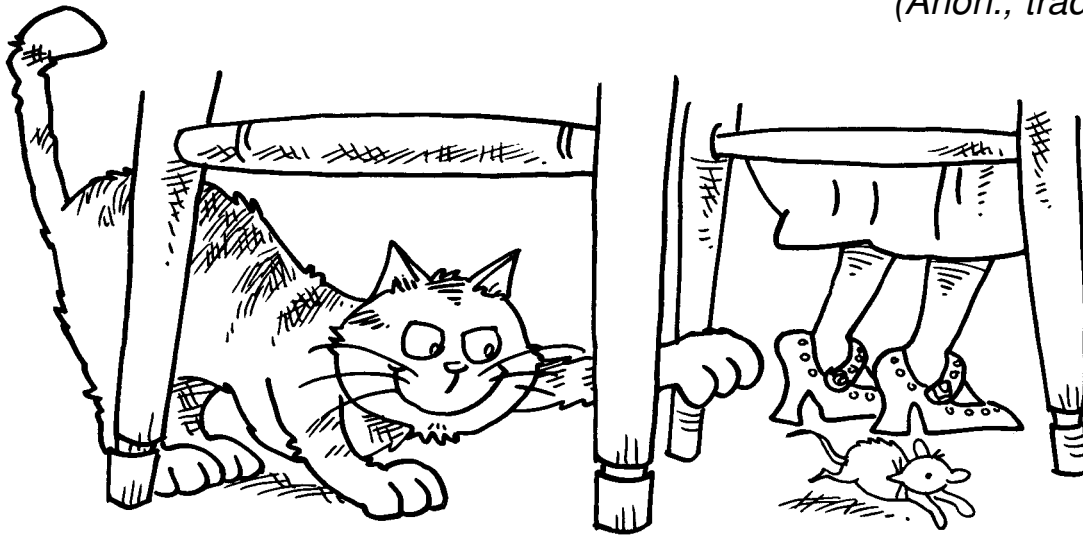
Mrs Sprockett has a strange machine.
It will thrill you through and through.
It's got wheels and springs and seven strings
And... I WISH I HAD ONE TOO!

Pussycat, Pussycat



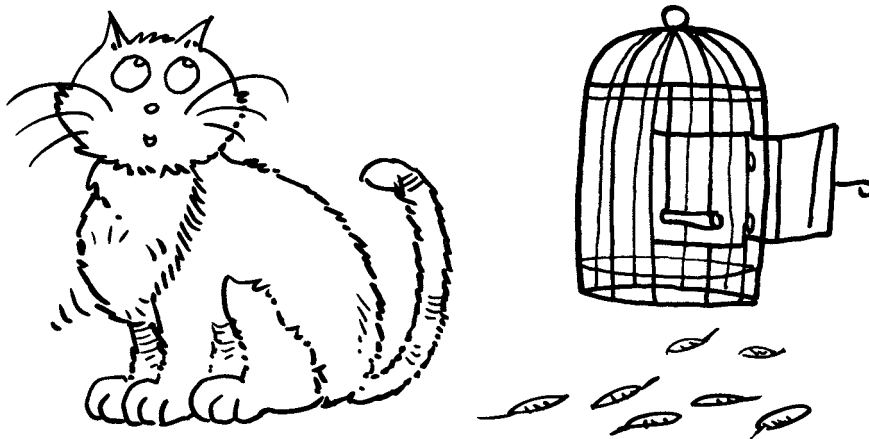
Pussycat, Pussycat, where have you been?
I've been to London to visit the Queen.
Pussycat, Pussycat, what did you do there?
I frightened a little mouse under her chair.

(Anon., traditional version)



Pussycat, Pussycat, where have you been?
Licking your lips with your whiskers so clean?
Pussycat, Pussycat, purring and pudgy,
Pussycat, Pussycat, WHERE IS OUR BUDGIE?

Max Fatchen



Workshop 3: Pussycat, Pussycat

Nursery rhymes.
Using rhyme as a model for own writing.

Speaking and listening

- Display the verses so that the whole class can see them. Keep a printed copy on display so that children can look at it in their own time.
- Read the traditional rhyme aloud for enjoyment.
- Read alone, read all together and/or take parts, paying attention to appropriate expression and volume. Pay attention to the punctuation. Point out the question marks indicating questions, and demonstrate a 'questioning' voice as opposed to the 'statement' voice. In the traditional version, one group of children can be the questioners and another group can perform the answers.
- Ask children if they already knew the nursery rhyme.
- Encourage them to tell nursery rhymes they already know. The aim of this is to validate existing knowledge and to give the whole class the opportunity to become acquainted with popular rhymes. It also provides the opportunity of showing or making written versions of rhymes that the children largely know orally.
- Read the modern parody of 'Pussycat, Pussycat'. Explain that poets often take rhymes and add their own ideas to the original.

Reading and writing

- Use the writing frame. As a whole-class activity, complete the writing frame on p. 22. Collect examples from the children, trim them to the right length and rhythm, and scribe them. Some ideas for a 'Pussycat' writing frame:

*I frightened a tiger. I frightened a bear/I stood and I shivered in my underwear/
I went to the shops and I went to the fair.*

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Do similar work with other nursery rhymes. 'Humpty Dumpty' and other well-known nursery rhymes provide excellent starting points to make your own rhyme, e.g. start 'Humpty Dumpty sat on a chair...' See bibliography for further examples of addled rhymes.
- Make a class anthology. On an interactive whiteboard or a large sheet of paper, record some of the rhymes remembered or generated. Over time, make a class

collection or a series of posters. The children can illustrate the books or posters. Read them with the children from time to time and make the book or posters available for all to see at any time. Sing the songs and rhymes as the occasion arises. Extend and adapt the rhymes orally or in writing. For example:

*Here we go round the mulberry bush
The mulberry bush,
The mulberry bush.
Here we go round the mulberry bush
On a cold and frosty morning.*

Change the weather depending on the day, e.g.:

On a bright and sunny morning/On a wet and rainy morning/On a dull and gloomy morning/On a wild and windy morning.

Change activities to fit in with your current activity, e.g.:

This is the way we brush our hair/This is the way we tidy up/This is the way we make a line/This is the way we find our book.

Add children's names, e.g.:

This is the way Ben turns around...

The more you do this the more confident the children will become in their grasp of rhythm and rhyme.

Keep a printed copy on display so that children can look at it in their own time.

- Link the rhymes to history or geography, e.g. 'Pussycat, Pussycat' links with using a map to find London or with a discussion of kings and queens.

More addled nursery rhymes

*Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall
Eating black bananas.
Where do you think he put the skins?
Down the king's pyjamas.*

(traditional)

All-Purpose Nursery Rhyme by Michaela Morgan

*Humpty Dumpty swallowed a fly,
lost his sheep, stuck his thumb in a pie,
jumped over the Moon with the dish and the spoon, and then sang a lullaby.*



Pussycat, Pussycat

Pussycat, Pussycat, where have you been?

I've been to London to visit the Queen.

Pussycat, Pussycat, what did you do there?



Humpty Dumpty

Humpty Dumpty sat on a _____

Humpty Dumpty had _____

Hopaloo Kangaroo



If you can jigaloo
jigaloo
I can do the jigaloo too,
for I'm the jiggiest
jigaloo kangaroo

But bet you can't hopaloo
hopaloo
like I can do
for I'm the hoppiest
hopaloo kangaroo

jigaloo all night through
jigaloo all night through

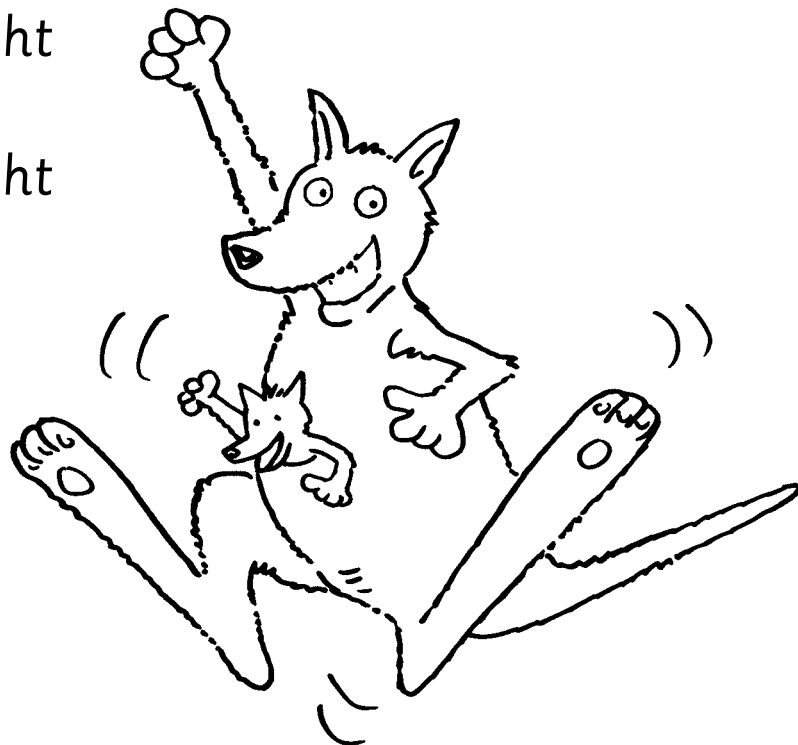
hopaloo all night through
hopaloo all night through.

If you can boogaloo
boogaloo
I can do the boogaloo too
for I'm the boogiest
boogaloo kangaroo.

Gonna show you steps
you never knew,
and guess what, guys?
My baby in my pouch will
be dancing too.

John Agard

boogaloo all night
through
boogaloo all night
through



Workshop 4: Can You Do the Kangaroo?

Poem by significant children's poet.
Predictable structure and patterned language.
Generating new and invented words.
Language play.
Synonyms.

Speaking and listening

- Display the poem so that the whole class can see it. Keep a printed copy on display so that children can look at it in their own time.
- Explain that the poet has started with real words – 'jig' and 'hop' (and arguably 'boogie') and played with them, making new words with them. We have *jigaloo* and *jiggliest* (from *jig*), *boogaloo* and *booggiest* (from *boogie*), and *hopaloo* and *hoppiest* (from *hop*).
- Ask the children if they can think of other ways of moving – ask them to think of synonyms for move or walk. List the suggested words and add your own, e.g.:

<i>skip</i>	<i>limp</i>
<i>bounce</i>	<i>slump</i>
<i>zoom</i>	<i>plod</i>
<i>bop</i>	

Demonstrate the meaning of new verbs by making the movements.

Reading and writing

- Read the poem again and, as a class, use the writing frame (p. 35) to make up a new stanza including one of the words collected.
- Photocopies of the writing frame can be given to the children to create their own individual stanza and illustration.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Perform the poem as a class, with individuals or groups performing their own new stanzas within the poem.
- You could join up the newly generated verses to make a class poem to perform with actions. It would be pleasant to end with 'snooze' in the place of 'hop' so that at the end of the performance the children snooze all night through (cue snoring noises).
- Use in drama/movement and PE classes.
- Study kangaroos and other animals.



Hopaloo Kangaroo

If you can _____

I can do the _____ too,

for I'm the _____

_____ kangaroo.

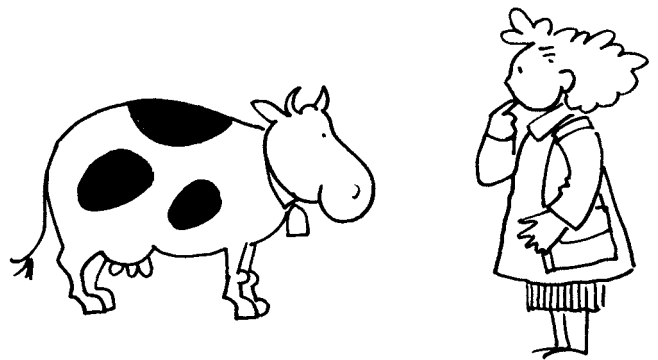
_____ all night through,

_____ all night through

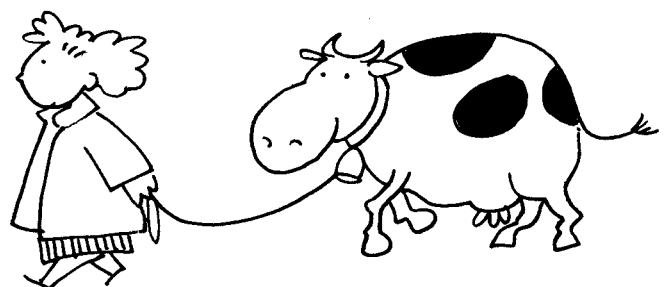
Mrs Brown



Mrs Brown went to town,
and what did she see?
She saw a cow,
it said 'meeow',
so she took it home for tea.

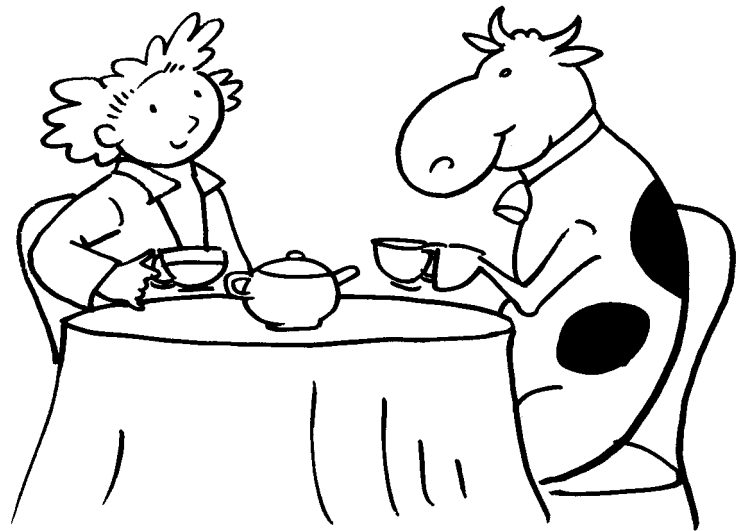


Mrs Brown went to town,
and what did she see?
She saw a cow,
it said 'bow wow',
so she took it home for tea.





Mrs Brown went to town,
and what did she see?
She saw a cow,
it said 'Ker pow!',
so she took it home for tea.



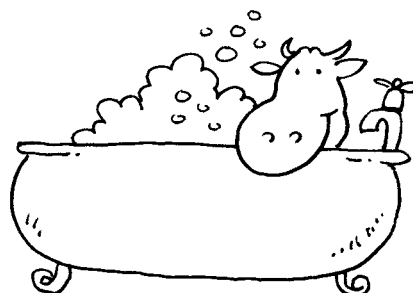
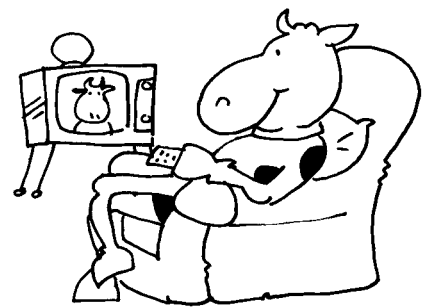
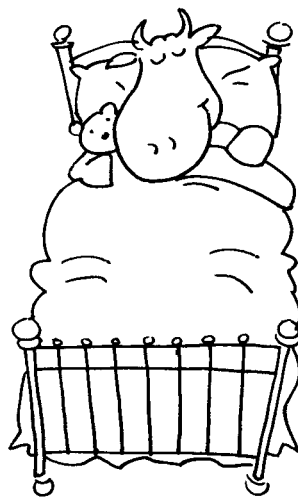
Mrs Brown went to town,
and what did she see?
She saw a cow,
it said 'Oh wow!'
when she took it home for tea.



When Mrs Brown got back home.
What did she see?
She saw cows in the bedroom,
cows on the stairs,
cows watching telly,
cows in all the chairs,
cows in the bath tub,
cows in the hall,
cows in the kitchen,
and no tea left at all!



Michaela Morgan



Workshop 5: Mrs Brown

Understanding and working with rhyme.

Speaking and listening

- Read the poem aloud to the class.
- Enlarge the poem so that everybody can see it.
- Enjoy saying the poem together with appropriate pace and expression. Individual children or groups can be given parts.

Ask children to point out the rhymes.

Reading and writing

- Use the displayed poem as reading material.
- Think of other animals Mrs Brown could meet. List them and try to think of rhymes for the new animals.
- Some ideas: a chick feeling sick, a pig in a silly wig, a sheep going 'beep beep', a lion whose name was Ryan, a horse in tomato sauce, etc.

As a whole class, write additional verses using the writing frame.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Individual children, using the writing frame, can write and/or illustrate their own verse.
- A big book of Mrs Brown verses and illustrations can be made and used as a reading book.
- Phonics work on 'ow' sound.
- ICT – word-process finished verses.
- Art – illustrate finished verses.
- Science – link with animals/farm topic.
- To explore other topics, use the Mrs Brown model and write a whole-class poem in which she meets, for example, different mini-beasts, finds a variety of buildings, goes to different countries, finds a variety of toys, etc.



Mrs Brown went to town,
and what did she see?

She saw _____

_____,
so she took it home for tea.

Words to Whisper



Words to *whisper*...

Words to SHOUT

To pack a punch!

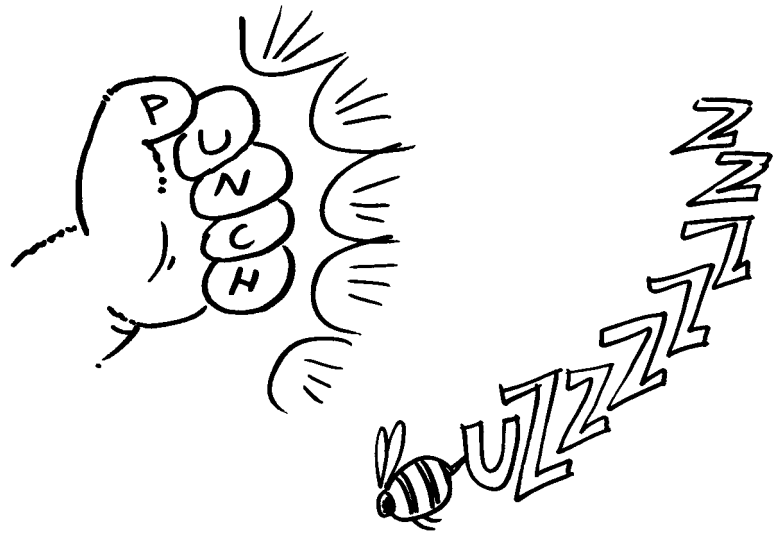
To cast a doubt...

Words to relish

Words to chew.

Antique words

or words brand new.



Words to clacker and to clack
like trains that travel on a track.

Words to soothe, words to *sigh*,
to shush and hush and lullaby.

Words to tickle or to tease,
to murmur, hum or buzz like bees.

Words like hubbub, splash and splutter,
wiffle, waffle, murmur, mutter.





Words that babble like a stream.
 Words to SNAP! when you feel mean.
 Get lost! Drop dead! Take a hike!
 Shut it! Beat it! On your bike!
 Cruel words that taint and taunt.
 Eerie words that howl and haunt.
 Words with rhythm. Words with rhyme.
 Words to make you feel just fine.
 To clap your hands, tap your feet
 or click your fingers to the beat.
 Words to make you grow – or cower.
 Have you heard the word?

WORDPOWER!

Michaela Morgan



Workshop 6: All Join In

Performance.
Onomatopoeia.
Calligrams.

Speaking and listening

- Display the poem so that the whole class can see it. Keep a printed copy on display so that children can look at it in their own time.
- Read the poem aloud to the class – don't encourage children to join in at this stage. In your reading, demonstrate the meaning of the words by your actions and tone of voice. Demonstrate good performance skills – clear voice, head up, standing still, using expression and pauses.
- Now discuss the meaning of the poem with the children and help them to understand the vocabulary. Less well known words (e.g. 'cower') can be more easily demonstrated than explained.
- Explain the term 'onomatopoeia' (see A to Z of Poetry) and with the class, pick out examples from the poem.
- Divide the class into groups to work on a performance of the poem. Encourage the children to shout the word 'SHOUT', whisper the word '*whisper*', sigh the word '*sigh*'.
- Remember you have an e-safe website <http://performapoem.lgfl.org.uk> which you can use to post recordings of your performance.
- Link with the 'Licensed to Thrill' workshop (14) and 'Jumblies' workshop (15) to hone performance skills.

Reading and writing

- Collect other examples of onomatopoeic words for display.
- Make a display of some of these onomatopoeic words written as calligrams.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Discuss the power of words to soothe or hurt. Move on to discussion of 'name calling' and bullying in PSHE.
- Look at 'Fishes' Evening Song' (p. 45) which is another poem featuring onomatopoeia. Mention can also be made of alliteration, but the main point is simply to enjoy saying the poem aloud.
- You could write a whole-class version of an animal song based on 'Fishes' Evening Song' (e.g. Owl or Lion or Snake Song).

Some ideas:

*Owl's Evening Song/too wit too woo/oo oo/flap flutter/night sounds,
soothing sounds/we waft our wings/as we perch/darkness falls/Moon
shines/shush shush hoot hoot/hush/eye glint/swoop swoop/whoop/air rush/claw
grabs/This we do.../too wit too woood...*

- Read and perform a range of poems simply to enjoy the sounds of words. See bibliography for suggested collections. See also <http://performapoem.lgfl.org.uk> – opportunity to record performances.
- Music composition. Use musical instruments to accompany performance, e.g with 'Fishes' Evening Song', use rainsticks, triangles, beaters etc.

Fishes' Evening Song



Flip flop,
 Flip flap,
 Slip slap,
 Lip lap;
 Water sounds,
 Soothing sounds.
 We fan our fins
 As we lie
 Resting here
 Eye to eye.
 Water falls
 Drop by drop,
 Plip plop,
 Drip drop,
 Plink plunk,
 Splash splish;
 Fish fins fan,
 Fish tails swish,
 Swush, swash, swish.
 This we wish...
 Water cold,
 Water clear,
 Water smooth,
 Just to soothe
 Sleepy fish.

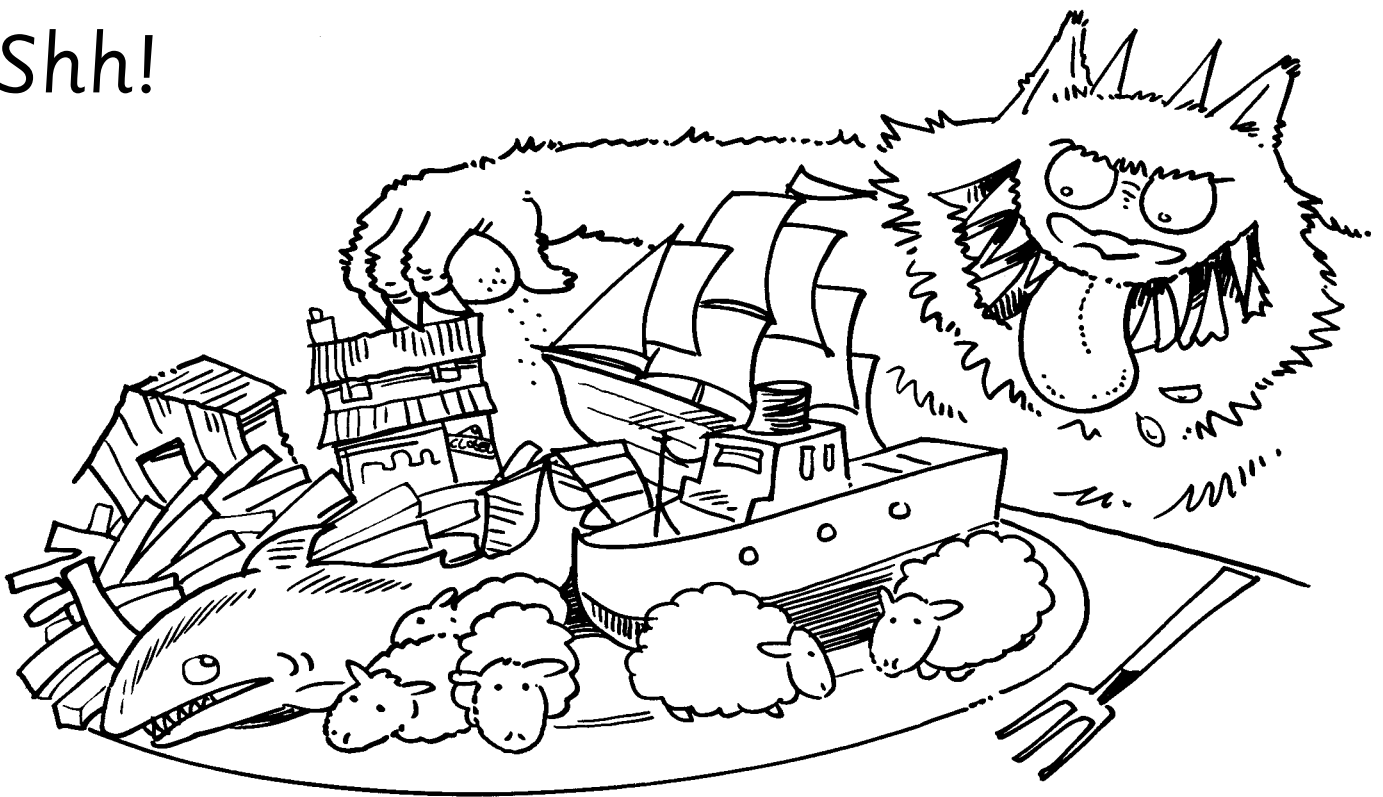


Dahlov Ipcar

Monster Meals



My monster eats:
shops that are shut,
a shed and a hut,
sheep and ships
and shark and chips!
Shh!



(by children in Year 2, Townlands School, Leicestershire)

Workshop 7: Monster Meals

Alliteration.

Speaking and listening

- Display the poem so that the whole class can see it. Keep a printed copy on display so that children can look at it in their own time.
- Read aloud for enjoyment.
- Emphasise the 'sh' sounds while reading the poem.
- Ask the children to point out the 'sh' sounds.
- Emphasise the difference between 'sh' and 'ch' (e.g. 'ships' and 'chips').
- Introduce and explain the term 'alliteration' (see A to Z of Poetry).
- Talk about the monster. It can eat anything. Encourage the children to make suggestions for things the monster can eat. Organise the suggestions made into groups beginning with the same sound.

Reading and writing

- Read the verse again and gather ideas. As a whole-class activity, make another poem, this time using a different initial sound or blend (e.g. 'ch'). Collect 'ch' words and list on a flipchart or whiteboard, e.g.:

chocolate, cheese, chips, chunks, chimpanzee, chart, choice, chattering, choo choo, chew, church

Try to arrange them in a poem – rhyming or non-rhyming, e.g.:

*My monster eats:
chocolate chunks
and chips and cheese,
chewy choo-choos
and chimpanzees.*

- Individual children could move on to writing a line or a verse of their own.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Do similar work with other sounds.
- You could also follow up by making similar verses using homonyms, e.g.:

*My monster eats:
pairs of pears
and hairs of hares
and bare bears
and stairs that stare.*

- Collect and enjoy other food and monster poems (see bibliography).
- Link with other topics, e.g. Healthy Eating in Science.

Workshop 8: Chips

A cut-up poem, or a shape/concrete poem.

Adjectives.

Re-ordering words in a poem.

Senses.

Redrafting.

This workshop does not start with looking at a poem; it starts with trying to capture a word. The emphasis is on finding a good word, not making a sentence. There is an example poem at the end of the workshop that can be read in a plenary session along with the poem the children have produced.

- Writing a poem such as this develops the skills of word selection and word ordering, redrafting and revising.
- Cut out rectangles of thick paper or card to look like chips – big fat chips, skinny chips, long chips, and so on.

Speaking and listening

- Remind children of the senses: sight, touch, smell, sound, taste. Ask children to think of words to describe:
 - the way chips look (e.g. *chunky, fat, thin, skinny, crinkled*)
 - how they feel (*soggy, sticky, crispy*)
 - how they taste (*salty, crispy, crunchy, soggy, vinegary*).

Reading and writing

- Write words on individual chip shapes and stick them up on a flipchart/board/large card using sticky tape or Blu-Tack or magnets.
- Use some of the chip shapes to keep as blanks and to write conjunctions, punctuation etc.
- In discussion with the children, move the words around.
- Try out the effect of different arrangements until you have made a poem.

As the words are easily moveable, there should be no reluctance to experiment – omitting words, adding extra words, changing the order of words, changing line breaks. Redrafting like this is probably more appealing than crossing out and changing.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Children, with their own chip shapes can make up their own chip poem. Present the poem on a cardboard plate or cone shape (like rolled newspaper) and you have a shape poem.
- Look at the example poem provided and discuss.
- Write other shape poems featuring food, e.g. spaghetti and other pasta shapes, fruit.
- Link with study of food and nutrition. Discuss healthy eating alternatives.
- Link with history, geography, science and art.
- Discovery of the potato and its voyage to the UK; how potatoes are cooked and grown.
- Art: potato prints.

Example poem

The following poem was written by Class 2 (whole-class mixed Y1 and Y2) with myself as scribe and workshop leader. When offered words, I grouped them according to sound and we managed to find rhyming or half-rhyming words. This is by no means essential.



Chips!

Crunchy chips

Salty chips

Squeezy chips

And squidgy chips.

Wiggly chips

Vinegary chips

Curly chips

And crunchy chips.

Spicy chips

Spiral chips

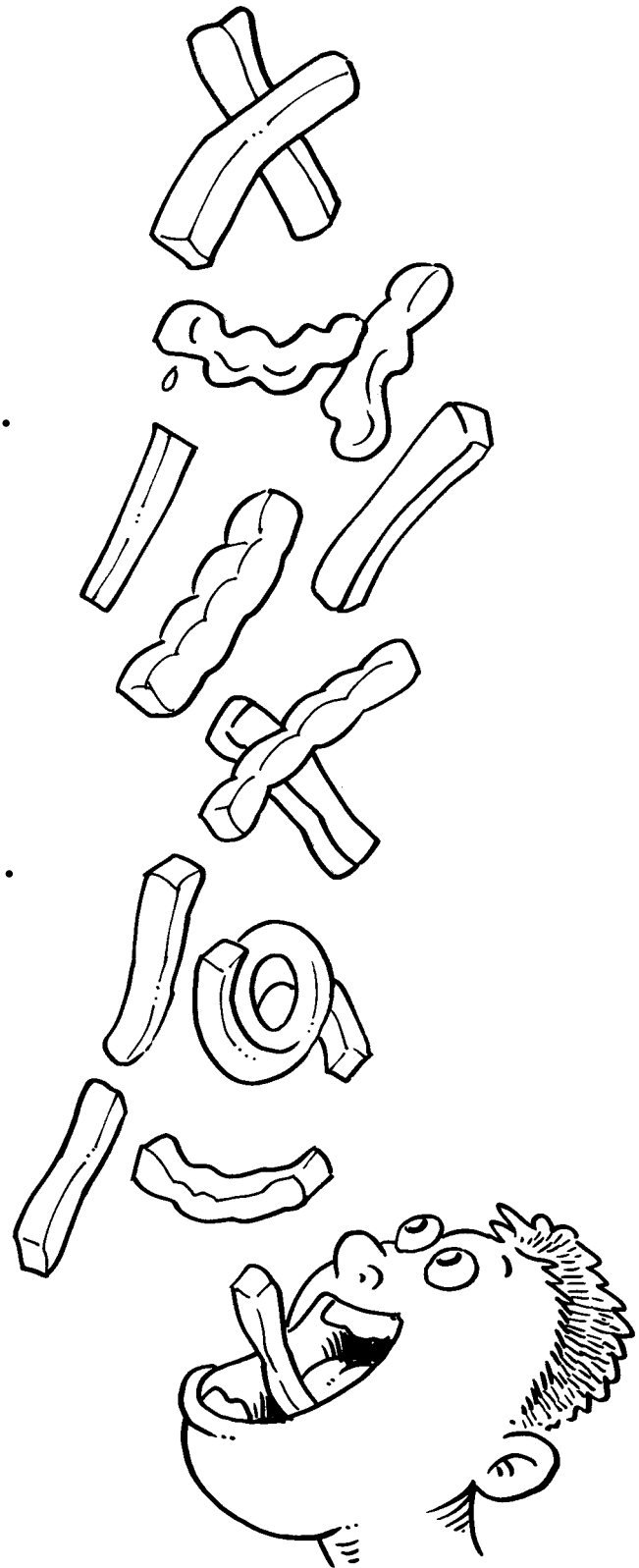
Smiley chips

And fat chips.

Hot chips

Thin chips

Yummy in my tummy chips!



Michaela Morgan and a class of children in Studfall Infants School, Corby

The Robin



I tried to write a poem today,
I tried to make it rhyme,
I tried to get the meaning right
But every single time
I thought I'd got the hang of it,
I thought I'd got it right,
I found I couldn't think of a word
To rhyme with bird
Or, that is, robin.

I didn't want to say
I saw a robin.
It was bobbing
Along and sobbing.
Because it wasn't.

So I started again.

Once, last winter, in the snow,
I was out in the garden
At the bird table,
When I turned round
And saw on the path beside me
A robin.

It was so close
I could have touched it.
It took my breath away.

I have never forgotten
The red of it
And the white snow falling.



June Crebbin

Workshop 9: The Robin

Rhyming and un-rhyming poetry.

The effect of layout.

Observation/senses.

Writing a poetic sentence.

Speaking and listening

- Read the poem aloud to the class without them joining in. This is a poem for one voice rather than group participation.
- Point out that many poems have a bouncy rhythm and the opportunity to join in, but some are quieter, more thoughtful, and you can read them aloud with one voice or to yourself. Point out that some poems rhyme, but rhyme is not necessary.
- Check that everyone has understood the poem.
- Display the poem so that everybody can see it. Keep a copy of the poem on display so that children can read it in their own time.
- What difference would it have made to the poem about the robin if it had to rhyme? It would become bouncier; the mood would have been lost. The poet would not have been able to capture what she felt and what she had seen. Emphasise again that rhyming is not essential to poetry. Rhyming is fun and is sometimes right for a poem, but if it stops you saying/writing what you want to say, if it makes you write nonsense by *mistake*, start again – this time without rhyme.
- Consider the layout of the poem. See how the poet alters the pace of the poem. She slows it down by leaving spaces. Look at the effect of 'So I started again' having space around it. Why is 'A robin' on a line all of its own? Notice how the length of the lines and the punctuation alter the pace and effect of the poem.

Reading and writing

- As a whole class or in groups, take an object and try to capture it in a non-rhyming description. One 'poetic sentence' will be a good start. Objects could be anything that might mean something to the class (e.g. a well-worn teddy bear, a prize they have won, a picture).
- Brainstorm words and ideas and scribe them on to a flipchart or a large sheet of paper.
- Look at the lines you have scribed for the children and try out different word orders, line-breaks, different choices of words.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Link this workshop with the senses and the following workshop, 'The Poem Hunt'.
- For science, link with weather/seasons.
- For art or maths, make symmetrical snowflakes. Paint a picture of a robin in the snow.
- Non-fiction research. Find facts on the robin. Compare the language of non-fiction with the poetic approach.

Workshop 10: The Poem Hunt

Using the senses.
Writing poetic sentences.
Making revisions.

The senses

This workshop does not start with the hearing or reading of a poem; it starts with an exploration.

- First, remind the children of the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch.
- Explain that a poet is like an explorer. He or she uses all their senses and tries to look at the world with open eyes, all senses on the alert, as if they have newly discovered the world.
- Go on a poem hunt to make poetic sentences. Take the worksheet out to the playground or around the school or use it on a school visit. Omit some senses if they are irrelevant to a particular exploration (e.g. to discourage tasting of inappropriate objects!) or if you feel the activity is too challenging for some. Smells are particularly challenging to capture and describe.
- You can add imagination to the list for some children (I imagine/I think/I feel/I dream) to try to capture mood.
- When the words and sentences have been captured, take the worksheets of rough notes back to the classroom to be rewritten and redrafted. Cutting out all unnecessary words will improve the description and make them more like poems. It is important to do several whole-class redrafts. For example:

*I see a tree
it is bent
like an old man*

becomes

I see a tree, bent like an old man.

*I hear some other children
whispering to each other
like the wind*

becomes

I hear children, whispering like the wind.

*I smell
the air
it's a nice fresh breeze*

becomes

I smell the fresh breezy air.

*I touch a stone
it is warm
like a pet*

becomes

I touch a stone, warm as a pet

or

I pet a stone, warm to my touch

- Now, or at a later date, ask each child to put all his or her 'poetic sentences' together to make a senses poem. Small changes can still be made to improve the poem. Words can be taken away or added:

*I see a tree, bent like an old man.
I hear children, whispering like the wind.
I smell the fresh breezy air
and touch a stone, warm as a pet.*

- Finally, think of a title.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- The young poets on their poem hunt have been like explorers, looking around a place carefully. A link with this theme of exploration could lead to work on famous explorers, Moon exploration etc.
- Link with geography. Make a map of the area explored (e.g. the playground) and make a map of the area.
- Science – link with work on the senses.



Poem Hunt

I see a _____

it is [*describe it*] _____

it is like a _____ .

I hear a _____

it is [*describe it*] _____

it is like a _____ .

I smell a _____

it is [*describe it*] _____

it is like a _____ .

I touch a _____

it is [*describe it*] _____

it is like a _____ .

Workshop 11: Feelings

Similes.
Feelings.
Writing a poetic sentence.

Speaking and listening

This workshop starts with a discussion of feelings.

- Make a whole-class list of the feelings you can think of, e.g. happy, sad, nervous, afraid, angry, contented, cosy.
- Take one feeling from the list and discuss the colours, weathers, objects, animals, musical instruments, clothes etc. that you associate with it; e.g. happy could be associated with yellow, sunshine, rainbow, dolphin, flute, flip-flops.

Reading and writing

- With the whole class contributing, gather ideas to make a poetic sentence with a simile (e.g. 'I am as happy as a rainbow!').
- Collect these poetic sentences to build up to a poem, rhyming or un-rhyming.

Rhyming example :

*I'm happy as a rainbow
Or a dolphin in the sea
Happy as a kangaroo
Or a buzzy bee
Happy as a flip-flop
Walking on the sand
Happy as a big bass drum
In the happy band.*

Non-rhyming example:

*I am happy like a dolphin
Leaping
I am happy as a Hawaiian shirt
Holidaying
I am happy as the Sun
Beaming.*

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Children can write their own Happy Poem using similes, or move on to focus on the feeling of their choice.
- This could lead to a performance, recording or collection of poems on the theme of feelings.
- For ICT, poems can be word-processed.
- For art, they can be illustrated – capturing a happy or sad mood by colours used.
- Link with PSHE discussion of feelings.
- Children can add to the well-known song 'If You're Happy and You Know It' and use instruments to accompany their singing. They can also add verses dealing with other emotions apart from happiness. They can try out various instruments available in school and work out which make happy sounds, sad sounds, nervous or angry sounds. For example:

*If you're happy and you know it toot a flute
toot toot... [etc.]*

*If you're angry and you know it
Bang a drum
Bang bang... [etc.]*

Workshop 12: Word Hoard

Collecting interesting words.

In this workshop the focus is on collecting interesting words.

- Choose a topic and brainstorm all the words associated with it.
- Be sure to include some adjectives and verbs, not just lists of nouns.
- The following topics provide a starting point. Add your own topics to fit in with current weather, events and topics of interest.
 - festivals such as Christmas, Diwali, birthday, bonfire night etc.
 - weather such as snow, rain, sunshine, fog etc.
 - animals such as snakes, spiders, tigers etc.
 - worms
 - mini-beasts
 - activities (e.g. racing/running/football/ swimming).

Draw on the children's existing knowledge and encourage use of a dictionary and a thesaurus.

- Make a list poem using a selection of the gathered words (*worms wriggle, worms wind, worms loop...*).
- Make a shape poem – for example, use the words you have thought of for 'worm' to make a worm poem.
- Make a class thesaurus using the words you have gathered.

Workshop 13: Playing Around

Word play.

Word games are important for building confidence, honing skills, providing starting points and increasing awareness of language. The following website is filled with wonderful ideas for writing games: <http://www.everybodywrites.org.uk/writing-games/primary/>

- Tongue-twisters are fun and useful for reinforcement of initial sounds, introduction to alliteration, word selection by sound, memorising and performing. Tongue-twisters need to be repeated a number of times. This is obviously helpful for early reading and for speech development. Children enjoy the challenge and the nonsense of tongue-twisters.
- Reading and writing riddles develops observation, consideration of language and a certain obliqueness that is a characteristic of poetry.
- Puns and jokes obviously amuse children (although younger children often laugh out of politeness and a wish to join in), and I consider them to be small steps towards poetry. They involve thinking about language and understanding that one word can have more than one meaning. They develop an understanding of the way a word can be used in different ways to different effect and can enhance an enjoyment of language.

Word game

There are many word games. They are light-hearted and free the mind to play with language. Here's one that raises awareness of language choices, is undemanding and fun, and can provide the starting point for a nonsense poem:

- Make four piles of cards or pieces of paper.
- On each piece of card/paper in set 1, write an adjective, e.g. *spotty, yellow, frilly, shiny, sparkly, enormous, tiny*.
- On each piece of card/paper in set 2, write an item of clothing. Be sure to put in some funny ones, e.g. hat, coat, slippers, boots, clown shoes, flippers, pants.
- On each piece of card/paper in set 3, write a verb of movement, e.g. *walk, run, swim, march, crawl, dance, jump*.
- On each piece of card/paper in set 4, write a noun of weather or food, e.g. *fog, drizzle, custard, jelly, gravy*.

Use this frame:

I put on my [choose an adjective from set 1, then choose a noun from set 2]
and I [choose a verb from set 3]
through the [choose a noun from set 4].

Some combinations will work better than others but you can enjoy the choices and the resultant nonsense and also use it to remind children of parts of speech. You can vary the game, add new words to your sets and also add choices of tense.

Here's one result:

I put on my enormous pants and I dance through custard.

Further work and cross-curricular links

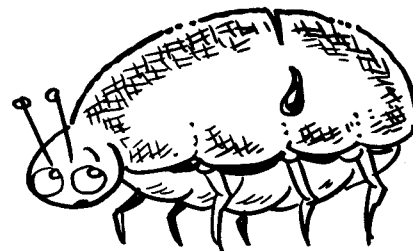
- Art – illustrate the nonsense sentence you have generated.
- Dance – mime the sentence you have illustrated.
- Read and enjoy other nonsense verses such as those by Edward Lear and Spike Milligan.

Tongue-twisters



Betty Botter bought a bit of butter.
But the bit of butter Betty Botter bought was bitter.
So Betty Botter bought a bit of better butter.

Anon traditional

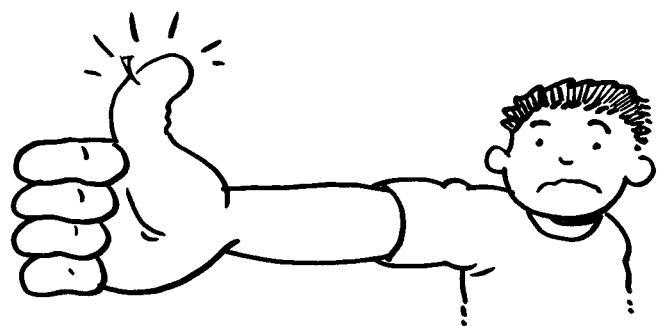


Red bug's blood, bed bug's blood.

Anon traditional

A thorn in the thumb makes a thin thumb thick.

Michaela Morgan and Sue Palmer



Swan swam over the sea.
Swim swan swim.
Swan swam back again.
Well swum swan!

Michaela Morgan

Tongue-twisters

Speaking and listening

- Read the tongue-twisters aloud – individually/as groups/as a class.
- Invent class tongue-twisters orally, focusing on a sound you particularly want to introduce or consolidate.
- To reinforce knowledge of the alphabet and alphabetical order, you could invent or find a tongue-twister using each letter of the alphabet (e.g. *Ann Anteater ate Andy Alligator's apples, so angry Andy Alligator ate Ann Anteater's ants. A big bug bit an old bold bald bear and the bald bold bear bled badly and blubbed*).

Reading and writing

- Invent and write whole-class and individual tongue-twisters.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Make individual or class collections of tongue-twisters.
- Individuals, groups or the whole class can write more tongue-twisters, using a dictionary to find additional words with the specified sound.
- Make a tongue-twister to link with any theme, e.g. history – Romans ran and rampaged roughly; science – Spiders spin sparkling spans speedily.



Tongue-twisters

Write a tongue-twister using 'D' sounds.

Here are some words to help:

dog, duck, dirty, den, deep, dark, dig,
dingy, dug, dozen, dozy

Riddles

Speaking and listening

- Riddles are a very old and popular form of poetry. They are short and mysterious. They usually have no title – you have to guess what they are about.
- Read the riddles provided on p. 68.
- Guess the answers.
- As a whole class, discuss riddle descriptions you could give of the following:

kettle, balloon, ball, Sun

You will notice that certain characteristics apply to several of the subjects. For example the ball, balloon and Sun are all round. The kettle and the Sun both heat water. You can play with both a ball and a balloon. Both ball and balloon can be full of air. They could all be yellow or red.

- Make the point that when writing a riddle you have to think very carefully about the subject. You have to consider it more carefully than you normally would. This way of thinking is good practice for writing any sort of poetry. The writers also have to think of things to compare their subject with. This is good practice in thinking figuratively, using similes, metaphors and images.
- Read a selection of other riddles (see bibliography for recommended collections).

Reading and writing

- As a whole class, write one of the riddles you have discussed. Consider the subject carefully. Scribe the class suggestions, making changes as you go. Model reading back and checking, considering and revising.
- Remember to write as if you are the subject ('I am round'. 'I bounce in the sky'.).
- Keep it mysterious. If you are going to give a clear clue, save it for the end of the riddle!

The riddle description is usually short (but not necessarily so). It can rhyme, but this is not necessary.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Individual children can move on to write their own riddle, which they can read out for the class to guess. Subjects could include everyday things you can see in the classroom or playground, animals, natural phenomena (shadows, water, fog, ice etc.).

- Compose riddles to link with your topics, e.g. science – write a riddle describing a creature.

Example:

Sticky question

*My sticky web invites you in.
I spend my lifespan in a spin.
What am I?*

Answer: spider

Answers to riddles (pp. 68–69)

- WHO AM I? – question mark.
- LOOK AT ME! – exclamation mark.
- STOP HERE – full stop.
- ‘Night Hunter’ by John Kitching – owl.
- ‘Silent . . .’ by John Cotton – mist.

Riddles



Each of the following riddles describes a punctuation mark. Can you guess what they are?

WHO AM I?

Am I a curl?

Am I a squiggle?

Where will you find me?

At the end of a riddle.

LOOK AT ME!

I stand up straight and tall

And balance on a ball!

Shock! Horror! Surprise!

You won't believe your eyes!

STOP HERE

I help you with your writing.

I make the meaning clear.

I'm small and round and useful.

I make you stop just here.



NIGHT HUNTER

Some think that I am blind by day.
At night my sharp eyes seek out prey.
I haunt the woodlands with my song.
I'm wise. And smaller creatures know I'm strong.
Who am I?

John Kitching

SILENT...

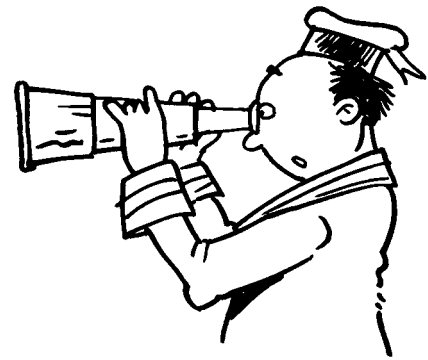
Silent, I invade cities,
Blur edges, confuse travellers,
My thumb smudging the light.
I drift from rivers
To loiter in early morning fields,
Until constable Sun
Moves me on.

John Cotton

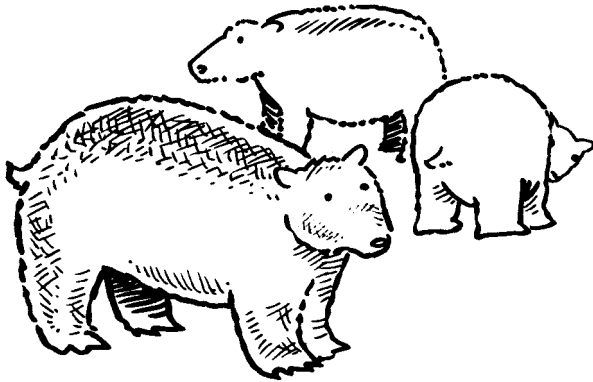
Puns



A sailor went to sea, sea, sea
To see what he could see, see, see
But all that he did see, see, see
Was the bottom of the deep blue sea, sea, sea.



Anon traditional



Bears, bears everywhere.
I can see a bear in front
and I can see a bare behind!

Anon traditional

Whether the weather be fine
or whether the weather be not
We'll weather the weather
whatever the whether
Whether we like it or not.

Anon traditional



I scream for ice cream!
We all scream for ice cream!

Anon traditional

Puns

An understanding of puns usually relies on a knowledge of homonyms (words with the same spelling but a different meaning, such as *stamp*, *light*, *stick*, *fine*, *might*, *dear*) and homophones (words that sound the same but have a different spelling or meaning).

Speaking and listening

Explore examples of these words (e.g. *jam* (for eating)/*jam* (in traffic), *stamp* (on a letter)/*stamp* (on a foot), *eye/I*, *might/might*, *stick/stick*, *sea/see*, *hair/hare*, *deer/dear*, *bear/bare*, *stair/stare*, *whether/weather*, *saw/sore*).

Reading and writing

- Enlarge the examples given for the children to read and enjoy.
- Check that they have understood the meaning.
- Meaning can be reinforced if the children illustrate or suggest illustrations for the words and verses.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Make a class collection of punny verse and punny words.
- Using some of the words given in the 'Speaking and listening' section above, work with children to write puns to add to the collection (e.g. *stamps*: Give me six stamps (*stamp foot six times*)).
- Enjoy reading the following poem – 'On and On' by Roger McGough. Discuss the meanings and try writing extra stanzas together. Some expressions that may start you off are: *daybreak*, *sunset*, *catalogue*, *kitchen sink*, *rubber band*, *light bulb*, *dinner lady*, *giant sale*, *shooting stars*, *horse fly*, *clothes horse*, *battery hen*, *reindeer*, *buttercup*, *sunflower*.

On and On



Is a well-wisher
someone
who wishes at a well?

Is a bad speller
one
who casts a wicked spell?

Is a shop lifter
a giant
who goes around lifting shops?

Is a pop singer
someone
who sings and then pops?

Is a fly fisherman
an angler
who fishes for flies?

Is an eye-opener
a gadget
for opening eyes?





Is a night nurse
a nurse
who looks after the night?

Who puts it to bed
and then
turns off the light?

Is a big spender
a spendthrift
who is exceedingly big?

Is a pig farmer
really
a land-owning pig?

Does a baby-sitter
really
sit on tiny tots?

Is a pot-holer
a gunman
who shoots holes in pots?



Roger McGough

Licensed to Thrill



A performance poem

Stand up tall.

Stand up proud.

Speak it *softly*.

Speak it **loud**.

Speak it clearly.

Take . . . your . . . time.

You'll be brilliant!

You'll be fine!

Do not fidget.

Do not mumble.

Stand still and strong.

Do not stumble.

Don't wobble or wobble or hop around.

Hold your head high. Don't stare at the ground.

Send your voice to the back of the room.

You can make it loud with a

Boom boom BOOM.

You can make it whispery, *soft as a sigh*.

Vary voice and volume. Use low and high.

No need to rush. No need to blush.

Just . . . have . . . fun.

You're as good as anyone.

And so . . .

Your performance is over.

What to do now?

Look at your audience

And

Take a bow.

Michaela Morgan

Workshop 14: Licensed to Thrill

Performing poetry.

Identify appropriate expression and tone, volume, use of voice and other sounds.

Performing poetry

Listening to verse and speaking it aloud is a vital step to appreciating and writing poetry. The aim of this workshop is to add extra energy and enjoyment to the poetry class and to boost confidence.

The advice on performing poetry is given in the form of a performance poem. Children can use this verse as a springboard to their own performances and to writing their own performance poem. In a playful way, awareness of punctuation and line-breaks is increased.

Read, speak, listen, enjoy!

- Display the poem so that the whole class can see it. Keep a printed copy on display so that children can look at it in their own time.
- Show some poetry performance, e.g. use <http://performapoem.lgfl.org.uk>
- Enjoy performing the poem. Read the poem aloud several times. Encourage children to work in pairs or groups performing the poem.

Discuss

- Discuss the advice given on performing poetry. Is there more advice you could add?
- Look at punctuation. What hints does the punctuation give for performance? Demonstrate stopping for full stops, lingering (not too long) at a comma, pausing at ellipses . . .
- Look at line-breaks. Many of the lines are short and snappy but some lines run together (e.g. 'Hold your head high'. 'Don't stare at the ground'.). What effect should this have on the way the poem is read/performed?
- What other how-to-perform clues can children find? (font: bold/italic, size, choice of word).
- Are there any lines children particularly like? Why? Are there lines they would like to add or remove?

Write

Whole-class activity with teacher as scribe:

Write a whole-class performance poem that gives instructions. Some ideas to get started with are:

what your mum/dad/friends/teacher say (do this/do that)
 how to score a goal (head it/kick it/lob it)
 how to train a pet
 how to get an idea
 or
 your own idea!

Hints for writing this performance poem:

Note that instructions are usually short and snappy. They may be exclamations. (Sit down! Stand up!).

Aim for economy of language.

Don't be afraid to repeat a word/phrase or to have a refrain, e.g.:

My mum says tidy up.
 My mum says read that book
 My mum says I've lost my key.
 My mum says I'll kiss your knee.

Performance poems often rhyme, but they don't have to. If you want to find extra rhymes use a good rhyming dictionary. If you can't find a rhyme, you can re-order your line so that the last line rhymes more easily, you can leave it out, or you can change the word.

At the revision stage, look at cutting lines out or rearranging them for better effect.

Look at line-breaks and punctuation. Will they give your readers clues about how you want them to read the poem?

Perform, enjoy, applaud!

Put on a performance for the class or school. Performances can be recorded and uploaded to the Perform a Poem website. Hints for doing this are given on the website (<http://performapoem.lgfl.org.uk>). This is an e-safe site founded by Michael Rosen.

Further work and cross-curricular links

- Read other performance poems in a variety of styles and voices (see bibliography).
- Write a class performance poem on the topic you are currently studying (space, mini-beasts, Vikings etc.).



The Jumblies

They went to sea in a Sieve, they did,
In a Sieve they went to sea:
In spite of all their friends could say,
On a winter's morn, on a stormy day,
In a Sieve they went to sea!
And when the Sieve turned round and round,
And every one cried, 'You'll all be drowned!'
They called aloud, 'Our Sieve ain't big,
But we don't care a button! we don't care a fig!
In a Sieve we'll go to sea!'
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

They sailed away in a Sieve, they did,
In a Sieve they sailed so fast,
With only a beautiful pea-green veil
Tied with a riband by way of a sail,
To a small tobacco-pipe mast;



And every one said, who saw them go,
'O won't they be soon upset, you know!
For the sky is dark, and the voyage is long,
And happen what may, it's extremely wrong
In a Sieve to sail so fast!'

Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

The water it soon came in, it did,
The water it soon came in;
So to keep them dry, they wrapped their feet
In a pinky paper all folded neat,
And they fastened it down with a pin.
And they passed the night in a crockery-jar,
And each of them said, 'How wise we are!
Though the sky be dark, and the voyage be long,
Yet we never can think we were rash or wrong,
While round in our Sieve we spin!'

Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.



And all night long they sailed away;
And when the sun went down,
They whistled and warbled a moony song
To the echoing sound of a coppery gong,
In the shade of the mountains brown.
'O Timballo! How happy we are,
When we live in a Sieve and a crockery-jar,
And all night long in the moonlight pale,
We sail away with a pea-green sail,
In the shade of the mountains brown!'
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

They sailed to the Western Sea, they did,
To a land all covered with trees,
And they bought an Owl, and a useful Cart,
And a pound of Rice, and a Cranberry Tart,
And a hive of silvery Bees.
And they bought a Pig, and some green Jack-daws,
And a lovely Monkey with lollipop paws,
And forty bottles of Ring-Bo-Ree,
And no end of Stilton Cheese.

Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.



And in twenty years they all came back,
In twenty years or more,
And every one said, 'How tall they've grown!
For they've been to the Lakes, and the Terrible Zone,
And the hills of the Chankly Bore!'
And they drank their health, and gave them a feast
Of dumplings made of beautiful yeast;
And every one said, 'If we only live,
We too will go to sea in a Sieve, —
To the hills of the Chankly Bore!'
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

Edward Lear

Workshop 15: The Jumblies

Nonsense poetry.
Significant poet.
Classic poetry.
Narrative poetry.
Effective use of strong rhyme and rhythm.
Writing new or extended verses.
Using humorous verse as a structure for children to write their own by adaptation, mimicry or substitution.
Performance.

Read, speak, listen, enjoy!

- Display the poem so that the whole class can see it. Keep a copy on display so that children can read and re-read it in their own time.
- Read the verse aloud. Different readers take parts, either individually or in groups. All can join in the refrain
- Enjoy!

Discuss

- This is a narrative poem. It tells a story. It is written by the famous nonsense poet Edward Lear.
- Together with the class, retell the story of the poem dealing with any vocabulary that might need explaining. Make a collection of words the poet has invented and discuss what they could mean. Which nonsense words are your favourites?

Write

- Whole-class activity: writing frame. Take the writing frame (p. 83) and have a go at making your own Jumblies poem, putting in your own words. Try to keep to the rhythm and rhyme scheme but feel free to make up funny words.

Here's an example of a completed frame to start you off:

The Bumblies

*They went to sea in a jar they did,
In a jar they went to sea:
In spite of all their friends could say,
On a chilly morn, on a wintry day,
In a jar they went to sea!
And when the jar began to sink,
And everyone cried, 'Just stop and think!'
They called aloud, 'Our jar is small
But we don't care, we don't care at all!
In a jar we'll go to sea!'
Here and there. Here and there
Are the lands where the Bumblies live;
Their heads are huge and their hands are small,
And they went to sea in a jar.*

Possibilities for follow-up and cross-curricular links

- After doing the whole-class adaptation of the Jumblies poem, some children will be able to work independently making their own Jumblies, inspired poem.
- There is a great deal of scope for artwork. Take some of the creatures and illustrate them (the monkey with lollipop hands for example). Take some of the incidents and the journey to illustrate. Make a display of the poem and artwork inspired by it.
- Geography – make an imaginative map of their journey and the land they found including the Western Sea, the Lakes, the Terrible Zone and the hills of the Chankly Bore.
- Drama – perform the poem, act it out, rewrite it as a playscript with parts.
- ICT – children can word-process their new Jumblies verses and make a class collection.

Perform, discuss, enjoy, applaud!

Plenary and revision/redrafting.

- Read out and comment on particularly good new Jumblies verses.
- Make the point that poems are worked and reworked. Can anyone suggest improvements or alternatives? Some revisions to improve rhythm may be needed.
- Ask children to write or type out their lines with revisions incorporated.
- Present as a collection in big book or display format. You could also record or film the performance.

Consider inviting other classes, parents etc. to share the displays and performance.



The _____

They went to sea in a _____, they did,

In a _____ they went to sea:

In spite of all their friends could say,

On a _____ morn, on a _____ day,

In a _____ they went to sea!

And when the _____,

And every one cried, ' _____!'

They called aloud, ' _____,

But _____!

In a _____ we'll go to sea!

_____ and _____, _____ and _____,

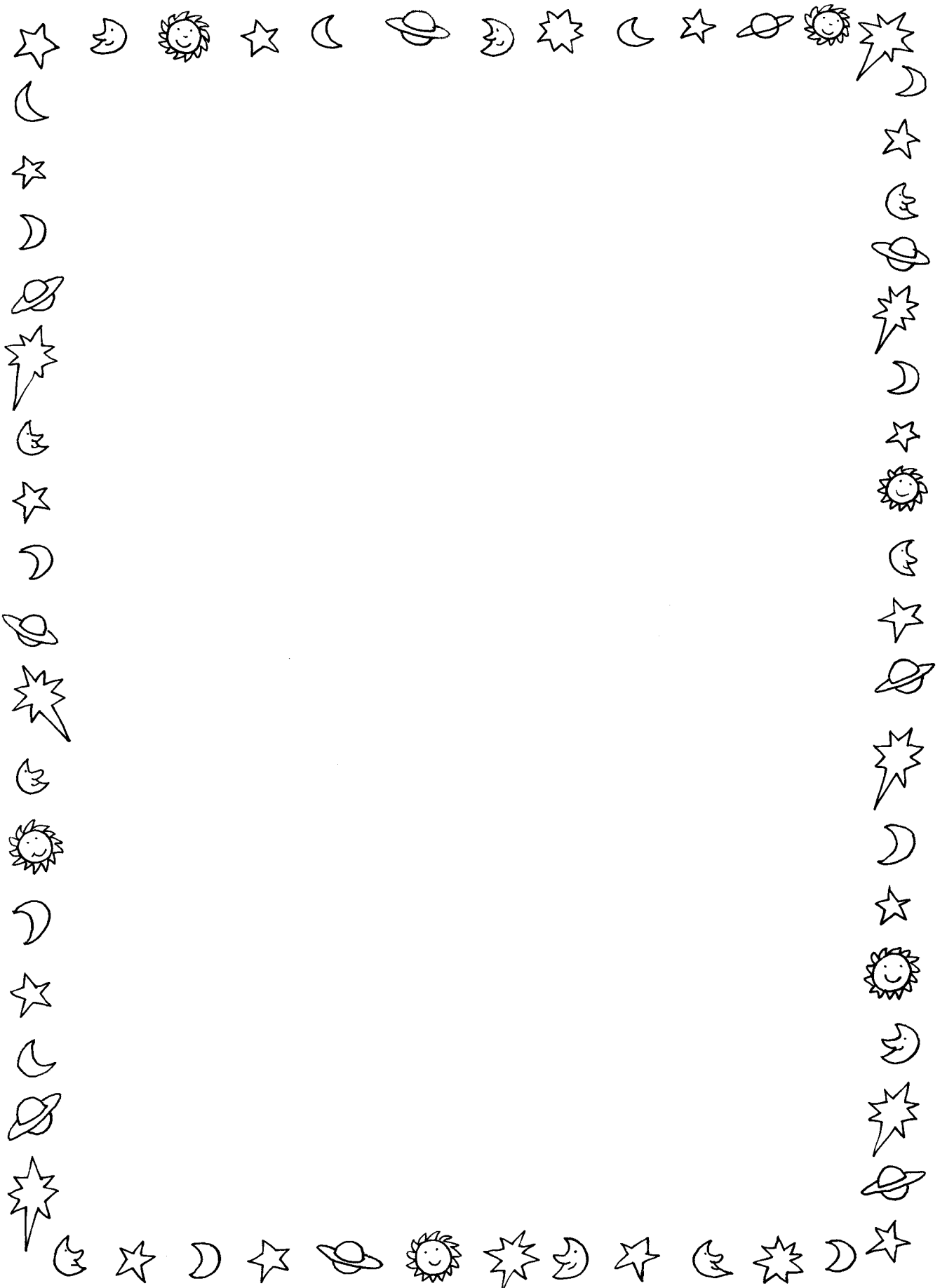
Are the lands where the _____ live;

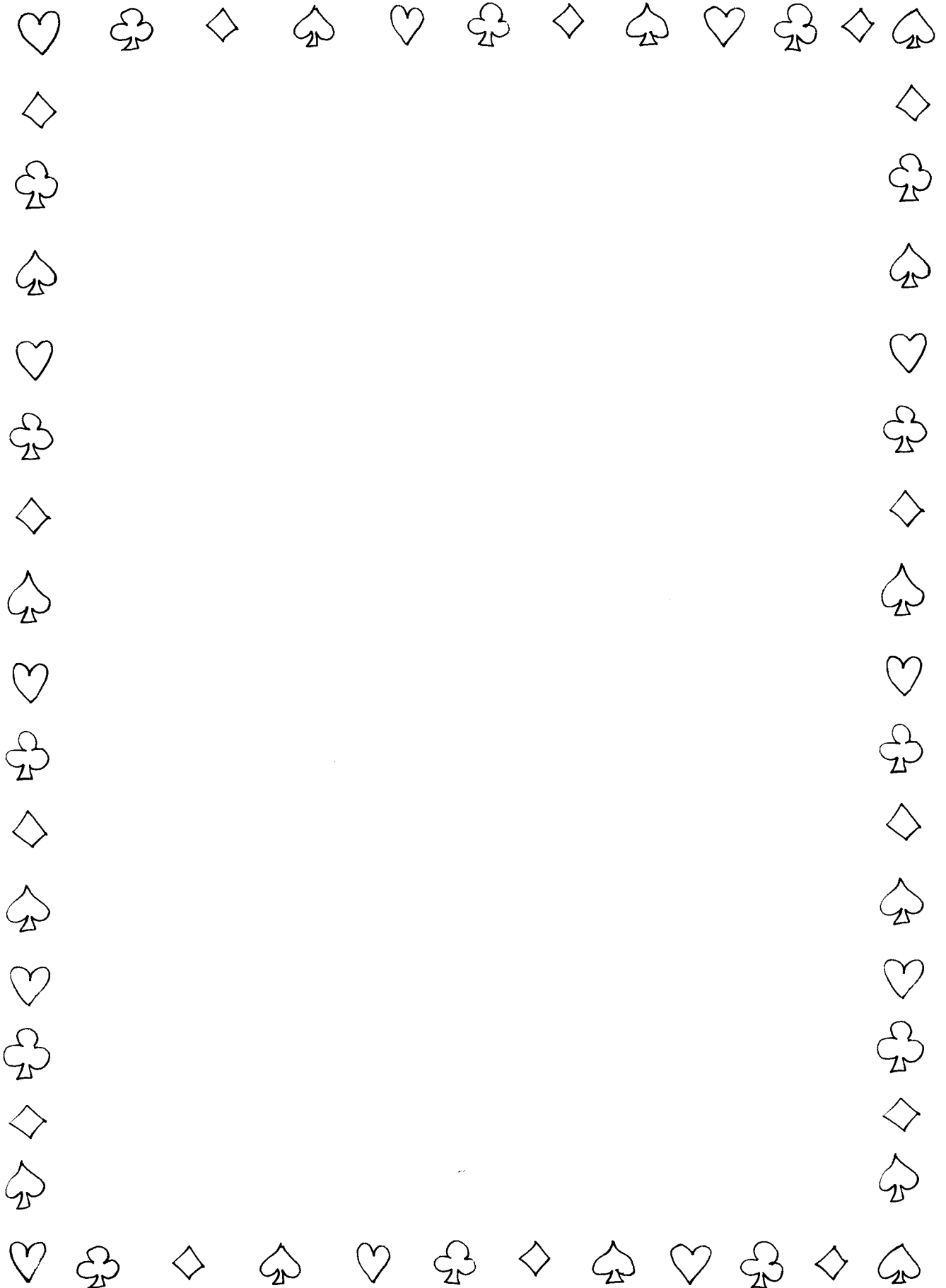
Their heads are _____, and their hands are _____,

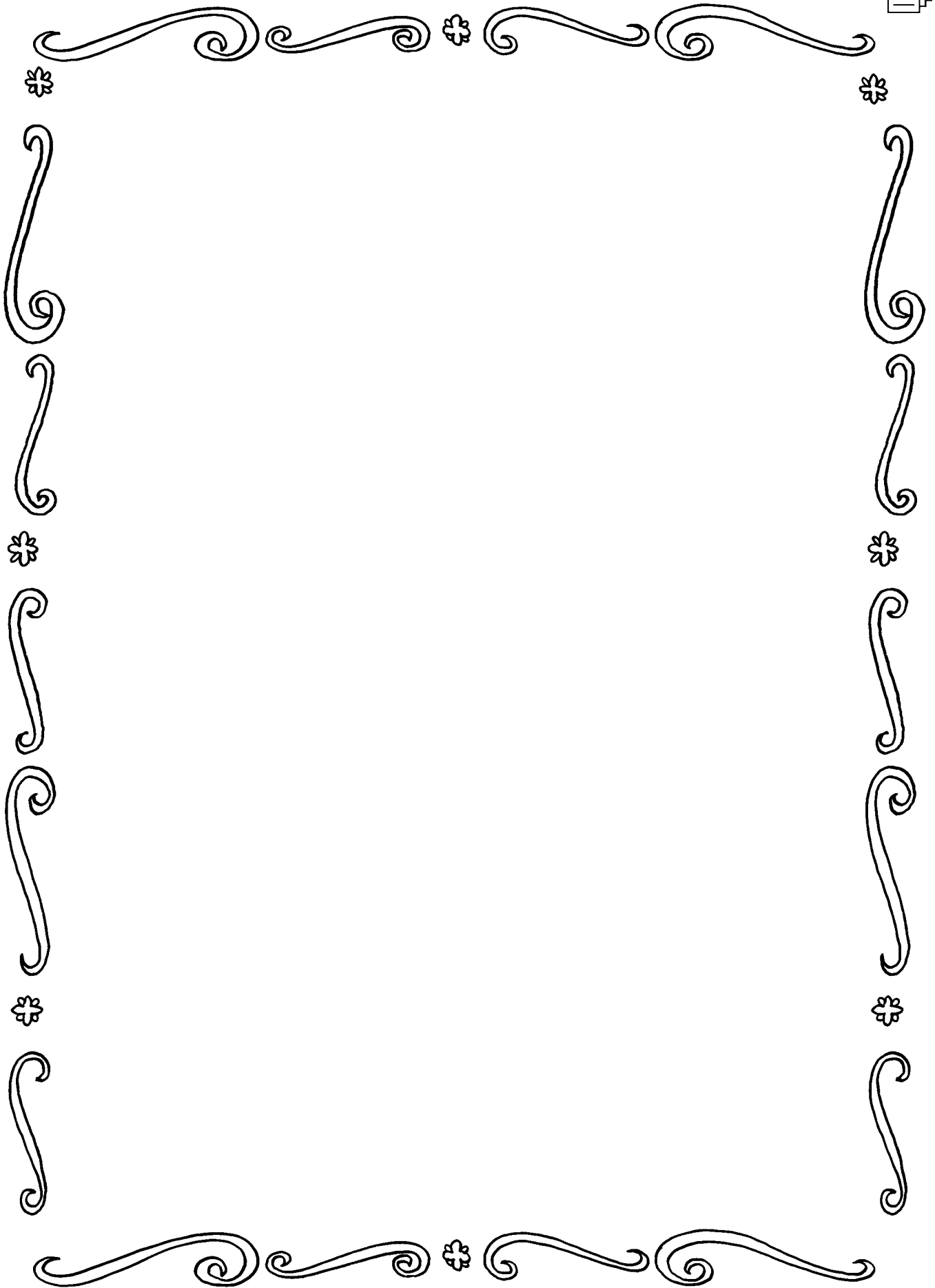
And they went to sea in a _____.

Display frames

Using the following pages for children to copy out their final version of a poem will encourage them to take extra care with presentation.







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- Michael Rosen (ed.), *Inky Pinky Ponky*, Collins Lions.
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- John Foster, *Twinkle Twinkle Chocolate Bar*, Oxford University Press.
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- John Foster (ed.), *Ready Steady Rap*, Oxford University Press.
- Clive Sansom (ed.), *Speech Rhymes*, A & C Black.
- Paul Cookson (ed.), *Unzip Your Lips*, Macmillan.
- Paul Cookson and David Harmer, *Spill the Beans. Action-packed Performance Poems*, Macmillan.
- Paul Cookson and Nick Toczek, *Read Me Out Loud*, Macmillan.

General collections

- Pie Corbett (ed.), *The Works, Key Stage 1*. Every kind of poem you will ever need for the Literacy Hour, Macmillan.
- Paul Cookson (ed.), *The Works*, Macmillan.
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- Gaby Morgan (ed.), *Read Me, A Poem a Day*, Macmillan.
- Louise Bolongaro (ed.), *Read Me First: Younger Poems for Every Day of the Year*, Macmillan.

Poems linked by theme

- Allan Ahlberg, *Friendly Matches Poems* (about football), Viking Kestrel.
- David Orme, *'Ere We Go* (football poems), Macmillan.
- Collections by John Foster; themes include: Sports, Ghosts, Space, Night, Snow, Sea, Shape, Food, and many more, Oxford University Press.
- John Foster (ed.), *Monster Poems* illustrated by Korky Paul, Oxford University Press.
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Some useful websites

<http://www.poetryarchive.org/poetryarchive/teachersHome.do>

<http://poetryzone.woodshed.co.uk/>

www.poetrysociety.org.uk

<http://performapoem.lgfl.org.uk>

<http://www.everybodywrites.org.uk/writing-games/primary/>