

### Ideas for Promoting Poetry:

- Group the poetry books together in your book area, on a shelf or in a box and label. Make a display of the books you'll be reading aloud from or want to focus on. You might make a display of books by the same poet and read aloud from this selection, so that children can become familiar and knowledgeable about an individual poet's work. Children could write a label or short note about a favourite poem (giving the title of the book and page number) and add to the display, next to the relevant book.
- Read poems at various points of the day, just for pure pleasure and not expecting a response. Let them hang in the air for children to mull over and discuss if they wish. Before or after playtimes and lunchtimes and at the beginning and end of school days are the perfect opportunity to drop in a poem.
- Read poetry aloud to the children and invite comments and responses. You could try some of the following prompts for discussion:
  - What did you like about it?
  - Is there anything you disliked?
  - What did it make you think of?
  - Did you have any pictures in your mind?
  - What did you notice about the sound and pattern of the poem?
  - Were there any words or phrases that you particularly liked? Or disliked?
  - Was there anything that puzzled you?
- Mark up a poem (lines/verses/refrain) to support a choral performance. Describe how you can mark it to emphasise the meanings and patterns in the poem.
- Make poetry cards of the poems (scanned and laminated) to enable you to select poems/themes and share with the class. Encourage children to read poems together, in pairs or groups.
- Invite children to choose their favourite poems to read aloud and say why they like them. They can practice reading/saying them aloud for a poetry performance. Working in pairs and small groups can help build confidence for this.
- Make an anthology of favourite poems, together with voice recordings of children reading them aloud. They might like to add sound effects or music. Children could photocopy, write out or type copies of the poem and illustrate it with visualisations they had whilst reading. Leave space in the anthology for children to write why they chose it and others to add their own responses after reading.
- Choose one poem and ask children to work in groups to enact and perform it, using their voices, actions, and if they choose, percussion. Each group will need a copy of the poem to use for marking up as a 'script'. They may need space to work in – possibly outside of the classroom. This will help them develop their own ideas, without being influenced by other

groups. After time for rehearsal, children can watch each group perform their version of the poem, responding as a real audience. It will be interesting for them to talk about the different interpretations of the same poem, and to comment on any similarities.

- Read a poem to the children. Ask them to close their eyes and picture the poem in their minds. Using sugar paper, charcoal or pastels, ask children to draw their picture; their interpretation. Display together with a large copy of the poem.
- Choose poems with a strong rhyme scheme, pattern or narrative. You can photocopy the poem or, it might be better to type it up with larger line spacing and print a copy. Add the title and poet and author or editor of the book where the poem is published. Laminate and cut into strips, choosing where to segment (e.g. into verses or pairs of lines) to make a poetry 'jigsaw', enabling the children to use the pattern or rhyme to make the whole poem. This activity works best if children work together in pairs or small groups. When they've completed it, they should read the poem together, and find the book – and poem – in the poetry or book area to check they've chosen the correct order. This is a good strategy for drawing children into the book. If you want to make several copies of the same poem, it's a good idea to photocopy each poem onto different coloured paper to avoid them getting mixed up. It also helps to store each 'jigsaw' in a separate, labelled plastic zip folder.