This teaching resource has been developed to support the use of the ebook, *Light-A National Poetry Day Book* in schools. The book was produced by Macmillan to mark the celebration of National Poetry Day 2015.

The ideas suggested will support a whole school celebration of poetry on National Poetry Day as well as enhancing existing routines and practices to ensure that poetry is an embedded and meaningful feature in the everyday life of the school.

**Making Poetry a Part of School Life - Preparation for National Poetry Day and beyond**

Prior to the National Poetry Day event:

- Consider creating a special class, library or school display of poetry texts. These may be books and anthologies that share the theme of light or alternatively could be a display to showcase the best of the poetry stock you have. This display could be maintained over the course of the year and routinely changed to showcase particular poets or illustrate how poetry can support key themes that will be of significance at different stages of the academic year.

- If it is not presently a part of your established class routine, consider incorporating daily or weekly sharing of poetry with your pupils. The sharing could take the form of children sharing and performing poems they have discovered or enjoy, it could involve the teacher performing a poem and providing opportunity to discuss its appeal or it could involve playing video clips (e.g. from [www.poetryline.org.uk](http://www.poetryline.org.uk)) so children have the opportunity to hear the poems performed by the poets themselves. This practice could be extended to form the basis of regular assemblies.

- You could invite poets into school to conduct workshops that enable children to deepen their appreciation of poetry and the process involved in composing poems. Consider extending the benefits of such workshops and make this a more longstanding feature of your provision by inviting a poet to be your school’s resident poet. As a part of the residency a poet can work in collaboration with the staff and school community to raise the profile of poetry in fun and engaging ways.

For more ideas and suggestions you can download our free publication: *Poetry in Primary Schools, What We Know Works*. [www.clpe.org.uk](http://www.clpe.org.uk)  This resource provides a set of simple suggestions for engaging children with poetry, for more in depth teaching sequences studying a range of poetry books and collections as well as videos of poets and examples of work from schools, please visit [www.poetryline.org.uk](http://www.poetryline.org.uk).
Launching National Poetry Day

Host a whole school assembly inspired by this year’s theme, Light.

Part 1
Explain to the children that the 8th October marks a special day in the calendar. Invite them to consider what poetry is and why it might be considered important to have a day that is especially dedicated to it. Explain that as part of the school’s recognition of its importance there will be a range of activities happening over the course of the week to mark this special time.

Part 2
Present the page of the ebook that features the poem, *Beware of the Grey* by Paul Cookson on an Interactive Whiteboard so that it is visible to all of the children. Explain that you wish to perform this poem with their assistance. Ask them to show you how they would show fear using a facial expression. Once they have settled on their chosen expression explain that you are going to perform the poem and every time you come to the phrase, ‘*Beware of The Grey*’ they will need to chant this in unison whilst showing their most fearful expression.

Once performed, allow the children time to discuss with the person next to them whether or not they liked the poem, what parts of the poem were most memorable and why and how it made them feel. Ask them to consider what the grey might be and why they think this, what clues does the poem give? Open the discussion to the entire group and take responses for each of the considerations suggested.

Part 3
Explain that they will over the course of the week be discovering poems that explore the theme of light. Invite them to seek out and collect poems inspired by this theme. Use the sections in the anthologies where the poets have chosen their favourite poems to illustrate this and highlight the different reasons for the choices the poets have made. *Once all of the poems are shared (during the course of the week) children could vote for their favourites and these could be used to form part of a whole school assembly poetry anthology. These could, over time, be collected and shared as a regular feature of whole school assemblies.*

Part 4
Host a celebratory whole school assembly in which the highlights of work from across the school can be shared and showcased. This can be presented through individual and class performances, video or audio recordings and exhibiting work produced.
Using the anthology – exploring the poems.

Each poet in this anthology has written a poem on the theme of light. They have written a short paragraph about why or how they wrote the poem. They have also all chosen a poem from another poet that is special to them. In any study of poetry this feature will help teachers to talk about how choices about language and form are made and the reasons for likes, dislikes and preferences for different poems.

We have chosen a single poem for each primary school phase. The teaching ideas will help you to use the poems with your children. However, you could follow the same structure or use these approaches with any of the poems in the anthology – perhaps picking your class favourites following the whole school assembly. In our teaching opportunities we have assumed that the poems would be studied over the course of three or four lessons – but you can expand or contract this to suit your class and their abilities and interests.
Year Group

Early Years

Poem

The Owl and the Pussy Cat by Edward Lear

Teaching Opportunities

- Prior to the session take an oversized cardboard box to represent the boat and collate props such as a cat and owl mask or puppet, jar of honey, £5 note, coins, small guitar and a large piece of blue material to represent the sea to compliment the re-enactment.
- Share the first stanza of the poem with the children, inviting them to support you in re-enacting the scene depicted.
- Through discussion explore with the children:
  - Why might the Owl and the Pussycat have decided to travel with one another?
  - Where might they be travelling to?
  - What plans they might have for their journey?
  - What do we know about their friendship? How do we know this?
- In future sessions explore the remaining stanzas in the same fashion. You may also wish to consider the use of rhyme and have the children recognise and come up with alternatives to explore, experiment and play with the language.

Suggestions for Continuous Provision:

Reading Area:
- Turn the book corner into an ocean under a star filled sky using similar fabrics referenced in the role play section. Involve the children in setting it up – you might fill the area with large floor cushions to represent different islands, with puppets or cuddly toys representing the characters from the poem for the children to read with. You could make 3D bong-trees for the back drop and add leaves over time that features poems written by the children. You could create a poetry display that features the best of your class poetry collection.
- Display Poem and rhyme cards for the children to sing, read and have read to them. Send these home to allow the children to share and re-read at home.
- Make audio versions of poems, rhymes and songs available for the children to listen to whilst tuning in to print.

Mark making/ writing:
- Write wedding invitations and vows.
- Make travel tickets.
- Make maps to mark the journey.

Small world play:
- Use the water tray with small world figures and a boat to reenact the story. The children can help you create the landscape by making stars to dangle above the tray to create the starry night and create a small world island in a tuff tray nearby using sand as well as artificial and real greenery, figures and small props to re-enact the events in land of the Bong-trees.

Role play:
- Work with the children to create the setting of the poem to form the basis of a role play area. Build a large boat experiment with paint mixing to determine the right shade of green. Use large pieces of blue material to depict the sea and glittery or sequin covered material to represent the starry night. Add key props from the poem to enable opportunities to re-enact the poem. These could include animal masks (made by the children), money, honey, a spoon, a ring, a guitar and a wedding veil. Invite the children to consider what other items might support the re-enactment and development of the plot and themes of the poem. Invite them to create the additional items, these could include and not restricted to wedding invitations, wedding seating plan, travel brochures, passports, maps and travel diary.
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<tr>
<th>Year Group</th>
<th>KS1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poem</td>
<td>Escape at Bedtime by Robert Louis Stevenson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Opportunities</td>
<td>Part 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Show the clip of starry nights from around the world as featured in a video clip such as this: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfqBFbHyYOM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfqBFbHyYOM</a></td>
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<td>• Discuss what they notice about the colours and movement of the night sky. Play the clip a second time and discuss whether they notice any shapes and patterns.</td>
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<td>• Invite the children to draw their own starry night inspired illustration on dark sugar paper using glitter and pastels.</td>
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<td>• Share the poem with the children and discuss what images it conjures for them, what they like or dislike about the poem, what questions they might have and what connections they might make.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Look at the poem Playing with Stars by Brian Moses. Can the children see why Brian Moses says that this is a companion poem – what are the similar images / pictures this poem conjures?</td>
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<td>Part 2</td>
<td>• Explain to the children that you would like to make a class illustrated picture book adaptation of this poem.</td>
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<td>• Split the poem into sets of lines of two. Place a set on each table and invite the children to use dark sugar paper and pastels to illustrate the part they found most memorable or special. Alternatively you could allocate lines to specific individuals, pair or groups to work collaboratively in illustrating the assigned lines.</td>
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<td>• Once complete discuss which of the first set of illustrations inspired by the video clip could be used to form the front and back cover as well as the end papers within the book.</td>
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<td>• Choose additional drawings created in the first part of the session to form double page spreads to intersperse the pages featuring the lines from the poem.</td>
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<td>• Stick the strips featuring the lines from the poem onto the corresponding illustration produced by the children and once placed in order laminate and bind the book.</td>
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| | • Incorporate reading the book aloud into different parts of the week, encouraging the children to join in. This will prepare them to share the book by reading it aloud in a whole school assembly.
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<tr>
<th>Year Group</th>
<th>LKS2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poem</td>
<td><em>Silver</em> by Walter de la Mare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Opportunities</td>
<td>Part 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | - Share the poem with the children. Discuss with the children their initial responses, encouraging reasons for their views.  
  - What did they like or dislike about the poem?  
  - Which part was most memorable?  
| | - Reread the poem and ask them to consider what they picture when they hear the poem read.  
| | - Provide them with copies of the poem to share in groups of 3. Invite them to discuss, text mark and annotate the parts that help them form a picture in their mind.  
| | - On dark blue sugar paper using charcoal and white chalk invite the children to draw what they picture when reading the poem. Silver glitter pens could also be used to lift certain parts of the illustration.  
| | - Look at the reasons the poet Jan Dean has given for choosing this poem – what kind of pictures did the words conjure for the poet? |
| | Part 2 |
| | - Invite the children in groups to revisit the poem and this time consider how they might read the poem as a performance.  
| | - Encourage them to highlight and text mark which parts of the poem they might read with emphasis and how they might express this emphasis through a range of methods such as:  
  - Varying tone of voice;  
  - Increasing or decreasing volume by whispering some parts for example;  
  - Changing voice, so that in some instances parts are read by an individual and in other instances parts are read by the group;  
  - Varying the pace for dramatic effect.  
  - Lingering on certain words for emphasis.  
| | - Allow the children time to discuss, plan, rehearse and refine their performances.  
| | - Invite each group to perform the poem. |
| | Part 3 |
| | - Discuss as a group which components of the performances they most enjoyed and why and how these further aided their understanding and appreciation of the poem.  
<p>| | - Draw on these to determine how you might choose to perform this to the school in whole school poetry themed celebratory assembly. |</p>
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<th>Year Group</th>
<th>UKS2</th>
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<tr>
<td>Poem</td>
<td><em>Light-Bringer</em> by Joseph Coelho</td>
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### Learning Opportunities

#### Part 1
- Share the poem with the children. Invite them to discuss their initial responses. What connections do they make with other literature and key figures?
- Divide the class into five groups.
- Provide each group with a stanza from the poem.
- Invite each group to text mark and annotate their stanza to aid in their consideration of how they might read their part of the poem in performance.
- Encourage them to highlight and text mark which parts of the poem they might read with emphasis and how they might express this emphasis through a range of methods such as:
  - Varying tone of voice;
  - Increasing or decreasing volume by whispering some parts for example;
  - Changing voice, so that in some instances parts are read by an individual and in other instances parts are read by the group;
  - Varying the pace for dramatic effect.
  - Lingering on certain words for emphasis.
- Allow the children time to discuss, plan, rehearse and refine the performance of their stanza.
- Invite each group to perform their part of the poem.
- Look at the section where Joseph talks about how he wrote the poem, what he says about inspiration and construction. Does this change how they would perform the poem?

#### Part 2
- Invite the children to discuss which parts are most memorable and why. How does the language help us in picturing the images and creating a sense of drama?

Invite the children to draw a memorable moment from the poem. Once complete, encourage them to return to the poem and lift or adapt a word, phrase or line that best captures the moment portrayed in their illustration. Ask them to write their chosen words on a strip of paper.

#### Part 3
- Collate the strips and use this to discuss how they might be ordered to form a class collaborative poem inspired by the *Light-Bringer*. 