

Cloud Soup by Kate Wakeling, illustrated by Elina Brasliņa

The Emma Press 9781912915743

Bake a weird cake, pay a visit to the Deep, and get some inspiration for your very own word hoard! Anything is possible in the world of *Cloud Soup*, Kate Wakeling's breathlessly imaginative collection of poems for children. Quieter poems sit alongside riotously funny ones in this sequel to *Moon Juice*. Readers are encouraged to look more closely at clouds, water, dust and trees, and to reflect on the knottier areas of life. Illustrated throughout by Elina Brasliņa.

This collection was shortlisted for the 2022 CLPE Poetry Award.

Overall aims of this teaching sequence.

- To explore and understand the importance of poetry as a genre
- To listen and respond to a wide range of poems
- To interpret poems for performance
- To gain and maintain the interest of the listener through effective performance of poems
- To explore how poetry is presented on the page to enhance our understanding
- To explore how a poet selects, crafts and shapes language to convey meaning
- To draft, compose and write poems based on personal interests, experiences and emotions using language and form with intent for effect on the reader

This teaching sequence is designed for a Year 4, 5 or 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 first sessions in the sequence look at the purpose of poetry, introduce the focus poet, Kate Wakeling, and explore children's pre-existing knowledge about poetry. There is a focus on getting to the heart of a poem, understanding the events described and themes raised by exploration of how the poet has used language for effect and how the layout and form of the poems also contribute to their meaning. Reader response and group discussion prior to personal reflection on poems explored form an integral part of a number of the sessions detailed in this sequence.

Throughout the sequence, pupils will have the opportunity to read poetry, listen to poems being read, offer personal responses to the poems, to prepare them for performance and to write their own. The whole sequence builds towards the chance for the class to write and perform their own poems on a subject of interest to them.

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The pupils will have the opportunity to use the knowledge they have gained about poetic form, devices and structure throughout the sequence to decide how to present their poem on the page as well as consider how these could be performed to an audience. The poems will be published in a variety of ways to be shared with the school community and beyond.

Teaching Approaches	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Watching a poet perform ▪ Reading aloud ▪ Looking at Language ▪ Re-reading ▪ Book talk ▪ Visualisation ▪ Learning about writing from published poets ▪ Free writing of poetry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Text Analysis ▪ Identification of poetic language and devices ▪ Performances of the poetry in the collection ▪ Evaluation of performances ▪ Poetry Journal with ideas and inspirations for writing ▪ Own poems related to themes introduced in the collection

Exploring poetic forms and devices:

This collection gives an opportunity to explore the following poetic devices:

- Rhythm
- Rhyme
- Assonance
- Alliteration
- Personification
- Simile
- Repetition
- Onomatopoeia

Cross Curricular Links:

Science

- The collection offers scope to link to exploring ecosystems and habitats, and exploring the characteristics of animals. There will be ample opportunity for the children to use both the language and illustrations from the text to compare and contrast a variety of animals, naming their parts and features and categorising them into classes such as mammals, fish, birds and minibeasts.

- A poem such as 'Stick Insect' might provide a stimulus for children to research and observe a whole range of minibeasts. This knowledge might then form the basis of a whole range of written outcomes, including poetry.
- 'The Deep' describes the fish that have adapted to survive in some of the deepest and most inhospitable parts of the ocean, and can be connected to learning about adaptation and habitats for a wide variety of living things.
- The poem 'Tree' could lead to children exploring their local environment and the needs and life-cycles of a variety of living things within that habitat. They might use classification to identify and compare different types of trees within the school surroundings.

Computing

- If children choose to create recordings of the poems that they write at the end of the sequence, they might need access to video editing software to add effects, voiceover, to layer in additional imagery or text or to add music.
- Word-processing software might be used by students to publish their finished poems.

Geography and History

- Some poems in the collection explicitly reference elements of the water cycle, and particularly the knowledge that the water we use and rely on every day has been running through that same cycle for millions of years. These poems might be used as a stimulus for children to engage in research around the water cycle, as well as an opportunity to gain an understanding of the chronology of the Earth at a geologic scale. Other texts which might be useful to reference are *The Pebble in my Pocket* by Meredith Hooper and Christopher Coady (Frances Lincoln) and *The Rhythm of the Rain* by Grahame Baker Smith (Templar). See Session 9 for more details.

Art

- One of the poems in the collection is inspired by a Marc Chagall painting: 'Blue Circus' (1950) <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/chagall-the-blue-circus-n06136>
- You might use this as an opportunity to explore other paintings by Chagall and his contemporaries as well as paintings in the fauvist, expressionist and modern expressionist movements, such as Henri Matisse, Alice Bailly, Andre Derain, Anita Malfatti, etc.
- What do they notice about the paintings they explore? What do they have in common? What differences can they see? Are there any patterns? Children may draw out some of the themes, subject matter, use of colours, evidence of brushstrokes, the depiction of the abstract rather than making more naturalistic choices, etc.
- As the children explore the paintings, encourage them to consider how they are personally responding to what they see. *What is their eye drawn towards? What do they like? What do different elements of the painting mean to them?* They may also consider the choices made by the artist in selecting what to depict and how to depict it, including the composition, the layout, the perspective and proportions, the colour and the materials used. As part of their

writing inspired by Session 10, children might begin to draft their own poem inspired by what they've seen and discussed in a selected painting. They could also work collaboratively to create a class exhibition, selecting a painting that each child would like to include in the exhibit and writing a short passage to be displayed on a placard alongside it.

PSHE

- In PSHE session, develop the discussion and themes raised around Kate Wakeling's poem 'Bodies' (explored during Session 3). You may wish to draw on some of the resources that are available online from a variety of charities and associations (see below for suggestions). Ensure that resources are appropriate for the age group and in line with school policy before using in your class.
 - <https://mediasmart.uk.com/body-image-9-11/>
 - <https://healthpoweredkids.org/lessons/self-esteem-and-body-image/>
 - <https://www.ghll.org.uk/Media%20Smart%20Body%20Image%20and%20Advertising%20Teachers%20Notes.pdf>

Links to other texts and resources:

Also by Kate Wakeling and illustrated by Elina Brasliņa:

- *Moon Juice* (Emma Press, 2016) This collection won the CLIPPA in 2017. You can download a sequence and access videos of Kate Wakeling performing poems from this collection on the CLPE website: <https://clpe.org.uk/books/book/moon-juice>

Other poetry collections for Key Stage 2 linked to the styles and themes in *Cloud Soup*:

- *Welcome to the Imaginarium*, Shauna Darling-Robertson (Troika)
- *Bright Bursts of Colour*, Matt Goodfellow, illustrated by Aleksei Bitskoff (Bloomsbury)
- *Stars with Flaming Tails*, Valerie Bloom, illustrated by Ken Wilson-Max (Otter-Barry Books)
- *Hot Like Fire*, Valerie Bloom, illustrated by Debbie Lush (Bloomsbury)
- *The Rainmaker Danced*, John Agard, illustrated by Satoshi Kitamura (Hodder)
- *The Language of Cat*, Rachel Rooney, illustrated by Ellie Jenkins (Otter-Barry Books)
- *My Life as a Goldfish*, Rachel Rooney, illustrated by Ellie Jenkins (Frances Lincoln)
- *If I Were Other Than Myself*, Sue Hardy-Dawson (Troika)
- *Michael Rosen's Big Book of Bad Things*, Michael Rosen, illustrated by Joe Berger (Puffin)
- *Jelly Boots, Smelly Boots*, Michael Rosen, illustrated by David Tazzyman (Bloomsbury)
- *Werewolf Club Rules*, Joseph Coelho, illustrated by John O'Leary (Frances Lincoln)
- *This Rock, That Rock*, Dom Conlon, illustrated by Viviane Schwarz (Troika)
- *Weird, Wild and Wonderful*, James Carter, illustrated by Neal Layton (Otter-Barry Books)
- *Dear Ugly Sisters and Other Poems*, Laura Mucha, illustrated by Tania Rex (Otter-Barry Books)
- *Belonging Street*, Mandy Coe (Otter-Barry Books)

- *Things You Find in a Poet's Beard*, A.F. Harrold, illustrated by Chris Riddell (Burning Eye Books)
- *Riding a Lion*, Coral Rumble, illustrated by Emily Ford (Troika)
- *Cherry Moon*, Zaro Weil, illustrated by Junli Song (ZaZaKids Books in association with Troika Books)
- *When Poems Fall From the Sky*, Zaro Weil, illustrated by Junli Song (ZaZaKids Books in association with Troika Books)

Weblinks:

- Access performances by a wide variety of poets on the CLPE website: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/videos>
- Find out more about Kate Wakeling and her work, here: <http://www.katewakeling.co.uk/>
- Kate Wakeling's article *On Trusting Difficult and Mysterious Things* (February 2022): <https://childrenspoetrysummit.com/2022/02/10/kate-wakeling-on-trusting-difficult-and-mysterious-things/>

Before beginning the sequence:

- Before this session, ensure that individual Poetry Journals (small notebooks, which could be handmade) are available for each child to use throughout the unit to note ideas and inspirations. Set the context for how these will be used; they will be for the children's own thoughts, ideas, inspirations and drafts of poems. They will not have to share these with anyone else, unless they specifically want to, but they should be using these all the time to collect and craft ideas for poems that could be worked up to finished pieces at the end of the unit.
- Create a focus display or poetry corner, where you can display a copy of the front cover of the book, a copy of the text and other poems or poetry collections that the children know or could be inspired by (see links to other texts).

Session 1: Introducing the Collection

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.

- Share the front cover and the title of the collection with the children. Read the name of the poet, Kate Wakeling, and the illustrator, Elina Brasliņa. *Have the children heard of either of*

these people before? Provide a picture of both of them for the children to see, and add these to the display alongside the front cover of the text.

- Gather the children’s initial responses to the title and the illustration. How does the combination of title and image make them feel? How do they work together? What sense do they give you about the kinds of poems you might find in this collection? What might a ‘cloud soup’ be? How would you describe it to someone else? Jot the children’s ideas around a copy of the front cover of the text to add to the poetry display and come back to at the end of the sequence.
- Now, listen to Kate Wakeling perform the opening poem from the collection, ‘Some Other Names for Rain’ (page 1): <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/kate-wakeling>
- Afterwards, give time for the children to share their initial responses to the text. *What do you like about the poem? How does the poem make you feel? What makes you feel like this? What ideas might it give us about the collection?*
- Explore how this poem fits with the children’s initial perceptions of poetry. What do they think of when the word poetry is mentioned? How do they feel about poetry? Which poets or poems do they know and like? Do they like reading poetry? Performing poetry? Do any of the pupils write their own poetry? Take note of the children’s responses and perceptions to come back to throughout the sequence. You may want to come together to watch Kate Wakeling and other poets talk about their feelings about poetry and look at the similarities and differences with the feelings of the children, using the videos on CLPE’s website: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/videos?f%5B0%5D=tags%3A10755>
- Now, hand out copies of ‘Some Other Names for Rain’ for children to re-read and explore on the page. *What do they notice as they re-read?* Encourage them to read the poem aloud as they explore it so that they can hear the sounds of the words as well as their meaning and how they appear on the page. *Are there any patterns that they can see or hear? What words or phrases stand out to them? Do they have a favourite line or section? Is there anything that surprised you?* Ensure the children text mark and annotate the poem with their thoughts, observations, and questions about the poem, to make their thinking visible. Amongst their observations, children might note and discuss the alliteration (*tongue tickler, hair hassler, sky spittle*, etc.) and the repeated internal sounds of words, such as the repeated ‘um’ in “drummer and umbrella summoner.” They might also draw out the rhymes and half-rhymes created by the repeated use of the –er suffix turning verbs into nouns. *What is the impact of these sort of patterns on the reader? Does it change the way you read the poem?*
- Encourage children to draw out any words or phrases with which they are less familiar or would like support in defining. For example, children might raise words or phrases such as ‘skirmish’, ‘brigade’ or ‘spittle’. Invite children to discuss possible definitions as a class or in small groups (*Can they work out potential definitions for these terms based on context, their own experiences, on other words that look or sound similar, by considering potential synonyms?*), before going to dictionaries or the thesaurus for additional insights. Encourage

the children to keep notes of certain words that they might use themselves in their own writing.

- The frequent – but irregular - use of ‘-er’ word endings might lead children to making connections with a form of poetry: the kenning; particularly if this is something that they have read or studied before, perhaps alongside an historical study of the Viking period, poetry and storytelling. If so, broaden the conversation to include reading and comparing this poem with kenning poems that they are already familiar with. *What does a kenning do? Is that similar to what Kate Wakeling is doing with this poem? Do you think it is fair to describe this poem as a kenning? Why/why not?*
- Alongside this session, you may choose to support children’s understanding of spelling by conducting a word investigation into what happens to meaning, sound and spelling when the –er suffix is added to a verb. *Can children identify the root words of each of the terms with ‘er’ endings in this poem? How is the spelling of the root word affected when you add or remove the –er suffix? Can you add –er to any verb? How does it affect the spelling? Can you create a hypothesis for when you should or shouldn’t adapt the spelling of a verb when adding a suffix?*
- Finish the session by engaging in some shared writing, working together as a class to compose a poem using a similar structure and theme to Kate Wakeling’s. *What other weather or aspect of nature could we come up with different ‘names’ for? Perhaps, ‘Some Other Names for Snow’ (“I call you finger freezer and toe chiller...”) or ‘Some Other Names for Tree’ (“I call you shade giver and squirrel shelter... etc.”).*
- Give time for children to generate ideas – talking in small groups about all the different concepts that they connect with the chosen subject matter (*what is it used for? What does it do? What does it feel like? What words would you use to describe it? Who is affected by it? What are the best things and what are the worst things?*) and jotting these down to return to later.
- Discuss the choices you make as a class putting the poem together, when you might choose to use the traditional kenning structure of noun followed by verb with an ‘er’ suffix, and when you might use a different form of noun phrase. *When might you repeat the ‘I call you...’ refrain, and when might you choose to add additional detail – either in parenthesis or by extending the thought with an additional clause?*
- Once the draft of the poem is complete, work as a class to create a performance of the poem, perhaps dividing the lines between different groups, or asking for volunteers to read certain lines or passages, or deciding which sections might be spoken chorally.
- At the end of the session, give the children time to think of other possible subjects that interest them and that could be drawn upon to create further poems inspired by their work in this session. If children are using poetry writing journals, allow some time for them to start jotting down any ideas, words, phrases or themes to return to later.

Session 2: Responding to and 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 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.

- In preparation for this session, photocopy the following poems from the collection and pin them up around the classroom or another space, such as the hall, for the children to find.
 - 'Mr Mangle's Beard' (page 3)
 - 'Toucan' (page 25)
 - 'The Deep' (page 27)
 - 'The School for Ghouls' (page 31)
 - 'I, ROBOT' (page 33)
 - 'Just Dust' (page 52)
 - 'I Just Have a Few Questions' (page 59)
 - 'The Poem Says No' (page 62)
 - 'The Day Mum Turned into a Lion' (page 68)
 - 'Word Hoard' (page 74)
 - 'The Skull Clock' (page 83)
 - 'The Baddies: A Miscellany' (page 86)
- As the children enter the space, explain that they are going to have time to explore the poems on display at their leisure. They can read the whole poem, pass over a poem if it doesn't appeal to them, start reading and move on if it doesn't hold their attention, until they find one that captures their attention. Support any children whose reading fluency might not allow them to fully engage by giving them a guided walk, reading the poems aloud to them. This encourages the children to enjoy the experience of simply reading a poem, to relish the uncertainties of meanings and the nature of the knowledge and emotional responses that poems invoke in them as readers.
- When they have had time to explore, ask them to stand by the poem that most captured their attention. Explain that they are now going to take this poem, re-read it and think about it more deeply. If there are poems that more than one child has chosen, allow them to take this and work in a group. If this is a large group, you may wish to provide them with additional copies of the poem so that all children can read and discuss it.
- Allow time and space for the children to re-read and think about their selected poems. Encourage them to explore what they like about the poem, ask questions about it, look for connections within the poem or between this poem and others they know, including the previous poem, 'Some Other Names for Rain' and comment on the themes or use of language. You may find the following question prompts useful for stimulating ideas and discussion:
 - What was it that drew you to this particular poem?

- How would you describe the poem you read?
- What did the poem make you think about?
- How did the poem make you feel? What made you feel this way?
- Encourage the children to make their thinking visible by text marking and annotating their poem with their observations, thoughts, ideas and questions.
- Allow time for the children to come back together to read their chosen poems aloud to the group and share their thoughts around the poems they chose. *Were there similarities or differences in the types of poems chosen and the reasons for choices? What was it that drew people to their chosen poem?*
- When you have heard and discussed all the poems that have been selected, talk about the range and breadth of poems they heard and read. *What insights do these give us about this collection? What might they tell us about Kate Wakeling's poetry? What do you think might inspire her as a writer?* Follow up by watching Kate Wakeling talk about what inspires her as a writer: <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/kate-wakeling-what-inspires-you-poet>
- As a follow up to these discussions, allow the children to work up their chosen poem to perform. You could share the advice of poet Ruth Awolola on performing poetry: <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/ruth-awolola-what-advice-would-you-give-performing-poetry>. Consider what she says about 'ensuring that there is meaning in your words', that 'it's clear' and that 'everyone else can feel what you are feeling when you are saying the words'. Encourage the children to think back to how they felt when they read the words. *How can they use their performance to share these feelings?* Share the [advice for performing poetry](#), provided for schools taking part in the CLiPPA shadowing scheme, to help the children make decisions around how to perform their chosen poem and how to develop their performances to bring out the feelings created by the poem they chose.
- After the children have had time to work up and rehearse their performances, allow space for them to perform their poems for the rest of the class. Before 14th June 2022, this could be filmed and submitted for the [CLiPPA shadowing scheme](#) competition to win poetry prizes.
- Then, ask the children to feed back on the interpretations of different groups, evaluating the effectiveness of different techniques and styles and what these brought to their understanding of the poem. *What was most effective about each performance? What did the performance bring to your understanding of or feelings about the poem? Did it change your feelings from when you first looked at the poem on the wall? Why was this?*

Session 3: Rhyme, Rhythm and poetry

Rhyme is the repetition of syllables, typically at the end of a verse line. Rhymed words conventionally share all sounds following the word's last stressed syllable. Rhyme is one of the first poetic devices that we become familiar with but it can be a tricky poetic device to work with. Matching content to a rhyming pattern takes a lot of skill. Rhyming patterns can be in couplets where pairs of lines rhyme or can be alternate where every other line rhymes.

Lots of people believe poetry must rhyme, but an exploration of the work of many modern poets reveals poems that don't rhyme at all, or play with more traditional rhyme schemes. Comic verse is the type of contemporary poetry that is most likely to rhyme

- Begin the session by listening to Kate Wakeling perform 'Bodies' (page 13): <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/kate-wakeling>
- Allow chance for the children to respond initially to the poem. How does this poem make them feel? What makes them feel this way? What do they like about the poem? Does it remind them of anything? What does it make them think about? Does anything in the poem surprise them?
- *What do they notice about the way in which Kate Wakeling performs the poem?* Children might draw out elements such as the steady, regular rhythm, the repetition of phrases, and the use of rhyme throughout. Rhyme is the first poetic device that we become familiar with, but it can be a tricky one to work with. Matching content to a rhyming pattern takes a lot of skill and at this point it is more relevant to the children to be able to hear and identify rhyme in poetry than try to write with it.
- Hand out copies of the poem on the page for the children to follow as you read through it again. Encourage the children to identify and highlight the pairs of rhyming words. They could use different coloured pencils to identify the pairs of words that rhyme.
- Re-read the poem, encouraging the children to join in, closely looking to match the words to the text. After reading it through together, do they notice any other aspects of the language that come through in lifting the words from the page?
- This poem also offers a good opportunity to explore beat and rhythm. The beat is the steady pulse that you feel in the poem, like a clock's tick or a heartbeat. This is what you would clap along to, or what you feel you want to tap your foot to. Ask the children to join in as you re-read the poem aloud and, while they read, to try to feel the natural pulse and beat of the lines by tapping their feet or tapping together a pair of rhythm sticks or claves.
- Since the three kinds of poetic meter in English depend on syllabic rhythm, an understanding of syllables is crucial to recognising them. Words divide into syllables depending on how many vowel sounds they have: *knees* has one syllable, while *bodies* has two, *volleyball* has three and *testimony* has four. In reading it through again, children can begin to identify where the stress falls – *which part of the word is situated on the beat and stressed when reading aloud? Is that consistent throughout the poem or does the position of the stressed syllables change? How many times do you clap your hands or tap your feet during each line?* For example, in the first line, the 'stresses' will most naturally fall as "**B**odies, **b**odies, **e**very**w**here" while later in the poem it moves to the second word of the line: "there **r**eally **i**s no **w**rong or **r**ight." An understanding of syllabification will support children's growing understanding of spelling and word structure.
- Support the children in marking up the poem: counting and identifying the number of syllables in each line and indicating where the stresses sit. For example:

Bodies, **b**odies **e**very**w**here: (7)

Knees and noses, hands and hair, (8)

Bodies big and bodies small, (7)

Bodies keen on volleyball, etc. (7)

- Reflect on anything they noticed while reading aloud and marking up their text. They might discuss the regularity of the rhythm and the choices that Kate Wakeling has made in selecting and crafting the language choices – there are four beats/stresses on each line, there are always 7-8 syllables in each line. They might note the words which are stressed on the beat – these are not the structural words such as *and*, *on*, *that*, *as*, *the*, etc. *Why might that be? What impact does that have when you are listening to the poem being performed? What words do you notice the most?* They might also start to hear other repeated sounds as well as the rhymes at the end of each couplet pairing. The /ee/ sound inside ‘bodies’ is repeated in almost every verse in different words and positions. This repeated vowel sound is called assonance. We can find other repeated sounds such as the short /o/ in bodies echoed in ‘bottoms soft...’’. They might also note that the position of the stress – whilst staying regular – changes only in the final 5 lines. *Why might that choice have been made?*
- Now that they’ve spent some time working on the poem, return to their original responses to see if they have anything to add: what do they like about the poem? What does it make them think about? Is there anything they’d like to ask about it? Is there anything that puzzles them? Why do you think Kate Wakeling might have chosen to write this poem? Share Elina Brasliņa’s illustration which accompanies the text in the book and allow them to respond to that too. This is the illustrator’s response to reading the poem – does it add to or alter your reflections on the poem? If so, how? Do you think the poem has a particular message or idea? What does it make you think about?

Alongside this session, you may want to plan in additional PSHE lessons to explore some of the themes raised by this poem, including ideas around body image and body positivity. Links to a range of resources are provided in the cross-curricular links section above.

- Now give out the following poems to groups of children: ‘The Goblins’ (page 17), ‘The Flibbit’ (page 57), and ‘Wardrobe Monkeys’ (page 66). You might want to give each group all of these poems so that they can self-select a poem to work on, or select one poem for each group. Allow the children time to read the poems, identify the rhyme patterns in the poems and the pulse and syllabic patterns contained within them.
- When the children have had time to explore these, give them time and space to work up the poems for performance, using the rhythms and rhymes of the poem to enhance their performances. Remind them that just because a poem has a steady pulse and rhythm, that doesn’t mean that you have to robotically keep the same tempo throughout. Although that is an option, as a performer you might also choose to emphasise certain emotions or highlight certain words or phrases by slowing down, speeding up or putting in a deliberate pause. You

might also wish to watch examples of other poets performing poems to see how poems can be performed drawing on the rhythms and patterns of language, such as:

- Michael Rosen in 'The Rhythm of Life': <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/michael-rosen-rhythm-life>
 - Joseph Coelho in 'A Little Bit of Food': <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/joseph-coelho-little-bit-food>
 - Rachel Rooney in 'Keepy-Uppy Kid': <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/rachel-rooney-keepy-uppy-kid>
 - Grace Nichols in 'Wha Mi Mudder Do': <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/grace-nichols-wha-mi-mudder-do>
- After the children have had time to work up and rehearse their performances, allow space for them to perform their poems for the rest of the class. Before 14th June 2022, this could be filmed and submitted for the [CLIPPA shadowing scheme](#) competition to win poetry prizes.
 - Come back together to discuss the rhyme patterns in these poems. What did the children notice about the sounds and spelling patterns in the words that rhyme? Did the word endings sound the same and look the same as in **earlobes** and **wardrobes**, or did they sound the same but look different, as in **high** and **spy**? Use these discussions to look at the sounds and shapes of words more closely, particularly the alternative ways of representing vowel sounds in the English language.

Session 4: Exploring Wordplay

Wordplay is a poetic device in which the words are used in the poem specifically as a main subject of the poem itself, primarily for amusement or the intended effect of the words themselves. **Comic verse** often focuses on the way words sound. It is often used to play with language and involves a lot of wordplay. It also presents fantastical situations for the amusement of the reader.

- Begin the session by handing out copies of Kate Wakeling's poem 'Nose Can Do' (page 89). Ask children to work in small groups to read aloud and then share their response to the poem.
- You might give them a simple grid or information organiser upon which they can capture their discussion. They might discuss: What do you like or dislike about it? What did it make you think about? How did it make you feel? Did the poem remind you of anything that you've heard or read before? Did it remind you of other poems or other stories?
- After their initial response, encourage the children to explore more deeply, text marking and annotating their copies of the poem, exploring the use of language. You can use this as an opportunity to introduce children to the names of specific forms or devices, considering what makes their chosen poem 'poetic'. You might introduce this by way of what Michael Rosen calls 'secret strings' (*What is Poetry?* Walker). He talks about the importance of discovering how the poet might have used assonance, alliteration, imagery, rhythm and sound. *Can you identify any of these features in the poem? If so, what impact does it have on the finished poem — on its sound, its look, the humour, its meaning, on how it makes you feel?*

- Next, give time for the children to work up a performance of the poem. How many voices would work best in communicating this poem? How will you pace the performance? How will you use your voice(s) to draw out the meaning of the poem and how it made you feel? Will you use any movement or action? How might you emphasise the rhythm, humour and sound within the words? Give time for the pupils to build up their poems, text marking with performance notes and ideas, practising, editing and polishing to a finished performance.
- After listening to the performances, ask the groups to discuss what was most effective and what they wanted to communicate to the listener. At this point, you might also listen to Kate Wakeling's own performance of her poem 'The Flibbit' which you can access on her page of the CLPE poetry website: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/kate-wakeling>
- Consider some of the ways in which the children highlighted and framed the poem around Kate Wakeling's repeated use of the long /oa/ sound, usually combined with /z/ ending, as in the end of the word 'rose' and 'shows'. *How is the tone, meaning, pace and humour in the poem affected by the presence or absence of words which feature that sound?* In addition, you might discuss how they lifted other aspects of the poem off the page, such as the use of italics, rhyme (enough/stuff), parenthesis, as well as the way in which the poem is laid out on the page – *how did they respond to line breaks and verse breaks in making sense of the text?*
- In a further session, you might look back at the text and ask the children to draw out all the words which have a long /oa/ sound. These will include: nose, knows, roses, toes, knowing, woes, composed, Os, don't, close, elbows, rhino's, suppose, blow, potato, holes. Then, use this as a starting point for an investigation into the different ways in which that sound can be represented. *Is one spelling more common than the others? Does it depend on the letters surrounding that sound? Does it depend on the position of the sound within the word?* After children have developed a hypothesis around the spelling of the /oa/ sound in the English language, they might test their own hypothesis by looking for further examples in other texts, creating word lists and comparing their work with other groups.
- Discuss **wordplay** as one of the poetic devices that poets can use, particularly in comic verse, to affect the reader. Wordplay might include the incorporation of invented words or nonsense words, or it might include deliberately playing with meaning by including homophones (words which share the same sound but actually have different meanings). In this poem, Kate Wakeling not only uses the same repeated rhyme but she uses the homophone: 'nose' and 'knows'. *Do children know any other poems, riddles, jokes or songs that use homophones like this? What words do they know that have more than one meaning? Do they like poems like this? Why/why not?*
- You might share other poems which feature wordplay centred on homophones, such as 'The Tents' by Michael Rosen (from *Michael Rosen's Big Book of Bad Things*), '[A Special Badger](#)' by Matt Goodfellow (from *Bright Bursts of Colour*) or '[The Duelling Duo](#)' by Joseph Coelho (from *Overheard in a Tower Block*). You might also read traditional folk rhymes and riddles which use homophones (or near homophones) for effect; such as 'Foolish Questions' adapted by William

Cole — many such rhymes were collected in *Walking the Bridge of Your Nose*, edited by Michael Rosen, sadly out of print at present, although your library may have a copy.

- Read aloud, share and discuss some other poems from this collection that use wordplay, e.g. ‘The Baddies: A Miscellany’ (page 86), ‘Toucan’ (page 25) and The School for Ghouls (page 31). Allow time and space for the children to explore the language chosen for the poems and how certain words emphasise concepts or humour in the poems. Discuss the examples of wordplay seen and why these might be effective in creating humour for the reader.
- At the end of the session, ask the children if the poems have inspired any other ideas within them to play with words and language. *Do they know any other homophones, jokes or puns that might work in a poem?* To link in work on language, vocabulary and spelling, you could use this as an opportunity to look at other words within words, rhyme, idioms, sayings as well as the homophones which could inspire the children’s ideas. Allow time for children to make notes of any key ideas in their Poetry Journals.

Session 5: Exploring Poetic Forms: Odes

It is important for children to be introduced to a range of forms, particularly those that are less technically demanding in rhyme and regular metre, but that can be used to shape experience of language and provide an extra stimulus for writing.

- Explain to the class that, in this session, we’re going to explore a form of poetry called the ode.
- Read aloud and share ‘In Praise of the Guinea Pig’ (page 65)
- Start by giving children the time and space to consider and share their initial responses to how they feel about the poem as if they have in previous sessions. *What do they like about the poem? What does the poem suggest are the great – and not so great – things about a guinea pig? Have they ever seen a guinea pig or kept one as a pet? Do they agree with this poem’s assessment of guinea pigs?*
- Explain that you are going to read aloud the poem again and, this time, ask the class to think about how the speaker of the poem feels about guinea pigs, and what words or phrases might suggest that. After reading, display the poem so that the children can respond to the way that it looks on the page as well as the sound of the words, and to support them in referring to specific lines, words or phrases within the text.
- If this is an example of an ‘ode’, discuss what the class thinks an ode might be. What could the intended purpose of an ‘ode’ be? What might the features of an ode be, based on this example?
- After children have shared their initial thoughts and ideas, confirm that odes are poems written in celebration of a person, place or object – in this case, a favourite pet. Odes have been written about famous people throughout history, they’ve been written about cities and ancient wonders, and they’ve been written about historical objects and works of art. *Do they think the subject chosen by Kate Wakeling is worthy of an ode? Why do you think she might have chosen a guinea pig as the subject for her ode? Do you think she is sincere in her praise?*

Why/why not? Discuss how some modern versions of the ode tend to use humour by either choosing to celebrate overlooked everyday items or to exaggerate the praise. *Have any of the children read poems that might be considered to be a form of 'ode'?*

- Odes have been around for hundreds and hundreds of years and traditionally have been written about important things and considered a high form of writing, as such odes normally use quite a formal tone – *can they see any examples of archaic or formal language in this poem?* They are usually addressed directly to the subject that they are celebrating and so are written in second person – an unusual form for expressive writing, one that the class might be more likely to associate with the writing of instructions. *Is this ode addressed towards the object being praised?* Because they are a type of formal poem, odes usually follow a simple rhyme structure. Look back at the poem – *did Kate Wakeling choose to use a consistent rhyme or rhythm to structure her ode to Guinea Pigs?*

- As an example of the language, structure, form and tone of some classical odes you might display and read some extracts from odes such as 'Ode to the West Wind' by Percy Bysshe Shelley:

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing

or 'Ode to a Nightingale' by John Keats:

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown

- Compare these with more contemporary examples or variations on the ode, such as:
 - 'Sun is Laughing' by Grace Nichols <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/sun-laughing>
 - 'Bread' by Matt Harvey <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gzA7o6qNOas>
 - 'Sunny Side Up' by Matt Harvey (*Midnight Feasts*, anthology collected by A.F.Harrold, illustrated by Katy Riddell, Bloomsbury)
 - 'Air' by Michael Rosen (<https://poetryarchive.org/poem/air/>)
 - 'The Potatoes My Dad Cooks' by Joanne Limburg (<https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/potatoes-my-dad-cooks>)
 - 'The City of my Birth' by Karl Nova (<https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/city-my-birth>)
- After reading, discuss their personal response, their preferences, and some of the ways in which the language features, tone and structure of the poems might be compared with the ode with which we started the session.
- Afterwards, discuss with the children the sorts of things that they might want to celebrate in their own lives: it could be a person, animal, food, place or object that carries particular meaning for them. Give time and space for the children to explore things they could write about in this way and make a note of these, either in words or drawings in their Poetry Journals. Some may even start drafting their own poems and jotting ideas for lines

immediately. *What or who might they consider worthy of an ode? Do you think others would agree with you or will your ode need to persuade them? What aspects of the odes that we have read would you like to use in your own poetry? Will you address the subject of your ode? Will you exaggerate its greatness? What will you compare it to? Will you use elements of rhyme? Will you acknowledge any negative aspects of the object of your praise, as some of these poets have done?*

Session 6: Exploring Poetic Form – List Poems

A list poem does exactly as described and collects content in a list form. It can be purely a list without transitional phrases. List poems don't have any fixed rhyme or rhythmic pattern and the order of the list can either serve to provide additional detail or to show the author's state of mind.

- Start the session by running a quick classroom drama exercise or game, usually called ‘This Is Not A...’ as that is the phrase with which the game begins. There are numerous iterations of this exercise. It usually starts with the teacher leading the exercise providing an everyday item, such as a cardboard tube, a pen or pencil, a scarf, or a glove, etc. The teacher holds out the item and declares “This is not a glove... It is a poor injured spider!” while demonstrating with the glove its spider-like nature. The next person is then passed the glove and declares “This is not a spider, it’s a...” Play continues around the circle if taking turns, or with children indicating that they have an idea and so are handed the object. You might also play with photographs of everyday objects, including the subject matter of the first poem – the garden pea!
- After a few rounds of the game, read aloud Kate Wakeling’s poem ‘Paeon (or Eleven Uses for a Garden Pea)’ (page 19).
- As previously, allow children time in groups and then as a whole class to respond to the poem: how it made them feel, what they liked or disliked, personal connections they have with the poem, what it made them think about or puzzles it raised. *Is there anything about the poem that surprises them? Encourage children to make connections between their activity and Kate Wakeling’s poem – are there any similar insights or observations? How do you think Kate Wakeling came up with her ideas?*
- Hand out copies of the poem for children to re-read independently and then allow them to look at the use of language and patterns in the poem – *what do they notice? What words or phrases did they enjoy? Are there any patterns that they have noticed?* If necessary, remind children of some of the ‘secret strings’ that we’ve referred to in previous sessions. Children might note that the use of alliteration, assonance and some rhyme, despite the poet making the choice not to have the lines rhyme, nor to follow a regular rhythm or line length for each of the uses. *Where does she add in additional detail? Are there any you had to think about, or any comparisons that still puzzle you?* Children might also note that some of the lines use a kenning-like form and make connections to the ‘rain’ poem explored during Session 1.

- Explain that this is an example of a list poem. A list poem does exactly as described and collects content in a list form. It can be purely a list without transitional phrases. List poems don't have any fixed rhyme or rhythmic pattern – they can follow a structured form but they don't have to - and the order of the list can either serve to provide additional detail or to show the author's state of mind. *Have any of the children read any other poems which are centred around lists?*
- Hand out copies of some other list poems from the collection:
 - '13 Slippery Facts About Antarctica' (page 45)
 - 'I Just Have a Few Questions' (page 59)
 - 'Free' (page 94)
- You might additionally choose to broaden the selection further by drawing on examples of list poems by a range of other poets from the CLPE website: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poetic-forms/list-poem>
- Give children time to read and discuss the sets of poems within their groups: Which poems do they enjoy the most? Why? What features do the poems have in common? How are they similar or different? Do you think these can all be considered 'list poems'? Why/why not?
- In small groups, ask children to spend some time discussing and noting down any ideas for other subjects that might inspire list poems.
- After enough time, ask each group to identify their favourite ideas that they have discussed to share with the class. As a class, choose one of these ideas to work up into a first draft of a poem that they can all create together collaboratively.
- Once the theme of the poem has been established, children can work individually or in pairs to draft a potential line for the poem. Once they have a draft version of the line that they are happy with, hand out long strips of paper or card for them to write the line onto, using a felt tip pen so that it can be read from a distance.
- Collect in all of the lines and pin or tack these to the Working Wall, whiteboard or flip chart. Read aloud all of the lines that have been created by the class. Through discussion, trial and error, reading aloud and negotiation, decide on how the lines might be sequenced into the most effective order for their list. As the poem is repeatedly read aloud, ask for the children to identify where lines might need small edits to support cohesion – maybe to ensure that the poem is written in a consistent tense or voice. The children may also need to confer and discuss whether their poem needs an additional line or verse to introduce the list or to conclude their poem. The title of a list poem is very often invaluable in supporting understanding so they will need to decide on a title that supports or enhances meaning.
- Finally, consider how the finished poem might be shared; perhaps creating a finished copy of the poem for display, for putting on the class web-page or rehearsing a performance of the poem to share with the wider school.
- Allow time either at the end of the session or after the session for children to jot down any ideas they might have about potential poems (list form or otherwise) in their notebooks or

poetry journals. They may also choose to continue to work up and refine ideas that they had started to develop in their collaborative work.

Session 7: Exploring Poetic Forms: Prose Poetry

A prose poem tells a short story, but it is different from a narrative recount. It is often presented on the page in a similar form to a narrative story, but uses poetic devices such as rhyme, rhythm, alliteration and assonance which make it distinctly poetic even though it may not look like a poem at first sight.

- Start the session by discussing some of the shapes, patterns and forms of poetry that we have explored together so far: this has included poetry written in rhyme, some with regular and steady rhythms and line lengths, as well as non-rhyming free verse poetry. We have explored list poems and odes as well. *Are they aware of any other forms of poetry?* Children might have previously read, explored, discussed or written in forms such as acrostic, kenning, riddle, limerick, haiku, etc. Discuss their preferences. *Do they enjoy writing poetry with a specific form? Why/why not? Do they enjoy reading or performing poetry that follows a form?*
- Display a copy of the poem 'To the Last Dinosaur Standing' (page 36) so that all the children can see it. *Do they think this is a poem? Why or why not?*
- Read the poem out loud to the children. What do they think now? What is different about this poem compared to the poems they have read so far?
- Read the poem again and give the children their own copy of the poem to look at. Explain to the children that this is a form known as prose poetry. This is a form of poetry that has the appearance of prose (standard punctuation and a lack of line breaks) but often includes many of the 'secret strings' and poetic elements that have been explored in previous sessions, such as rhyme, assonance, alliteration, word play and imagery. *Can they see or hear any of these 'secret strings' being used by Kate Wakeling in this piece?*
- Give plenty of time and space for the children to read aloud, explore, discuss, and text mark the poem. Come back together to discuss the children's ideas and the similarities and differences in what they have drawn out. The children might talk about:
 - The repetition of 'there had to be one' in the first two sentences
 - The choice to start both paragraphs with a conjunction – and the link in meaning between the title and the first sentence
 - The onomatopoeia in words like *sizzle*, *crack* and *THWACK*
 - The rhyme in pairs of words such as '*leaf*' and '*beef*'; and '*know*' and '*go*'
 - The alliteration in phrases such as '*horrible happening*', '*sudden stop*', '*watched the world*' and '*saw skies*'
 - The assonance, for example the repeated /oa/ sound in the second paragraph: *lonely*, *soul*, *most*, *only*, *hope*, *go*, *know*
- Now, encourage the children to think about what the differences might be in performing this poem from the others you have seen so far. *What would you want to draw out in your performance? What is the poem about? How does the poem make you feel? How do the poetic*

elements that you have identified draw attention to specific words, phrases or ideas? How will you draw out those words and phrases, the meaning and the emotion in a performance? How will you use your voice, your facial expressions, or your body language throughout the text?

- Give the children time to mark up the poem and rehearse for their performance. You may wish to give the children a choice as to whether they want to perform the whole poem individually or break up the story into parts to perform individual snippets in a group, passing the story from one person to the next, if they don't like the idea of performing individually.
- Give chance for individuals and groups to record each other performing. Play those that the children are happy to share to the class and respond to the performances, noting the impact on their engagement and understanding.
- After watching and discussing some of the children's performances, watch Kate Wakeling perform the poem on the CLPE website: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/kate-wakeling>
- Discuss some of the choices that Kate made in her performance. What did you like about her performance? Which aspects of language and meaning did she highlight in her performance choices? How did she accentuate or emphasise the meaning of the poem? Were there any elements of her performance that were similar to any groups or individuals in the class?
- You may wish to finish by reading and discussing another example of prose poetry by Kate Wakeling: 'Hair Piece' from her previous collection *Moon Juice*: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/hair-piece>
- Give time and space in free writing time for the children to explore ideas, concepts or events they could write about in prose poem form and make a note of these, either in words or drawings in their Poetry Journals. Some may even start drafting their own poems immediately. *How will they ensure that their ideas are presented as a prose poem and not a narrative recount? What poetic devices will they incorporate into their writing?*

Session 8: Poetry connected to our own experiences – Food

Personal experiences and memories can provide a powerful stimulus for children's poetry writing.

Through poetry writing children are encouraged to reflect on their experience, to recreate it, shape it and make sense of it.

- Begin this session by reading aloud the poem 'Weird Cake' (page 8).
- Allow time for the children to discuss their initial reactions to the poem. What did they like about the poem? What did it make them think about? How did it make them feel? What made them feel this way? Did it remind them of anything? Have ever baked, cooked, or created something? How did it turn out? Was it what you were expecting? How do you feel about all the other 'voices' in the poem commenting and predicting how the cake will turn out? How would you respond?
- Discuss with the children the concept of the 'I' in the poem. It is important for the children to understand that the 'I' in a poem can be anyone - a speaker who is quite unlike the poet, an historical figure, a fictional character who shares characteristics with the poet, real people

from the poet's life, or sometimes the poet themselves. For this reason, when discussing the 'I' in poems presented with an 'I' narrator, we usually say the speaker, the narrator or the 'I', rather than 'the poet'. With this in mind, ask the children: *What do you know, or think you know about the narrator in this poem? What in the poem allows you to infer this about them?*

- Now, give out copies of the poem on the page for children to explore in pairs or as a small group. Allow time for the children to discuss the poem together, sharing their thoughts, observations, looking at the language used, how the words are laid out on the page, the accompanying illustration and to raise any questions that they have about the poem. Encourage them to make their thinking visible by text marking and annotating their copy of the poem as a record of their thoughts and discussions.
- Come back together to discuss as a group. The children might talk about:
 - The repetition of 'I' throughout the poem
 - Their thoughts and understandings about the narrator in this poem
 - The alliteration in 'whisked' and 'whispered', in 'sympathetic stuff' or the repeated /w/ at the end of the poem in: *weird, which, was, way, wanted*.
 - Some of the patterns in the poem: the pattern of three each time that lists are made which suggest ways to make the cake rise, be crunchier, softer, or more moist. The changing preposition before the pronoun in Verse 9: *in it, on it, by it*
 - The use of punctuation and typography: the impact of the colon, parenthesis, italics, upper-case letters and the creation of hyphenated compound nouns ('*bottom-of-the-pocket fluff*') – *how do these features affect the way you read, understand or enjoy the poem?*
 - The choice of line breaks, the separation between lines and why this might be.
 - The repetition of '*it was weird*' towards the end of the poem
- Now read aloud the title of the poem on page 84: 'The Absolutely Worst Food in the World'. Gather some opinions across the class about what food this poem could be about. Select one of the class's suggestions and read aloud the poem inserting the chosen food at each stage.
- As before, give the children time to respond to the poem. What do they like about the poem? How is it similar to/different from the poem read earlier in the session? This poem is also written in the first person – do they think that this 'I' is similar to or different from the narrator of the earlier poem? Why? Have they ever felt as strongly as this about something – food or otherwise? The children might compare this poem with the ode form explored during Session 6, as rather than exaggerating, emphasising and praising all of the positive attributes of the subject matter, this poem exaggerates their perceived negative qualities. Which do they prefer? Why?
- Then, invite the children to work with a partner, handing each pair a copy of the poem. Ask them to read through the poem. What do they notice about the poem? How do they feel about the structure and layout of the poem? Do they like that the poem is interactive, that the reader needs to contribute something to the meaning of the poem? Why do you think Kate Wakeling might have chosen to structure it in this way? How does this choice affect your

response? How does her choice - in not naming a specific food item – affect the language she can use in writing about it for the rest of the poem? Which words, lines or phrases do you think are most effective in communicating how awful the food is? What do you think makes them so effective?

- Consider any personal connections they made to these poems. Did they find these poems relatable? Why/why not? What do you think makes a piece of writing, such as a poem, more relatable? Do you like to read things that reflect your own experiences? What other themes or ideas might they like to read about?
- In small groups, invite children to discuss some potential topics for poems that might relate to their own interests, experiences, likes and dislikes – including ideas that they might have for other poems inspired by food that they love or despise. Give children large sheets of blank paper so that they can capture their ideas as some form of visual organiser: as lists, spider diagrams, mind maps, etc. Afterwards, discuss some of the ideas that came up in their groups that might become the subject matter for a poem.
- Suggest that children choose one of the themes or topics that they feel could inspire their writing: it could be anything from pizza to cycling, from Lego to dance. Tell them to write the subject matter for their potential poem at the top of a new page in their Poetry Journal. Then, for 2-3 minutes, just write everything they can think of on that subject matter underneath – it doesn't matter if they write in sentences, phrases or just lists of words, but just to fill up the page as much as possible. They might jot down what the subject makes them think about, what it looks like, how it feels, what they like about it – anything at all. After the time is up, tell them to read back over what they have written and underline or circle any words or phrases that they like. *Can they see anything that could become the line of a poem?* Give them another few minutes to identify any potential phrases. Some children may start drafting a few lines of a poem.

Session 9: Poetry connected to our own experiences – Nature

- Before starting, make copies of the following poems to hand out to children throughout the session:
 - 'Stick Insect' (page 7)
 - 'Cloud Song' (page 15)
 - 'The water in the glass you are holding right now' (page 21)
 - 'The Deep' (page 27)
 - 'Tree' (page 91)
- Begin the session by listening to Kate Wakeling read aloud the poem 'The water in the glass you are holding right now' (page 21): <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/kate-wakeling>
- Give the children time to take in the poem and the performance and to give their initial responses to the poem. What did it make them think about? How did it make them feel? What language or imagery was the most effective? Why?

- Give small groups of children a copy of the poem to look at on the page. Play the video again and encourage the children to follow along with the text. This time, encourage the children to come together to summarise some of the events that are shared in the poem. *What do you know about the water in this glass? How long has it been around for? What journey has it taken, before it has reached the glass? What might have happened to it on its journey? What does this make us think about the glass of water? Has it made you think differently about the water that you drink – and use? How do Kate Wakeling’s language choices and layout affect your response?*
- Children might note:
 - The verbs used to describe the water (*led, dashed, locked, washed, powered, quenched, goes, knows*) and what these might suggest to us as readers
 - The internal rhymes or half rhymes: *lives/survived, splash/dashed, hands/grandmother*
 - The rhyme of *leaves/tree, tea/me/wee, drops/triceratops, thirst/first, leap/deep, think/link/drink, goes/knows*
 - The rhythm and pulse of some of the lines – *which lines can you tap your foot to? Where does the rhythmic pattern change pace or pause or get interrupted?*
 - The use of the adverbs ‘perhaps’ and ‘maybe’ to open three of the verses. *What do they suggest about the possibilities? What other options did Kate Wakeling have? She chose to offer tentative possibilities, how would it sound and feel different if she had used a more definite statement of fact?*
 - The larger-than-usual space before the final line. *How does that affect how they might read the poem? Could they hear that space in Kate Wakeling’s performance?*
- Now give the children copies of the other four poems: ‘Stick Insect’, ‘Cloud Song’, ‘The Deep’ and ‘Tree’. Allow time for the children to read these as a group, comparing and contrasting them with the first poem and discussing preferences and drawing out some of their similarities and differences. *Why might we have selected these poems to look at together? What other poems do they remind you of?*
- Now allow each group to select one of these five poems to work up into a dramatic performance. Remind the group to think about what they can draw into their performance reflecting on their previous experiences with performing poems from this collection, considering how they can work together to use voices, bodies and facial expressions to bring out the meaning in these poems. Encourage them to try things out, marking up the poem as if it were a script with all of their performance ideas. *How will you work together to bring out the storytelling and to emphasise the imagery created in the language?*
- When the children have had plenty of time and space to work up their ideas, give them space to share their performance with the rest of the group. Allow time for the audience to reflect on what was effective in each performance and what could be improved and how.
- Then allow for a final dress rehearsal before filming the final performances. If you are completing this session before 14th June 2022, these could be submitted for the CLiPPA

shadowing scheme competition to win poetry prizes, including the opportunity to perform this poem as part of the 2022 award ceremony, see: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/CLIPPA>

- After filming, watch and evaluate the performances together, looking at how these impacted on you as an audience. What have you learnt about making a performance effective for an audience? How did they make you feel about the subject of the poem, whether it was a tree, an insect, a cloud or a sea creature?
- Ask children to reflect on any other aspect of the natural world that they would like to celebrate through their own writing. Give time for children to begin to jot down ideas in their own Poetry Journals for what they might choose to write about – perhaps other animals, insects, or plants. Or perhaps they might be inspired by the poems to think more broadly about the planet, weather and climate, mountains and rivers or environmental issues. If time allows, children might select one of their ideas and start building a bank of vocabulary and ideas around it, creating something like a mind map or spider diagram to capture all of the words, phrases, sayings, ideas, information or connections they make to their chosen subject matter. They may even start to use these to draft some lines that might be part of a later poem written towards the end of this sequence.
- Discuss whether there are any poetic features or forms that they would like to use in their poem that they have seen in Kate Wakeling’s collection. They might like to create a poem like ‘Stick Insect’ which draws on the language and patterns of odes and kennings to celebrate its subject matter. Or they might consider how they could play with the space on the page as Kate Wakeling has chosen in ‘Cloud Song’ and ‘The Deep’.
- Alongside this session, you could continue to read aloud and enjoy a range of other poems which are themed around the natural world, all of which might inspire children’s own writing on the subject, for example:
 - ‘Hummingbird’ by Grace Nichols <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/hummingbird>
 - ‘In The Tree’s Defence’ by A.F. Harrold <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/trees-defence>
 - ‘Natural Dancing Partners’ by John Lyons <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/natural-dancing-partners>
 - ‘For Forest’ by Grace Nichols <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/forest>
 - ‘Kale’ by Hilda Offen <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/kale>
 - ‘Jellyfish’ by Michael Rosen <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/jellyfish-0>
 - *Cherry Moon*, Zoro Weil and Junli Song (Troika)
 - *I Am The Seed That Grew The Tree*, Fiona Waters and Frann Preston-Gannon (Nosy Crow)
 - *A First Book of Nature*, Nicola Davies and Mark Hearld (Walker Books)

Session 10: Poetry as a response to other art forms

- Use the whiteboard or a visualiser to revisit some of the poems that have already been shared during this sequence alongside their accompanying illustrations. Discuss how Elina Brasliņa’s illustrations reflect her response to the poems. *What do you think she is responding to in the*

poem? What do we like about the illustrations? What do they add to the experience of reading the collection? Some of the illustrations might capture a moment in from the poem in a fairly literal manner, while in others she is emphasising the humour, or she might aim to capture the emotion or the theme of the poem. What is similar about the poems themselves and the illustration? In what way is this a good match between poet and illustrator?

- Explain that you are going to read aloud another poem from the collection – ‘I am looking at this painting called Blue Circus by Marc Chagall’ (page 38). Tell the class that, as you read, you would like them to close their eyes and try to visualise what is being described in their mind’s eye. It might not be literally what is described, but it might be an image that comes to mind because of an emotion or an association or a memory – a personal response that you have. It might be an image which responds to the poem as a whole, or that has been triggered by a particular word or phrase.
- Hand out art materials – you may wish to give them some element of choice in what they use so that they can select materials according to what they hear in the poem (e.g. acrylics, oil pastels, chalk pastels, watercolours, coloured pencils, cartridge paper). Explain that you are going to read the poem 2 or 3 more times and when they have a clear mental picture, maybe after another reading, you would like them to represent what they picture in their mind as you are reading. Give sufficient time for children to complete their artwork, perhaps reading aloud the poem again, if necessary, while they are working.
- Once children have completed their artwork, ask them to write any words or phrases that they might use to describe what they visualised on a post-it note or sheet of paper – these might be words or phrases that they remember from the poem, or their own words inspired by their visualisation.
- Then, ask them to share their artwork and the associated language with the person next to them, explaining what they were feeling or the imagery they were trying to capture in their art work. *What was it in the poem that helped you visualise it?*
- You may wish to conduct a gallery walk; allowing children time to walk around the room looking at all of the artwork created by their peers and considering the similarities and differences amongst the range of work and why these might be.
- After discussing children’s initial response and visualisation in relation to the poem, hand out copies of the poem for children to re-read for themselves and allow time, either as a whole class or in small groups for children to explore the language and some of the poetic devices used. After children’s initial response to how the poem made them feel, anything it reminded them of and any questions they might have, give them the opportunity to seek clarification of any unfamiliar vocabulary. Allow time for children to offer explanations themselves if they are familiar with some of the terms. *For example, from the context of the fifth verse, how might we begin to unpick the meaning of the word ‘tumbler’ as distinct from its definition as a drinking container?*
- Ask the class which words or phrases or patterns of language they were drawn to and start prompting them to consider some of the possibilities of playing and experimenting with poetic

devices for their own writing. *What choices in language and layout has the poet made and what might they tell us? What do we find out about the narrator of the poem? How would you summarise the feeling of looking at this painting? Do you think her response and her experience of this painting are positive or negative? What makes you think that? Have you ever felt that way looking at a painting?*

- Ask the children if they have ever heard of the artist, Marc Chagall, or his painting, 'Blue Circus' (1950). What would they expect to see in the painting? Share an image of the painting for the children to explore. You might need to print out some enlarged copies of the image so that children working in groups can get a clear look at some of the smaller details. The painting forms of the collection at the Tate and you can find a digital copy of it here: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/chagall-the-blue-circus-n06136> (Find out more about the artist here: <https://www.theartstory.org/artist/chagall-marc/>)
- You may suggest prompts to children to support their discussion around the painting. Encourage the children to annotate their copy with any words, phrases, questions or connections that come to mind as they investigate the image. *What do you notice? What is your eye drawn to? Why might that be? How does the painting make you feel? What patterns, lines or shapes can you see? What do you think the artist used to create this painting? What 'title' would you have given this painting? Why? Does the painting remind you of anything else you've seen?*
- After discussing children's observations and responses to the painting, return to Kate Wakeling's poem. Read it again and imagine the narrator of the poem standing and looking at the painting. *What connections can we see between the poem and the painting? Where do you think the person in the poem saw the painting – at home, online, in a book, in a gallery? Have you ever 'lost yourself' in a painting in this way?*
- Explain that we're going to experiment with responding to a painting to see if it might lead into some poetry. Using a similar technique to the 'Poetry Papering' in Session 2, print out a selection of different paintings – you might offer a wide selection of paintings from different styles, eras and artists, or you might choose to use this as a springboard for a wider study of Marc Chagall, or the various artistic movements by which he was inspired, or which he influenced himself, including surrealism, fauvism, expressionism and cubism.
- Ask children to walk around the space pausing at any painting that catches their eye and interest. Once they have found a painting that speaks to them, ask them to take it back to their table. Some children may select the same painting which they can either work on together or you may choose to provide further copies.
- As they did when exploring 'Blue Circus', give children time to pore over the painting, looking at smaller details as well as the whole composition. As they look, encourage them to annotate it with any notes that captures their response – words and phrases to describe what they can see, things that they think imagine might be happening, things that they infer, words and phrases to describe what is in the painting, and to describe their emotional response to the

painting, questions or puzzles that it prompts. Encourage them to think about tone, patterns, lines, structure, colour, materials, light and dark, etc.

- Undertake the same exercise with a different painting of your own choosing alongside the class. Then, when the children have had sufficient time, model reading back your notes and annotations, selecting an idea that interests you and start to draft some potential lines that could become part of a poem. You might choose to imitate some of the structures or phrasing that Kate Wakeling used, but don't need to be bound by this.
- After modelling the process, allow time for children to work with their Poetry Journals, jotting down words, phrases and potential lines, or snippets of verses that could be reshaped and refined into a poem in the future.

Session 11: Deeper responses to poems read – poetry to connect with and make sense of personal experiences and emotions

Allowing ample time for pupils to explore and make personal choices and reflect on what resonates with them personally is an important investment that can heighten engagement with and response to poetry. Rather than looking at a poem as a puzzle that needs to be solved, or to be mined for specific language and technique, we need to encourage a personal and emotional response as a way in to looking at what it was about the writing that garnered the response.

NB: The poem shared in this session includes an exploration of bereavement and particularly of the emotions associated with remembering a family member who has died. Whilst it is important that all aspects of life are represented in poetry, as these allow children to see and make sense of emotions and experiences faced by themselves and others, teachers are advised to read the poem before introducing it to pupils in order to decide how best to mediate the content with their own classes and children in mind.

- Begin this session by listening to Kate Wakeling read the poem 'Grandma and the Sea' (page 47) on her poet page on CLPE's website: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/kate-wakeling>
- Allow time for the children to discuss their initial reactions to the poem. What did it make them think about? How did it make them feel? What made them feel this way? How does this poem compare and contrast with other poems by Kate Wakeling that they have read so far? How did Kate's performance bring out the emotions evoked in the poem?
- Now, give out copies of the poem on the page to pairs or groups of children. Play the video of Kate reading the poem again, encouraging them to follow the poem on the page as she reads. Come back to discuss: *What do you know about the person narrating the poem and their relationship with their Grandma? Why do you think they have selected this memory to share? What in the poem allows you to infer their relationship? Can you imagine what it was like stepping into that sea? What in the poem allows you to visualise the water and the feeling of*

being in it? Does the relationship between the two figures in the poem remind you of important people in your own life?

- Now, allow time for the children to re-read and discuss the poem together, sharing their thoughts, observations, looking at the language used, how the words are laid out on the page, the accompanying illustrations and to raise questions that they have about the poem. Encourage them to make their thinking visible by text marking and annotating their copy of the poem as a record of their thoughts and discussions.
- You can use this as an opportunity to re-introduce children to the names of specific forms or devices to look at what makes their chosen poem poetic returning to the idea of Michael Rosen's 'secret strings' that were introduced in Session 4: assonance, alliteration, imagery, opposition, rhythm and sound. *Can they identify any of these in the poem?*
- Come back together to discuss as a group. The children might talk about:
 - The use of figurative language such as the similes 'loosened like the strands...'; 'hit me like a bus'; and the personification of the cold that 'hit', the water which 'roared', and the anger which 'flew'.
 - The use of conjunctions to start many of the verses.
 - The choice of line breaks, the separation between lines, why this might be and the effect this has on the reader. The verses range from just 1 line to 7 lines – *how does this effect the pace, the rhythm, the emotion, etc.?*
 - The ways in which the environment reflects the emotion (pathetic fallacy): e.g. the grey day reflecting their misery, the roaring water reflecting her anger, etc.
 - The inclusion of familiar informal idioms or sayings: 'cooked it up', 'run for its money', 'by heck' (and the use of italics).
 - The rhyme or assonance used in some of the verses, e.g.
 - Back, crackled (Verse 3)
 - Sea, she, beach, me, we, agreed (Verses 6 and 7)
 - Roared, more, short (Verse 11)
 - Round, found (verse 11)
 - Done, swum (Verse 13)
 - Swim in it (Verse 18)
 - The alliteration in 'wool... well-worn'
 - The potential ambiguity of the pronoun 'it' in the last line – allowing space in the poem to consider whether the narrator is literally swimming in the sea, or figuratively swimming in the memory, or both.
 - The emotional journey of the poem and how this is presented
 - Personal connections they have with the emotions or experiences shared.
- Follow up reading aloud another two poems from the collection: 'The Day Mum Turned into a Lion' (page 68) and 'Walking Poem' (page 84). After reading these, allow time and space for the children to talk about their response to the poems as they have read in previous sessions

and then to consider some of the connections between the poems read during this session. *What personal connections do you have with these experiences or of the feelings connected with these? Which poem particularly resonates with you? Why do you think that is?*

- *If you were to draw on your own personal experiences or emotions in a poem, what might these be?* To support the children's thinking, allow them time and space to think about this and share aspects of their wider lives and feelings they have connected with these in a visual organiser in their Poetry Journal. They might focus on aspects such as 'special people in my life', 'pets' or 'special times in my life'. As an enabling adult and model of the creative process, ensure that you do this in your own Poetry Journal, alongside the children.
- Reinforce that poetry is a place where they can be expressive about their thoughts and feelings and that they can do this indirectly through taking snippets of their own lives and presenting these through the 'I' narrator. Go back to the original poem and discuss again how Kate Wakeling is able to show the importance of this moment and the depth of the emotion around it. Look at how they might be able to use imagery, personification, pathetic fallacy or how to build anticipation as she does in the poems we've shared.
- When they've completed their visual organisers, give them time to think about aspects they could share through a poem. Do this yourself, drawing on your own visual organiser to model the process. Tell them that they can come back to add to this organiser at any time, and that their thoughts and ideas can be worked up into their own poems at the end of the sequence, but that they can continue to develop ideas in their journals in the meantime.

Session 12: Writing own poems in response to the collection: Ideation

Following an authentic model for writing in the classroom allows students to feel what it is like to be a writer. It is so much more than simply 'doing' writing tasks. Following an authentic process results in well-developed pieces of writing; pupils follow a truly creative process and have the impetus to write for themselves. The core focus of an authentic writing process is on giving pupils a credible opportunity to develop their own voice, have a choice about what they want to say and how they say it and the chance to write with freedom.

Ideation is the creative process of generating, developing, and communicating new ideas. Activities and demonstrations should focus on exploring where and how we get ideas from in the real world of writing and giving pupils time, space and stimulus to begin to form and shape ideas for their own writing for real life purposes and audiences.

- Reflect on all the poems that have been read in the collection so far. How would you describe the different poems? Can you categorise them under different headings? What would these be? What were different poems about? Could you categorise these into different topics or themes? What ideas do these give you about what poetry is and what it could be? What ideas do you have for poems of your own?

- Often, when people talk to writers about their work, one of the most commonly asked questions is where they get their ideas from. Listen to Kate Wakeling talk about where she gains inspiration for her poetry on the CLPE website: <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/kate-wakeling-what-inspires-you-poet>
- Ask children to reflect on what Kate said and talk in pairs or small groups to list as many places as they can think of where a person can get ideas to help their writing. After a couple of minutes, get children to report back and create a class list. *Where can we get ideas from?* Children might mention: things that we see/notice, something heard, memories, other books that we've read, a song that we heard, dreams, imagination, daydreaming, playing, films, toys, family events, arguments, etc.
- Come back to the Poetry Journals where children have been jotting down ideas, inspirations, sketches and drafts of poems. Remind the children that these books are only for them – there's not a particular amount of writing you expect them to do, they can write in any way they wish, and they can also sketch and draw. It's also important to make clear that you won't be marking them.
- Now give time for the children to reflect back on the ideas they've collected and think about which they feel might be most successful to take forward to a draft piece of writing in the next session.
- It is important for you as a teacher of writing to reflect on your own feelings about writing alongside the children and review ideas you have collected in your own journal. Our recent research highlights the importance of teachers as writers of poetry. Share some of the ideas you would consider working up and why, and how you might start to think about doing this, then give the children some time to begin to work up their own ideas or to sit and think about how to do this.
- Some children may choose to start by drawing, doodling or sketching ideas initially. You might even refer back to some of the illustrations in the text.
- They could also draw on the ideas of practising poets. You can listen to Kate Wakeling and other poets talk about how they go about writing their poetry here: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/videos?f%5B0%5D=tags%3A10757&search>. They might keep a note of favourite or overheard words, phrases and conversations. They might start by splurging all their ideas onto the page to refine later like Kate, they may have a line that is their starting point, like Sue Hardy-Dawson, they might make a mind map around the theme or title, like Ruth Awolola.
- Remind them that they don't have to start writing a poem straight away, they might just begin by collecting words, phrases, ideas and images that can be used later. However, if they have an idea that they want to start exploring immediately in a poetic form that is also fine.

Session 13: Writing Own Poems, Gaining a Response

Creation is the act of writing down and shaping ideas with a purpose, audience and form in mind.

Activities and demonstrations should focus on exploring different ways to capture, work up and

develop ideas in the journey to publication. Sharing the processes of real writers, for example their thoughts and advice and images of their journals, notebooks and sketchbooks can be a valuable part of this process, sharing how the work will often begin rough, in note form and tentative before being worked up more fully for an audience.

It is important to develop children as reflective writers by giving ample opportunity throughout the writing process to talk about themselves as writers, enable them to voice their views, listen to others and develop new knowledge and understanding.

Children's writing can be improved if they, a partner or their teacher reads it aloud at an early stage, giving it life and breath and helping the young poet see the patterns and tunes they have created. Just as an author would work with an editor, children should be given opportunities to help each other by reading their writing aloud and responding as readers. This allows them to support each other as they compose and structure their ideas. Writers can tell response partners what they are pleased with in their writing, particular devices or parts of the poem they may be struggling with and gaining a picture from the reader of how their writing impacts on them. Response partners should be encouraged to reflect on the impact of the poem on them as a reader. Children can then re-draft parts of their work, based on these conversations.

- Reflect on the ideas that the children have been noting in their Poetry Journals throughout the unit. Which ones do they feel strongly enough about to take through to writing? How can you take your initial notes forward into crafting a poem?
- Take a theme or topic from your own journal that you could begin working up into a poem. Model how you might begin crafting a poem based on one of the topics discussed during one of the sessions, talking through the choices that you are making as a writer to communicate the right feelings and images for your reader.
- Think about the form the poem will take and if they will use any of the poetic devices you have explored in Kate Wakeling's poetry, such as rhythm, rhyme, wordplay, repetition, imagery, alliteration or assonance. You may have children in the class who are very adept at using rhythm and rhyme in their writing, some may be more comfortable to write in free verse and find it easier to express their thoughts and feelings in this way. Encourage them to select the form and devices that allow them to best express their themes and feelings in the best way, as they have seen and responded to in Kate's writing.
- Allow time for children to draft their own poems around the themes and subjects of their choice, then allow them to read these aloud to themselves, perhaps while walking around or moving so they can feel the rhythms of their writing before sharing with a response partner to lift the words off the page, hearing how they sound when performed.
- Give time for response partners to ask the writers questions, discuss parts they aren't sure are working, adjust rhythms or make suggestions to improve the writing.
- Start to think together about how the poem could be presented on the page to enhance the meaning and the reader's understanding. Draw the children's thoughts back to what they saw

in this collection and the impact this had on them as readers and use this knowledge to make notes about this on their draft.

- You might also think about whether the poem will have an accompanying illustration, and if so, what this might be. Again, look back at the poems studied. *What is the impact of having the illustrations there? What style of illustration do you think might best fit the theme and emotions captured in your writing?*

Session 14: Editing and Publishing Own Poems

Publication is the means to present writing in a way that is most appropriate for the purpose, audience and form. This may be through the spoken as well as the written form and may also involve visual communication, if appropriate.

Prior to publication, writers should work with a supportive partner to polish the work ready for publication, proof reading work and checking for spelling and punctuation accuracy. Materials that facilitate the most appropriate forms of publication, reflecting those used by a practising writer working in this way should be provided to give writers the full sense of the satisfaction publishing and presenting writing can bring.

- Give further time for children to redraft any parts of their poems that they discussed with their response partner in the previous session, or to work on their poems further if they need time to do this.
- When they have a poem that they have read aloud to a partner, discussed and explored changes and that they are happy to present to a wider audience, start to think about how that poem could be best presented. *How will it look on the page? What form will it take? How will you use line breaks and spacing on the page to enhance the meaning or emotions behind your poem? Will you hand write it? Will you publish using a word processor? What script or font will you choose? Will you make any specific decisions about the way certain words look or are placed on the page? Will you illustrate the poem? If so, how will the words and illustration sit and work together?*
- Allow plenty of time and space for the children to make a final draft and then publish their work accordingly.
- When they are happy with the way their poems look on the page, think about how this could be lifted off the page and be performed to an audience. Give each child a photocopy of their finished poem and allow them to mark this up with performance ideas. *Will you perform on your own? Do you need others to support you? How will you use voice, body movements and facial expression to enhance the listener's engagement and understanding?*
- Ensure time is given to try out ideas and rehearse performances of children's own poems before presenting to an audience and consider ways to allow published poems to be shared with an audience – as part of a display in a prominent area in the school, printed in an anthology to share in a public reading space or school library, on a class blog or the school website, or published on a school social media account – you could even tag in the poet.

- Allow the children time to reflect on the writing process. How did it feel to write their own poems? What was successful? What was challenging? Have they been inspired to write more poetry? Why or why not? If so, what else might they want to write about?

Session 15: Reflecting on the Collection

- Revisit the poems that have been explored throughout the sequence. Ask children what their favourite poems have been, re-read some that the class suggest or invite them to read these to the class. *What did each poem make them think about? How did it make them feel? What made them feel this way?*
- To draw together all the work done in this unit, hold a discussion about the collection as a whole. Which were your favourite poems? Which were the most memorable for you? Why? What have you learnt about poetry that you didn't know before? Would you be encouraged to read more poetry after studying this collection? Why or why not?
- Compare their current thoughts around the book with their first impressions. What were you expecting? Was the poetry included in the collection what you expected it to be? Why or why not? Was there anything in the collection that surprised you? How would you describe this collection to someone else? What would you tell them about the poems? What might you keep back so as not to spoil their experience?
- Come back to discuss the poems that they have heard performed by the poet, heard read aloud or read and performed themselves and discuss the similarities and differences within them.
- Spend some time now reflecting on the poems that the children have written. What kinds of poems were your favourite to write? What did you find it easiest to write about? What was more difficult or challenging for you? Why do you think this was?
- Following this, you might hold a poetry festival for children to do readings from their collections to parents or other classes in the school or display their work as part of an exhibition, including the published poems and accompanying illustrations. For the children performing at the event, ask them to consider what they learnt from listening to the poems being read aloud and performed by other poets as well as trying out ideas in their performances of poems from this collection that they will need to remember when reading their own poems.
- Display the children's own poems and artwork prominently in the library or other shared area or on a blog, website or school social media account so they can be read by a wider audience. Ensure you obtain each child's consent before publishing their work. This might lead on to wider explorations around the concept of copyright. You may wish to draw on the resources CLPE produced in partnership with the ALCS to explore this in more depth: <https://clpe.org.uk/teaching-resources/ALCS-resources-on-copyright>.
- You could even send Kate copies of the children's poems with a covering note or letter thanking her for inspiring their work, by email via the details on her website:

<http://www.katewaking.co.uk/> or by tagging her into a school Tweet. Kate's Twitter handle is @WakingKate

- You may also want to look into the prospect of inviting Kate to the school for a poet visit. Details of how to do this can be found on her website: <http://www.katewaking.co.uk/>