



Museum of Wellington  
City & Sea

Education Service

## Word Witch exhibition - teacher resource

### POETRY – information to prepare for and follow up Museum learning experiences

#### Curriculum Links

Learning Area  
English Language

Strand/s  
Reading, Writing, Presenting.

Level  
2-5

Values  
Excellence,  
Innovation, inquiry and curiosity  
Community and participation

Key Competencies  
Using Language, symbols, and texts  
Relating to others  
Participating and contributing  
Thinking

Teaching Points	L/Os and L/Is	Assessment Activities
<p>Big questions            What does poetry do?            How do I recognise a poem?            What are common characteristics of a poem?</p> <p>This resource introduces the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rhyming patterns</li> <li>• rhythm</li> <li>• repetition</li> <li>• language features</li> <li>• structures and presentation</li> </ul>	<p>WALT            We are learning to            Identify poems and poetic conventions            read poems to an audience            compose and publish poems</p> <p>WILF            What I am looking for.            Students will:            demonstrate a range of poetic conventions            Rehearse and perform poems to an audience            Publish original poems</p>	<p>Students maintain journals in which they;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record ideas of what constitutes a poem</li> <li>• List poems and poets encountered in the course of this unit</li> <li>• Record poems they discover and like (or dislike) and describe why</li> <li>• Record reflections on the power of poems to motivate or inspire: (ie disgust, laughter, sadness, anger etc)</li> <li>• Draft, redraft and publish original poems modelling a range of conventions.</li> <li>• Illustrate their own and others poems</li> <li>• Record (ie photograph) inspiration such as people, places and objects alongside original poems.</li> </ul> <p>Also            Listen to/view recordings of poets performing their work and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehearse and perform to an audience their own and/or others poems</li> </ul> <p>Produce a class poetry slam</p>

## Learning Progression & Resources

### Get Inspired:

- See Poets perform
- Listen to Poetry readings
- Read Poetry books aloud
- Discuss and define “what is a poem”
- Discuss the role of poetry?

ie. Poetry makes us laugh, disseminates information, imparts a message or truth, motivates and inspires, celebrating a universal emotion such as love, unifies a group of people or a cause...

With each experience discuss a poetic convention. Introduce opportunities for practise.

### Rhyming patterns

Rhyme scheme means the pattern of rhyming words in a poem. The pattern is at the end of the lines, e.g.

“It’s Christmas – the time when we gather to make  
A truly remarkable once-a-year cake.  
The recipe’s written in letters of gold  
By a family witch who is terribly old.”  
(from “The Remarkable Cake” by Margaret Mahy)

The rhyme scheme is AA BB. Look for the rhyme pattern in other poems or rhyming stories.

“Hungrily sniffing  
And licking their chops,  
They followed him up  
Past the school and the shops”  
(from *Hairy Maclary’s Bone* by Lynley Dodd, Mallinson Rendell, 1984)  
The rhyme scheme is ABCB.

### Rhythm

Poems often repeat words or phrases to create a rhythm.

“This is the cat, that killed the rat, that ate the malt, that lay in the house that Jack built.  
This is the dog, that worried the cat, the killed the rat, that ate the malt, that lay in the house that Jack built.”  
(from *The House that Jack Built* by Gavin Bishop, Scholastic NZ, 1999)

Other examples of rhythm are skipping and clapping chants children use for games. Get students to share some of these. Talk about when they use them, and what makes them fun and memorable.

## Repetition

Repeating syllables, words, sounds, phrases lines, stanzas and even metrical patterns is a common device used in poetry. Examples include:  
Mahey: 17 Kings and 42 Elephants

## Language features

A verse of Margaret Mahy's "Bubble Trouble" has examples of several common features of poetic language.

Assonance – repeating vowel sounds within a line, e.g.  
"Even feeble Mrs Threeble in a muddle with her needle"

Alliteration – repeating words that begin with the same letter, e.g.  
"(Matching pink and purple patches for a pretty patchwork quilt)"

Consonance – repeating consonants within a line, e.g.  
"When her older sister told her, tossed the quilt across her shoulder,  
As she set off at a totter in her tattered tartan kilt."

## Structures and presentation

Introduce some classic poetry forms and find or write examples.

*Couplet* – two lines that rhyme. "Goodness Gracious" by Margaret Mahy is made of four couplets.

*Haiku* - three lines, the first and last lines have 5 syllables and the middle line has 7 syllables. The lines don't have to rhyme.

*Limerick* – a five line poem, AA BB A rhyme scheme. Here are some examples by [Michael Rosen](http://www.poetryarchive.org/childrensarchive) from the Children's Poetry Archive website, [www.poetryarchive.org/childrensarchive](http://www.poetryarchive.org/childrensarchive)

*Nonsense* – just what it says! Here are some [Spike Milligan](http://www.poetryarchive.org/childrensarchive) nonsense poems from the Children's Poetry Archive website, [www.poetryarchive.org/childrensarchive](http://www.poetryarchive.org/childrensarchive)

*Sonnets* – a 14 line poem with a specific rhyme scheme. A common sonnet scheme is ABAB CDCD EFEF GG, or ABBA ABBA CDE CDE. A very famous sonnet is "How do I love thee?" by Elizabeth Barrett Browning has a different rhyming scheme. Hear actress [Helen Mirren read it on](#)

[YouTube](#) 1:03

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.  
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height  
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight  
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.  
I love thee to the level of every day's  
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.  
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;  
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.  
I love with a passion put to use  
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.  
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose  
With my lost saints, I love thee with the breath,  
Smiles, tears, of all my life! and, if God choose,  
I shall but love thee better after death.

*Acrostic* - a poem in which the first letter in each line combine to create a word or message. There are multiple sites and devices for playing with acrostic poems

A good way to start is with a simple theme like 'colour poems' or 'name poems'.

Challenge students to link lines of their poems by enlarging on their theme

<http://www.poem-poetry.com/acrostic-poems.html>

Complete the Unit with a class Poetry Slam

Negotiate a theme

Discuss criteria for a great performance (see Performance Unit)

Students rehearse and recite or perform poems for an Audience