

Wonderland: Alice in Poetry, Edited by Michaela Morgan, Illustrated by Sir John Tenniel (Macmillan)

In this anthology, Michaela Morgan curates the poetry of Lewis Carroll and his sources, inviting new and established contemporary poets to pen their responses. In a variety of ways, modern poets provide their own take on Carroll's poems, many of which were parodies of verse from his own times. Roger Stevens has a modern young lad chide Carroll in a similar way to that in which an earlier young man mocked old Father William (a poem which in turn was modelled on one by Robert Southey). Stevens also ends the poem with a sly reference to a significant Carroll character. There are two responses to the famous nonsense poem 'Jabberwocky'. Joseph Coelho employs made up words to create a poem that feels full of action and to which the reader can supply their own meaning, while Michaela Morgan uses the same pattern and rhyme scheme as Carroll to express the horrors of hay fever.

This collection was shortlisted for the 2017 CLPE Poetry Award.

Overall aims of this teaching sequence.

- To explore and understand the importance of poetry as a genre
- To know how to listen and respond to a wide range of poems from a response anthology
- To explore and compare the poetry and literary works of both contemporary and earlier poets
- To understand that poems are written for different reasons
- To interpret poems for performance
- To gain and maintain the interest of the listener through effective performance of poems
- To recognise how a poet uses poetry as a voice to express their own feelings and views
- To explore how poetry is presented on the page to enhance our understanding
- To draft, compose and write poems based on personal interests, experiences and emotions or fantasy poems using language with intent for effect on the reader

This teaching sequence is designed for a Year 5 or Year 6 class.

Overview of this teaching sequence.

This teaching sequence is designed to be delivered over 15 sessions, but teachers will want to use their own judgement about the length of time their class will need to spend on each of the sessions. The teaching sequence is split into three sections.

The first section – Down the Rabbit Hole - introduces Alice and Wonderland and explores the things that inspired Lewis Carroll's writing; in particular, his response to ideas around morality in Victorian society, his response to this and writing of his time, and his play with language. It also introduces us to this collection as a response anthology to the poems penned by Lewis Carroll. We return to this section at the end of the sequence when considering our own responses to his writing and ideas throughout his Alice books and poetry. The second section – Wonderland – focuses on the way in which poetry can be pieces of scientific observation as well as being a medium in which we express our human experiences and relationship with the world. In the final section – Through the Looking Glass - children are given the opportunity to explore poems written about the experience of growing up and changing as well as shifting attitudes towards childhood over time. This leads us back to reflecting on the way in which Lewis Carroll viewed childhood, his response to Victorian views of children's place in society and how Lewis Carroll challenged this through Alice's adventures.

In each section, children have the opportunity to listen to read poetry, listen to poems read, offer personal responses to the poems, to prepare them for performance and to write their own. There is opportunity throughout the sequence for children to visualise and revisit Wonderland, look at poetry on the page, lift it off the page with performance, play with language and familiar rhymes, and write poems in response to others and that explore themes of interest. Their poems will be published in a class anthology and these as well as their performances can be shared with the school community in a variety of ways.

<p>Teaching Approaches</p> <p>Reading Aloud Listening to the poet and responding Visualising and drawing Shared writing Response and Editing Publishing</p>	<p>Outcomes</p> <p>Art and illustration related to poems studied Written responses to poems studied Poetry performance Text marking Drafting, redrafting and writing poetry in different forms Published poems</p>
<p>Exploring Poetic Forms and Devices</p> <p>Poetic Forms Explored:</p> <p>Nursery Rhyme Song Narrative Poems Ode Concrete Poems</p> <p>Poetic Devices Explored:</p> <p>Imagery Neolanguage Personification Repetition Rhyming Couplets Rhythm Word Play Simile</p>	<p>Opportunities to develop and reinforce phonic knowledge and reading fluency</p> <p>Rhythm and Rhyme Onset and Rime Different representations and pronunciations of vowel sounds Rehearsal and performance of poetry Homophones</p>
<p>Cross Curricular Links:</p> <p>Art:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In supporting ideas for poetry composition, give children the chance to create their own observational pencil sketches in sketchbooks. <i>What captures their attention? What do they find interesting?</i> <p>Music:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The children could explore how the medium of song is used in many early nursery rhymes and why. They could look at the way in which song lyrics are organised and compare devices used in poems, rhymes and songs that enable memorability; rhythm, repetition, alliteration, imagery, narrative, etc. <p>Science:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children may choose scientific concepts and themes as an inspiration for their poetry such as animals and the natural world, space, different environments and habitats. Cross curricular research may help enlarge children’s knowledge and stock of words for writing. <p>History:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children could research the life and influence of Lewis Carroll within the context of Victorian England and explore attitudes to childhood then and now. The children could explore the classic poets featured in this response anthology and consider the context within which they wrote their rhymes and poems and indeed their influence. 	
<p>Links to other texts and resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable access to versions of <i>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</i> and <i>Alice through the Looking Glass</i> by Lewis Carroll in text, audio and film forms. It is worth exploring decisions that went into abridged versions of the text and allowing the children to explore the range of interpretations, including comparison between John Tenniel’s original illustrations and those by contemporary illustrators like Helen Oxenbury and Emma Chichester Clark and filmmakers like Disney and Tim Burton. See https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks/alices-adventures-wonderland for a list of some editions of <i>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</i>. 	

- Create a display of classic and contemporary poets featured in this anthology as well as those known to the children. Many of the poets are featured on CLPE's Poetryline website – www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline - for example:
 - John Agard:
 - *Goldilocks on CCTV* (Frances Lincoln)
 - *Under the Moon & Over the Sea* (Walker Books)
 - *Inside Out. Children's poets discuss their work* edited by JonArno Lawson (Walker Books)
 - *A Caribbean Dozen* (Walker Books)
 - Joseph Coelho
 - *Werewolf Club Rules* (Frances Lincoln)
 - Roger McGough
 - *Poetry Pie* (Puffin)
 - *All the Best* (Puffin)
 - Tony Mitton:
 - *Plum* (Barn Owl Books)
 - Grace Nichols:
 - *Sun Time Snow Time* (Bloomsbury)
 - *Under the Moon & Over the Sea* (Walker Books)
 - *Inside Out. Children's poets discuss their work* edited by JonArno Lawson (Walker Books)
 - *A Caribbean Dozen* (Walker Books)
 - *Cosmic Disco* (Frances Lincoln)
 - Rachel Rooney:
 - *The Language of Cat* (Frances Lincoln)
 - *My Life as a Goldfish* (Frances Lincoln)
- Display, read and share together books, websites and film that will support wider cross curricular learning, such as:
 - *Tiny. The Invisible World of Microbes* by Nicola Davies and Emily Sutton (Walker Books)
 - *The Story of Stars* by Neal Layton (Hodder)
 - *Professor Astro Cat's Frontiers of Space* by Dr Dominic Walliman and Ben Newman (Flying Eye)
 - *A First Book of Animals* by Nicola Davies and Petr Horáček (Walker Books)
 - Texts from Walker Books' Nature Storybook series
 - BBC website:
 - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/wildlife>
 - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/space/>

Teaching Sessions

Part 1: Down the Rabbit Hole

The first part of this sequence introduces the children to the focus collection, *Wonderland: Alice in Poetry*, the editor Michaela Morgan and the contemporary poets that contributed to this response anthology. It is an opportunity to explore children's prior knowledge about Lewis Carroll and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Alice through the Looking Glass* and introducing them to those new to the poet and the magical and subversive world he created.

Before beginning the sequence:

- Ensure that individual poetry journals (small notebooks, which could be handmade) are available for each child.
- Explain to the children that this will be their own personal poetry notebook where they can write their own poems throughout the sequence of work. Explain that these won't be marked, although they are welcome to share them with you. Explain that you will also be keeping your own poetry journal. It is important that you are writing alongside the children throughout the sequence, so that children experience how it is to write through a model by an

experienced writer, facing the same challenges and successes as they will face.

- Create a focus display or poetry corner, where you can display a copy of the front cover of the book, photographs of the contributing poets, a copy of the text and other poetry collections that the children know or could be inspired by, including those written, or edited by the poets featured in this collection.

Session 1: Reading Aloud, Responding to and Being Inspired by Poetry

- Read aloud 'Read Me' by Joshua Seigal (p. 8-9). *How does the poem make you feel when you hear it? Scribe children's responses around a copy of the poem, or allow time for them to write their own responses on post-it notes that can be stuck around a copy of the poem on display.*
- Link the poem to personal connections; *have they felt this way before when being absorbed in a poem, a story, a book, a film or a game? What was it like? How did it make them feel? How can being immersed in, say, a story make you feel so involved as well as so insignificant?*
- Re-read the poem aloud and further investigate the feelings that are created by the poem. *Whose voice are we hearing? What tone is it taking with us, the reader? What is the impact of this? What do you think the message of the poem is? What is the poet telling us about writing poetry? How do you feel when you read it? What makes you feel like this? What language has the poet used that makes an impact on you as a reader; that helps create atmosphere or evokes emotion?*
- Encourage the children to think about words and phrases that they have heard and find vivid or enjoyable. Encourage the children to discuss their meaning as well as supporting them with words or phrases that they are unsure about.
- Do the children know any other poets like Joshua Seigal and if they have any favourite poems now or throughout their childhood? *What do they like about these poems? How do they make them feel? What images do they conjure up for them?*
- Record the children's favourite poets and poems on the focus display and ask children to bring in books or copies with their favourite poems or recite them if they are able. Display a range of classic and contemporary poetry collections and anthologies in the poetry area and make this a central feature of the children's daily reading routine.
- Create a culture of recommendation by drawing children's attention to a poet or poem that you think they may like based on their known preferences and giving the children ample opportunity to share their favourites with each other. Encourage them to use their personal poetry journals for creative responses to the poems they are hearing and reading and use the class poetry journal for wider, more open discussion and response.
- Help children to source texts in school, if they don't have copies of these, and show them how they can use the resources on CLPE's Poetryline, including watching favourite contemporary poets perform their poems:
www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline

Session 2: Introducing the poet, Lewis Carroll, Alice and Wonderland – Reading Aloud and Book Talk

The experience of being read to is likely to be the real foundation of children's knowledge of poetry, and is also going to be a major influence on how they write themselves. So it is important that it should be as rich, interesting and 'ear-catching' as it can be. It is important that voices other than the teacher's should be heard interpreting a poem. In this way, a range of accents, dialects and voices can be introduced into the reading. It can be particularly valuable for children to hear the poets themselves reading their own poems. This allows authentic voices to be heard.

- When you feel the children have had rich opportunity to share and enjoy a range of favourite poetry with each other, read aloud the poem 'Wonderland' by Rachel Rooney (p.6) but do not show them the accompanying illustration or the poem on the page. Give time for the children to share their initial responses to the text. *What do you think the poem is about? Of what does it remind you? Who is the poem about? How do you know? What is happening? How does the poem make you feel?*
- Read the poem again. Elicit from the children what they know about 'Wonderland', Alice's adventures and each or either of the two books. Encourage them to share what they know about the characters or props featured in the stories, such as the queen, the Cheshire cat, turtle-soup, a golden key. *Which events are memorable to the children?*

Why? Invite the children to share how they know about Alice; from a version of either or both books, certain poems perhaps read aloud to them from anthologies, the films or a stage production.

- Now read aloud the poem again and ask the children which words and phrases they find memorable or vivid and why. Focus on the repeated phrase: *'wonderland in Alice'*. Why do you think this phrase is repeated? What do you think the writer means about 'Wonderland' being in Alice as opposed to a place she visits?
- Now give the children a copy of the poem as it is laid out on the page, but without Tenniel's illustration, and allow them to look at its overall shape. Draw attention to the way the poem undulates in and out as if shrinking and growing in breadth. It is useful to draw on earlier discussions around events in the story that the children remember most vividly, such as the episode when (in Chapter 4 of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*), Alice shrinks and grows to disproportionate size having eaten cake or drunk from a bottle. Encourage the children to read it for themselves and consider the poet's intentions. Why do the children think Rachel Rooney has chosen to have *'and green'* and *'and fears'* stand alone and isolated on their own line?
- Introduce the front cover of the collection and look at the title and illustration. Ask the children if they know any of the poems by Lewis Carroll alluded to in *Wonderland*, for example, 'Jabberwocky', 'The Walrus and the Carpenter', 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Bat'. *How do they know them?* It would be worth eliciting from the children whether they know the poems from the stories, from poetry anthologies or being told them. This will be explored further in the final session when responding to the *Wonderland: Alice in Poetry* collection as a whole and reflecting on their learning.
- Share the way in which the anthology has been organised. Read aloud these and other poems by Lewis Carroll in the collection and any original classic poems that he was influenced by himself when composing his own to give the children a sense of the context within which Lewis Carroll played around with ideas.
- Gather a collection of versions of *Alice Adventures in Wonderland*, with original and contemporary illustrations, both full and abridged, to which the children can hear read aloud or read and revisit independently. Read aloud from the display and encourage the children to read and revisit the collection together.

Session 3: Introducing the Poetry Collection - Reading Aloud and Book Talk

- Return to 'Read Me' by Joshua Seigal (p. 8-9) and read the poem aloud.
- Provide pairs or groups of children copies of the poem to look at. *How does the way it is arranged on the page add meaning to the words? What does it have in common with Rooney's 'Wonderland'. How does it allude to Alice's Adventures in Wonderland?* You might want to give the children time to revisit the story independently or revisit Chapter 4.
- Ask the children to read the poem for themselves and ask them to investigate patterned language, the succinct use of words, the line breaks, spacing between stanzas, font size, the way the final words of the poem are repeated and placed on the page as well as the words chosen by the poet. *How do these elements feed your ideas about the poem?*
- Collect the children's responses to both poems in the class poetry journal or working wall.
- This is an opportune time to discuss the idea of this being an anthology that gives us the voice of contemporary poets responding to the unique work and voice of Lewis Carroll. You can watch Michaela Morgan being interviewed about this on <https://www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poet-interviews>
- Provide opportunity and resources for the children to explore the life of Lewis Carroll – or Charles Lutwidge Dodson - in more depth so that they can appreciate his own motivations as a poet; his family background, his mathematical mind, his ease around children, his response to Victorian ideas of childhood and the way in which he played with language and well known, classic children's literature.
- Read aloud the classic and contemporary poems in the collection for pleasure and invite the children to explore it for themselves, sharing familiar and fresh favourites and talking about the connections between the contemporary response poems and the original Lewis Carroll.

Session 4: Performing Poetry

If poetry is not given a voice, if it just stays on the page as a printed object, then it is not going to come alive for most

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children. Giving voice and sound to poetry is an important key to unlocking the meanings and music contained in each poem. It is through performing poetry that the quality of rhyme and verse form, and the power of language can be explored and realised. Presenting poetry to an audience in this way might also lead children to recognise more clearly the humour in a poem or reflect more thoughtfully on its meaning.

- Give pairs of children copies of the poem 'Read Me' by Joshua Seigal (p. 8-9) and give them time to practise reading it aloud in different ways.
- Bring the pairs together in small groups and ask them to negotiate how the poem can be performed as a group. Which words or phrases might be emphasised and to lift meaning from the page through use of voice or instrument, varying pitch or dynamics, actions or sound effects. Would it be read in unison or in turn or even echoed to enhance meaning or elicit emotional response from the audience?
- Ask the groups to text mark their printed poem with performance notes and rehearse their performance reading ready to share with the wider group.
- You might extend this session by encouraging the children to respond to and feedback to each other's rehearsals as well as performance readings and making refinements to prepare a final performance. This could be shared more widely across the school community in a number of ways. You might film the performances to support the children's engagement in the response process as well as filming the final polished performance for a wider audience.

Part 2: Wonderland – Odes to Our World

This part of the sequence introduces the children to the idea that poetry can be an observation to the world and, specifically, to explore the poetic form, odes. Given the wide-ranging poetry in this anthology there is a real opportunity for children to respond to the range of poetic devices employed by poets to elicit intended response from their reader. Children are inspired to create their own odes to the natural world, drawing on their knowledge of poetic form.

Session 5: Introducing Odes

Odes are formal poems written in honour of a person, thing or place They tend to be formal in tone and are addressed to the subject about which they are written.

- Before beginning this part of the sequence it would be beneficial for the children to have access to their poetry journal or you may wish for them to have a small sketch book with which to make their own observations of the world they inhabit. These observations could contribute to poetry writing of their own.
- Read aloud 'The Star' by Jane Taylor (p. 44) so that they can hear or be introduced to the whole poem. Doubtless the children will be able to anticipate the rhyming pairs, drawing on the strong couplet patterning and their knowledge of the world, stars and the night sky. Children will most likely know this familiar rhyme as 'Twinkle, Twinkle' and be able to recite or sing the first verse, perhaps more. Ask the children why they think the poem has been written. Tell the children that this is a special poem, called an ode, written in celebration of a person, thing or place.
- Read aloud 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Bat' by Lewis Carroll (p.45). Allow time for the children to discuss the poem, what they like/dislike, the language, patterns and rhymes on the page and to raise any questions they have.
- Re-read 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Bat'. Show the children the illustration of the Mad Hatter and ask them how they think Carroll intended them to respond to his ode. *Why did he choose this small creature?* The children will likely be aware of this character and his topsy-turvy, witty take on the world and they can hear and revisit Chapter 7 in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* later to confirm this. Consider Carroll's use of language and how he has achieved humour in his homage, for instance, the comparison made between the wing span and a tea-tray through the simile *'Like a tea-tray in the sky.'*
- They will likely have made the connection between the structure of this poem and the original, classic nursery rhyme that influenced it. *What is the impact of choosing a classic nursery rhyme as the structure for his ode?*
- Reveal a photograph of a bat on the IWB or as a large scale image on a flipchart. *How do you think the poem should be performed?* An ode talks directly to its subject, so give groups of children a copy of the poem and time

to mark up with performance notes, rehearse and perform as if speaking to the bat.

- Ask the children to reflect whether there is a person, animal, place or thing on there that is special to them that deserves to be celebrated in an ode; either in direct celebration or with a humorous twist. You might give them time to think about this with their personal poetry journals.
- Pick one thing, perhaps an animal, from your list and think about the words, phrases and emotions that come to mind as you picture it. Write these down. It may help to draw or get an image of the thing you want to write about first to stimulate your thoughts and ideas.
- Model doing this with one of your own for the children to see: e.g. *Polar Bear: ice bear, fat, hollow fur, black skin, Arctic, claws, majestic, strength, swims in frozen seas, run on ice, stalks seals, unstoppable, patient, camouflaged hunter, lone hunter, mother bear, gentle, playful, Inuits, survivors.*
- Investigate ways to draft these ideas into a verse. Decide whether you want parts of your verse to rhyme. Most odes do, but they don't have to; freeing the children from the constraint of rhyme might unlock greater emotion and a wider breadth of language in their writing. If you do decide to make your ode rhyme, think about how you want to format the rhyme scheme of this poem. You can make every two lines or every other line rhyme. You may want to have a rhyming dictionary nearby to refer to as you go and look at which words are and aren't easy to rhyme. It is important also to model where challenges arise with finding words that rhyme and to model when to put aside an idea that might not be working with the rhyme.
- Show the children how to refine ideas, editing as you go for coherence and cohesion. An example might look like this:

*Ice survivor, polar bear,
Majestic in dwindling frozen land.
Invisible through hollow fur,
Stalking seals with swipe of hand.
Ruthless, cruel, 'til mother's care
Will hunt for cubs and future bears.
Oh majestic bear, you taught us how,
We'll preserve the frozen land for you now.*

- When you have read aloud for sense, meaning and flow, think of a title that reflects the subject, emotion or sentiment of your poem, e.g. *Homage to Ice Bear* or *Ode to Polar Bear*.
- Give the children ample time to begin finding inspiration and freely recording their ideas in their poetry journals. Provide the children with engaging non-fiction texts, images and access to appropriate technology to enable their reflections and research.
- You might also want to create a display of nursery rhymes. Encourage the children to share and recite their favourite early childhood nursery rhymes which may be in a range of languages. These could be collated in a self-published class anthology which could include the children's own illustrations as well as their favourite illustrations and a history of the rhyme itself; known author, influence in literature and, of course, inclusion by Carroll in his books.
- The children might enjoy revisiting 'The Star' and preparing it for a performance reading. Groups could then take a verse each to contribute to whole class performance once they have text marked, rehearsed and refined their own part.

Session 6: Reading Aloud, Exploring Form and Composition

- Read aloud a selection of poems from the collection in which poets have made an animal their focus; as ode or as a way to urge children to follow suit or avoid in their own behaviour. These could include: 'Against Idleness and Mischief' by Isaac Watts (p.10-11), 'How Doth The Little Crocodile...' by Lewis Carroll (p.11), 'How Doth then Scary Centipede' by Roger Stevens (p.12), 'The Mouse's Tail/Tale' by Lewis Carroll (p.14-15), 'Dinah and her Mouse's Tale' by Liz Brownlee (p.16-17), 'Advice from a Caterpillar' by Rachel Rooney (p.20-21) as well as revisiting 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Bat' by Lewis Carroll (p.45).

- Encourage the children to respond freely after the first reading, eliciting responses with basic Book Talk prompts, then hone in on language choices, patterns, form and poetic devices, for example, how Lewis Carroll's faith to the rhyming couplet in *How Doth The Little Crocodile...* is at odds with the ferocity and cruelty of this creature. *What then is the impact of using rhyme in this case? Which other poems rhyme? What is the rhyming pattern; ABAB rhyme or AABB or is half rhyme employed? Is there always faith to a rhyming pattern within the same poem? Why might this be? What effect does this have on you?*
- When the children then look at the poem on the page, ask them to consider how the shape and form adds to meaning and why, for example, a concrete poem and the use of pun are so effective and appropriate for 'The Mouse's Tail/Tale' and 'Dinah and her Mouse's Tale'.
- Encourage the children to choose something from their ideas and inspirations pages in their journals and follow the same process as your shared writing in the previous session, first brainstorming words and phrases, then, using some of these to form some phrases which could then be worked into a poem celebrating an animal and entitled.
- Encourage the children to read their ideas aloud to see how they work off the page, and whether lines flow before thinking of a title.
Support the children to draw on what they have learned about the different forms and devices used by poets to elicit specific responses from their readers. They might draw on their initial responses and what they noticed about form, structure, language choice, rhyme and patterns. They might wish to create a shape poem. Some children may be able to create an advisory poem that draws on the desirable or indeed undesirable behaviour of their animal and the consequence of that.
- Allow the children ample time to create, shape and play around with their poems until they are ready to publish them as an illustrated page within a class anthology. The children could also prepare, rehearse and perform their poems for a wider audience.

Session 7: Reading Aloud and Response

- Read aloud 'Star' by Michaela Morgan (p.46-47) and elicit the children's initial responses, using the basic book talk prompts. *What is the poem telling us? How does she feel about stars? How does it make us feel?*
- Discuss with the children the connections they have made with 'The Star' nursery rhyme and 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Bat' both in prosody, rhythmic pattern and structure but also in that it is a response poem. Read these two poems aloud again to provide context to these observations and to enable further connections and patterns to be absorbed. Capture the children's ideas in the class journal.
- Read aloud again and ask the children to respond more deeply to patterns, rhyme, repetitions, language choice, etc. Are any words or phrases particularly memorable or vivid to the ear? Why?
- When the poem is presented to the children on the page, ask them to consider how its overall shape and verse structure compares to the original nursery rhyme. Read aloud 'Star' again while they tune in to the print and ask the children to consider how the meaning and message shifts from the first verse, drawing on enquiry around scientific fact; the second, an observation of the human relationship with stars; the third, further observation of our human experience; through to the last which likens a little child to the star and is concerned with the future.
 - *How do you feel about stars?*
 - *Do you ever gaze at the stars? How does it make you feel? Why?*
 - *Why should the poet hope that star's future would be bright? Why would it not be bright?*
- You could continue to have wider discussions in cross curricular work about the life of stars as well as environmental issues for the future of our planet.
- Groups could take a verse each and discuss what it is saying to us.
 - *What is the poet doing to create a sense of awe and wonder?*
 - *Whose voice are we hearing? What is the tone? Why is the poet speaking on our behalf? What effect does this have?*
 - *To whom is the poet speaking? Why? What is the impact?*
 - *Which words and phrases does she choose to use that ensure we feel empathy and admiration for the star; that we feel protective towards it?*
 - *What would happen if it were a poem about stars in general as opposed to this one star.*
- You could link back to devices used by script writers for news reports and documentaries to hone in on one

particular animal in order to provoke investment from the audience.

- Ask groups to come back together and summarise what they think with each other about their own verse as well as what they consider to be the overall intention by Michaela Morgan and what it inspires in us.
- Have the children watch her read the poem on www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline/morgan-michaela and compare it with their performances.

Session 8: Performing Poetry

- Give groups of children copies of the poem 'Star' by Michaela Morgan (p.46-47) and give them time to practise reading a chosen verse aloud in different ways.
- Ask them to negotiate how the poem can be performed as a group. Which words or phrases might be emphasised and meaning lifted from the page through use of voice or instrument, varying pitch or dynamics, actions or sound effects. Would it be read in unison or in turn or even echoed to enhance meaning or elicit emotional response from the audience?
- Ask the groups to text mark their printed verse with stage directions and rehearse their performance reading ready to share with the wider group as a whole poem.
- You might extend this session by encouraging the children to respond to and feedback to each other's rehearsals as well as performance readings and make refinements to a final performance. This could be shared more widely across the school community in a number of ways. You might film the performances to support the children's engagement in the response process as well as filming the final polished performance for a wider audience.

Session 9: Visualisation and Artwork – Exploring Neolanguage

- Give the children access to a variety of art materials that allow them to put their visualisations on paper quickly, such as soft pencils, charcoal pencils, pastels or brush pens.
- Read aloud 'Jabberwocky' by Lewis Carroll (p.72-74) without revealing the illustrations. Allow the children time and space to draw the picture the poem places in their mind, perhaps reading the poem aloud several times as you draw alongside the children.
- Display the children's artwork on the walls around the room and allow children to conduct a gallery walk, walking round the room, observing each other's ideas, looking at the similarities and differences in their interpretations.
- Explain to the children that a poem gives a snapshot of a moment or an idea for the reader or listener, but each reader or listener will connect with it in a different way, just as they have done with their drawings.
- Provide the children with the printed poem. Ask them which words or phrases enabled them to imagine pictures so vividly. Explore and write some of the words they drew upon, looking particularly at how we can derive meaning from the words that are apparently nonsensical. Discuss what they remind us of, including other words and what they mean. Explain that Lewis Carroll is renowned for his play with language and the way in which he created new words by combining known words to create new meaning. The children may link their knowledge of neolanguage with well-loved authors such as Roald Dahl or Michael Rosen who continue this rich tradition of meaningful wordplay.
- Now reveal the illustrations that accompany the poem, by John Tenniel. How does his interpretation compare with the children's? It's important for the children to know that all these responses are unique and are guided by the children's and the illustrator's individual interpretations, so there is no 'right or wrong' way of illustrating the poem.
- This is a poem with strong rhythms, rich in imagery, dramatic in its narrative and strong in characterisation; it makes an ideal poem for the children to go on to recite and perform.
- The children might like to explore other poets and storytellers who draw on neolanguage and make a collection of such words. Draw attention to the *Roald Dahl Dictionary* (Oxford University Press) where they may find some already familiar to them. Read aloud 'The Ursin Fight' by Joseph Coelho (p.76-77) in this collection to see how he has gone about creating a poem with made up words. Provide opportunities for the children to engage in this creative tradition and have a go at composing their own poems using neolanguage in their personal journals. Encourage them to read them out loud to a trusted friend or response partner to realise the impact on their reader.

Session 10: Visualisation, Artwork and Response

- Give the children access to a variety of art materials that allow them to put their visualisations on paper quickly,

such as soft pencils, charcoal pencils, pastels or brush pens.

- Read aloud 'Feeling Icky' by Michaela Morgan (p.78-79) without revealing the border illustration or have the children watch her read it on www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline/morgan-michaela. Elicit from the children what the poem reminds them of? Why? You may wish to read 'Jabberwocky' to contextualise this discussion around rhythm and the battle theme. Encourage them to consider how it is the same, similar and how it differs. Ask the children how it makes them feel? *Can they relate to it from personal experience? Does it bring back miserable memories or make them laugh.* Encourage the children to value all responses and interpretations.
- Read it aloud again and allow the children time and space to draw the picture the poem places in their mind, perhaps reading the poem aloud several times as you draw alongside the children.
- Encourage the children to annotate their drawings with words and phrases that come to mind or that they picked up on from the poem. Ask them which words or phrases enabled them to imagine pictures so vividly. *Why? What is impact of the poet's language choice?*
- Display the children's artwork on the walls around the room and allow children to conduct a gallery walk, walking round the room, observing each other's ideas, looking at the similarities and differences in their interpretations.
- Provide the children with the printed poem, give them time to read it together and engage them in book talk:

Tell me...

 - ...what do you like or dislike about it? Why?
 - ...of what it reminds you - in stories, poems, real life?
 - ...do you have any questions? Does anything puzzle you?
 - ...do you notice any patterns, rhymes or repetitions in the poem? What is the effect?
- Capture the children's response around a copy of the poem in the class journal.
- Again, this is a poem with strong rhythms, rich in imagery, dramatic in its narrative and strong in characterisation; it makes an ideal poem for the children to go on to recite and perform.

Part 3: Through the Looking Glass – Tales of Transition

In this part of the sequence, there is opportunity for the children to make connections with their personal experiences of childhood and growing up, including discussion around adult attitudes now and in Victorian times. This section might be supportive in enabling the children to consider ways in which they can manage change in themselves and their circumstances. The poems in this section express the experience of childhood in ways that may be felt deeply by the children and could give rise to the children using poetry as a safe means of their own self-expression.

Session 11: Reading Aloud and Personal Responses

- Read aloud 'I Knew Who I Was This Morning' by Tony Mitton (p.18-19) without revealing the illustration of Alice. Elicit the children's initial responses.

Tell me...

 - ...what do you like or dislike about it? Why?
 - ...of what it reminds you - in stories, poems, real life?
 - ...do you have any questions? Does anything puzzle you?
- Discuss with the children what connections they are making with their own lives. *Whose voice are we hearing? Why do you think that?* Encourage the children to share with a trusted partner how they feel about the physical changes happening in them; what about changes to the way they think about things from even a year ago?
- The children can capture their thoughts and feelings in a personal journal. They may have worries and fears about growing older and the changes and transitions to come. They may feel excited at the prospect. Explain that a poem can be an expression of thoughts and feelings.
- Elicit from the children how they think the child feels throughout the poem. Is the emotion consistent as the poem progresses? Collect a range of words that describe the emotions they feel are being expressed, drawing on these to support the children to articulate their own experiences.
- Explore the way in which the poet has created uncertainty and doubt, for instance through word choices like 'but', 'yet' and 'or' as well as the questions being asked. Do they feel they are able to answer these questions or

are they rhetorical? Are they questions that can be answered easily or are they philosophical?

- You might wish to take one or two questions and conduct a philosophy session in which the children can explore ideas around who we really are, identity and concepts of thought. You could read 'On Growing Up' by Cheryl Moskowitz to support the children's reflections.
- The children might like to create their own poems about how they feel in their journal and decide if they wish to remain the only reader or if they want to share them with others.
- Ask the children to consider how the theme of the poem relates to Alice. Reveal the illustration and read or revisit Chapter 5 by which time she has undergone many physical changes and emotional uncertainty.
- The children could work with their families to create a shrine box, scrap book or digital record in which they could place objects, drawings, writing or photographs that capture moments significant to them. They could continue this project as a record of moving from Primary to Secondary school and the changes they have experienced and will undergo during this period. Support the children with managing change by helping them to know what will be reassuringly familiar, what fresh experiences they can look forward to and develop strategies for the children to share their concerns in ways that are helpful for them.

Session 12: Reading Aloud and Performance

- Read aloud 'The Parent and Child Quadrille' by Michaela Morgan (p.58-59) or have the children watch her read it on www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline/morgan-michaela Elicit the children's immediate responses.
 - *How did it make them feel? Why?*
 - *What did it remind them of? Have they heard anything like this in their own lives? Who says this kind of thing to them? Why?*
 - *Whose voice is speaking in the poem? With what tone? Who is the audience? What is the intent?*
- Read the poem aloud again, or listen to Michaela Morgan read it on CLPE's Poetryline, this time drawing attention to the patterned language and repeated refrains they hear. *What is the impact? Does it remind the children of any other poems?* They may be reminded of Michael Rosen's 'Don't' which they could revisit or listen to it being performed by him: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oaq3gzswei0>
- Read aloud Lewis Carroll's 'The Lobster Quadrille' (p.56-57) from which Morgan took inspiration then 'The Spider and the Fly' by Mary Howitt (p.52-55) to which Lewis Carroll parodied.
- Compare the poems; the rhythmic patterns, tone, sense of audience and repeated refrains. You could read Chapter 10 of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* to discover how Alice felt about the rules and tests that she had to negotiate. *How are those that children are expected to abide by nowadays similar to or different from those in Wonderland and, in fact, in Victorian times?* Children could debate whether it is even possible to behave as perfectly as requested by this parent. *What would happen if every child behaved like this all the time?*
- Invite the children to choose which of the three poems they would like to perform in their groups and allow ample time for them to decide the most effective way to do this. They might choose to elicit some kind of audience interaction given that there is dialogue in the two older poems and an unspoken child in Morgan's.
- Read aloud 'Speak Gently' by David Bates (p.36-37), 'Speak Roughly to Your Little Boy' by Lewis Carroll (p.38) and 'Child Care' by Michaela Morgan (p.39 and available to watch on www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline/morgan-michaela) in which the advice is that for the parent. The children could compare the attitude of the Duchess toward parenting little boys and why they think Michaela Morgan has felt the need to offer advice to parents specific to gender. Provide a secure and trusting environment in which the boys and the girls might compare their own childhood experiences. *Do they feel they live in a society in which they are treated equally? Do they think they should be?* Support the children in expressing themselves whilst mediating their responses to ideas with which they may not agree.

Session 13: Reading Aloud and Responding

- Read aloud 'After Wonderland' by Michaela Morgan (p. 108-9) or have the children watch her read it on www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline/morgan-michaela. *How does the poem make you feel when you hear it? How did it sound?* Scribe children's responses around a copy of the poem, or allow time for them to write their own responses on post-it notes that can be stuck around a copy of the poem on display. Draw on personal connections and the emotions of Alice in the poem having left Wonderland. *Why would she be thinking of the rabbit at the*

back of her mind?

- Look at copies of the poem in pairs or groups. *How does the way it is arranged on the page add meaning to the words? What connections can we make with other poems that we have heard, for instance with Rooney's 'Wonderland'. Draw on the children's research on Lewis Carroll to support their understanding of his attitudes to childhood and how they differed from many in Victorian society. Why might Alice yearn for Wonderland? Do the children ever yearn to be free of their duties and routine, the rules and expectations of their modern life? How do they achieve escapism and a sense of freedom?*
- Ask the children to read the poem for themselves and ask them to investigate patterned language, the succinct use of words, the line breaks, spacing between stanzas, font size, the way the final words of the poem are repeated and placed on the page as well as the words chosen by the poet. *How do these elements feed your ideas about the poem?* Collect the children's responses to both poems in the class poetry journal or on the working wall.
- Invite the children to perform this poem in any way they choose that will best lift the meaning from the page to stage. *How can the children provide a sense of the printed poem in their performance reading?*
- You could show the children 'Messages' by Rachel Rooney (p.69-71) and discuss how she has achieved the sense of going back and forth through the looking glass using mirrored writing and how such a short poem can provoke in us questions of belonging and identity.

Back Through the Looking Glass – Reflections

Here, like Alice, we return to ground and have opportunity to reflect on this anthology as a whole as well as our shifting impressions of Lewis Carroll and the Wonderland he created. The children can respond, as is fitting, to this response anthology, through the medium of poetry.

Session 14: Reading Aloud, Visualising and Performance

- Reflect on *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Alice through the Looking Glass* and the magical impossible world that Lewis Carroll created for us. Invite the children to talk about their favourite character or moment.
- Give the children access to a variety of art materials that allow them to put their visualisations on paper quickly, such as soft pencils, charcoal pencils, pastels or brush pens.
- Read aloud 'Six Impossible Things to Do Before Breakfast' by Roger McGough (p.89) without revealing the illustration. Allow the children time and space to draw the pictures the poem places in their mind, perhaps reading the poem aloud several times as you draw alongside the children.
- Encourage the children to annotate their drawings with words or phrases that come to mind or that directly influenced their image from the poem.
- Display the children's artwork on the walls around the room and allow children to conduct a gallery walk, walking round the room, observing each other's ideas, looking at the similarities and differences in their interpretations.
- Provide printed copies of the poem and invite the children to read it together, discussing their favourite impossible thing to do.
- Invite groups of children to perform the poem as they choose to lift the meaning and maintain the humour intended by the poet.
- The children may wish to conjure fresh lines, imagining different 'impossible things to do before breakfast' and bring these together to create a class poem.

Session 15: Book Talk

- Read aloud 'Grounded' by Michaela Morgan (p.114 or listen to the poet read it on Poetryline) to complete our journey through *Wonderland: Alice in Poetry*. *How do the children think Alice feels to be back to her normal life? How would you feel?*
- *Ask the children to consider the collection as a whole and support their discussion through Book Talk prompts: Tell me...*

- *What did you like about it?*
- *Is there anything you disliked? Why?*
- *Does it remind you of other anthologies or collections of poetry? How?*
- *Are you left puzzled by anything? Do you have questions?*
- Collect the children's responses around a copy of the cover in the class journal or working wall.
- Read and show the children 'Alice's Movie' by Grace Nichols (p.106-7), discussing how the poet has chosen to summarise Alice's adventures and how the shape of the poem on the page supports this.
- It would be a worthwhile discussion to ask the children if they even knew how much poetry was in both of the Alice stories and whether they would have described Lewis Carroll as a poet before. *What has the collection taught them about poetry? Which new poems and poets have they been introduced to; classic and contemporary?*
- If the children were to summarise Alice or this response anthology how would they present it in a poem? *What form would it take? What would it look like on the page? How would it be illustrated?*
- Allow the children time to write a poem in response to their experiences with the poetry they have encountered in this sequence. Provide the resources for them to publish it any way they think appropriate.