



## POETRY WORKSHOP 2

### Models of Poetry

Make sure that the young writer is not overwhelmed by the techniques of poetry writing. Point out that it is ***what the poet wants to tell us about life and ourselves, our feelings and emotions*** that is important. Incidental reading of poetry during the day is encouraged.

The most exciting prospect for writers young and old must be this: that we have spent thousands of years exploring the magic of language without yet exhausting its possibilities. And that they, as writers, are free to go on exploring



### Before the Writing Poetry Workshop- some models to try

The workshop outlined can be used as a stepping-off place for *poetry writing*. In the first stages of learning to write, students do find it useful to have ***models*** for their own writing. A poetry reading followed by a brief discussion which touches on several characteristics of poetry may be enough to motivate students to write. Encourage students to **discover and discuss** the following characteristics of poetry. Then use some of the poem as models for work of their own.

...stillness and quiet for reading...

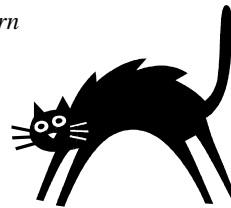


- **Its shape and pattern on a page** e.g. lots of white around the poem on the page. This can be seen by merely holding up a poem for the group as opposed to some prose.

*Cat being Cat  
Curls in swirls  
of blankets  
Moulds on folds  
of sheets  
Sleeps on heaps  
of clothing*

*Curls  
Uncurls  
Elastic  
Fantastic  
Cat being cat!*

*by Libby Hathorn*



Tyger! Tyger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

*From The Tyger William Blake 1757-1827*

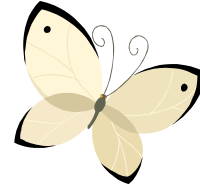


Ask the students to find a picture of an animal and then write an animal poems using the shape and pattern as above.

- **Its compression or brevity**- the best arrangement of words in the shortest most effective way. Japanese Haiku form is a wonderful example.

A long black strand of river, far below  
Winds across a moorland, deep in snow.  
-Boncho

The moon-how big and round and bright.  
Children, to whom does it belong tonight?  
-Issa



The falling blossoms which I saw arise  
Returning upward to the bough, were butterflies.  
-Moritake

Up comes the bucket from the well of gloom  
And in it floats- a pink camellia bloom.  
-Kakei



Another year departs; the bell is tolled  
And I intended never to grow old.  
-Jocun

The rogue called Love has taken to its heel:  
On snowy nights; how cold in bed it feels!  
Jackush

When from the moor the autumn mists have fled  
A spider's web has dew on every thread  
-Hakyo

To see the world in a grain of sand  
And heaven in a wild flower,  
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand  
And eternity in an hour.



*From Auguries of Innocence by William Blake*

Haiku are 17 syllables long. Ask the students to experiment with haiku, choosing something simple from nature at first.

- **Its rhythm and sound-**  
repetition of a sound alliteration

*And, softer than slumber, and sweeter than singing,  
The notes of the bell-birds are running and ringing.*

*From Bellbirds by Henry Kendall*

Jim and Jody and Jake have joggers,  
Jilly and Jock and Janet have joggers,  
Grandpa Jeremiah has joggers,  
Justin Jones has too.

*From Who has Joggers? by Libby Hathorn*

### **Internal rhyme** *assonance*

Collecting, projecting  
Receding and speeding,  
And shocking and rocking,  
And darting and parting,  
And threading and spreading,  
And whizzing and hissing,  
And dripping and skipping,  
And hitting and splitting,  
And shining and twining,  
And rattling and battling  
And shaking and quaking  
And pouring and roaring



*From Cataract at Lodore  
by Robert Southey*

- **The connections of language** (imaginative and metaphorical rather than literal)

*My heart is like a singing bird  
Whose nest is in a water'd shoot;*

*from Birthday by Christina Rossetti*

Droplets in the late sun,  
A shower of silver coin  
Into the dark valley.

*from Wentworth Falls at Evening by Mark O'Connor*



Make the writer aware of **the freedom and power** one has, as composer to:

- **range through time and space-** take the reader back, or into the future

*He crouches, and buries his face on his knees,  
And hides in the dark of his hair;  
For he cannot look up to the storm-smitten trees,  
Or think of the loneliness there –  
Of the loss and the loneliness there.*

*The Last of His Tribe by Henry Kendall*

- **search for fresh images-** from memory or from experience, like looking at a landscape or out the window at a storm

The wind began to rock the grass  
With threatening tunes and low-  
He flung a menace at the earth  
A menace at the sky.

The leaves unhooked themselves from trees  
And started all abroad:  
The dust did scoop itself like hands  
And throw away the road  
*Emily Dickinson*

*I love a sunburnt country,  
A land of sweeping plains,  
Of ragged mountain ranges,  
Of droughts and flooding rains.  
I love her far horizons,  
I love her jewel sea,  
Her beauty and her terror –  
The wide brown land for me!*



*My Country* by Dorothea Mackellar

- **concentrate meaning using the tools of rhythm and sound.**

*Round sky  
In my eye  
Way up high,  
Things swirl  
Bend and curl  
Straighten out  
Blow about.  
Round sky  
In my eye  
Clouds go by.*



*Clouds go By*, by Libby Hathorn

### **Some poems can be like a list...**

#### **Good Catalogue**

Sky's drapery  
Neck's napery  
Children smiling  
Time for wiling  
Food to e at  
Friends to meet  
Winter's bite  
Summer's light  
Night's tracery  
Foam's lacery  
And love, and love,  
Love's embracery.

#### **Bad Catalogue**

Acid rain  
Hunger's pain  
Prisoners held  
Forests felled  
No home to go to  
No love to show to  
One another, one anoher,  
Nobody's sister, nobody's brother,  
Nobody's sister, nobody's brother.

*Libby Hathorn*

Ask the students to talk about their own feelings of good and bad in the world. Remember to note the invented words e.g. 'napery, tracery' in the poem. As them to write their own catalogue of good and bad things in the form of a poem.

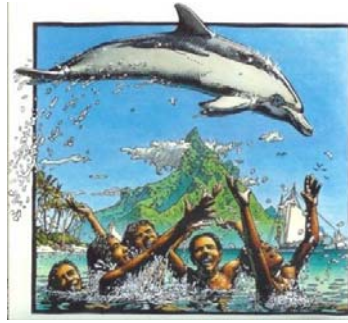
### **And as for Rhyme...**

Whilst we may automatically want to rhyme our poetry, remember it is not necessary to use rhyme to make a wonderful poem. Though it is advisable to experiment with rhyming poems, don't insist on rhyme in every instance. For students, this limitation sometimes makes for awkward expression and a lack of 'honesty' vital to the simple truth of a poem.

- **Rhyming**

**Miracle Thing**

Lovely as life is,  
For me and for you,  
Wild in the falls  
Soft in the dew.  
Lovely as life is  
For you, for me  
Placid in lakes



Lovely as life is

Untamed in the sea.  
Lovely to touch,  
To sup, to the eye,  
Precious to have  
For without it we die.  
Lovely as life is  
For the life it will bring,  
Splendid as rainbows  
A miracle thing.  
Water!



For the life it will bring

*By Libby Hathorn*

NB This poem was re-worked as a picture storybook entitled *The Wonder Thing* with the remarkable lino-cuts of Tasmanian artist, Peter Gouldthorpe. The students might like to try to plan a poem or even rhyming picture storybook, which has the reader guessing. Not until the last line does the poet reveal she is talking about water.

- **Repetition is a powerful tool of the poet**

Poems that have a chanting quality can ‘cast a spell’ on the reader/listener through their **music** and **rhythm**. Poems can be playful and create nonsense words. Or more serious as the following, taking the form of an oath, invocation, supplication or prayer.

**Invocation**

Give me of your bark, O Birch Tree,  
Of your yellow bark, O Birch Tree!



Growing by the rushing river,  
Tall and stately in the valley!  
I a light canoe will build me,  
Build a swift Cheemaun for sailing,  
That shall float upon the river,  
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn  
Like a yellow water-lily.

*From The Song of Hiawatha  
by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow 1807-1882*

## **Oath**

Shanga ya!  
I want to be your friend  
For ever and ever without break or decay.  
When the hills are flat  
And the rivers are all dry,  
When it lightens and thunders in winter,  
When it rains and snows in summer,  
When Heaven and Earth mingle-  
Not till then will I part from you.

*Oath of Friendship  
Anonymous China 1<sup>st</sup> Century BC*

## **Some Mountain Poems**



At last unto the mountains  
I'm returning, I'm returning,  
Oh mountains of my childhood  
I'm returning to thee.

*Fragment of song lyrics*

### **These are my Mountains**

For fame and for fortune, I wandered the earth  
And now I'm returning, to the land of my birth.  
I brought back my treasures, but only to find,  
they're less than the pleasures, I first left behind.

### **CHORUS**

For these are my mountains and this is my glen  
The bra's(brae) of my childhood, will know me again,  
No land's ever claimed me, though far I did roam  
For these are my mountains, and I'm going home.

Kind faces will meet me and welcome me in  
And how they will greet me, my ain kith and kin.  
This night by the fireside, folksongs will be sung,  
At last I'll be hearing, my ain mother tongue

### **CHORUS**

*Traditional Irish Lyrics*



### **Viewing the Waterfall at Mt Lu**

Sunlight streaming on Incense Stone kindles violet smoke  
Far off I watch the waterfall plunge to the long river  
Flying waters descending straight three thousand feet,  
Till I think the Milky Way has tumbled from the ninth height of Heaven  
*Li Po 705-762*

### **They say you're staying in a mountain temple**

They say you're staying in a mountain temple  
In Hang-Chou- or is it Yueh-chou?  
In the wind and grime of war, how long since we parted?  
At Chiang-han, bright autumns waste away.  
While my shadow rests by monkey-loud trees,  
My soul whirls off to where shell-born towers rise.  
Next year on floods of spring I'll go downriver  
To the white clouds at the end of the east  
I'll look for you.

*Tu Fu 712-770*



### **In a Cloud**

For three days we have lived inside a cloud,  
Watching a fog squeeze itself into droplets.  
Sometimes it lowered and lifted around us,  
White heights and dull grey,  
And once wispy white-blue  
Myrtle bushes were wet feather dusters  
That soaked us at the touch.

.....  
The stream spilled water from a flute-edged rim,  
Once its bank, down half a hill  
Star-flowers in the never-rained overhangs  
Pulled water from the yielding air.  
The heath's bell-sprays hung heavily  
Till an extra drop made an avalanche  
That landing, cleared the branch below.

*From Poetry of the Mountains by Mark O'Connor*

From the Art of the Snowflake  
By Kenneth Libbrecht

