

# Poetry

## Chatterbooks activity pack

October 2014



## About the Pack

There are all sorts of poems - simple, complicated, scary, funny, sad, rhyming ones, limericks, haiku and shaped ones. Many tell stories. Poetry is about using words and language imaginatively and creatively. Everybody can have fun writing and listening to poetry.

Here's what Michael Rosen says about his poetry in his introduction to *Mustard, Custard, Grumble Belly and Gravy*:

***Like most poets I have a go at writing about a variety of things and in a variety of ways. This means that what you find here are snatches of conversation alongside fantasies, nonsense, word-play, argument, moments of sadness and euphoric mucking about.***

Here now from Chatterbooks is our **Poetry activity pack**. It's an update of the pack we did last year – with lots of the same content **plus new titles\*** to get your Chatterbooks group talking and thinking about poetry – and writing poetry!  
*2014 new titles all marked \**

You can use lots of different poetry books to inspire these activities, and to get you going here are some lovely poetry books from our publisher partners – and there's also a list of more great books at the end of this pack.

In this pack we're focusing especially on multi-poet collections – with favourite poems and fresh voices for your groups to enjoy.



## Some Top Tips for Enjoying Poetry

- Take home a poetry book from your library
- Read a poem every day
- Read poems out loud to your friends and family
- Learn a poem off by heart
- Listen to your friends reading poems
- Listen to poets on YouTube
- Make a list of your favourite poems and share this list with your friends

*....they sit on the page longing for you to say them out loud... (Michael Rosen)*

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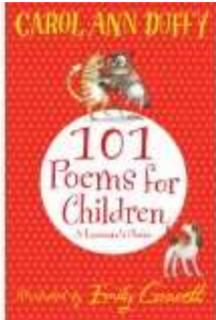
- *Acrostics*
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## The Poetry and the Poets



### ***A Laureate's Choice: 101 Poems for Children*** **Carol Ann Duffy Macmillan 978-1447220268**

Carol Ann Duffy, the Poet Laureate, has chosen her favourite poems for children for this stunning collection of classic and modern verse, exquisitely illustrated by multi-award-winning illustrator Emily Gravett. Here you'll find old favourites from *The Night Mail* to *The Lion and Albert*, and new favourites by today's poets including John Hegley and Jackie Kay.

#### **A Taste:**

*...I used to go down to our little library on a Friday night*

*In late summer, just as autumn was thinking about*

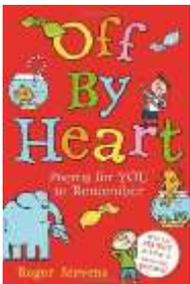
*Turning up, and the light outside would be the colour*

*Of an Everyman cover and the lights in the library*

*Would be soft as anything, and I'd sit at a table*

*And flick through a book and fall in love*

*With the turning of the leaves, the turning of the leaves...* **Adult Fiction** by Ian McMillan



### ***Off By Heart: Poems for YOU to Remember*** **Roger Stevens Bloomsbury 978-1408192948**

This is an unusual approach to a collection of poems. All have interesting themes and many are funny. Stevens stresses in his tips sections that, above all, to be motivated to learn the poems and to put them across, children need to enjoy and understand what they are reading. There should be no difficulty with that. There are short and long poems, new and classic poems – arranged in order of length! With some poems there are tips for groups to learn and perform them. And there is the SECRET of how to memorise poems!

#### **A Taste:**

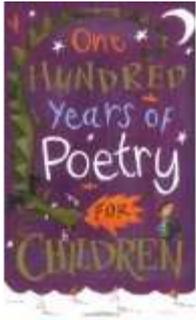
*January brings the snow,*

*Makes our feet and fingers glow.*

*February brings the rain,*

*Thaws the frozen lake again.*

*March brings breezes, loud and shrill...* **The Garden Year** by Sara Coleridge



## **One Hundred Years of Poetry for Children**

**ed. Michael Harrison & Christopher Stuart-Clark**  
**OUP 978-0192763501**

This is a reflective and beautifully put-together anthology of poems for young people, to stimulate the emotions, whether evoking the comforting silence of true friendship, the thrill of sea tempests in the night, the power of hunger, or the joy of the first stirrings of love. Divided into seven themed sections (mystery, animals, childhood, people, scenes, war, and love), it has wide-ranging and thought-provoking choices and includes many classics by authors such as Walter de la Mare, Dylan Thomas, Ogden Nash, Michael Rosen, Eleanor Farjeon, T.S. Eliot, W.H. Auden, E.E. Cummings, & Philip Larkin.

### **A Taste:**

*Broad sun-stoned beaches.*

*White heat.*

*A green river.*

*A bridge,*

*scorched yellow palms*

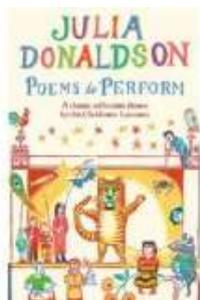
*from the summer-sleeping house*

*drowsing through August.*

*Days I have held, days I have lost,*

*days that outgrow, like daughters,*

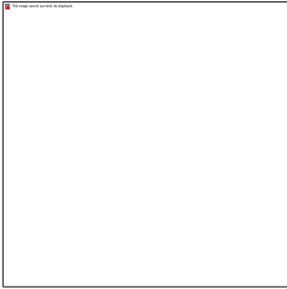
*my harbouring arms.*     **Midsummer, Tobago** by Derek Walcott



**Poems to Perform\***     **Julia Donaldson**     **Macmillan**  
**978-1447243397**

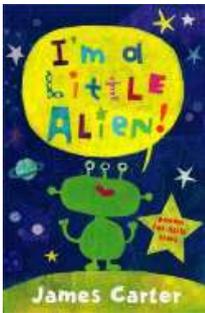
In this collection, Julia Donaldson has chosen poems with performance by children in mind, and at the end of the book are her notes and ideas on performing them. Julia's passionate belief that performance can help children enjoy reading and grow in confidence is informed by her own experience both as a child and now, working with groups of children to bring stories, poems and songs to life.

The poems range from classics by Edward Lear, W H Auden and Eleanor Farjeon to contemporary work by Michael Rosen, John Agard and Clare Bevan. Illustrated throughout with exquisite, expressive lino-cuts, this is a book for teachers, parents, children: anyone who loves great poetry.



**Edward Lear's Book of Nonsense\* Edward Lear/Christine Pym Usborne 978-1409566885**

A beautiful gift edition of Edward Lear's timeless collection of limericks, jokes and rhymes, enchantingly illustrated. The much-loved *The Owl and The Pussycat* - as well as lots of other less well known but equally funny and charming rhymes - are bound to delight young children. An heirloom of the future, this beautiful book is richly produced with a padded Hardback cover, a ribbon marker and traditional binding.



**I'm a Little Alien\* James Carter Frances Lincoln 978-1847804815**

Zoom around this book to find aliens, stars and a greedy robot - as well as funny faces and a ball that won't bounce back! This is a fun and playful new collection by an award-winning poet who knows how to inspire and delight very young children.

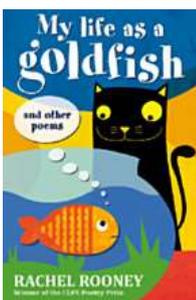
*Rush rocket*

*roar rocket*

*zip about some more rocket*

*let me climb aboard rocket*

**ZIM ZAM ZOOM**



**My Life as a Goldfish\* Rachel Rooney Frances Lincoln 978-1847804822**

A monster's lunch, a wolf boy, Monday mornings, monkeys, head-lice, Christmas, making friends, goldfish – and lots more. Full of jokes, surprises and puzzles, but also sensitive and thought-provoking, this is a spellbinding new collection from the winner of the CLPE Poetry Award.

*Magic slips  
between the  
cracks in  
real life.  
One day  
you will  
step on  
it.*



**Sun Time Snow Time Grace Nichols Bloomsbury  
978-1408193006**

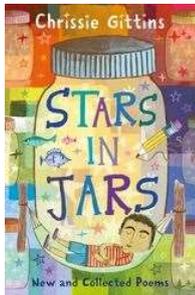
This is a joint edition of Grace Nichols' two collections of poetry for children, *Come on into my Tropical Garden*, and *Give Yourself a Hug*, in a new single-volume edition. The Caribbean rhythms and culture that come through her writing blend with the experience of moving to Britain to make this a truly multicultural collection from one of our foremost poets.

**A Taste:**

*Long neck ones*

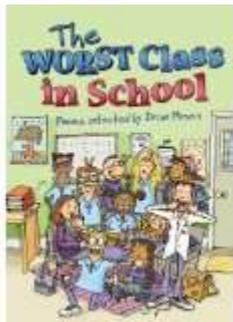
*Yellow swans*

*Too soon gone. Daffodils*



**Stars in Jars\* Chrissie Gittins A & C Black 978-1408196939**

A wonderful collection of new poems and old favourites, some funny and some serious, by a talented children's poet. Covering almost two decades of Chrissie Gittins's best work, this collection will appeal to anyone who loves words and what they can do. With charming line illustrations by Calef Brown, this is a delightful selection to get children thinking, reading and rhyming.



**The Worst Class in School ed. Brian Moses  
Wayland 978-0750265706**

Join the Worst Class, who wreak havoc wherever they go. Bringing destruction to a museum visit; the school photo; a search for a girlfriend; the Caretaker's Complaint; the Incident With the Cleaning Lady; Pets Day...never mind the worst class in the school, these might just be the worst class in the world. Until Miss Honey turns up... A fun collection of poems put together by Brian Moses.

**A Taste:**

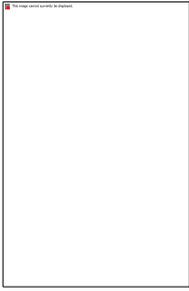
*...And there's Malik and Joel, Mohammed and Lee,*

*Celine, Marisa and finally me*

*pulling rude faces*

*having a laugh,*

*all captured forever on the school photograph. The School Photograph by Bernard Young*



***Werewolf Club Rules\** Joseph Coelho  
Frances Lincoln  
978-1847804525**

Find out the mysterious rules of Werewolf Club, how to look like a rainbow, what happens when puppies fall in love – and how to fold up your gran! This is an exciting debut poetry collection from a young poet who is already performing his work successfully at venues across the UK.

*Do not talk about Werewolf Club!  
You can howl about it  
But never talk.*

*Do not walk to Werewolf Club!  
You can bound to it in moonlight  
But never walk.*



***What Are We Fighting For?\** Robinson/Moses/Stevens  
Macmillan 978-1447248613**

This book explores the concept of war in a brilliantly accessible way for younger readers. Fascinating and moving in equal measure, there are poems about incredibly brave dogs, cats and pigeons; the Christmas truce of WWI when soldiers played football in No Man's Land; poems about rationing and what it was like to be an evacuee, poems about modern warfare and the reality of war today; plus lots of amazing true historical facts. This cross-curricular poetry book is a brilliant way to get young readers thinking about both the historical and philosophical aspects of war.



***What Happens when the Queen Burps?*  
Ed. John Foster OUP 978-0192757425**

What happens when the Queen burps? She issues a royal pardon! Come inside for more hilarious jokes and rhymes, as well as teasing tongue twisters, ridiculous riddles, loopy limericks, batty booklists, potty proverbs and much, much more.

**A Taste:**

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

*All the king's horses and all the king's men  
Had scrambled eggs for breakfast again.*

### **Short Warm-Up Activities**

Expressing feelings is a big part of poetry. In one minute write down all the words you can think of to describe...

- Feeling happy
- Feeling sad
- Feeling angry
- Feeling bored
- Feeling frightened

Read and talk about Grace Nichols' *Give Yourself a Hug* from *Sun Time Snow Time*:

*Give yourself a hug  
when you feel unloved  
Give yourself a hug  
when people put on airs  
to make you feel a bug...*

Or *in Just-spring* by e.e.cummings  
*...when the world is puddle-wonderful..*



### **Fun with words – Alliteration!**

- Zany zebras zigzagged through the zoo
- Squawking seagulls swooped on sunbathers

Choosing words starting with the same letter gives wonderful sound to poems. Have a go. Make up your own sentences and phrases.

There is a fine poem *F For Fox* by Carol Ann Duffy in *A Laureate's Choice* which uses alliteration:

*...His fur was freaked.*

*His foxy face was frantic as he flew. A few feathers  
fluttered out of his mouth...*

### **Fun with words – Onomatopoeia!**

Balloons pop. Water drips. Fierce dogs growl. Thunder roars.

Think of some more phrases like this where the verb **sounds** like the thing it is describing – just as the word ‘pop’ sounds just like the sound of a balloon bursting!

### **Rhyming Fun with First Names**

\*Make rhymes out of first names – eg: Alice Palace, Josh Posh, Amanda Panda

\*Have a look at *When Granny Won Olympic Gold p16 - Some of My Sporty Mates* by Nick Toczek

\*Do a list of your sporty mates – how about Front-crawler Paula? Or World-beater Peter!

\*Make silly sentences choosing words that start with the first letter of people’s names –  
eg. Horrid Henry hated hairy hamsters; Amazing Amy always ate apples; Bold Billy bought billions  
of books

### **Song Lyrics**

- Find some song lyrics you like - use the internet.
- Read them out like poetry
- Do they sound different being read out from being sung?

## **Longer activity ideas**

Here are lots of poetry ideas for a Chatterbooks club session, plus a section of ideas for children writing their own poems.

### **A. Activities around Poetry**

#### **Cut up your Poetry**

As a group choose about 10 poems

Pick out the first line from each poem and write each line on a separate piece of paper

Arrange the ten lines into a new poem

#### **Peg up your Poetry**

Get a collection of poetry books together

Get your group to choose some poetry

Draw the outline of some clothes – hat, scarf, shirt, skirt, trousers

Write a poem on an item of clothing

Get a washing line and some pegs. Put up the washing line in the library. Peg up your poetry.

Get library users to read the washing line and peg up their own poetry

### **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 some poems
- 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.

### **Acting Out Poems**

Many poems – from books, or ones which you write yourself – are great for acting out, and this makes for a really enjoyable Chatterbooks session.

Read and talk about a poem together, and then divide up the poem so that children in twos or threes can work together on actions for their part of the poem.

The groups then come together and each act out their part so that you have a whole performance of the poem.

Video it for Youtube – and send it to Chatterbooks to share with other Chatterbooks clubs!

### **Off By Heart**

As Roger Stevens says in his book *Off By Heart*, learning to say or perform a poem aloud, on your own or as a group, can be a great confidence builder – and great fun! Roger gives really useful tips on how to help and encourage children to learn poems off by heart, and how to bring a poem to life with performance.

### **Your Favourite Words**

Have a special notebook where you can collect all your favourite words.

When you write down a word you might want to say why you like it – the look of it, the sound of it, what it makes you think of....

Use your words for your own poems – one way of doing this is to write half a dozen or more of your words on separate bits of paper, then shuffle them around to see what images and ideas they make together, to set off your poem.

(This is like doing Magnetic Poetry on the fridge!)

Have a look at Edward Thomas's poem **Words**, (in Carol Ann Duffy's *A Laureate's Choice*): in this poem he says about words:

*Let me sometimes dance*

*With you, Or climb,  
Or stand perchance  
In ecstasy, Fixed and free In a rhyme, As poets do.*

### Container Poetry!

This is fun to talk about in your group – and then write a group poem.

First of all choose a special container – it can be a box, a backpack, a pocket; or a room, a ship, a car – whatever you want!

Then think of all the things you would like to put in it – they can be any size, they can be real, they can be dreams and wishes!

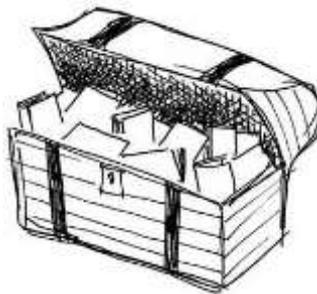
Then create your poem – first describe your container, and then list all the things you will put in it, special things you'd like to keep forever – eg:

*I have a deep and baggy pocket in my favourite coat and safe in this pocket I will put:*

*Good times playing with my friends in the holidays,*

*All my favourite episodes of Dr. Who,*

*My mum's smile when she's in a good mood.....*



### Similes in Poems

A 'simile' is a phrase or sentence where two things are compared so that there is a clearer or more vivid understanding of the first thing – eg:

- *Busy as a bee*
- *The wind was as strong as ten men pushing together*
- *Her hair was like golden silk*
- *He spoke as fast as a babbling stream*

You could write a poem where each line or verse is a simile:

In your group decide what you would like your poem to be about – eg: *Winter*

Then decide what things might be in your poem – eg. *snow, ice, frost, cold*

For each of these things, think of a simile – eg. *the snow glittered like diamonds in the moonlight; the ice was like see-through plastic...*

Put your similes together to make a poem – you may want to rearrange the order of the lines, or tweak the sentences, to give your poem more shape and balance.

### **Poetry into Song:**

#### ***maggie and milly and molly and may***

Here's a poem by American poet e.e.cummings, which has been set to music.

Read it in your group, then listen to it sung. Talk about the poem itself, what you all think about it – does the music give anything extra or change the poem for you?

<http://ericwhitacre.com/blog/maggie-and-milly-and-molly-and-may-with-recording>

*maggie and milly and molly and may  
went down to the beach (to play one day)*

*and maggie discovered a shell that sang  
so sweetly she couldn't remember her troubles, and*

*milly befriended a stranded star  
whose rays five languid fingers were;*

*and molly was chased by a horrible thing  
which raced sideways while blowing bubbles: and*

*may came home with a smooth round stone  
as small as a world and as large as alone.*

*For whatever we lose (like a you or a me)  
it's always ourselves we find in the sea*



## **B. Writing Poetry**

In *Can It Be about Me?* poet Cheryl Moskowitz says:

***It's good to keep pencil and paper  
with you wherever you go.***

***That way if you think of something  
you can write it down – it might just***

**turn out to be a little poem.**

Here are some ideas and tips for writing your poems

### Acrostics

An acrostic is a poem where, if you read down the first letters of the lines of the poem, you get a word which is actually the subject of the poem. Here's an example:

C        Crazy clowns cavorting around  
I        Inside the big top there are thrills to be found  
R        Roll up! roll up! The circus is in town  
C        Courageous trapeze artists and plate-spinning marvels  
U        Utterly amazing acrobats and fire-eating startles  
S        Smiles and cheers from the enthusiastic crowd

Have a look at Paul Cookson's poem **A.C.Rostic – Goalkeeper** It starts:  
*Gargantuan, colossus, somewhat god-like*  
*Omnipresent guardian of the goals...*

Have a go yourself:

- Write a word vertically down your page – or use the lines below
- Write a poem about your word by starting each new line with the next letter in the word


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## Alphabet Poems

These are poems created around letters of the alphabet.

In *Really Wild Adventures* there is a poem called **A-Z of Animals** where each verse is about a different animal, using each letter of the alphabet –eg:

*M's for the Mischievous Mongoose-*

*In a camp site we found a whole pack.*

*There are Many different types in Namibia-*

*These had black stripes on their back.*

Here's another way to write a poem, concentrating on one letter of the alphabet:

- Choose a letter of the alphabet – eg: **C**
- Think of an animal whose name begins with that letter - eg: **cat**
- Write down as many words as you can starting with that letter, which you think would work well in a poem about that animal - eg: **climbing curtains, curious, caterwaul, courageous, clever**
- Then write your poem

Eg: 'My clever cat climbs curtains, Gets stuck and has to call.  
She's curious and courageous But you should hear her caterwaul!'

In the book *When Granny Won Olympic Gold* there is a poem by Sue Cowling called **Talking for England:**

*Mum says my Aunty Dot could talk for England  
Could someone else's aunty Speak for Spain?  
Chinwag for China? ....or Gossip for Greece?  
And with all that noise how would we hear who'd won?*

Have a go at some more lines like these.

Eg. Arguing	...for Australia
	...for Wales
	...for France
	...for Canada
	...for Denmark
	...for Thailand

And have a look at the lovely **First Words** by Gillian Clarke in **A Laureate's Choice**. It's more than an alphabet poem – all about words, language and stories:

*The alphabet of a house – air,  
breath, the creak of the stair.  
Downstairs the grown-ups' hullabaloo, or their hush as you fall asleep...*

## Haikus

Here is a Haiku by Paul Cookson, called **The Pie Queue Haiku**:

*Sometimes the only  
Thing to look forward to is  
The pie at half-time*

And here is a **Haiku for Summer** by Cheryl Moskowitz

*We are all waiting  
For school to be out again  
Take uniforms off*

Cheryl explains that:

**Haiku is a Japanese form of poetry.  
It's very short, only three lines long.  
The first and last line have five syllables.  
Count them. The middle line has seven.  
The whole thing makes a picture.**

There are some great examples of haikus on this web page: <http://yhoo.it/VEVkwI>

Try writing your own haiku.

- First think of what you want it to be about - eg. the sea
- Then jot down some words and phrases about it - eg. waves rolling, tide coming in, white foam
- Then shape the words into a haiku

5 syllables	The tide comes in fast
7 syllables	Waves rolling onto the beach
5 syllables	Their crests white with foam

Your haiku:

5 syllables	.....
-------------	-------

7 syllables	
5 syllables	

### 'List' poems

When you make a list of things it can turn into a poem.

In Michael Rosen's poem ***The Greatest*** each verse is a list of things which people are greatest at:

*I'm the world's greatest at sport...*

*...I'm the world's greatest inventor*

*I've invented*

*a dog scrambler*

*a sock mixer*

*a throat cleaner*

*a moustache toaster*

*and a custard sprinkler.*

*I'm the world's greatest.*

- Have a go at your own 'I'm the greatest poem' – What things would you be greatest at?

Michael Rosen's ***The Bathroom Fiddler*** is another kind of list poem – by listing all the things the boy fiddles about with in the bathroom he makes a picture and a poem. (And you could act it out too!)

In *What Rhymes with Sneeze?* Roger Stevens has a list poem called ***The Records I Hold***

You could write your own 'Records' list poem about the fastest and slowest things you do add in your friends and family as well.

**Or try this list poem** about 'All the things I like about holidays' or 'All the things I don't like about holidays'

All the things I like about holidays	All the things I don't like about holidays
More time to play with my friends	When it rains...
Going away to the seaside	
Not getting up so early in the morning	

When you've got your list, shape it into a poem - maybe have a go at making it rhyme (see p 10 for rhyming ideas) – though it doesn't have to!

***A Laureate's Choice*** has two List poems with the tang of the sea:

Ian McMillan's *Ten Things Found in a Shipwrecked Sailor's Pocket*, and *Beachcomber* by George Mackay Brown. Reading each of these together and talking about them would make an interesting session, and could inspire children's own poetry using similar frameworks: things found in someone's pocket; daily beachcombing finds and their stories.

There is also *The Garden Year* by Sara Coleridge in *Off By Heart* – a lovely poem to learn and recite together - the 'list' framework makes it much easier to remember !

## Rap

Writing a rap is a great thing to do together in your group.

To inspire you – and give you a few tips at the same time – here's a brilliant rap by Tony Mitton

### **Write-A-Rap Rap**

*Hey, everybody, let's write a rap.*

***First there's a rhythm you'll need to clap.***

*Keep that rhythm and stay in time,*

***'cause a rap needs rhythm and a good strong rhyme.***

*The rhyme keeps coming in the very same **place***

*so don't fall behind and try not to **race**.*

*The rhythm keeps the rap on a regular beat*

*and the rhyme helps to wrap your rap up neat.*

*'But what'll we write?' I hear you shout.*

***There ain't no rules for what a rap's about.***

*You can rap about a robber, you can rap about a king,*

*you can rap about a chewed up piece of string ...*

*(well, you can rap about almost ... anything!)*

*You can rap about the ceiling, you can rap about the floor,*

*you can rap about the window, write a rap on the door.*

*You can rap about things that are mean or pleasant,*

*you can rap about wrapping up a Christmas present.*

*You can rap about a mystery hidden in a box,*

*you can rap about a pair of smelly old socks.*

*You can rap about something that's over and gone,*

*you can rap about something going on and on and on and on ...*

*But when you think there just ain't nothing left to say ...*

*you can wrap it all up and put it away.*

***It's a rap. It's a rap. It's a rap rap rap RAP!***

So

- Agree what you want to rap about – a dinosaur rap? An animal rap? A wintertime rap?
- Get clapping and into the rhythm of your rap
- Remember to give each pair of lines that ‘good strong rhyme’!
- And rap rap RAP!

## Rhyming

Often poems have lines that rhyme – where a word at the end of a line sounds the same as a word at the end of another line.

Rhyming can help to give a poem a really good rhythm, especially when you say it out loud.

If you want to write a poem that rhymes, here are a few ways you might do it.

First of all, a bit of rhyming practice! See how many words you can find to rhyme with:

- Cat – eg hat; fat
- Dog
- Rain
- Plate

You could divide into teams for this and see which team gets the most rhymes

(Tip: work through the alphabet – eg. bat, cat, fat - and then you should pick up lots of words)

Here are some different patterns of rhyming:

### Every line rhyming

*Something's drastic  
my nose is made of plastic  
something's drastic  
my ears are elastic...*

Michael Rosen ***Something's Drastic***

### Pairs of lines rhyming

*I saw you when you fell and slipped  
Upon the greasy mud and tripped*

*You slid headfirst along the grass  
And dirt at speeds none can surpass*

Paul Cookson ***Dear Referee***

### Alternate lines rhyming

*Fantasy Cottage  
is clean and bright.*

*Its roof is green  
and its walls are white.*

Tony Mitton ***Fantasy Cottage***

As its title tells you Roger Stevens' book ***What Rhymes with Sneeze?*** gives you lots of rhyming and poetry writing tips.

## Riddles

A riddle can make an interesting kind of poem – where you write about something without saying what it actually is, so that people reading or listening to the poem have to work out the answer.

In *The Hobbit* Bilbo and Gollum challenge each other with riddles – try these:

1. *What has roots as nobody sees,  
Is taller than trees  
Up, up it goes,  
And yet never grows?*
2. *Alive without breath,  
As cold as death;  
Never thirsty, ever drinking,  
All in mail never clinking*
3. *Thirty white horses on a red hill,  
First they champ,  
Then they stamp,  
Then they stand still.*
4. *A box without hinges, key or lid,  
Yet golden treasure inside is hid.*

The answers are: 1.Mountain 2.Fish 3.Teeth 4.Egg

Some **Anglo-Saxon riddles** have survived as playground rhymes. This one comes from Tiptree in Essex. It may be over a thousand years old, and has been kept alive by children learning it from one another and repeating it in the playground.

*Four dilly-dandies* (teats on the udder)

*Four stick standies* (legs)

*Two crookers* (horns)

*Two lookers* (eyes)

*And a wig wag* (tail)

The answer is a cow.

For some more riddles have a look at Grace Nichol's poem *Riddle* in *Sun Time Snow Time* – and there is lots of riddling fun in John Foster's *What Happens when the Queen Burps?*

Look for the special riddle pages *What Wears a Jacket but No Trousers?* and *A Jumbo Yeti and a Poultry-Geist!*

In this book, and in Susie Gibbs' *Funny Poems to Give You the Giggles* you'll also find some great jokes and 'knock-knocks'!

## Shape poems

It's great fun to give your poem the **shape** of what you're writing about.

Valerie Bloom does this with *Pyramid*:

A  
Stately  
Chamber where  
Vast treasures are hid

And a variation on this is Grace Nichol's *Snowflake* fluttering down the page

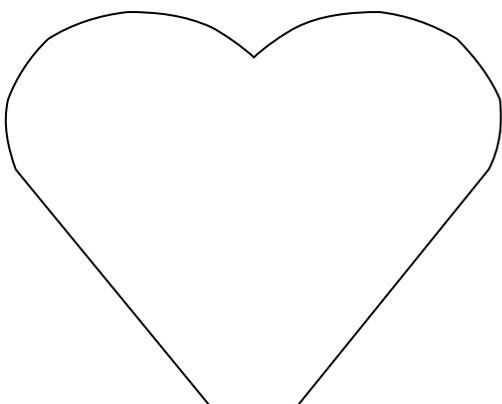
*Snowflake*

*you little clown*

c  
a  
r  
n  
i  
v  
a  
l  
l  
i  
n  
g  
  
d  
o  
w  
n

*A small ghost kiss  
on my warm tongue.*

Or how about a heart poem? Write the words of your poem inside this shape (or draw a heart on a separate piece of paper)



## Tongue Twisters

In John Foster's *What Happens when the Queen Burps?* there is a great *Alphabet of Tongue Twisters* poem.

And try this one by Carolyn Wells from the book *Off By Heart*:

### *The Butter Betty Bought*

*Betty Botta bought some butter;  
 'But, said she, 'this butter's bitter!  
 If I put it in my batter  
 It will make my batter bitter.  
 But a bit o' better butter  
 Will but make my batter better,'  
 Then she bought a bit o' butter  
 Better than the bitter butter,  
 Made her bitter batter better.  
 So 'twas better Betty Botta  
 Bought a bit o' better butter.*

Then have a go at making up some of your own. They're quite hard to write! And hard to say out loud! Lots of alliteration and assonance and words that rhyme - and they need to make sense!

Start with a word that's the main subject of your poem – eg. parrot (p's and s's are good for tongue twisters)

Then add lots more 'p' words, especially ones that sound similar – 'the prattering parrot prattered persistently and perkily sat on its perky perch' – already this example is getting hard to say!

What is your tongue twister about?	Eg. Parrot
More words beginning with the same 1 <sup>st</sup> letter	..... Eg. pretty
Make sentences using your words; try to put	

<p>next to each other words that sound the same. Make it really hard to say.</p>	
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Divide into teams and challenge the other team to say your tongue twister – first slowly, then fast!

### Text and Twitter

It's fun too to write a poem as if you were texting it

This ***Txt PoM*** is by Tony Mitton in his book ***Come into this Poem***

*Wht wll peple  
thnk v nxt?  
PoMs cmpsd  
in mble txt!*

*Ltst thng  
4m th hmn rce:  
txt tht flots  
in cbr spce.*

### C if U cn wrt a txt poM 2day!

Another challenge is a Twitter poem - you've got a total of just 140 characters/letters and/or spaces to write it in!

How about this one?

*This was a day to remember. The sun shone and all had gone right. I hugged my happy memories and kissed my mum goodnight.[#twitterpoem](#)*

Made it with 17 letters, full stops, and spaces to spare – and managed to put in a hashtag!

Try to write one with exactly 140 characters.

Here's a grid which you may find useful – or just keep writing and counting and changing things till it works!


--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

## Using Repetition in Poems

This is a very powerful way of strengthening images, sounds, and feelings in poetry.

Look at Grace Nichols' *Sea Timeless Song*:

*Hurricane come  
and hurricane go  
but sea – sea timeless  
sea timeless  
sea timeless  
sea timeless  
sea timeless...*

Read it aloud together and hear the sound of the waves.

See also *Morning* and *Sea-rock* – these are also in Grace's book *Sun Time Snow Time*

And there's Kit Wright's *Whisper Whisper* from *Off By Heart*:

*whisper whisper  
whisper whisper  
goes my sister  
down the phone....*

and in *Funny Poems to Give you the Giggles* there's *Polly!* By Marcus Parry, with a repetition twist!

## More Poetry to Read and Enjoy

Here are more poetry books to get inspiration from!

John Agard Satoshi Kitamura	<i>Goldilocks on CCTV*</i>	Frances Lincoln	978- 1847801838
Valerie Bloom	<i>Hot Like Fire</i>	Bloomsbury	978- 0747599739
Paul Cookson	<i>Give Us a Goal</i>	Frances Lincoln	978- 1847803412
Pie Corbett &	<i>A first poetry book</i>	Macmillan	978-

Gaby Morgan			0330543743
Sharon Creech	<i>Love that dog</i>	Bloomsbury	978- 0747557494
Jan Dean and Roger Stevens	<i>The Penguin in Lost Property*</i>	Macmillan	978- 1447253730
Graham Denton	<i>My Rhino Plays the Xylophone*</i>	Bloomsbury	978- 1472904560
Graham Denton (Ed)	<i>When Granny Won Olympic Gold</i>	A & C Black	978- 1408131497
T.S.Eliot Axel Scheffler	<i>Old Possum's book of Practical Cats</i>	Faber	978- 0571252480
John Foster	<i>What wears a sock on its bottom?</i>	OUP	978- 0192757418
Susie Gibbs (ed)	<i>Funny Poems to Give you the Giggles</i>	OUP	978- 0192726056
Ted Hughes	<i>Collected poems for children</i>	Faber	978- 0571215027
Amanda Li	<i>Hot Dogs and Dinosnores*</i>	Macmillan	978- 1447253730
Roger McGough	<i>An Imaginary Menagerie</i>	Frances Lincoln	978- 1847801661
Tony Mitton	<i>Come into this Poem</i>	Frances Lincoln	978- 1847801692
Brian Moses	<i>The Works 2*</i>	Macmillan	978- 1447274834
Cheryl Moskowitz	<i>Can it be about Me?</i>	Frances Lincoln	978- 1847803405
Hilda Offen	<i>Blue Balloons and Rabbit Ears*</i>	Troika	978- 1909991033
Brian Patten	<i>Thawing frozen frogs</i>	Frances Lincoln	978- 1847803405
Michael Rosen & Quentin Blake	<i>Mustard, Custard, Grumble Belly and Gravy</i>	Bloomsbury	978- 0747587385
Roger Stevens	<i>What Rhymes with Sneeze?</i>	Bloomsbury	978- 1408155769
Michaela Strachan	<i>Really Wild Adventures</i>	Franklin Watts	978- 1445113401

Celia Warren	<i>Don't Poke a Worm Till it Wiggles*</i>	Bloomsbury	978- 1472900234
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For even more poetry pleasure and session ideas have a look too at our **Frances Lincoln Children's Books Chatterbooks poetry pack!** featuring poets **John Hegley, Kathy Henderson, Wes Magee, Brian Moses, and Grace Nichols**

### **And finally... Poems from Dudley Chatterbooks Club**

Chatterbooks is where we come  
Every month to have some fun  
We do puzzles, draw and discuss  
Why don't you come and join us? Demi (age 8 years)

Chatterbooks is great, and really fun  
Reading ,activities, poems all done!  
Treasure hunts and book reviews  
Cryptograms just to confuse!  
I love Chatterbooks ,it is the best  
Come and join in with all the rest. Nicola (age 9 years)

Enjoy your poetry reading and writing!