



National Poetry Day Chatterbooks activity pack



This year **National Poetry Day** falls on Thursday 4 October and we hope everyone will be celebrating! This year the theme is **CHANGE**.

Here are some ideas for poetry activities to choose from and enjoy on **National Poetry Day**, or any day! Don't forget, make sure you have lots of poetry books to hand.

Things to start a discussion

What is poetry? What does it mean to you?

Ask children what they think poetry is – how would they describe it? What does poetry mean to them? Is it something that rhymes; or that doesn't have to rhyme? Is it funny, beautiful, boring? Does it help you feel or understand things?

Make a list and see how many different things poetry can be to different people.

What kinds of poetry do you know?

Make a list of all the different kinds of poetry people know of – e.g. funny verse, limericks, rap, haikus, nursery rhymes, free verse, story poems. Put the list up on the wall for people to see, and add to it as they meet new kinds of poetry.



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Share a poem

You'll find lots of poems on the theme of change to download from the **National Poetry Day** website. Share one or two in your **Chatterbooks** group - read them through more than once, maybe a few times. Have copies of them for group members to read; ask if they would like to read it aloud.

Then talk about it – start by asking 'Why do you like – or not like – this poem?' Make it clear that everyone is right – there is no right or wrong answer. Everyone will find their own meanings, likes and dislikes, and that makes for great arguments and discussion! Here are some more questions you could ask:

- What do you think is the main thing being said in this poem?
- How does the poem make you feel? Why?
- Are there any lines or words which you specially like?

Peg up your poetry

This is a favourite Chatterbooks group activity! (It came originally from Fordley Chatterbooks in North Tyneside)

Create a washing line of poetry to decorate your library.

Get members to look through a selection of poetry books and choose a poem they like. Everybody takes a turn to read their chosen poems out to the group. Cut out shapes of clothes using cardboard or have readymade templates of clothes to draw around and cut out. Write chosen poems on the clothes and decorate. Hang up the washing line in the library and peg up your poetry.

Materials needed

- Templates of clothes socks, skirts, knickers, scarfs
- Scissors
- Paper or card
- Felt tip pens
- Washing line and pegs

Create a poem from words in a newspaper

It's amazing where poetry is hiding! For example, cut out words and phrases that you like from newspapers and magazines. Spread them out to see what you've got, move them around and group them. What might you write a poem about? Arrange the cuttings to make a poem.

Poetry aloud: have a Chatterbooks poetry slam

A poetry slam is a poetry competition. Poems are judged by the audience who give each poem a mark.

- Get everybody to choose their favourite poems or write a poem of their own.
- Make some score cards 1 - 5
- Take turns in reading out the poems

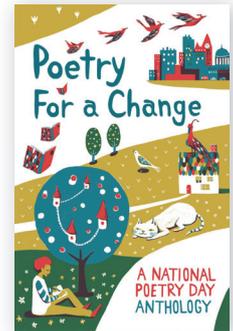
Hold rounds. In the first round the lowest score is knocked out; in the second round the lowest score is knocked out - and on and on until you have a winner.

New Poetry Books

Look out for these books recommended for **National Poetry Day**

Poetry for a Change, A National Poetry Day Anthology, Otter-Barry Books

This very special anthology features poems by the **National Poetry Day** Ambassadors, top poets who bring poetry alive all year round. There are new poems, all on the theme of Change, from poets including Deborah Alma, Joseph Coelho, Brian Moses, Joshua Siegal and Kate Wakeling. And each poet has chosen a favourite poem to share, so you'll also find classics by WB Yeats, Mary Lamb, Matthew Arnold and Dora Greenwell. With suggestions for further reading (and writing) this is a collection to enjoy all year round.

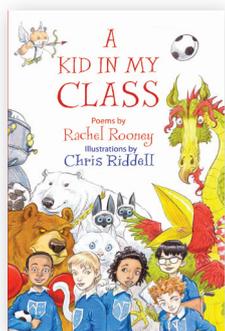
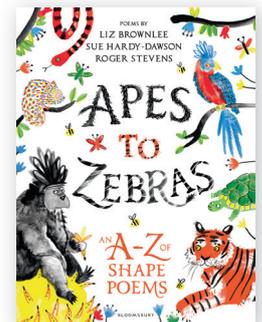


Happy Poems, Roger McGough, Macmillan Children's Books

The one and only Roger McGough draws together a fantastic collection of upbeat poems to bring happiness into your day with this uplifting collection. He reminds us that happiness can be found in the everyday, in family, in books, in nature and, of course, in our pets! **Happy Poems** includes gems from the very best classic and contemporary poets, such as John Agard, Adrian Henri, Carol Ann Duffy, Joseph Coelho, William Wordsworth and William Blake.

Apes to Zebras, Liz Brownlee, Sue Hardy-Dawson, Roger Stevens, Bloomsbury

Featuring a full alphabet of animals, birds, and insects, with the odd extinct or imaginary creature thrown in, these beautiful shape poems are a perfect way to introduce children to poetry. Poems from favourite children's poets Roger Stevens, Liz Brownlee and Sue Hardy-Dawson will entrance and delight in equal measure. Some are funny, some serious, and every one is beautiful to look at.

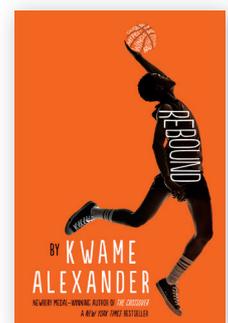


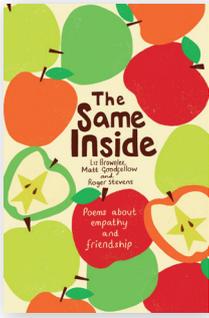
A Kid in My Class, Rachel Rooney, illus Chris Riddell, Macmillan

This new collection of poems by award-winning poet Rachel Rooney features stunning illustrations by former UK Children's Laureate Chris Riddell, and every type of kid will find themselves in its pages – the tough kid, the dreamer, the shy one, the whizz kid (even the class hamster). As always, the Rooney's poems are well-crafted and stimulating, accessible and constantly inventive.

Rebound, Kwame Alexander, Andersen Press

Charlie Bell's father has died suddenly from a heart attack and, even more shockingly, right in front of twelve year-old Charlie. You don't rebound from that easily. Yet we know, from the very first page, that there is more to Charlie than the pain which has knocked him off his feet like an unexpected move from an opponent. Most of all we see this in Charlie's love of language, the verve and drama with which he describes the world. This verse novel is both moving and exhilarating.



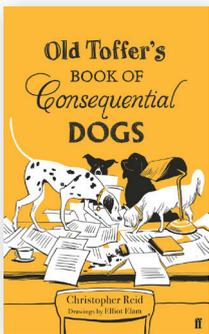
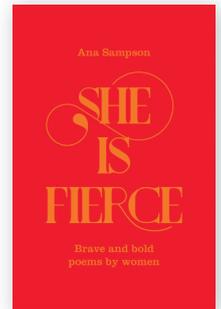


The Same Inside: Poems About Empathy and friendship, Liz Brownlee, Roger Stevens, Matt Goodfellow, Macmillan Children's Books

Three of our best-known and best-loved children's poets, Liz Brownlee, Matt Goodfellow and Roger Stevens cover friendship and togetherness, difference, tolerance, bullying. Some of the poems make their point through humour while others, particularly those about the refugee experience, are necessarily bleaker; some even contain direct advice about where to go or who to turn to in specific situations. All do what poetry does best, and will make readers think, engage and look at things with new eyes.

She is Fierce: Brave and Bold Poems by Women, Ana Sampson, Macmillan Children's Books

A powerful collection of 150 poems written by women, *She is Fierce* contains an inclusive array of voices, from modern and contemporary poets such as Maya Angelou and Grace Nichols to poets from previous centuries including Emily Dickinson, Christina Rossetti and Charlotte Bronte. Immerse yourself in poems from Wendy Cope, Carol Ann Duffy, Fleur Adcock, Liz Berry, Jackie Kay, Hollie McNish, Imtiaz Dharker, Helen Dunmore, Mary Oliver and Dorothy Parker, to name but a few! Featuring short biographies of each poet, this is a stunning collection and an essential addition to any bookshelf.

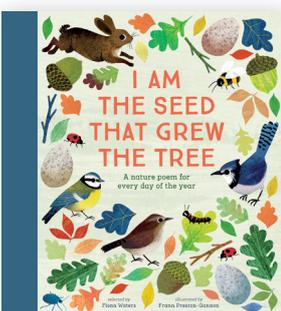
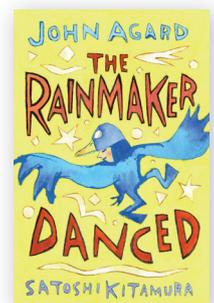


Old Toffer's Book of Consequential Dogs, Christopher Reid, illus Elliot Elam, Faber & Faber

T. S. Eliot's best-selling collection of practical cat poems has been one of the most successful poetry collections in the world. Now for the first time a companion volume will be published. Originally conceived by Eliot himself, **Old Toffer's Book of Consequential Dog** poems are a witty, varied and exquisitely compiled as Eliot's cats.

The Rainmaker Danced, John Agard, illus Satoshi Kitamura, Hodder Children's Books

John Agard's poems display an intense integrity, never talking down to children, encouraging them to question, while being playful in tone, witty or satirical. They focus on social observations, play with ideas from mythology and traditional tales, consider new developments in technology and reflect on nature and humanity and their interaction. The bold black and white illustrations in this wonderful new anthology complement and counterpoint the ideas in the poems.



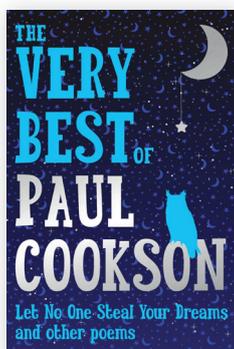
I Am the Seed that Grew the Tree, selected by Fiona Waters, illus Frann Preston-Gannon, Nosy Crow

I Am the Seed that Grew the Tree is a lavishly illustrated collection of 366 nature poems – one for every day of the year, including leap years. Filled with familiar favourites and new discoveries, written by a wide variety of poets – including Benjamin Zephaniah, Beatrix Potter, Langston Hughes, Jackie Kay, Charles Causley and Allan Ahlberg – it's a perfect book to share at the beginning or end of the day, or to dip into at any time.

The Song of the Dodo, Hilda Offen, Troika Books

A vibrant and accessible collection full of funny, thoughtful and surprising poems.

Hilda Offen writes about subjects that fascinate children, from dreams and magic to dinosaurs and family life and anything can happen in this mysteriously marvellous world. Lively, enticing line drawings give this book even more appeal.

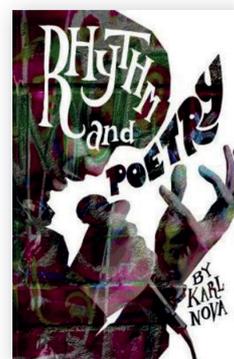


The Very Best of Paul Cookson: Let No-one Steal Your Dreams and Other Poems, Paul Cookson, Macmillan Children's Books

The Very Best of Paul Cookson brings together twenty-five years of poetry. It includes his favourite poems and his most thoughtful, uplifting and memorable poems. Includes *Let No One Steal Your Dreams*, *Father's Hands*, *May You Always*, *Invisible Magicians*, *This is Our School* and many more.

Rhythm and Poetry, Karl Nova, Caboodle Books

A brilliant new collection of raps and hip hop influenced poetry, Karl Nova's collection won this year's **CLIPPA** and is hugely popular with young readers.



Good luck and happy poetry writing!

There are lots more activities and information on the **National Poetry Day** website <http://nationalpoetryday.co.uk/>



Don't forget to let us know what you're reading using **#NationalPoetryDay**

