

Bookside Down by Joanne Limburg

A delightful, playful, humorous and perceptive collection of poems, shortlisted for the 2014 CLPE Poetry Award, that provide a fresh take on school and family life as well as exploring the everyday preoccupations and experiences of children in the modern day. The poems in this collection allow for the opportunity to explore considerations of these everyday experiences and how they affect the way we think, feel and relate to one another.

Overall learning aims of this teaching sequence.

- To use art as a stimulus for writing
- To use poetry as a stimulus for art
- To explore how language and structural devices are used in poetry to create powerful responses.
- To explore ways in which we can use our voices, facial expressions and body language to perform poetry.
- To compose poetry and consider effective ways to capture the essence of the poem through performance and techniques such as soundscaping.

This teaching sequence is designed for a Year 2, 3 or 4 class.

Overview of this teaching sequence.

The teaching sequence encourages children to work collaboratively to share their responses and interpretations of the poems whilst providing a supportive framework through which to compose and perform poetry inspired by the collection through themes they can identify with.

The sequence maps out ten sessions spread over two weeks. However teachers are encouraged to use their discretion, knowledge of their children's needs and professional judgement to extend the length of sessions dedicated to any one aspect featured. The poems created over the courses of the sessions can be presented and published in a class anthology.

National Curriculum 2014

Reading: (Word reading / Comprehension)

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop positive attitudes to reading, and an understanding of what they read, by:
 - listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks
 - preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action
 - discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
 - recognising some different forms of poetry [for example, free verse, narrative poetry]
- understand what they read, in books they can read independently, by:
 - checking that the text makes sense to them, discussing their understanding, and explaining the meaning of words in context
 - asking questions to improve their understanding of a text
 - drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
 - identifying main ideas drawn from more than 1 paragraph and summarising these
 - identifying how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning.

Writing: (Transcription / Composition)

Pupils should be taught to:

- plan their writing by:
 - discussing writing similar to that which they are planning to write in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar
 - discussing and recording ideas
- draft and write by:
 - composing and rehearsing sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures
 - organising paragraphs around a theme
- evaluate and edit by:
 - assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggesting improvements
 - proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency, including the accurate use of pronouns in sentences
- proofread for spelling and punctuation errors
- read their own writing aloud to a group or the whole class, using appropriate intonation and controlling the tone and volume so that the meaning is clear

Speaking and Listening:

- Participate actively performance, discussion and debate;
- Use spoken language to develop understanding through imagining and exploring ideas in role play drama and dance;

- Select and use appropriate registers for effective communication.

Cross Curricular Links:

Through the inspiration of the poetry children will be encouraged to respond through art and producing, 'creative work that explores their ideas and records their experiences as stipulated by the aims of the National Curriculum.

Teaching Approaches

- Reading aloud and rereading
- Writing in role
- Visualising and illustrating
- Shared writing
- Readers Theatre

Writing Outcomes

- Poems inspired by the collection
- Note taking

Teaching Sessions:

Session 1 - Poem Focus: Beware the Humans (p.7)

Session Plan:

- Share the poem with the children
- Take their initial responses to the poem
- In small groups ask them to discuss and note their responses to the poem using the following prompts:
 - Did you like the poem, if yes what did you like about the poem?
 - Did you dislike the poem, if so what did you dislike about the poem?
 - How did the poem make you feel?
 - Did it remind you of anything else you have read or seen?
 - Were there any words or phrases you particularly liked or found interesting?
 - Was there anything that puzzled you?
- Have a whole class discussion of their responses.
- Show the poem enlarged either on a flipchart or IWB. Read the poem as a whole class.
- Ask them to consider what humans contribute to the world and how they damage the world.
- Assign the groups as either pro human or anti human and ask them to formulate arguments

inspired by the poem and their discussions to this point.

- Conduct a whole class debate.

Session 2 - Poem Focus: Not Good (p.31)

Session Plan:

- Share the poem with the children.
- Invite the children to discuss if there were any things that the poet described as irritating that they also identify with as being irritating.
- Share a table with the title headers in the example below either on flipchart paper or on the whiteboard.

| Things I find irritating ... | Why I find them irritating ... | How it makes me feel ... |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | |

- Invite the children to consider what other things they find irritating, why and how this makes them feel. They can be encouraged to do this in talk partners and note their ideas on post-it notes that can be placed in the appropriate column on the table above.
- Once this is done share some of the contributions.
- Reread the poem with the text provided ask the children what they notice about the structure of the poem.
- Using the structure as a framework and some of the post-it contributions work with the children to model writing the first three stanzas.
- Give the children the time to write their own versions taking the approach modelled.
- Allow the time for response partners to share and feedback on the poem to enable the children the opportunity to refine their poems.
- Invite some children to share their poem.

Session 3 - Poem Focus: Our Class: An ABC (p.42)

Session Plan:

- Share the poem with the class.
- Discuss the value of what our individuality brings to the class community.
- Discuss how we might categorise features that might define such individuality. Note these down.

- Invite the children to take turns in sharing something that they think is either special or unique about a member of the class.
- Provide each child with five post it notes. Ask each to think of one positive special or unique thing about five members of the class. Invite the children to write one comment relating to one child on a post it note and then stick this on that individual. They must all do this for five children.
- Each child must then review the comments and consider either which of these they wish to select for the poem or contribute their own.
- Invite the children to draw a picture that captures the essence of all of the positive things shared about them.
- They should then be encouraged to construct a sentence in the same structure as the original poem inspired by the comments, discussion and drawing. This line will form the caption for the drawing and the page of the book dedicated to them.
- Use the illustrations and lines devised by the children to create a class book with a page dedicated to each child.
- If the class contains children whose names are representative of the entire alphabet then the format of the poem can be replicated. However if the class has a high representation of a particular letter then the format of the class poem will reflect this.

Session 4 - Poem Focus: Excited (p.22)

Session Plan:

- Perform the poem to the children in an excited tone.
- Ask the children to consider how the poet uses the words to create a sense of excitement and to comment as to whether they feel this is effective and why.
- Ask them to think of a special occasion that makes them excited such as birthdays, holidays, Christmas, Eid etc. Create a grid of the key occasions identified with a box dedicated to each occasion as in the example below.

| | | |
|----------|-----------|-------|
| Birthday | Christmas | Eid |
| Hanukkah | Holiday | Party |

- Invite the children to think about the key things that excite them about one of the special occasions they get most excited about and share this with a talk partner.
- Conduct a whole class discussion and scribe their thoughts based on their partner talk.
- Through shared writing model picking four items detailed in one of the boxes and using this construct the first stanza of the poem.
- Reread the first and second stanza of the Excited poem and then read the stanza that has been constructed through shared writing and ask them how this would be used to construct the second stanza following the same structure as the Excited poem.
- Reread the third stanza from the Excited poem and work with the children to create the third stanza of the whole class poem using the same framework.
- Repeat the previous point with stanza four.
- Read the final stanza and ask the children what word will be required for the class constructed poem.
- Read the poem together as a whole class in an excited tone.
- Allow the children the time to devise their own version based on an occasion that particularly excites them

Session 5 - Poem Focus: Nothingness (p. 48)

Session Plan:

- Share poem and use this as a stimulus to discuss their:
 - common anxieties and fears;
 - when these anxieties/ fears most commonly arise
 - most effective ways to redress these.
- Through shared writing use the framework of the poem to model how you might write another poem substituting the fear of silence with another common fear such as fear of the darkness.
- Invite the children to write their own poem exploring a different fear and ways to redress this.

Session 6 - Poem Focus: Different Wishing (p.54)

Session Plan:

- Enlarge the poem to feature either on a flipchart or IWB. Colour code the text to illustrate the two distinct perspectives.
- Conduct a whole class reading of the poem by splitting half of the class to read the parts in favour of a little brother and the other half against. Before they proceed ask them to imagine from the perspective of their role how a younger sibling might make them feel and what tone of voice would best encapsulate that feeling. Encourage them to use this voice when reading their part.

- Invite the children in talk partners to share the best and worst things about having a sibling and if they don't have one what they would imagine these to be based on relationships with friends, cousins etc.
- Use their initial discussion to inform a whole class open discussion and scribe their reflections on the pros and cons of having a sibling in a grid like the one below.

| Positives | Negatives |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Younger Sibling/ Cousin | Younger Sibling/ Cousin |
| Older Sibling/ Cousin | Older Sibling/ Cousin |

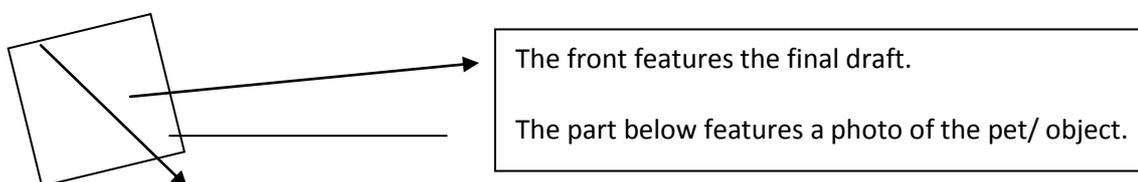
- Invite the children to consider whether they want to write about older or younger siblings and using the sentence starter and structure derived from the poem model through shared writing an example of how the first two lines might read as inspired by some of the ideas scribed.
- Provide them with the time to compose their own versions either individually or in pairs. If the children compose their poems in pairs they can rehearse and refine the poem together with the aim of each pair performing their final version to the rest of the class.

Session 7 - Poem Focus: New Baby in our House (p. 41)

Session Plan:

- Prior to the session ask the children to bring in either a special toy or photo of a pet to share in this session.
- Share the poem and ask them to:
 - share their thoughts about how the confusion about the type of baby it is comes about;
 - consider how the choice of language leads to this confusion.
- Ask the children to share their photo or toy with a talk partner and discuss:
 - What makes the object/ pet special
 - What do they recall about the first time they received the toy or pet as a gift
- Ask them to then note down their recollection of the following points and use this to frame their discussion:
 - When they recall the object/ pet arrived at their home;
 - Where in their home they first encountered the object/ pet;

- The first thing they did when they encountered the object/ pet;
- The first thing they said when they encountered the object/ pet;
- How the object/ pet responded;
- How the child responded in return
- Ask one or two talk partners to share their discussion using the notes from their paired talk.
- Through shared writing model how such notes could be used to form a poem using the same structure as the New Baby in our House poem.
- Invite children to write their own poems inspired by the poem.
- An additional session could be spent with the children working in response partners to refine their poems and making a flap book as in the example below to present their final draft in.



Session 8 - Poem Focus: What I found under my bed (p.56)

Session Plan:

- Share the poem.
- Ask the children to think about the space in which they sleep and pretend that they are in the room in which they sleep.
- Ask them to visualise the types of things that might be lurking under their bed/ sofa/ mattress and draw these.
- Provide them with the time to share their drawings with a partner.
- Reread the poem and discuss how we might choose to categorise the types of things found under the bed. Tabulate the agreed categories based on the discussion as in the example below. Ask

| Imaginary Objects | Toys | Reading materials | Dirt |
|-------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| | | | |

- Ask the children to contribute items under beds that fall within these categories based on

their drawings and discussions. Write these down in one colour.

- Ask the children to consider a word or phrase that would best describe each object listed. Write these responses next to the corresponding word in a different colour. (Alternatively you could provide children with post it notes and ask them to note down their ideas and place them in the grid – one colour for the object and a different colour for the word/ phrase to describe the object)
- Put the children in groups of 5 and invite each child in the group to pick two favourite things either from the discussion or inspired by it and decide how best to describe them. Provide each child with two strips of paper and ask them to write a sentence/ phrase for each object, writing one on one strip and the one relating to the other object on the second strip.
- Ask the children to share their strips within the group and discuss as a group the order in which the strips should be read.
- Once they have agreed the order of their collaborative line poem give them either some blu tac or pritt stick and a large piece of sugar paper to allow them to stick the strips in the order agreed.
- Provide them with the time to rehearse the poem, considering ways in which they will perform it to the class.
- Use a bed sheet and large pillow to create a fictional bed. Hold a pillow at one end of the performance area and ask four volunteers to hold the sheet taut in line with the pillow.
- Invite each group to stand under the sheet whilst they perform their poem.

Session 9 - Poem Focus: There was a wind (p.57)

Session Plan:

- Invite the children to close their eyes and listen to a sound clip of howling wind such as the one in link. (<http://soundbible.com/suggest.php?q=howling+wind&x=0&y=0>)
- As the clip plays ask the children to consider how the sound makes them feel, what sensations they sense on the surface of their skin, the lids of their eyes, their nostrils and their hair.
- Ask them to consider what they picture in their mind.
- Invite them to draw the scene.
- Invite them to talk to the person next to them and describe the detail in their drawings.
- Play one of the video clips of a windy storm.
- Ask the children to note what they observe.
- Scribe their contributions or provide them with post it notes to note their ideas and add this to the board.
- Share the poem with the children.
- Using the structure of the stanza from the poem use a selection of their contributions to model writing a stanza.
- Provide them with the opportunity to construct their own poem using the structure of the poem as a framework.

- Ask three children to volunteer to share their poem. Give them some rehearsal time.
- Work with the rest of the class to create a sense of atmosphere for the poetry readings by creating a wind inspired soundscape.
- Invite each child to read their poem whilst the rest of the class provide the soundtrack. Record this and play it back so that the whole class can appreciate the collaborative performance

Session 10 – Poems in Focus: Listed in session plan section

Session Plan:

- Share a short poem of your choice from the collection, it maybe one you have studied in a previous session or one that you have a preference for. Enlarge this to A3 or put on the IWB. Discuss how you might perform the poem as a class.
- Using different coloured markers text mark the poem accordingly. Invite the children to consider how tone, voice, sound effects, actions and soloist and communal readings might vary the impact of the words and poetry being performed.
- Conduct the poetry performance.
- Divide the children into five groups. Give each group a focus poem listed below and provide them with the time to rehearse their poem. (Provide them with photocopies of the poem and highlighters/ pens to allow them to text mark as appropriate.)

Group 1 – The Day we went to the Multi-skills Festival (p.24)

Group 2 – And Then My Brother Said (p.17)

Group 3 – Yes – Man (p.14)

Group 4 – Banana Phone (p.10)

Group 5 – Awesome and Random (p.50)

- Allow each group to perform their poem to the rest of the class.