

AND EVERYTHING WILL BE GLAD TO SEE YOU

Poetry Teaching Resource for KS2

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

And Everything Will Be Glad to See You is an anthology of poems by women and girls. It includes well-loved poets, such as Maya Angelou, Wendy Cope, Lucille Clifton and Christina Rossetti, as well as newer voices such as Amanda Gorman, Yrsa Daley-Ward and Ada Limón. The poetry is wide-ranging but accessible for pupils in KS2 (as well as younger or older children), and has been chosen to inspire and uplift. Every poem is complemented by beautiful illustrations, which can also contribute and be referred to during reading and discussion.

This classroom resource focuses on different ways of reading and understanding poetry, and gives ideas and tips to get children writing their own poems. It contains a combination of activities to use within literacy lessons, and some suggestions of ways to introduce poetry to children and integrate it into your classroom.

The resource is aimed at pupils in upper KS2, but activities and ideas could be adapted to use with younger ones if required. The poems themselves could be read out loud to anyone.

TEACHING WITH SENSITIVITY

The resource starts with some discussion starters and suggestions around the poems in this anthology being by women and girls, and the author's reasoning behind this. Ensure that discussion of gender-related issues is handled sensitively and is fully inclusive of all pupils, their backgrounds and family circumstances.



AND EVERYTHING WILL BE GLAD TO SEE YOU

POEMS BY WOMEN AND GIRLS

Selected by Ella Risbridger
Illustrated by Anna Shepeta

978 1 78800 921 8 • HB • £20.00

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INTRODUCTION

The following questions and activities will help as a starting point for your class to feel confident and enjoy reading poetry and beginning to write their own. You can of course adapt and develop these activities to whatever works best for you and your class, depending on how much or little experience they have with poetry.

FAMILIARISATION WITH AN ANTHOLOGY

Pupils may not be familiar with a poetry anthology, or may need some help finding their way around it.

- Do you know, or can you work out, what an anthology is? (E.g. a collection of different poems together in one book.)
- Why do you think someone would collect lots of poems together like this? (Encourage pupils to think of lots of different reasons such as grouping poems by a theme, choosing particular poets, to add more variety to someone's reading, because there are so many poems to choose from and these are the ones they like best, etc.)
- What are the benefits of reading a poetry anthology? (E.g. you get to read poems by lots of different poets/discover new work.)



LESSON ACTIVITIES

These lesson activities can be adapted or developed to fit with you, your class or your curriculum needs, and could be extended and developed into further activities and lessons where necessary. They are focused on three ways of understanding and engaging with poetry:

- Listening and reading
- Writing
- Performing and memorising

LISTENING TO AND READING POETRY

There are infinite ways to explore poems while reading them aloud! The following are suggestions to use with particular poems from the anthology, but could be adapted and used with any suitable poem. The suggested poems could also be used in many alternative ways to those suggested here.

- Read a poem (e.g. *Nina's Song*, page 19) out loud to the class. Then read it out again, but this time ask pupils to close their eyes and try to see the scene in their heads while you are reading. Does this help them focus on the poem more or understand it differently? Ask volunteers to tell you which parts of the poem created the clearest or most vivid images – for example, ‘The million-zillion stars’ll amaze you’ or ‘We’ll show you the wee-est field mouse’ or ‘three perfect rainbows/ In just one wide sky’.

Show the class the image across pages 18 and 19 that accompanies the two poems printed there. Is this the kind of scene they imagined when they listened to the poem? Alternatively, ask them to draw the image they imagined, then compare everyone’s drawings and the illustration in the book.

Read the line ‘And everything will be glad to see you’. Why does this sound unusual? (E.g. you would expect it to be *everyone is glad to see you*) Why do they think the poet chooses the word ‘everything’ instead of ‘everyone’? Try reading that stanza substituting ‘everything’ for ‘everyone’. Does it alter the meaning or feeling behind the poem?

- Something that poets often do is try to use all their senses in a poem, so the reader or listener can experience it in every way. Read out *Kensington Market* (page 38) (again, asking pupils to close their eyes), and ask pupils to pick out the lines that use the five senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch). How does the poet use the senses together to conjure up the image of a food market? Why do you think she uses all the senses, rather than just, say, sight or smell on its own? Compare this to a poem such as *Pink* (page 40) which only focuses on the sense of sight. Why does just one sense work for this poem?
- Read a poem without telling pupils the title. Good examples include *What is Pink?* (page 40), *Cancan* (page 80), *Dog* (page 110) or *3.05 AM* (page 43). See how many alternative titles pupils come up with – the class could vote for their favourite before revealing the actual title. When the real title is revealed, is it a surprise? Does it change the meaning of the poem, feelings about it, or responses to it? Do pupils think it’s a better title than the ones they came up with?
- Play recordings of poets reading their own work aloud from the [Children’s Poetry Archive](#) website. The site includes information about each poet and a copy of the poem to follow as they read. You can also search to see if any of the poems in the anthology are included – for example, [here is Berlie Doherty reading *The Ghost in the Garden*.](#)



LESSON ACTIVITIES

WRITING POETRY

Writing a poem can feel quite daunting, so it's a good idea to take some time and spread out the composing and writing over several sessions. Using a theme can help with inspiration and focus. The suggestions below use particular themes and related poems as starting points for pupils' own poetry, but can be adapted to use with other poems or different themes.

Theme: Colour

Read *Pink* (below, or on page 40) Ask pupils to discuss the poem (they can do this in pairs, in small groups or as a whole class), using questions such as those below to help them:

- What is the poem about?
- What is 'pink' in this poem?
- How does the poet write about pink so that it is more than just a colour (discuss how she uses personification to create a sense of the colours as beings)
- What kind of character does pink have? Which words or phrases make you think that?
- Why do you think pink and yellow are presented as female and blue as male?
- Which senses is the poet using in this poem?
- Why do you think the last line is repeated?

Pink

The night has come,
Pink's job is done,
She was the dawn, and the pink sun.
But now blue's time has come.
He'll be the moon,
He'll be the sky.
Pink sits and waits for sunrise,
Then she'll be the sun again,
She'll be the sky.
But sunrise won't last long.
When yellow comes
And spreads her color to the sun.
Pink sits and waits.
Pink sits and waits.

Zeynep Beler

Compare the poem to *What is Pink?* on the same page. Help pupils discuss it by highlighting aspects such as:

- the repeated phrases
- the repetitive structure
- the rhyming structure
- how the poet describes each object
- their reaction to the last line - why do they think it ends like this?
- the contrast with *Pink* (e.g. personification instead of description, the rhyming structure)



LESSON ACTIVITIES

WRITING POETRY

What is Pink?

What is pink? A rose is pink
By the fountain's brink.
What is red? A poppy's red
In its barley bed.
What is blue?
The sky is blue
Where the clouds float through.
What is white? A swan is white
Sailing in the light.
What is yellow? Pears are yellow,
Rich and ripe and mellow.
What is green? The grass is green,
With small flowers between.
What is violet? Clouds are violet
In the summer twilight.
What is orange? Why, an orange,
Just an orange!

Christina Rossetti

Help pupils create their own colour poem. To begin with, encourage them to look at lots of different examples of colours e.g. artworks, landscapes, objects, nature, what's around them in the classroom, using their imagination, etc. They could even create a moodboard for ideas and of coloured images that they particularly like. Then they can decide if they want to write a poem about one particular colour, like *Pink* or different colours like *What is Pink?*

If they want to use personification, suggest pupils write down lots of ideas about what kind of person their colour would be e.g.:

- What's their character like?
- Are they male or female, or neither?
- What would they do?
- How would they move?
- What do they represent?

To help with their ideas, pupils could draw their colour as they think it would look if it was a person. For example:

Yellow like a sunflower -

Goddess of the field

Swaying her slender stem

Elegantly

Towards the warm light.



LESSON ACTIVITIES

WRITING POETRY

Alternatively they could use the same structure as *What is Pink?* by choosing a colour at a time and asking the same question as the poem does. They should then think of their own description, and rhyme it if they want to. Encourage them to think of objects that are different to the original poem. For example:

What is brown? A conker is brown

Plopping out of chestnut trees, all over town!

Use pupils' poems to create a class display or your own class anthology. The class could choose what to name their anthology, and even create an index of poems, poets and first lines.

Theme: Animals

Use the poem *Dog* (page 110) to introduce pupils to kennings, a poetic structure that uses a two-word phrase in place of a one-word noun (e.g. 'mouse hunter' to describe a kitten). Read the poem without giving its title – from the descriptions can pupils guess what it is about?

Ask pupils to pick out the kennings in the poem, as well as other ways in which the dog is portrayed (e.g. paws on the shoulders/and lick on the chin). Compare this to *Topsy* on page 111 which is about a particular cat, or *Cats* on page 112 which describes cats more generally based on their quirky habits.

Ask pupils to create their own poem about a favourite pet, a pet they would like, or an animal they are interested in. Can they describe it using kennings? They could bring in a photo of their pet, or an image for reference, and use the following ideas to help:

Creating kennings

1. Write down all the things your animal does (e.g. jumps on the table, sits on my lap, runs around its wheel, looks for food).
2. Look at all the verbs (e.g. jumps, sits, runs, looks): can you make them more interesting and representative of how your animal does these things (e.g. leaps, relaxes, scampers, seeks)?
3. Use the interesting verbs to create kennings using the rest of your original phrase (e.g. jumps on the table: table-leaper; sits on my lap: lap-relaxer; runs around its wheel: wheel-scammer, looks for food: food-seeker)
4. You can also try this to describe your animal's appearance by adding an interesting adjective to a part of their body (e.g. ears: pointy-eared; claws: sharp-clawed; head: stripy-headed; paws: soft-pawed)

Other themes

The following examples could be used to inspire poetry on other themes, such as:

- Family (*Auntie Lucille*, *Grandpa's Soup*, *Granny, Granny*, *Please Comb My Hair*, *Where Did the Baby Go?*)
- The weather (*Blizzard*, *Winter Poem*, *Looking Forward*, *The Summer Day*)
- Inspirational people (*Harriet Tubman*, *Rosa Parks*, *Boudicca*, *Queen of the Iceni*, *Malala*, *Sometimes, Change is One Girl*)
- Feelings (*Keep a Poem in Your Pocket*, *Don't Be Scared*, *Honey, I Love*, *Life Doesn't Frighten Me At All*)



LESSON ACTIVITIES

PERFORMING POETRY

When poems are performed they often come to life in a different way, as performing them can draw out different meanings and interpretations. Hearing a variety of voices rather than just the voice in your own head can also give a different perspective.

- Start by reading out a poem in a monotonous, bored-sounding way (e.g. *Comet*, page 12). Then read it again as suggested at the start ('...as quickly as possible, in as few breaths as you can manage'). Ask pupils for their reactions to both versions – which do they prefer? Why do they think the poet gives an instruction to read it in that way? How does it complement the subject of the poem?
- Read out a poem that has a strong rhythm (e.g. *Getting Ready for School*, page 26). Help pupils hear the beat of the poem by asking them to clap or tap it out; if there is space, encourage them to walk around keeping time with the beat. How does the rhythm of the poem work with the subject?
- Read *Sing a Song of People*, page 16. Does the rhythm sound familiar? Which nursery rhyme does it remind you of? Why do you think a poem can be like a song?
- Divide the class into small groups of between 2-5 (these could be friendship groups, or you may want to decide who is in the groups, based on individuals' strengths). Give each group a poem – groups could choose their own, or use the following suggestions:

Comet (page 12)

Sing a Song of People (page 16)

Sea Timeless Song (page 60)

Ghost in the Garden (page 95)

Keep a Poem in Your Pocket (page 114)

Here are Girls Like Lions (page 125)

Life Doesn't Frighten Me At All (page 128)

In their groups, ask pupils to read their poem through together a few times, then discuss the poem's meaning using the following questions to help:

- Are there any words or phrases which particularly stand out?
- What do you think the poem means?
- Does the poem have a literal meaning (e.g. *Sing a Song of People*), or a more metaphorical one (e.g. *Keep a Poem in Your Pocket*, *Ghost in the Garden*). If it's metaphorical, what could be the meaning behind it?
- Who's speaking, and who are they speaking to? (E.g. is there one person or more than one?)
- Where is the poem set? (This might be obvious in some, less clear in others.)
- What is the poem trying to say?



LESSON ACTIVITIES

PERFORMING POETRY

Ask groups to discuss anything about the poem that they could use in their performance, for example:

- Does it have a strong rhythm or beat?
- Does it rhyme?
- Does it need to be read quickly or slowly, or using a combination of both? (They could try reading different lines in alternative ways to decide which sounds best)
- What happens if you emphasise different words or phrases in different ways? Does the meaning change?
- Does the poem need actions to go with it? Do they make a difference to the meaning?

In their groups, ask pupils to decide how they will perform their poem together. For example:

- If the poem has lots of stanzas, each person might perform one stanza
- If a poem has more than one person speaking in it, decide who will voice each person
- If one person is reading the poem, what will the others do?
- If there are any repeated phrases in the poem, these could be spoken all together

Once groups have decided how to perform their poems give them time to rehearse. They can then present their performances to the rest of the class. Depending on your class this could be a performance within the lesson, or even developed further using music, costumes, props, etc.

After each one, ask if the performance has made viewers think about or understand the poem in a different way to just reading it on paper. How has the poem changed for them as a result of being performed?

Show the class [this video](#) of CBBC actors performing different poems so they can see different techniques and approaches.



LESSON ACTIVITIES

LEARNING A POEM

Learning a poem off by heart is fun, and very satisfying! It can help you to understand the poem better, it gives you a good feel for language, and some people remember poems they have learnt for the rest of their life.

Challenge pupils to learn a poem by heart in a week/month/school term, then recite their poem to the class when they are ready. Here are some tips for making memorising a poem easier:

- Choose a poem with a strong rhythm or beat, or one that rhymes
- Choose a poem about something you recognise, like a pet, a family member or a place you know. Then when you're learning the poem you can think, or even be with that thing!
- If you like the idea of learning a longer poem, team up with some friends and learn a stanza each
- Learn the poem with a partner, so you can practise with one another and help with any forgotten lines
- Listen to the poem being read lots of times, and read it to yourself out loud lots of times so you know the subject really well
- Write lines down, or create an image in your head for lines you find hard to remember. Then when you need to remember that line, think of the image and the words will come along with it!
- Recite from the poem to yourself when you are walking home from school, lying in bed at night, in the shower, waiting for a bus...
- Don't rush! It takes time to remember a poem so concentrate on a line at a time rather than trying to learn it all at once

Here are three suggested poems to learn by heart:

Cats

Cats sleep
Anywhere,
Any table,
Any chair,
Top of piano,
Window ledge,
In the middle,
On the edge,
Open drawer,
Empty shoe,
Anybody's
Lap will do,
Fitted in a
Cardboard box,
In the cupboard
With your frocks -
Anywhere!
They don't care!
Cats sleep
Anywhere.

Eleanor Farjeon

Breakfast for One

Hot thick crusty buttery toast
Buttery toasty thick hot crust
Crusty thick hot toasty butter
Thick hot buttery crusty toast
Toasty buttery hot thick crust
Hot buttery thick crusty toast -

With marmalade is how I like it most!

Judith Nicholls

3.05 AM

Owl eyes
Bat wings
Moon dance
Night things.

Siana Bangura



DISCUSSION STARTERS

There are no right or wrong answers to the questions and suggestions below, nor is it an exhaustive or compulsory list. You may want to develop discussion further, depending on pupils' reactions and responses.

POEMS BY WOMEN AND GIRLS

Draw attention to the fact that this is an anthology of poems just by women and girls (and includes non-binary poets, and someone who is anonymous).

- Why do you think the author decided to include poems by women and girls only?
- Do you think the poems will be different to those in an anthology of poems by men and boys? Why/why not?
- Why do you think 'Anonymous' was chosen for the anthology (*I Saw*, page 13), even though we don't know who they are?
- Do you think that it's a good idea to have anthologies of work by all women or all men, or is it better to have anthologies of works by both? (Emphasise that there is no right or wrong answer to this question, but a matter of opinion, and that opinions can also change! You could also develop a class debate on this, if appropriate.)

Share some of the reasons given for her choices by the book's editor, Ella Risbridger (page 7-9), and discuss the questions she asks about fairness in relation to an all-female anthology.

- Can you see her point of view? Do you agree with it?

You could also use this discussion to challenge any stereotypes that might arise, about both boys and girls.



DISCUSSION STARTERS

INDEXING

Demonstrate the indexing of poetry anthologies by showing them the different ways there are to look up a poem via the index of poems, the index of poets and the index of first lines.

- Why do you think poetry books are indexed like this? What are the benefits of using each type of index?

You could explore each index in the following ways:

Index of poems

- Why might someone search for a poem using this index?
- Are there any poems here that anyone has read already?

Select a few poem titles to share with the class (try to pick a selection of 'obvious' and less obvious titles).

- What do you think these poems might be about?
- Which is your favourite poem title? Why?
- What does the title make you think of?

Index of poets

- Why might someone search for a poem using this index?
- Are there any names you recognise (e.g. pupils may already have explored poems by poets such as Carol Ann Duffy, Grace Nichols, Jackie Kay, Emily Dickinson or Eleanor Farjeon)?

Tell pupils that there are poets here who are also authors of fiction, (e.g. Alice Walker, Maya Angelou, Berlie Doherty and Katherine Mansfield), and ask if anyone has heard of these writers (Berlie Doherty is a popular writer for children, and pupils may have read her books *Street Child*, *Granny Was a Buffer Girl* or *Children of Winter*).

Draw attention to the variety of names on the list and tell pupils that there are poems in the book by poets from all around the world.



DISCUSSION STARTERS

Index of first lines

- Why might someone search for a poem using this index?

Read out a selection of first lines, or write some of the first lines where everyone can see them.

- Which first line do you like best? Why? Are there any poems here that anyone has read already?
- What do you think the rest of the poem is about?
- What does a particular first line make you think about (e.g. 'I saw a star slide down the sky' or 'These wet rocks where the tide has been')? How does it make you feel?

Give pupils a selection of first lines and poem titles, and see if they can match them. When they've done this, take a look at the poems to see if they were right. Were there any surprises? Choose your own, or use the example below (you could also use this with the first lines activity outlined in the *Listening to and Reading Poetry* section).

FIRST LINES	TITLES
She was a dog-rose kind of girl	<i>Spell of the Bridge</i>
My cat is all concentrated tiger	<i>Selkie</i>
The night has come	<i>Pink</i>
Went star-fishing last night	<i>Nina's Song</i>
Governor! Well, what an honour	<i>From Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni</i>
Hold the wish on your tongue	<i>Tabby</i>
The secret me is a boy	<i>Starfish</i>
Best friend?	<i>Dog</i>
Nina, come to Scotland	<i>Sally</i>

ANSWERS

She was a dog-rose kind of girl: *Sally* by Phoebe Hesketh (page 28)

My cat is all concentrated tiger: *Tabby* by Grace Nichols (page 111)

The night has come: *Pink* by Zeynep Beler (page 40)

Went star-fishing last night: *Starfish* by Judith Nicholls (page 43)

Governor! Well, what an honour: *From Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni* by Kirsten Irving (page 46)

Hold the wish on your tongue: *Spell of the Bridge* by Helen Lamb (page 104)

The secret me is a boy: *Selkie* by Rachel Plummer (page 61)

Best friend? *Dog* by Judith Nicholls (page 110)

Nina, come to Scotland: *Nina's Song* by Liz Lochhead (page 19)

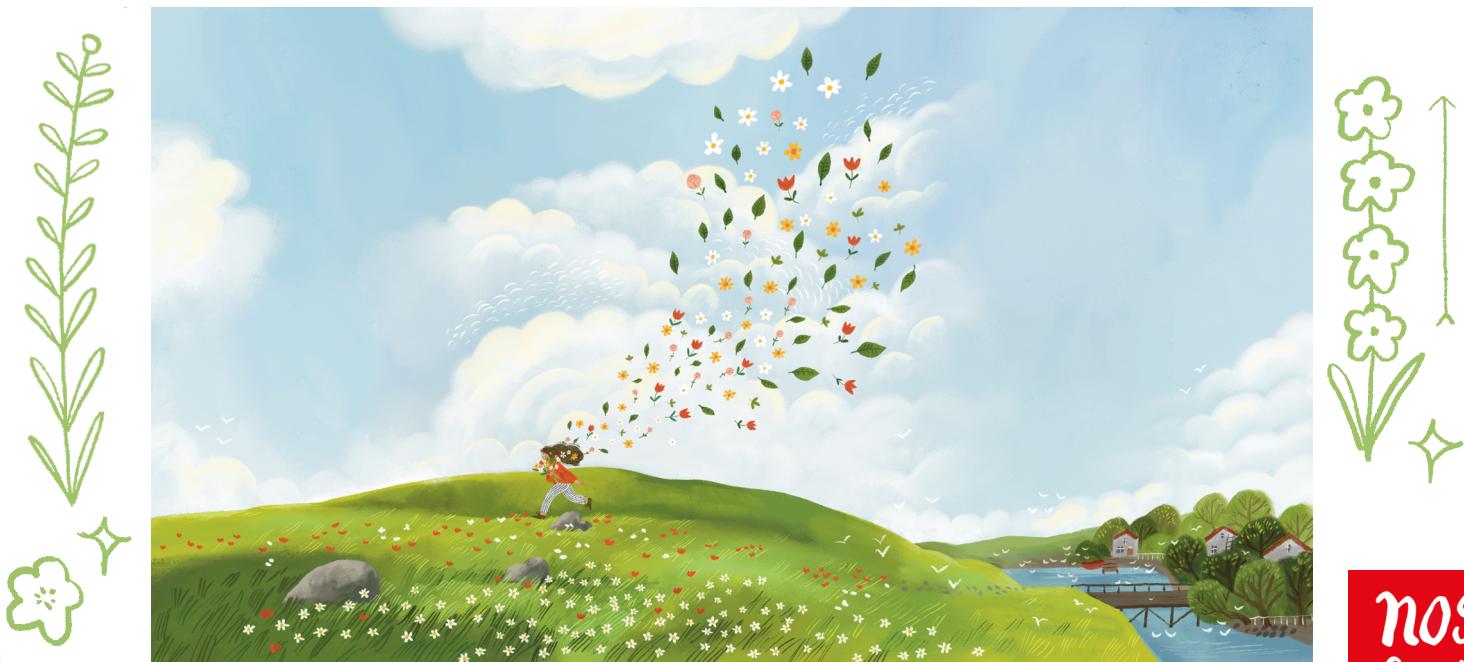
Encourage pupils to explore the book in their own time,
using alternative ways to look up poems to get a feel for how each index works differently.



IDEAS FOR CREATING A POETRY-FRIENDLY CLASSROOM

Here are some easy ways to create a classroom culture for enjoying poetry:

- **Start or end the day by sharing a ‘Poem of the day’ chosen by you or someone in the class.** It could be a poem that is relevant to something happening in school that day, or to reflect an event or mark an occasion, or it could just be a poem that the chooser likes. You could follow the reading with a short discussion of the poem (e.g. if at the start of the day), or just read it for pupils to reflect on themselves (e.g. if it’s the end of the day before hometime). Alternatively, choose a poem of the week that could be read and reflected on each day to show how a poem’s meaning can change as we get to know it better.
- **Create a poetry table/display area with a variety of poetry books by different poets, different themes, etc.** Pupils could choose these for free reading, or add any books that they have enjoyed themselves. If space allows, pupils’ own poems, or favourite class poems could be displayed alongside.
- **Choose different forms of poetry that are easily accessible to the age group to read out loud,** such as haiku, acrostics and limericks, and draw attention to how these work. [This article](#) explains nine forms of poetry, and includes a glossary of different poetry-related terms.
- **You can find poems in all sorts of places if you look for it!** Challenge pupils to keep their eyes open for poetry when they’re out and about, maybe on park benches, statues, as public art, on the underground, on the sides of buildings, etc. If they find any, ask them to take a photo/copy down the poem and bring it in to share with the class. This could lead to an ‘Out and about poetry’ display.
- **Encourage pupils to listen out for ‘I’m a poet and I didn’t know it!’ moments,** when they say something that rhymes, or use a simile, metaphor or some kind of imagery as part of everyday speech. If it’s particularly good, suggest they write it down to use in a future piece of writing.
- **Invite a poet into school to perform their poetry and talk about it with the class.** Some can also provide workshops for different age groups. You can find out more about bringing a poet into school from the [Poetry Society](#), or look at different poets’ websites to see if they have information about visiting schools.



CURRICULUM LINKS

The activities and themes in this resource can be linked to the following aspects of the English National Curriculum at Years 5-6:

General

...pupils should be able to read aloud a wider range of poetry and books written at an age-appropriate interest level

Pupils' knowledge of language, gained from stories, plays, poetry, non-fiction and textbooks, will support their increasing fluency as readers, their facility as writers, and their comprehension. As in years 3 and 4, pupils should be taught to enhance the effectiveness of their writing as well as their competence.

... pupils' confidence, enjoyment and mastery of language should be extended through public speaking, performance and debate.

Reading

Comprehension

Pupils should be taught to:

maintain positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by:

- continuing to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of ... poetry
- learning a wider range of poetry by heart
- preparing poems and plays to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone and volume so that the meaning is clear to an audience
- discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader

Pupils should be taught the technical and other terms needed for discussing what they hear and read, such as metaphor, simile, analogy, imagery, style and effect.

Writing

Composition

(All aspects of planning, drafting, evaluating and editing and proof-reading are relevant links)

- perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear.



THANK YOU FOR USING THESE RESOURCES!

We hope you enjoyed discovering the poetry in *And Everything Will Be Glad to See You*.

Please do share your work with us @nosycrow #AndEverythingWillBeGladtoSeeYou
or via email marketing@nosycrow.com.

Sign up to our newsletter for more amazing activities for your classroom!



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