

Writing poetry

Learn

There are lots of different types of **poetry**, but they often contain similar ingredients.

[\(If you have access to a computer, watch the video\).](#)

All poems are made up of **words**. Poems can tell a story or be about a thought or a feeling. They can be serious or silly, but they always have to use words.

Poems often have a **rhythm**, which is like a beat in music. The rhythm is quick or slow depending on the words the poet chooses.

Poems can use **rhyme**, which means that certain words have similar end sounds.

For example:

'break' and 'lake'

'cat' and 'mat'

'loud' and 'proud'



Poems can also use **alliteration**, which is when more than one word starts with the same first letter or sound.

For example: *The slimy, sneaky snake slithered silently.*

Complete these activities

If you have access to a computer, complete Activity 1 as well Activity 2 - If not, start on Activity 2.

There is also an optional activity 3. Depending on how long it takes you to complete activity 1 and 2 and what time you have, you could give it a go.

Activity 1

Complete the 'How to write a poem' quiz on the website link above. Can you get all four questions correct?

I scored: _____ / 4

Activity 2

Read the poem:

My Shadow

By Robert Louis Stevenson

*I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.*

*The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow-
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an India-rubber ball,
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him at all.*

*He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks to me!*

*One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.*

Answer the questions below:

- 1) What is this poem all about? Write next to each stanza a summary of what you think is said.
- 2) Are there any **unusual words** in this poem? Look up any that you don't know.

Do you think the **rhythm** or the poem is slow or fast? Why might this be?

Can you spot a **rhyme** scheme? Explain the pattern.

Can you spot any **alliteration**? Copy out an example.

Activity 3 (Optional)

When we want to write a poem, it is always useful to use another poem to inspire us.

Read this short poem:

Who Has Seen the Wind?

By Christina Rossetti

Who has seen the wind?

Neither I nor you.

But when the leaves hang trembling,

The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?

Neither you nor I. But when the trees bow down their heads,

The wind is passing by.



Use this poem to inspire your own short poem about nature. You could write about the wind as well, or the sun, moon, water, trees - use your imagination! See if you can use alliteration too!

Top tip!

You could base your poem on Rossetti's by:

- starting with a question
- using the same rhyme pattern
- repeating lines like she does
- using some of the same lines

Handwriting

Extract from Tom Thumb

Now, odd as you may think it, it came to pass that this good woman's wish was granted, just in the very way she had wished it; for, not long afterwards, she had a little boy, who was quite healthy and strong, but was not much bigger than my thumb. So they called him Thomas Thumb.

They gave him plenty of food, yet for all they could do he never grew bigger, but kept just the same size as he had been when he was born. Still, his eyes were sharp and sparkling, and he soon showed himself to be a clever little fellow, who always knew well what he was about.



Letter-join 

You can complete the handwriting using the 'Handwriting line guides' which can be found on the website (where you found instructions for your work), or if you have a pack, they will be in there. Alternatively, if you think you have good control over the size of your letters, then you could work on lined paper or plain paper with guidelines.