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**TEACHING ENGLISH WITH POETRY IN EFL
CLASSROOM**

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ABSTRACT

A significant amount of research has been conducted on the benefits of using literature in the language classroom. However, very little attention is usually paid to poetry. Thus, it has been among the objectives of this TFM to analyse and outline the advantages of implementing poetry in EFL classroom, as well as to identify potential difficulties in its use. Apart from highlighting the role of poetry in teaching the English language, the focus has also been on designing learning activities that would promote the acquisition of reading, speaking, listening and writing skills. Another objective of this TFM has been to prove that use of poetry in English, as representation of authentic language in its creative form, does not only provide multiple opportunities to make language – learning process both productive and enjoyable, but can boost creativity and self-expression as well. The methodological approaches that lay the foundation of this TFM are Communicative Approach, Task – Based Learning and Action – Oriented Approach. The principles of constructivism, individualisation, autonomous work, cooperation, collaboration and learning through discovery have also been taken into consideration. Overall, this TFM suggests that potential challenges of teaching English through poetry are hugely outweighed by its benefits.

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INTRODUCTION

Among the main aims of educational process is to contribute to learner's integral personal development. According to UNESCO (2023), it is vital to ensure young people possess necessary skills that would allow them to acquire the sense of belonging to the internationalised world, integrate into modern globalised society and to contribute to its evolution and prosperity. The goal that can only be achieved through acquiring certain skills, knowledge of foreign languages among them. In the age of globalisation and technology, the English language has long become a universal tool of communication and interaction on global scale. Changes in all spheres of society have brought about the necessity to modernise teaching methods and strategies as well, particularly those concerning foreign languages. Thus, the foundation for language – learning activities designed in this TFM rests on the principles of Communicative Approach, Task – Based Learning and Action – Oriented Approach, where students play central role in the teaching – learning process.

Poetry constitutes an intrinsic part of literature and reflects national and cultural features of people and the époque it belongs in. Therefore, the introduction of poetry in EFL classroom is aimed at, apart from acquisition of language skills and new vocabulary, generally broadening the students' horizons and encouraging them to be open-minded in their perception of other people and their reality. The possibilities offered by poetry are abundant. Apart from being regarded as entertainment, thus an enjoyable activity, it contributes to spiritual development, which is essential at a young age, and can serve as means of creating one's own personal space. The versatility and variety of types of poetry makes it easy to introduce in EFL classroom, where every student is highly likely to encounter something that would resonate with their personal experiences. Thus, one of the aspirations of this TFM has been to emphasize the role of poetry is promoting both individual and collaborative work in EFL classroom. Literature review has been conducted to get a clearer picture of the extent to which introducing poetry as a branch of literature in a language classroom has been explored academically. Overall, the scholars take similar approaches and coincide in defining poetry as a highly valuable tool that provides the opportunity to strengthen the relationship between the learner and the language.

1. THE BENEFITS OF TEACHING POETRY TO ADOLESCENTS

What is a poem?

A whisper,

a shout,

thoughts turned

inside out.

A laugh,

a sight,

an echo

passing by.

A rhythm,

a rhyme,

a moment caught in time.

A moon,

a star,

a glimpse

of who you are.

Charles Ghigna

Poetry is regarded by many as one of the most ancient arts, after all, both rhyme and rhythm existed before written language. Poetry illustrates a nation's cultural heritage and contains records of their feelings, sorrows and joys. It is an intrinsic part of literary art, even though the views on its meaning and overall place in human culture are diverse. The word poetry itself is of Greek origin (ancient Greek: ποιεω (poieo)) and its meaning is 'I create' ([English meaning - Cambridge Dictionary](#), 2023). The definition is probably the basis for understanding its true nature. Poetry, similar to other types of art, provides an insight into the personal, emotional,

cultural and national traits of a specific community. It is also an understanding of a particular époque, a reflection on society with its culture and history, as well as expression of people's personal attitudes, feelings, worries, griefs and joys, in other words, the reflection of life itself.

The major difference of poetry from prose is that the emphasis is placed on different strategies when using the language, in which emotions, feelings and images are transmitted through the beauty of the language. As underlined by Fitch and Swartz (2008), inspiration can take many different forms, and poetry is unquestionably one of them. Accordingly, one can perceive poetry on a variety of ranges and levels. It is a marvellous tool for expressing one's sentiments, facilitating communication and connection to the world around and inside us, and an instrument for self-expression as well. Consequently, poetry's educational value for schools can hardly be underestimated. It does not only reveal the charm of the language, but highlights new notions and ideas, improves memory skills, boosts imagination and triggers creativity. Moral lessons can be transmitted through poetry, making it a multifunctional and powerful tool, also essential to adolescents' personal development (Elkind, 1975). All of the above-mentioned characteristics make a perfect combination for introducing poetry in EFL classroom, starting with young learners and moving on to older teenagers. There is such a wide range of poetry available, from nursery rhymes, limericks, haiku, sonnets and ballads to free verse poetry that it can easily meet the needs of basically any kind of reader and language learner (Swartz, 1993).

The focus of this TFM is, however, on teenagers, or adolescents, in their senior secondary school years. The adolescence is, undoubtedly, one of the most crucial and challenging periods in the formation of human personality. It is a bridge that connects childhood and adulthood and a cornerstone for future interests, ambitions and targets. According to Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development Stages (1958), that is the period of human development when learners become conscious of belonging to a community, start to think in moral, philosophical, social, ethical and political terms. Besides, they tend to make use of deductive logic and are able to plan for the future and hypothetical situations. In consequence, this period is complex and challenging, and usually characterised by contradictory behaviour, dramatism, egocentrism and exaggerated emotional response. However, in accordance with cognitive aspects related to adolescents' characteristics, at this age of vulnerability and susceptibility the teenagers are highly responsive to creative and emotional stimulus, whose perfect example is poetry, which addresses all possible topics, among them coming-of-age, forming relationships and learning to interpret and be part of the 'adult' world (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

From a psychological perspective, and in line with Erikson's and Marcia's (1980) model of identity formation, the use of poetry in the classroom provides a unique opportunity to encourage social empathy, the ability to see things from a different perspective and learn to see the beauty of the language through creative expression. Moreover, poetry is a unique and powerful tool for boosting creativity, self-expression and cultural representation, thus it may serve to build up learners' personal spiritual space, as well as help to establish emotional connections with the world around them.

Although the teenagers are not always aware of the fact, poetry is actually constantly introduced in their lives through pop culture, music in particular. There is poetry for all ages that focuses on all possible topics. Literally, everyone could find something appealing or particularly attractive if they only bothered to look for it in poetry. It is, in essence, an amazing form of art unsuppressed by regulations. Although it can be precise as sciences, it can also rhyme or not, can have infinite rhythms, lines of no strict length, free punctuation rules. There may be plenty of different meanings interpreted individually, or no logic or meaning at all (Barton and Booth, 2004:11). Thus, poetry exists beyond grammar rules and specific formula. This freedom is certain to appeal to young people, who do not generally like to abide by norms. Consequently, it provides an alternative creative and individual - focused way of teaching a foreign language. Thus, it is regrettable that its use in EFL classroom is often overlooked by educators.

Interest for reading in a child awakens at the age of 10-11 (Ross, 2009). Unfortunately, the school, rather than awakening love for reading, often makes it an obligatory systematic process, at times alienating younger kids from literature. It is no secret that educators, as well as parents, often experience that resistance and unwillingness from both younger and older teenagers to broaden their horizons by means of reading. It certainly cannot be blamed upon the lack of resources or reading material, but rather the lack of time, the overload of homework and the natural need to spend time with their peers. Apart from, obviously, the already enormous amount of information the teenagers are flooded with through social media. It is a shame, though, since it is precisely at that age when we are attracted to learn about natural and historical events, other countries and cultures, to interpret the reality that surrounds us and learn about and from other human beings (Piaget, 1977). There is also a difference in tastes between boys and girls, boys being more driven towards technology, adventure, fantasy, science fiction, thrillers, etc., while girls, apart from being interested in all those topics, also have a tendency to romantic literature. The motivation for reading is also generally different nowadays; it is to

seek information rather than emotional involvement. The overall reading statistics in Spain is quite promising, though. As shown in the table (see Appendix 1) provided by [Barómetro de Hábitos de Lectura y Compra de Libros en España](https://www.elisayuste.com/habitos-de-lectura-infantil-y-juvenil/) (<https://www.elisayuste.com/habitos-de-lectura-infantil-y-juvenil/>, 2019), the highest reading numbers are among the children between 10 and 14 years old, which show that around 80% of children that age are frequent readers. The numbers go down in the next age category followed by teenagers aged 15-18 which still constitute almost 50%. Overall, the readers aged between 14 and 24 constitute the adult group with highest reading habits. Apart from traditional book reading, both prose and poetry, the same group are, of course, active readers of online blogs, articles and texts on social media. Spain is, fortunately, ahead of many countries, such as the UK. A report released by the National Literacy Trust UK ([National Literacy Trust](https://www.national-literacy-trust.org/)) states that in 2019 only 26% of students under 18 spent some time each day reading. Overall, Spanish adolescents show a predisposition for poetry reading, the fact that facilitates the introduction of poetry in an EFL classroom and is beneficial both in terms of developing general reading habits and introducing cultural contents through literature originally created in English language, an essential part of language acquisition (Hinkel, 2007).

Taking all the above – mentioned factors into consideration, the teacher is crucial in how the poetry is presented in the classroom, since it is not only the content but the way the content is introduced that is essential to the success of the teaching – learning process. Apart from being prepared to transmit professional knowledge, the teacher's enthusiasm and love for literature plays an essential role in awakening inspiration and being able to open the world of new possibilities to the learners (Barton, 2004:8). That is to say, to broaden the horizons and open the minds of the students, it is essential for the teacher to encourage and 'infect' their students with curiosity to interpret different phenomena, as well as the capability to comprehend, empathise, be tolerant and learn to accept a different point of view. According to Norato & Cañón (2008:13), "it is necessary to motivate students to read for pleasure by exposing them to English reading in order to build their cognitive processes and also as a way to learn different aspects of the language".

Another great asset of poetry is its ability to unite people in their attempts to explain or understand certain eternal phenomena, such as love, friendship, freedom, joy and sadness and all types of feelings, that is to say, life in general. As well as enhancing positive and motivational outlooks, poetry also tackles loneliness, disappointment, feeling of loss and being lost and, of course, death. All of the mentioned phenomena, eternal and ever important to the

humanity throughout centuries, have been reflected in poetry (Flynn, 2000:7). At the age when personalities are being formed, when young people have to go through complex processes both on a physical and mental levels, they may find answers and support in poetry. Through poetry, the readers become acquainted with personal stories of the writers and can empathise with their personal experiences. As a means of expressing one's feelings, poetry has always been considered a supreme tool unlike any other. Introducing different types of poetry – based activities in the classroom can be highly beneficial for adolescents' development both on personal and social levels.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

2.1. Literature review

The topic of teaching poetry at school and particularly its introduction in an English classroom has been a source of both controversy and inspiration for a while now. While there has been plenty of research carried out on introduction of poetry in schools, its potential benefits when employed in EFL classrooms have been largely marginalised. There is, however, little doubt as to the endless benefits it provides for the teaching – learning process. An extensive study of literature has been conducted in order to tackle the topic.

Erikson (1988) addressed the issue of stages in human development through life, both social and psychological, and, according to his theories, it is in the adolescence period when development of sense of identity and social roles is combined. Applying Erikson's theories to the topic of language learning, foreign language acquisition in particular, it is clear that learners feel more motivated when handling real-life materials, such as games, images and poetry among them, instead of traditional textbooks.

According to constructivist theories of Vigotsky (1978), the building of knowledge happens through interaction and discovery, while cultural and social experiences shape the way of thinking. Poetry is an artistic portrayal of life, it is created through a particular perception of reality. It is subjective and emotional, and, in turn, awakens a strong emotional response. Vigotsky (1978:79-91) addressed the interconnection between the adolescence and literary artistic development, stressing the leading role of language in expressing emotions and building social relationships. The perception of one's personal and other people's inner world, the expression of thoughts and feelings through language is more efficiently achieved through

poetry. Thus, addressing the English language through poetry provides young people with a different perspective on language.

Essential role of poetry both in forming young people's personality, their ability of self-expression and in finding the essence of a phenomenon through words is emphasised by Swartz (1993). It is salient to expose the learners to different types of poetry, thus helping them to encounter topics that resonate with their feelings. Doing so in English, using the original poetry to teach the English language, strengthens the relationship between the reader and the language, which is highly beneficial in foreign language teaching. "Experimenting with reading, writing and speaking is key to understanding" (Swartz, 1993:8). The value of poetry in enhancing learning and cooperation is enormous. It can be used for cooperative working during an English class to strengthen the sense of unity between the students, to allow them to get to know each other better, to negotiate, collaborate, express themselves, come to agreements, take turns, assess one another. The main focus of the book is on the value of poetry in education, and the strategies of introducing poetry into English classroom.

There is, however, a different approach to using poetry in ESL classroom, where the focus is on the challenges it presents, which is of great relevance to our topic. "Perhaps the greatest barrier to understanding poetry, however, is its elliptical, metaphorical, and highly allusive language" (Brindley, 1980:1). Different methods are suggested to make the most of poetry benefits, among them "to stress enjoyment and to teach poems at the appropriate maturation level" and "to relate the fundamental human concerns that many poets deal with to the students' lives" (Brindley, 1980:1).

Barton and Booth (2004) focus on the crucial role of the educator in the introduction of poetry into their students' learning space. "For us as teachers, poetry can be a concentrated teaching package that demonstrates language in unique patterns and forms, triggering new meanings, touching emotions, and encouraging vivid perceptions" (Barton and Booth, 2004:5). Their focus is on the creative side of poetry, and on how to encourage students to see it and learn to 'bring words to life' by themselves. Special attention is on supporting the students throughout the learning process and ensure they build up their language skills by means of poetry.

In comparison to other authors, Fitch and Swartz (2008) focus on poetry teaching from a more personalised perspective on the learner. The way of teaching poetry and the resources used depend heavily on the kind of reader the teacher is dealing with, their attitudes, interests and feelings. "If we hope to see curious, sceptical, creative thinkers emerge from our classrooms

and go on to reach their potential, we offer them the experience of poetry” (Fitch, 2008:4). They coincide, however, with the general opinion expressed by other authors that poetry, when shared and discussed in class, has enormous potential to promote collaboration and create highly beneficial learning environment. “When poetry is lifted off the page and shared, it connects us to each other” (Fitch, 2008:4).

Flynn and McPhillips (2000) introduce the topic of teaching poetry from a different angle. Their focus is not so much on learning through poetry, but rather on awakening feelings and emotions, as well as boosting creativity, and leaving a trace in their students’ minds and lives as a consequence. Flynn and McPhillips (2000:10) state that “ it [poetry] can help us identify who we are and what we are, and through poetry our voices can be larger than we are”. They present poetry as a kind of map across times and continents, that can take the reader on unforgettable journeys and open new worlds. Flynn (2000:15) reflects on images as ‘containers for meaning’, without which we would not have any memory. Image is central to poetry, and the feelings that accompany it constitute part of the memory. The authors suggest a particular strategy of introducing poetry, where a ‘mentor’ poem is chosen, and the lesson revolves around it.

Hughes (2007) explores the notion of literacy in general in her research, and the power of poetry in its acquisition and enhancing. Her approach is somewhat different from other mentioned authors, since she focuses on the role of poetry on a larger scale and links it directly to our overall literacy development, to enhancing fluency when learning a language, poetry’s transformative potential and, notably, its introduction through digital devices and media. Hughes coincides with other authors in stressing role of poetry in developing oral language skills, as well as enhancing reading and writing abilities,

Kovalevskaya (2022) delves further into the topic of stimulating reading habits, poetry included, by means of digital techniques, and the notion of ‘media literacy’. The research focuses on adolescents as ‘digital natives’, whose lives are intrinsically connected to the Internet, which is both their main source of information and means of communication among themselves. The article offers quite a unique approach to the topic, underlining pros and cons the ‘virtual’ or ‘digital’ readers face when getting acquainted with literary works through technology. To stimulate the adolescents’ interest and develop their reading culture, Kovalevskaya, similar to Brindley, highlights such tasks as motivation of creativity, development of artistic self-expression, creation of adequate environment for learning,

teaching to search, analyse and assess information, and, finally, the importance to awaken and maintain interest for reading in students.

2.2. Methodological approaches

Didactic methodology is “a set of strategies, procedures and actions organized and planned by the teachers, in a conscious and reflexive way, in order to enable the learning of the students and the achievement of the set objectives” (as stated in Article 2 of Royal Decree 1105/2014, 26th December). In compliance with the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFRL), the main objective of language teaching - learning process is to enable communication by means of language as a facilitating tool. Thus, the methodological framework of the present TFM is based on the current methodological trends in foreign language teaching, such as the Communicative Approach, the Task-Based Learning and the Action-Oriented Approach.

The Communicative Approach foundation rests on the idea that it is essential to communicate real meaning in order to learn a language successfully. Canale and Swain (1980) claim the communication and interaction are not the mere objectives of the learning process, but also the means through which learning is enacted. In the Communicative Approach, the main goal is to present a topic in the most natural context possible. “Active use of authentic language in real communication through various strategies has replaced the traditional emphasis on grammar and teacher – centred classroom” (Widdowson, 1985: 158).

It was the emergence of socio-linguistics in the '60s, the branch of science where sociology merges with linguistics, marked by the rise of interest in the individuals and in relationships they develop, that introduced the idea of language as communication, which, in its turn, laid the foundation for the whole communicative movement. Hymes (1972) replaced the notion of linguistic competence by the notion of communicative competence. According to the socio-linguistic theory, the act of communication is seen as a social phenomenon in which the use of the language plays a crucial part. The basic idea of the Communicative Approach is to equip students with skills to communicate in real – life context. Thus, less emphasis is placed on the knowledge of particular grammar rules, and students are assessed on their communicative competence instead. Thus, it is considered a philosophy or an approach, rather than a strictly structured methodology. According to Nunan (1991), the emphasis is on the ability to communicate by means of interaction in the target language, while introducing realia, such as

texts, or poetry in this case, into the learning situation greatly contributes to learning effectiveness.

Task-Based Learning or TBL is a student-centred approach in which learning centres upon completing meaningful tasks. The main focus of TBL is on the use of authentic target language for communication (Nunan, 2004). The focus is not on grammar and accurate use of structures, but on fluency and on helping students develop linguistic strategies that enable them to complete assigned tasks. Thus, the emphasis is placed on spontaneity and creativity when using the target language, both in its spoken and written forms, rather than on total accuracy. The assessment is based on the outcome, and learners should be aware of the results expected of them at the end. The outcomes may vary: conducting an interview, finding answers to specific questions, making a YouTube video tutorial, writing emails, gathering materials, translating or composing a poem. TBL is tightly connected to the use of technology, which has become an essential part of learning process, an abundant source of information and ideas. In terms of introducing poetry in the classroom, it is an excellent tool which, apart from facilitating access to resources, also allows to share and exchange work, or give and receive feedback.

As for the methodological principles that lay the foundation of the present paper, they are, among others, constructivism, individualisation, autonomous work, cooperation, collaboration and learning through discovery. According to Dewey (1958:46), who is regarded as a philosophical founder of constructivist approach “education is not an affair of telling and being told, but an active and constructive process”. Other prominent figures in this movement, Piaget (1971) and Vygotsky (1978) also advocated new concepts in the process of learning, both being supporters of learners’ active role in acquiring knowledge. The cognitive constructivism of Piaget and sociocultural constructivism of Vygotsky do not coincide in the way knowledge is constructed. For Piaget (1971) knowledge is produced in the learner’s mind while they are building up their experiences and cognitive structures: “The essential functions of the mind consist in understanding and in inventing, in other words, in building up structures by structuring reality” (Piaget, 1971:27). Vygotsky (1978:123), however, claims knowledge is produced through social and cultural interaction: “Human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them”. Hence, the main assumption of constructivism principle that distinguishes it from other theories of knowledge acquisition is that it does not exist independently of the learner, but is actively produced or constructed by them in response to interaction with already existing knowledge and environment. The principle of individualisation implies that tasks are adapted

to students' individual features and language level, while autonomous work makes students take control over their learning process and improve it constantly (Littlewood, 1982:18). It is related to lifelong learning and emphasizes the importance of working independently and taking responsibility for their own decisions.

As regards cooperative and collaborative learning, while the former revolves around the principle of interdependence, in collaborative learning, although learners work together towards achieving a common goal, students' progress is personal. The principle of learning through discovery is centred on interests and based on problem-solving situations. Active participation and skills development are boosted by means of planning the development of hypotheses, carrying out research on tasks, and developing the capacity for analysis in order to convey conclusions (Littlewood, 1982:22-32).

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The place of poetry today is not the same as it was a century ago, when reading and writing poetry was a sign of higher social status, a notion practically lost in the modern world. The circles where poetry is read are, indeed, narrow nowadays, and poetry is regarded as something distant and not an essential part of either social life or an educational process. Its prestigious place in literature has often been replaced by other forms of self-expression, boosted by the use of internet and social media. That is of no surprise given the variety of informational resources and possibilities to communicate in the modern world. Nonetheless, there are still millions of poetry lovers and writers in the modern world, and it is within the educators' reach to reintroduce it in the classroom, English language classroom among them.

The research questions raised in this TFM are as follows:

- What are the benefits of introducing poetry in ESL classroom? Is there enough research carried out on the topic?
- What are the difficulties of teaching poetry in English to English language learners?
- Is the use of poetry to teach English generally undervalued / underestimated by the educators? How often is poetry used to teach English?
- What methods are the most productive and why?

Among the objectives of the present section is to prove that the introduction of poetry in the classroom in order to acquire English language skills is fully justifiable. In addition, the focus will be on several techniques that might introduce teenagers to poetry and on its use as a language – learning tool in the classroom. Since there has been a considerable rise in English language learning worldwide, in Spain as well, 21st century teenagers are fully aware of the fact that English has already turned into a globalised language and is now established as the major language for communication worldwide (Graddol, 2006). Technology and music, the two fields young people are deeply interested in, are being developed and transmitted to the world mostly by means of the active use of the English language, thus it is quite close and familiar to the so-called ‘digital natives’. A significant amount of contemporary poetry is based on and intertwined with different musical styles, such as rap, reggae, rock, funk, etc. Moreover, there is a general awareness of the urge to learn languages in today’s internationalised world, where English is the language of communication on a global level (Crystal, 2013).

Another objective of the present Master thesis is to prove that introduction of poetry in English classroom offers an alternative and original way of becoming acquainted with the language. Poetry is very likely to fit quite naturally in an English class, making lessons more creative and original. The fact that it is written in English might make poetry look even more attractive to learners, since it represents the culture of the language they aspire to master. Consequently, the present work aims at providing both theoretical and practical approaches/basis to using poetry effectively in ESL/EFL classroom both for academic and personal development of adolescents, and focuses on its benefits in boosting language learning. Among its objectives is to research the possibilities offered by poetry as regards language acquisition, as well as to study the means which will enable English students to connect with poetry in a way that combines learning with enjoyment. Moreover, the idea is to enhance both language skills and creativity, since the latter is, unfortunately, often lacking in a modern classroom, despite all the possibilities and resources offered by the 21st century progress in education field. Besides, we are going to tackle the assumption that poetical context is too challenging for all but advanced language learners, and defend the idea that it can be applied for individual, collaborative and cooperative learning as well.

Bringing practical language learning skills into focus, teaching English through poetry provides endless opportunities in terms of developing speaking, reading, writing and listening skills. Danielson (1980:3) states that “The procedure in language learning involves listening first, to be followed by speaking. Then comes reading, and, finally, the writing of the language. This

is the order in which a child learns this mother tongue, and it is the same for foreign language learners.”

4. DIDACTIC MATERIALS

The benefits of using poetry in EFL classroom can hardly be denied or doubted. There is, however, a long-standing debate on whether poetry is too sophisticated for secondary school EFL students. Learners at low English levels may find its understanding and interpretation, its linguistic and cultural characteristics challenging. That potential difficulty, however, should not be a barrier, since it is quite possible to adapt the chosen content for a specific group. Thanks to its versatility, poetry can be introduced at almost any language level, starting from pre-intermediate to proficiency, given the variety of forms and topics it covers.

4.1. Guided reading of a poem to discover meaning

All poetry is written to be read, thus the response of the reader is an essential part in poetry reading experience, thus teachers should encourage students to discover the meaning of poetry for themselves. The teacher will help them to find new ways to explain the meaning, hidden or direct, expressed in a poem, and to describe feelings and emotions evoked in them by the poem.

 The students are encouraged to discuss the following (adapted from Fitch & Swartz, 2008:22):

- *the content of the poem*
- *the theme in the poem*
- *the poet*
- *the stories within the poem*
- *the choice of words by the poet*
- *punctuation (or lack thereof)*
- *the feelings produced by the poem*
- *the rhythm when the poem is read out loud*

Poems for the activity:

- **“Miracles” by Walt Whitman** (see appendix 2)
- **“Once” by Michael Rosen** (see appendix 3)
- **“Time” by Naomi Shihab Nye** (see appendix 4)

Activity: After reading the poem aloud, the students are encouraged to focus on specific phrases that allow for its better understanding, such as verbs of action or feeling, adjectives or nouns, or, more generally, the author's feelings, mood and tone. In this manner, the learners are led to discover the meaning by themselves. The main aim is to boost interest in reading overall, especially reading in English. A multitude of topics can be introduced through poetry. In order to facilitate communication and encourage students to think critically and express themselves, the teacher provides them with a list of possible questions based on the poem:

1. Describe in no more than two sentences what the poem is about.

2. What is it about the poem that you liked / disliked the most?

3. What questions would you like to discuss about the poem?

4. How is this poem? Did it give you any particular feelings / remind you of something?

5. What would you like to ask the author about the poem?

6. Do you think the poem is good/bad? Why?

7. What did the poem reveal you about the poet?

8. Do you think the poem is happy/sad/humorous/serious or something else entirely? What makes you think so?

9. Which phrases/ words stand out to you in the poem? Why?

10. Write down thoughts and feelings you have when reading the poem .

Activity: The students are provided with several poems – riddles. In groups of four they try to find the solutions within limited time (approximately 10 min). When the allowed time is up, they compare their answers with other groups and give their reasons for them. The teacher will provide them with correct answers. As they read, they make a list of new words and try to guess their meaning, later to be checked with the teacher.

Riddles chosen for the activity:

1. I'm in you,
But not in him,
I go up,
But not down,
I'm in the colosseum,
But not a tower,
I'm in a puzzle,
But not a riddle.

2. It can not be seen whenever it's there
It fills up a room, it's much like the air.
It can not be touched, there's nothing to hear
It is quite harmless, there's nothing to fear.

3. You can crack me;
You can make me;
You can tell me;
You can play me. What am I?
When I'm young I'm tall
When I'm old I'm short
When I'm alive I glow
Because of your breath I die
What am I?

4. Until I am measured I am not known,
Yet how you miss me when I have flown.

5. I can sizzle like
bacon,
I am made with an egg,
I have plenty of
backbone, but lack a
good leg,
I peel layers like onions,
but still remain whole,
I can be long, like a
flagpole, yet fit in a hole.
What am I?

6. Never was,
I am always to be
No one ever saw me,
nor ever will.
And yet I am the
confidence of all,
to live and breathe
on this terrestrial
ball.
What am I?

8. Die without me,
Never thank me.
Walk right through me,
Never feel me.
Always watching,
Never speaking.
Always lurking,
Never seen.

7. Three lives have I.
Gentle enough to soothe the
skin,
Light enough to caress the
sky,
Hard enough to crack rocks.

Retrieved January 13, 2023 from [Riddles in English: 200+ Wonderful Word Puzzles for English Learners | FluentU English](#)

Keys: 1) Letter U 2) Darkness 3) A candle 4) Time 5) Snake 6) Future 7) Water 8) Air

4.3. Paraphrasing a poem

Poetry offers an excellent opportunity for students to work in groups and thus increase their collaborative and cooperative skills, allowing them not only to grow as language users, but as social beings as well. Through sharing their ideas and learning to listen to each other, discussing options, agreeing and disagreeing, they learn to perform as a group and within a group in an academic environment.

Poems chosen for the activity:

- **“How Falling in Love is like Owning a Dog” by Taylor Mali** (see appendix 5).
- **“Keep going” by Edgar Guest** (see appendix 6).

Activity: After reading the poem or watching the video of the poet reading his poem as a whole class, students work in groups of four. They are given a copy of the poem which is divided into chunks. The teacher assigns different chunks to different groups. Students have to paraphrase them using their own words. They are encouraged to use online dictionaries (CALDO, CEDO, MWO, OEDO) to find synonyms for the words whose meaning they are not sure of, and afterwards share their results with the class. Finally, they decide which group’s work is the best in terms of how well it transmits the original meaning.

4.4. Reading poetry out loud

Apart from obvious purposes, such as to improve pronunciation and general speaking skills, reading poems aloud in class fulfils a variety of other purposes and is beneficial to students at all language levels. According to Swartz (1993:19), “poetry is like a song that is meant to be experienced out loud”. The way a poem is recited provides, to a great extent, keys to its understanding.

The list below focuses on other reasons for reading poetry aloud (adapted from Swartz, 1993:23):

- *to practise pace, pause, emphasis as reading- aloud skills*
- *to bring to life the words by animating them*
- *to help others ‘hear’ what they have read silently*
- *to learn by heart the sight and sounds of words*
- *to experience patterns and structures of language which can also be incorporated into writing*

- *to explore meaning in blocks before studying words separately*
- *to boost students' skills and confidence when speaking English with their classmates*
- *to experience the rhythm and rhyme, refrain and repetition found in poetry*
- *to recreate emotions, ideas and thoughts expressed by the poet*
- *to have fun while learning.*

✚ The following chart specifies the ways to introduce reading activities in English classroom (adapted from Swartz, 1993:31):

Ways of assigning reading activities to class		
Choice of poems	Manner of working	Groupings
▪ Poems by a single poet ▪ Poems on a single/different themes ▪ Poems from an anthology	▪ Each group is given the same poem ▪ Each group is given a different poem ▪ A longer poem is divided into chunks with each chunk assigned to a group	▪ Students choose groups ▪ Teacher assigns groups ▪ Groups are formed randomly

4.4.1. Tongue – twisters

Tongue – twisters are excellent tools to both practise pronunciation and learn new vocabulary. Since they are intended to be spoken aloud quickly and accurately, it is both fun and challenge for the students to recite them in a row and afterwards choose a winner, or the person who reads most accurately and stumbles the least when reciting. In groups of four students practise reading the tongue – twisters provided by the teacher and afterwards assign one group member to read a chosen tongue – twister to the class.

Adapted from Barton with permission to reproduce for classroom use (2004:45):

Tongue twisters twist tongues twisted Trying to untangle twisted tangles My tang's tangled now	Swan swam over the sea, Swim, swan, swim! Swan swam back again, Well swum swan!
--	--

Three grey geese in the green grass grazing, Grey were the geese, and green was the grazing	Said she to me, "Was that you?" Said I, "Who?" Said she, "You."
Robert Rowley rolled a round roll round, A round roll Robert Rowley rolled round; Where rolled the round roll Robert Rowley rolled round?	Said I, "Where?" Said she, "There." Said I, "When?" Said she, "Then." Said I, "No." Said she, "Oh."
Once upon a barren moor There dwelt a bear, also a boar; The bear could not bear the boar; The boar thought the bear a bore. At last the boar could bear no more The bear that bored him on the moor; And so one morn the bear he bored The bear will bore the boar no more.	I've got an itch, a wretched itch, No other itch could match it, It itches on the one spot which I cannot reach to scratch it. Jack Prelutsky

4.4.2. Pronunciation practice

This reading activity is useful for learners to investigate how words that are spelled similarly can be pronounced in different ways. It also illustrates the exceptions that exist for most spelling rules. To present longer poems, such as the one below, those can be divided into a number of verses and the sections can be assigned to various groups. Together, the students make decisions on the ways of presenting their extracts dramatically and rehearse them.

Poems for the activity:

- **"Dearest creature"** (see appendix 7)
- **"English Pronunciation Poem"** (see appendix 8)

4.4.3. Acting the poem: role - play, miming, performing

Students work in groups of four. Each group is given a poem on a certain topic, with its different parts being assigned to various students. Each group is responsible for presenting a poem to the class, manipulating the text, using gestures, sound effects, soft and loud voices, speaking with an emotional charge.

Poems for the activity:

- **"Who am I?" by Felice Holman** (see appendix 9)
- **"Mind your own business" by Michael Rosen** (see appendix 10)
- **"Get out of bed" by Diane Z. Shore** (see appendix 11)

4.4. Poetry summary in groups

By introducing poetry in the ESL classroom, students are exposed to authentic texts and are encouraged to use the language creatively. That is an excellent way of practicing the language whether orally or in writing. The activity is designed to boost the learners' text - producing skills.

Poems for the activity:

- **"Let Me Try Again" by Javier Zamora** (see appendix 12)
- **"Remember" by Joe Harvo** (see appendix 13)
- **"Richard Cory" by Edwin Arlington Robinson** (see appendix 14)

Activity: Each group of about four students is given a poem or a chunk of a poem in case it is long. They read it together and analyse its most important parts to make a short summary to present to class. To that end, they start by producing a two-line summary of each chunk and then organise them as a whole within a group. Afterwards, a member of each group reads out their summary. In they are summaries of chunks, the class decides how they should be arranged to represent the whole poem.

 Tips to help write a good summary:

- *Stick to the facts, do not analyse or include opinions.*
- *Make a list of key points if necessary.*

- *What is the main topic of the poem/chunk?*
- *Who/ what are the main characters? (if there are any)*
- *Is there a story in the poem? Is there is, who is telling the story in the poem?*
- *Omit going into detail, provide general explanation.*
- *Try to use your own words as much as possible.*
- *What do you think is the author's main idea behind the poem? What information is essential to understand it?*

4.5. ICT activities based on poetry

In an era of technological development that provides an easy access to all types of resources, the introduction of poetry in EFL classroom may have never been easier. Apart from the enormous amount of information on poetry and authors, there are endless opportunities at readers' and learners' disposal that support both poetry reading and composing, websites and programs that allow them to change texts, integrate media into them, share them online and receive feedback, create webpages, combine language with imagery and acoustic devices, etc. Thus, the inclusion of poetry in English classroom is also a way of boosting the learners' ICT skills and getting them acquainted with digitalised poetry world.

- TRIVIA games based on a poem created by the students
- Kahoot games created by teacher/ students
- BBC webpage Poetry Please provides materials on poets, poetry, videos of poets reading their work and different programmes linked to them.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b007vw5c>
- BBC Teach webpage contains literary resources for English language teachers, including short films featuring contemporary poets reading their poems and analysing their work. It is an amazing tool for classroom to introduce students to poetry and its authors, first by listening, then by analysing their work.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/gcse-national-5-english-literature/z6rjscw>
- **Lyricstraining.com** is yet another fun and useful webpage where students can practise filling in the gaps in song lyrics while listening. It can be used by different language

level students since it allows users to choose a corresponding level. The students can either play online or the teacher can print out the gapped lyrics to hand out to learners.

- **Rhymebrain.com** is a page designed for poem writers to provide rhyming vocabulary. Using the page facilitates creative work and makes carrying out writing activities less time – consuming and more fun.

4.6. Learning to ask questions based on poems

Question forms in English often pose challenges for Spanish students even at higher levels, since the differences in their formation are considerable between the two languages.

Activity: To revise the question forms in English, the students work in groups and, within limited time (5-10 minutes, depending on their English language level) produce a maximum number of questions based on a poem or an extract from a poem, handed out to them by the teacher. They are encouraged to focus on the content, the theme, the poet, stories within the poem, background information, the poem's meaning. (For lower levels, they can change statements into questions if they find making questions too complex). An alternative way is for each group to read different poem/extract, then read it aloud to the class and ask their classmates three questions based on it.

🌈 Tips for asking questions (adapted from Flynn, 2000:111):

- *Use a comparison to ask a question (Is the line's meaning as clear as /less clear than...)*
- *Ask an 'if' question to imagine another possibility (If you could change...)*
- *Ask a question about the future / the past/ the present*
- *Ask a question on personal likes/ dislikes/ beliefs*
- *Ask the opposite of what is real (If you didn't speak Spanish...If you lived in a different country...)*
- *Address the subject directly (What do you think? Can you...)*
- *Start with "Does/ Did...?"*
- *Start with "I wonder..."*
- *Start with "What would happen if...?"*
- *Start with "Without..."*
- *Start with "When..."*
- *Start with "Why..."*

- *Start with "How..."*

Poems for the activity:

- **"Theme for English B" by Langston Hughes** (see appendix 15)
- **"The Mower" by Philip Larkin** (see appendix 16)
- **"Ten Tall Oaktrees"** (see appendix 17)

Activity (cont.): Each group is given a copy of the poem to read and think about the questions they would like to ask. Once they completed their lists of questions, they can compare them with other groups. Finally, as a class, students discuss significant questions. As a class, they may assess which group's questions are most interesting or most thought provoking.

 Sample questions to discuss with class (adapted from Swartz, 1993:116):

- *Why do you think the poet wrote this poem?*
- *What would you imagine the poet looks like?*
- *What musical instrument would you choose to accompany the poem?*
- *What new words did you learn from the poem?*
- *Where do you think the poet got the idea for writing?*
- *Do you think it's better to read the poem aloud or silently? Why?*
- *If you had to describe the poem in three words, what would they be?*

Useful language patterns for discussion:

Speculating	<i>It may be that /Maybe the poem was written because.../ I am not sure if the meaning of the line is.../ It may be /have been.../ The poet might/must have meant...</i>
Reasoning	<i>I think the words (...) mean that./ It is (not) quite clear (if) that... /I guess that.../ I bet that.../ Speaking personally.../ I imagine that...</i>
Explaining	<i>In line...it says that .../ So I believe.../ It makes me think that.../ I am quite sure that.../ That is the reason why.../ As far as I'm concerned...If you ask me...</i>
Making analogies	<i>It reminds me of (when I) .../ According to...</i>

	<i>It is different from.../It is similar to.../ People think that.../ Everyone (no one) understands why...</i>
Questioning	<i>What do you think?/ Do you agree?/ Do you see my point?/ Do you understand why..?/ Do you remember when you were...?/Would (not) you say that...?/ How do you feel about it?</i>
Agreeing	<i>I couldn't agree more./ That's so true./ That's for sure! / Tell me about it (colloq.)! / Exactly/Absolutely / No doubt about it/ I suppose so/ I have to side with.../ You're absolutely right.</i>
Disagreeing	<i>I don't think so./ No way(colloq.)./ I'm afraid I disagree/ That's not always the case/ No, I'm not so sure about that/ I totally disagree (colloq.)/ Not necessarily/I'd say quite the opposite</i>

4.7. Rearranging the rhymes

Activity: Without providing the originals, the teacher hands out poems cut out into separate individual lines, words and phrases. In groups of four students make up their own poem arranging the lines the way they find best or most fun. They are made aware that the exploration of patterns and creativity is more important than rearranging the poem like the original. After the out-loud readings, they decide which poem is the best. They have to explain why they have chosen to arrange the poem the way they have and afterwards compare it to the original

Poems chosen for the activity:

➤ "The park" by James S. Tippet

I am glad that I	On a hill
Live near a park	The park
For in the winter after dark	That I
The park lights shine	For in the winter
As bright and still	Live near
As dandelions	As dandelions
On a hill.	And
	Still and bright
	I'm glad
	After dark
	Lights shine

➤ **"What Are Heavy?" by Cristina Rosetti**

What are heavy? Sea-sand and sorrow; What are brief? Today and tomorrow; What are frail? Spring blossoms and youth; What are deep? The ocean and truth	Spring blossoms and youth; What are brief? Today and tomorrow; The ocean and truth What are deep? What are frail? Sea-sand and sorrow; What are heavy?
--	--

➤ **"If You Don't Believe In Dragons" by Jack Prelutsky**

If you don't believe in dragons, It is curiously true That the dragons you disparage Choose to not believe in you.	Choose to not believe in you That the dragons, you disparage believe in dragons If you don't It is curiously true
My dragon's been disconsolate And cannot help but pout, Since he defied the thunderstorm That put his fire out.	And Since he defied the thunderstorm My dragon's been disconsolate That Cannot help but pout, Put his fire out

➤ **"Underface" By Shel Silverstein**

Underneath my outside face There's a face that none can see. A little less smiley,	A little less sure, There's a face that none can see
---	---

A little less sure, But a whole lot more like me	But a whole lot more like me A little less smiley, Underneath my outside face
---	--

➤ **“Dreams” by Langston Hughes**

Hold fast to dreams For if dreams die Life is a broken-winged bird That cannot fly. Hold fast to dreams For when dreams go Life is a barren field Frozen with snow.	Life is That cannot fly. Frozen with snow. For when dreams go Hold fast to dreams A barren field For if dreams die Life is a broken-winged bird
--	--

4.8. Using poetry to introduce new topics and vocabulary

In their majority, students get very little exposure to the English language outside school, except listening to music in English or watching films and series in original. Thus poetry is among the means that could serve to bridge the gap. Specific authors or poems can be linked thematically to topics to be introduced in class. Connecting poetry to a specific topic or task activates students’ prior knowledge and serves to demonstrate it is not purely abstract type of art, but the one linked to the real world.

Poems for the task:

➤ **“Sound of Water” by Mary O’Neill** (see appendix 18)

Activity: The topic of nature / environment, and vocabulary connected to it, is introduced in the activity. Students read the poem in groups to try guess the meaning of unknown words and speculate on the sound or movement they might describe (later to be consulted with an online dictionary to check whether they were right). The teacher helps to provide the meaning of words they fail to define. To make the activity more efficient, students can also play a game in groups

making movements and sounds that the words suggest in order to explain their meaning, so that other groups may try to guess the word in question.

As an extension activity students can compile their own lists to create a poem using titles such as "Sound of Street", "Sound of a Party", "Sound of Holiday", "Sound of School", "Sound of a Football Match", etc. (Adapted from Swartz, 1993:27).

➤ **"Sick" By Shel Silverstein** (see appendix 19)

Activity: Students are introduced to the topic of health and body through the poem, which covers a huge variety of illnesses, comprising an easy and light - hearted read at the same time. While reading, students underline the words they do not know and try to predict their meaning. In groups, they choose five words to define their meaning using an online dictionary (Cambridge, Macmillan, Collins). Afterwards they explain the meaning to the class without naming the word and the rest have to guess which word is being defined.

4.7. Comparing poem translation from Spanish into English and vice versa

Students do not often stop to think about the difficulties a translation from English into Spanish and vice versa may present. They are given the chance to compare original poems and their versions in both languages and are encouraged to discuss in class what possible difficulties there are for translators.

 The teacher will encourage them to:

- *Identify language that shows how the author feels.*
- *Compare the experience of reading a poem themselves on a page to watching the poet read a poem on video.*
- *Compare how the ideas are expressed in English and Spanish version, how they are different or alike.*
- *Compare the language used by the author. How expressive is it in both versions?*
- *Distinguish between what a poem is saying literally and figuratively.*
- *Explore how the language is used in poetry as means of creating personal identities and relationships.*
- *Suggest their own ideas for translating certain lines.*
- *Discuss what language brings the notions across more vividly for them and why.*

Activity: Before watching the video of the author reading the poem, the students brainstorm ideas related to the topic, in the case of the first poem, their families and relationships within them; in case of the second poem, personal likes and dislikes. In groups they talk about how they get on with their parents, siblings or other relatives.

Poems for the task:

- **"Translation for Mamá" by Richard Blanco** (see appendix 20)
- **"Like You" by Roque Dalton translated by Jack Hirschman** (see appendix 21)

🌈 To help students discuss poems, the teacher provides them with a list of general questions (adapted from <https://poets.org/lesson-plan/incredible-bridges>)

1. *Who is the speaker?*
2. *What circumstances do you think gave rise to the poem?*
3. *Who or what is the audience?*
4. *What is the tone?*
5. *How is the poem's form related to content?*
6. *Is sound an important, active element of the poem?*
7. *Does the poem spring from an identifiable historical moment?*
8. *Does the poem speak from a specific culture?*
9. *Does the poem use imagery to achieve a particular effect?*
10. *What kind of figurative language, if any, does the poem use?*
11. *If there is a question in the poem, what is the answer?*
12. *If the poem is an explanation, what is the question?*
13. *What does the title suggest?*
14. *Does the poem use words in an unusual way?*

4.8. Poetry writing

When students are encouraged to try their hand at creating a poem, a whole variety of linguistic challenges arises, making students play with words, manipulate grammar structures, thus not only boosting both their oral and written language skills, but communicative speaking skills as well. It is not considered recommendable to write according to a formula, since the idea of creating poetry is to encourage to think outside the box, express oneself in a unique way and explore the possibilities offered by the language. In case of learning a language, however, it may prove helpful to guide the students through the process providing them with certain tips and structures.

 Tips for creating poems (adapted from Barton, 2003):

- *Writing about special events, family or local celebrations*
- *Getting ideas from poems they like to express their opinion on the topic*
- *Noting unusual events happening*
- *Describing literature or films/series they enjoyed*
- *Remembering characters from books/ films and describing them*
- *Using memorable quotations in poems*
- *Including photos of family and friends*
- *Retelling family stories*
- *Speaking out on issues of interest*
- *Getting something off their minds*
- *Speaking of their worries*
- *Describing their hopes and dreams*

To make the task easier, students are provided with samples of different shapes and patterns for writing simple poetry to be used as visual aid, although they are encouraged to be creative and do not have to follow any rules as an obligation. Thus, the patterns are provided as means of establishing certain background knowledge, not intended to impede the creative process.

4.8.1. Haiku with topic cards

Activity: The teacher provides students with general notions of Haiku, a three-line form of traditional Japanese poetry, which are usually short and involve common everyday experiences, natural objects described with few words in order to convey a feeling or mood in a memorable way. The teacher provides examples of haiku poems for students to read as a class or in groups to get a general idea of this kind of poetry.

<i>Birthday Haiku</i> <i>For your birthday, friend, I wrote this haiku for you. Worst present ever.</i> <i>Kate Miller-Wilson</i>	<i>Summer</i> <i>School is out, warm days, Watermelon, sweet and red, Hanging out with friends.</i> <i>Kristina N. Routh</i>	<i>O snail</i> <i>O snail Climb Mount Fuji, But slowly, slowly!</i> <i>Kobayashi Issa</i>
<i>Haiku About Texting With Mom</i> <i>Texting with my mom. I don't think that emoji means What she thinks it does.</i> <i>Kate Miller-Wilson</i>	<i>Haiku for Room Cleaning Motivation</i> <i>I hid a twenty In your messy room somewhere. Just clean to find it.</i> <i>Kate Miller-Wilson</i>	<i>T-Rex Hug Haiku</i> <i>The T-Rex likes you, But he can't give you a hug. His arms are too short.</i> <i>Kate Miller-Wilson</i>
<i>Haiku to Alexa and Siri</i> <i>I know one of you Is always listening, but You're so convenient.</i> <i>Kate Miller-Wilson</i>	<i>Funny Haiku About Getting Up</i> <i>I love my pillow. My alarm clock is beeping. No, no, no, no, no.</i> <i>Kate Miller-Wilson</i>	<i>Good Morning From the Cat</i> <i>In the morning light, You sleep despite my meow. I stand on your face.</i> <i>Kate Miller-Wilson</i>
<i>"Sniff Check Haiku"</i> <i>Forgot to wash clothes But there's no time for laundry. Which t-shirt smells worse?</i> <i>Kate Miller-Wilson</i>	<i>"In a Station of the Metro"</i> <i>The apparition of these faces in the crowd; Petals on a wet, black bough.</i> <i>Ezra Pound</i>	<i>"Haiku [for you]"</i> <i>Love between us is speech and breath. loving you is a long river running.</i> <i>Sonia Sanchez</i>

Retrieved from <https://examples.yourdictionary.com/20-funny-haiku-poems-examples-for-all-ages.html>

Activity: the teacher explains that the students have to be brief and highlight the essence of the subject in three line structures, short – long- short, or 5-7-5 syllable lines if they prefer to try them.

Students choose two topic words from Topic cards or choose their own topic and provide as many words as they can connected to the topic (an example word 'winter': snow, cold, Christmas, rain, skiing, wind, leaves, presents, holidays, etc.). Haiku is constructed using the words connected to the topic. Students choose ten or twelve words they like best. Within a time limit of 10-15 minutes, they write as many haiku as they are able to on separate pieces of paper. Finally, they read their haiku to the class without naming the topic so that their classmates try to guess it. Topic cards (adapted from Hadfield, 2000:10):

school	fun	moon	father
friend	stress	mother	sun
Monday	night	Friday	home
holidays	winter	summer	day

exams	morning	fire	night	
sea	earth	rain	love	

4.8.2. *Free verse*

Written without regular beat and rhyme, free verse poetry offers a wide variety of choices and actually boosts creative writing. Not set within limits, it allows the students to explore their imagination and produce creative writing without following pre-set patterns. The students are provided with examples of poems which they read together to get a clear idea of what is expected of them.

Poems for the topic:

- **An Alphabet Poem** (see appendix 22)

Activity: After reading the poem students are encouraged to produce their own poems using alphabet letters. They are split into groups of four and are given different sets of letters from the alphabet. In the course of 15 - 20 minutes they produce as many verses as they can and read them to the class afterwards. As a class they choose the best poem.

- **“If I Were In Charge Of the World” by Judith Viorst** (see appendix 23)

Activity: After reading the poem as a class, students are divided into groups and are assigned to compose their own poems using the original as an example, starting each line with ‘If I were in charge of the world’, saying what things they would leave out and what they would introduce both at school and generally in their lives. The groups read their poems to the class and decide whose ideas are the most interesting. Can be done both as homework and in class within a time limit.

If I were in charge of the world

I'd cancel.....

..... and also

.....

If I were in charge of the world

There'd be.....

..... and

.....

If I were in charge of the world

You wouldn't have.....

You wouldn't have.....

You wouldn't have

Or “.....”

You wouldn't even have

If I were in charge of the world

A

.....would be a vegetable.

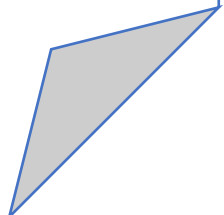
All

And a person who sometimes forgot.....

And sometimes forgot to.....,

Would still be allowed to be

In charge of the world.



4.8.3. Acrostic poems

In acrostic poems the verse is arranged so that the initial letters of each line form words, phrases or sentences when read downwards. New concepts can be introduced in this manner, as well as proverbs, sayings and idioms.

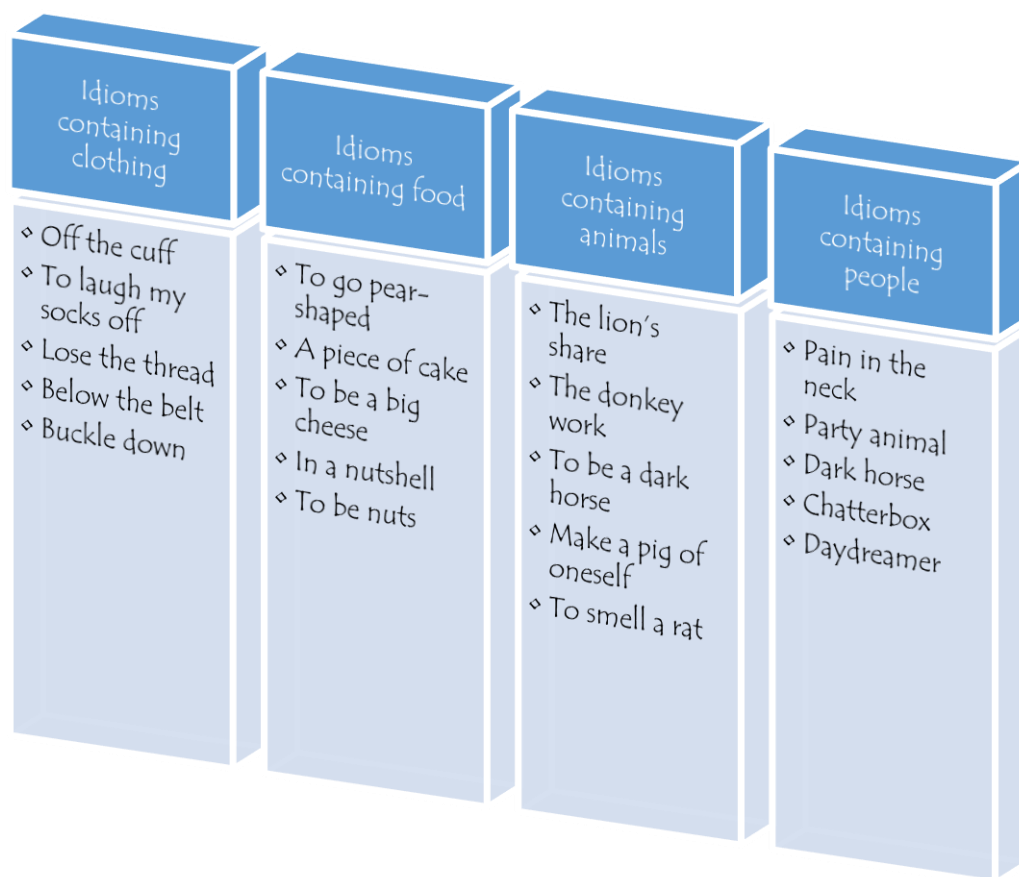
Activity: Students of lower levels can be given single words, while those of higher level can be given a list of idioms. In small groups they make their own poems following the examples provided by the teacher.

Sample poems:

<i>Friends</i> <i>F-</i> Friends are precious gifts <i>R-</i> Rare and hard to find <i>I-</i> Invisible when life is good <i>E-</i> Ever near when your sun doesn't shine <i>N-</i> Nothing is ever too much <i>D-</i> Distance never too far <i>S-</i> Standing by your side when your dreams have passed you by. <i>John P. Read</i>	<i>Sports</i> FootballS and basketballs UmPires and refs Defending yOur goal ScoRing goals A real Team effort Crowd goesS wild
<i>Food</i> Chicken or beeF Rice or potatO Broccoli or tomatO White wine or reD	<i>Sophia</i> Serene, a calming quality Organized, you always have it together Picturesque, strikingly beautiful Honest, so genuine Imaginative, a creative mind Alluring, so attractive.

Retrieved January 15, 2023 from <https://examples.yourdictionary.com/acrostic-poem-examples.html>

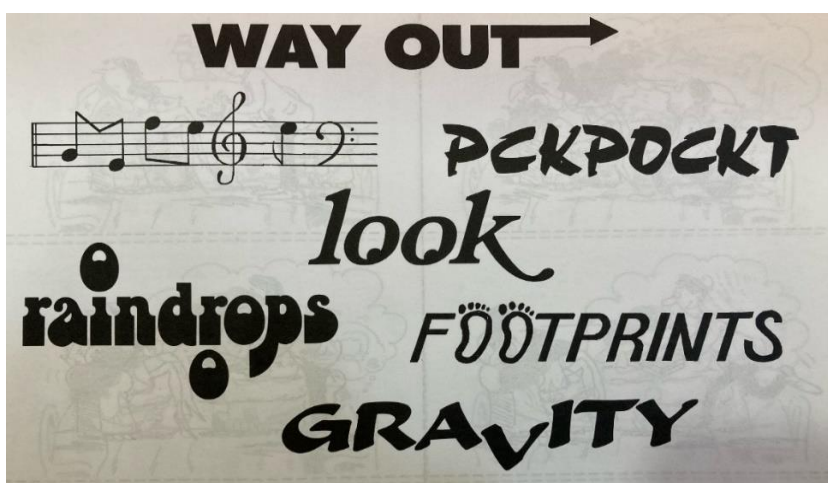
Activity (cont.): Students are divided into groups with each group being responsible for writing an acrostic poem using the given phrase. They are assigned idioms from different topics or the ones they were not acquainted with. Can be done in class within allowed time limit or set as homework.

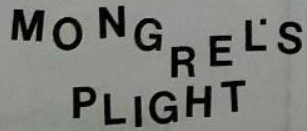


4.8.4. Pattern poems

Pattern poetry, where verses are arranged in unusual shapes, is another fun activity where students are encouraged to express their creativity and boost language knowledge. The visual image has to reflect the contents of the poem.

Activity (adapted from Hadfield, 2000:9): students look at examples of single words (*look, music, pickpocket, gravity, way out, raindrops, footprints*), phrases and illustration of a proverb (*smoke*) and Lewis Carroll's 'The Mouse's Tale' (initially published in "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" (see below).





"DON'T CROSS YOUR BRIDGES BEFORE YOU COME T

ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND

she kept on puzzling about it while the Mouse was speaking, so that her idea of the tale was something like this –

'Fury said to a
mouse that
he met in
the house,
"Let us
both go to
to law: *I*
will prosecute
you. Come,
I'll take no
denial: we
must have a
trial: for
really this
morning
I've noth-
ing to do."
Said the
mouse to
the cur,
"Such a
trial, dear
sir, with
no jury
or judge,
would be
wasting
our
breath."
"I'll be
judge, I'll
be jury,"
said
cun-
ning
old
Fury:
"I'll
try
the
whole
cause,
and
con-
demn
you to
death."

Activity (cont.): Students are provided with words easy to visualise or associate with an object (*mirror, zip, twins, money, sheep, sunshine, food, sleep, eye, clock, cloud, time, birthday, wall, freedom, gift*) or can choose their own words. In groups they first write one sentence about the object or concept, and later rewrite it in the shape of the object or concept they are describing. Afterwards they are given proverbs to illustrate. They do not have to write out the whole proverb, but make use of key words or phrases to explain the image it contains.

✚ Suitable proverbs:

*Actions speak louder
than words.*

It takes two to tango.

Ignorance is bliss.

Love is blind.

People in glass houses should not throw stones.

No man is an island.

All that glitters is not gold.

*The grass is always greener on the
other side of the fence.*

*A bird in the hand is worth two in
the bush.*

*It's no use crying over spilt
milk.*

Pride goes before a fall.

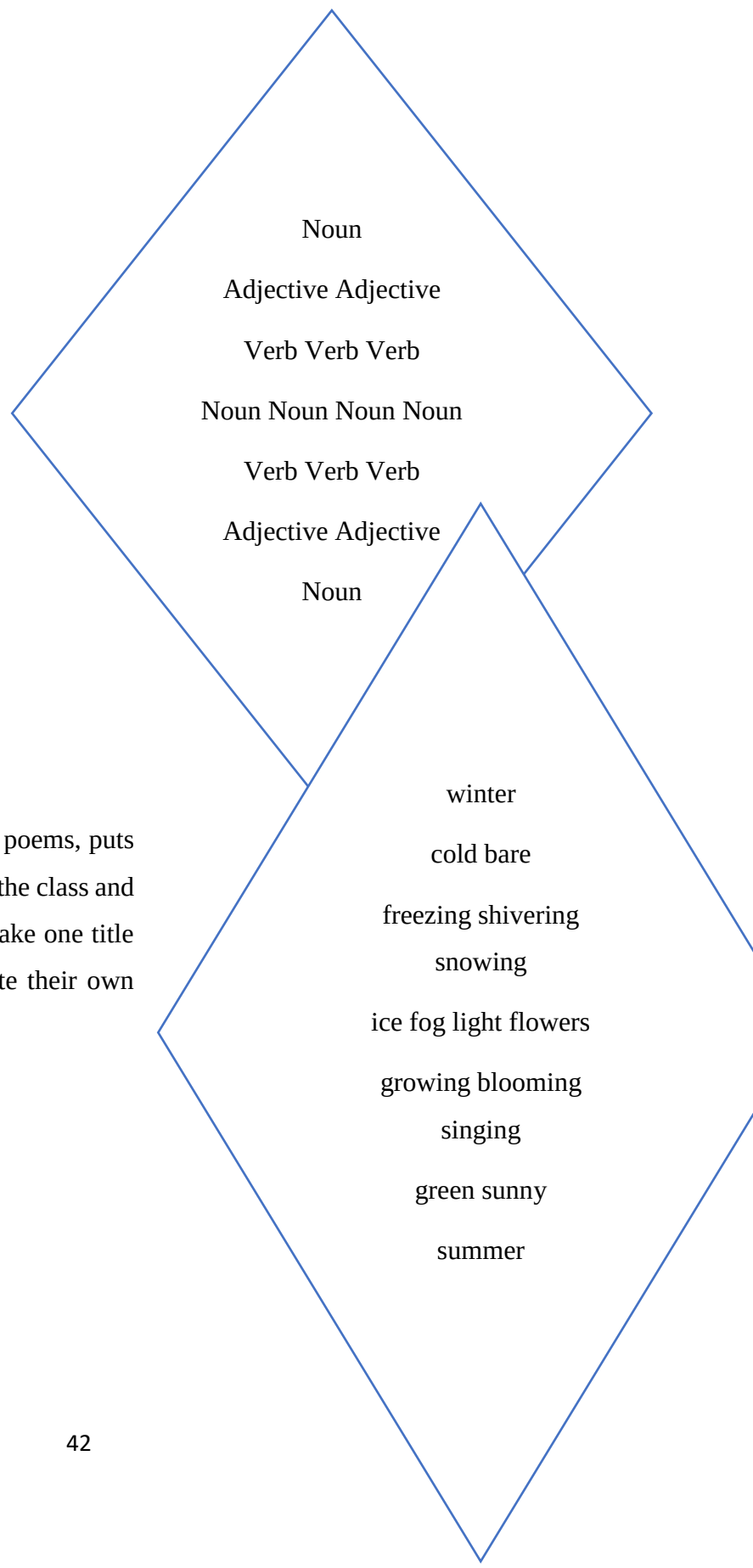
4.8.5. Diamond poems

Diamond poems are composed in seven lines which are arranged shaping a diamond. It usually compares or contrasts two opposites. With this type of poems, students are encouraged to revise different parts of speech and brainstorm adjectives, nouns and verbs associated with a specific topic or phenomena.

Activity (adapted from Hadfield, 2000:11): The teacher explains basic notions of diamond poetry to the students. The subject of the poem is in the first line and it is usually a noun. The second subject is in the last line of the poem. Students have to come up with words related to both subjects. The poem is created according to a pattern:

The class brainstorms noun, adjectives and verbs to do with winter and summer. In that manner students revise different parts of speech. Out of suggested words the students choose the correct number of verbs, nouns and adjectives to construct the poem. Words 'winter' and 'summer' are used as examples.

The teacher prepares different titles for poems, puts them in a bag or a box, passes it around the class and asks each group or pair of students to take one title out the box. They then proceed to write their own diamond poems.



🎨 Titles for diamond poems (adapted from Hadfield, 2000:16):

friend – enemy	peace – war	trust- fear	desert – oasis
cats – dogs	life - death	love – hate	Friday – Monday
noise – silence	success - failure	dreams – reality	hunger – satisfaction
holidays – work	innocence- experience	anticipation – disappointment	happiness – sadness
night – day	despair – hope	asleep – awake	child – adult

4.9. Use of English

A wide variety of activities based on poems can be introduced to revise vocabulary, verb forms and tenses, question forms, conditionals, etc.

4.9.1. Read the poems and fill in the gaps with suitable verbs from the box

To Catch a Fish

It takes more than a wish

To catch a fish

you ... the hook

you ... the bait

you concentrate

and then you wait

you wait you ...

but not a bite

the fish don't ...

an appetite

so tell them what

good bait you've got

and how your bait

can ... the spot

this works a whole

lot better than

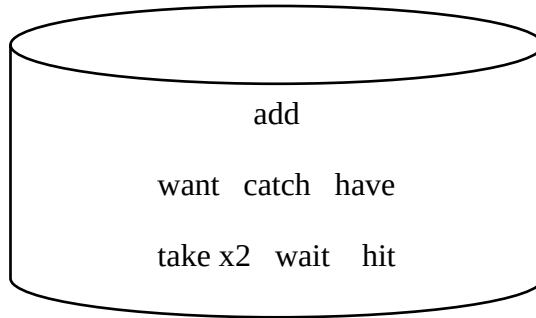
a wish

if you really

want to ...

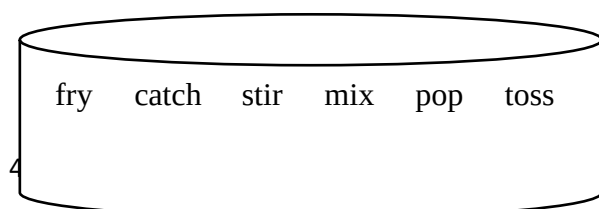
a fish.

Eloise Greenfield



Mix a Pancake

... a pancake,



... a pancake,
... it in the pan;
... the pancake,
... the pancake—
... it if you can.

Christina Rossetti

4.9.2. Think of a verb that best fits each gap

Rope rhyme

Get set, ready now, jump right in
Bounce and ... and giggle and ...
Listen to the rope when it hits the ground
... to that clappedy-slappedy sound
Jump right up when it ... you to
Come back down, whatever you do
... to a hundred, count by ten
Start to count all over again
That's what jumping is all about
... set, ready now,
...
right
out!

Eloise Greenfield

4.9.3. Reinforcement activities

- **"Two lists" by Tony Bradman** (see appendix 24)

Activity: students read the poem and fill in the table according to what they learn from the poem paying special attention to imperative mood and past tenses. They carry out the activity individually and compare it with the rest of the group.

things to remember	things to buy	things the boy did	things the boy didn't do

Activity (cont.): Students think of the story behind the poem. They tell the story making use of modal verbs (might, may, could, must)

- **"The Turkey Shot Out Of The Oven" by Jack Prelutsky** (see appendix 25)

Activity: Students find verbs in the past and explain their meaning. They can use online dictionaries. Can be done individually or in groups.

- **"If only" by Petra Sheane** (see appendix 26)

Activity: Students read the poem (which is also an alphabet poem) and produce five similar phrases about themselves in groups starting with 'If only...' and present them to the class.

- **"How Many, How Much" by Shel Silverstein** (see appendix 27)

Activity: Individually students write their own verse with similar questions and share it with their group of four. They choose the best verse in the group to be read to class.

4.10. Introducing cultural contents in the classroom

The introduction to different cultural backgrounds undoubtedly enhances the students' overall academic performance. Poetry provides a rich historical and cultural outlook, starting from antiquity and its civilisations, continuing throughout centuries, delving into the 21st century modern world.

4.10.1. Limericks

Activity: The teacher introduces students to limericks, a typical, usually a nonsensical five-line poem meant to entertain, based on a definite rhyme scheme and rhythm pattern. In groups they read the limericks and talk about how (or whether) they understand them, and what this kind of poetry represents. Both lower and higher level English learners will benefit from limericks.

There was a young lady of Niger Who smiled as she rode on a tiger; They returned from the ride With the lady inside, And the smile on the face of the tiger. Edward Lear	Langford Reed saved the limerick verse, From being taken away in a hearse. He made it so clean Now it's fit for a queen, Re-established for better or worse. George Bernard Shaw
A wonderful bird is the pelican, His bill holds more than his belican. He can take in his beak, Enough food for a week, But I'm damned if I see how the helican. Dixon Lanier Merritt	Newton looked at the data, numerical, And then observations, empirical. He said, «But, of course, We get the same force From a point mass and something that's spherical!» Leigh Mercer
$((12 + 144 + 20 + 3 \sqrt{4}) / 7) + 5 * 11 = 92 + 0.$ A dozen, a gross, and a score Plus three times the square root of four Divided by seven Plus five times eleven Is nine squared and not a bit more.	There was a small boy of Quebec, Who was buried in snow to his neck; When they said, "Are you friz?" He replied, "Yes, I is— But we don't call this cold in Quebec."

Leigh Mercer	Rudyard Kipling
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4.10.2. Traditions, celebrations

Activity: Students read poems about different festivals and celebrations, such as “**Thanksgiving**” by Edgar Guest (see appendix 28). They reflect on the traditions and talk about whether it represents the same for them and how different occasions are celebrated in their country / family.

4.10.3. Autobiographical poems

Activity: Students read the autobiographical poem “**Why The Caged Bird Sings**” by Maya Angelou (see appendix 29), where the American writer tells about her struggle to overcome prejudice and racism. The students reflect on whether they think the poem is relevant today, whether it can only be related to certain parts of the world or their country as well.

4.11. Writing activities based on poems

1. A poetry Word Hunt: students compile a list of new vocabulary using unfamiliar words from the poems. In groups of four, students make a list and provide their own examples of phrases containing previously unknown words.
2. The most typical, but nonetheless productive writing activity is writing a review of a poem, expressing whether the students liked it or not, and why; whether there is something they particularly enjoyed about it, etc. after reading the poem used as an example students are invited to reflect on the use of social media.

Poem for the task:

➤ “**The Facebook Sonnet**” by **Sherman Alexie** (see appendix 30)

🌈 Questions to reflect upon:

- *What ideas do you think the author intends to transmit? Do you understand them / agree with them?*
- *Do you think we progress or recess with social media use?*
- *Can you easily tell between true and fake / private and public/ sharing and oversharing?*

3. Story based on a nursery rhyme.

Using the webpage <https://chimesradio.com/parenting-blogs/50-best-english-nursery-rhymes/> students get acquainted with nursery rhymes, choose one or several and invent their own story expanding on its characters, their background, speculations about the future, etc. The teacher suggests they do some research on the nursery rhyme since quite often there can be historical explanations to it.

4.12. Interpreting poetry

Poetry, apart from promoting creative thinking, can be used to establish fun learning conditions, while students read it, interpret it, share their ideas and responses to it. They can do it by themselves, in groups, or as a class activity. The main purpose is to encourage students' discussion in order to boost their speaking skills. Simultaneously, their critical thinking and analysis skills are developed. The teacher provides students with a list of questions to answer in groups.

Poems for the activity:

- **"You Reading This, Be Ready" by William Stafford** (see appendix 31)
- **"The Three Little Pigs" by Roald Dahl** (see appendix 32)

 Sample questions to ask about a poem (adapted from Swartz, 1993:116)

1. *What is unique about the poet's style of writing?*
2. *Why do you think the poem was written?*
3. *What do you think the poet enjoys doing?*
4. *What things do you imagine when you read the poem?*
5. *If you had to illustrate this poem, what colours would you use? Why?*
6. *What kind of music could accompany this poem? What musical instrument (a drum, a guitar, a piano, a violin, a flute)?*
7. *Where do you think the poet got the idea for his writing?*
8. *Is the poem serious/ funny/ happy/ sad/ ironic/ bitter? What makes you think so?*

9. *Are there any coded messages in the poem?*

10. *What alternative title would you choose for the poem?*

Useful phrases to express opinions:

Response to the poem	Make personal connections	Make analogies
the poet tells us about... it's easy/difficult to respond to this poem because...' I like/dislike/ (do not) identify with the poem because...	it makes me think about/ makes me imagine... when I finished reading I thought of... it reminds me of...	the poem is like... the topic is similar to... it is like/unlike... it is contrary to...

4.13. Flipped classroom

At home the students listen to the poem on YouTube while reading its text provided by the teacher. While listening, they have to write out the common things the author speaks about and prepare two questions based on the poem to ask their peers in class. In groups, they compare the ten common things they pointed out and decide how they reflect on life and death. Afterwards, they choose one question per group to be asked to their classmates.

Poems chosen for the activity:

- **"Common things" by Cristopher Kondrich** (see appendix 33)
- **"Dusting the Phone" by Jackie Kay** (see appendix 34)

 Possible sample questions:

- *What do you think is the author's attitude towards the topic of...? What makes you think so?*
- *What did the poem make you think about?*
- *What ideas do you find most important?*
- *Is there a notion/idea you did not understand?*

- *Could you explain the meaning of the phrase "... "?*

4.14. Finding images in poems

Activity: The students are provided with the lyrics which they read while listening to the poem or watching a video. In groups of four, they decide what images the poem evokes and how the writer achieves that effect. They share their ideas with the class.

 Questions to discuss:

- *What image does the line/stanza... evoke in you?*
- *How is the effect of... achieved?*
- *What words does the author use to produce images? Are they nouns, adjectives, verbs?*
- *What can you tell me about the images the poem creates? Are they visual?*

Poems for the activity:

- **"One Today" by Richard Blanco** (see appendix 35)
- **"It's September" by Edgar Guest** (see appendix 36)
- **"Mediterranean Girl's War Phobia Poem" by Muzahidul Reza** (see appendix 37)

4.15. Final task. Group presentation of a poet and their work

As a final task at the end of a teaching unit students prepare a presentation. In groups of four, they choose a poet they are familiar with or whose poems they enjoyed or found most interesting / challenging during class readings, and conduct research on poet's life and work. They also prepare reading aloud extracts from the chosen poet's poems they enjoyed the most or found most meaningful. Their presentation is assessed by both the teacher and their peers using the rubric provided by the teacher (see appendix 38).

 The teacher provides students with tips to carry out the activity (see appendix 39)

CONCLUSION

The present TFM aimed to identify the potential benefits of introducing poetry in English in EFL secondary school classroom and to create adequate learning materials to that end. Having conducted literature review has demonstrated that most authors indisputably acknowledge the value and advantages of implementing poetry in the teaching – learning process. There are certain reservations, however, as to challenges it may present to some students in terms of its often sophisticated language. Thus, to ensure the success of the teaching – learning process, it is essential the materials used in the classroom satisfy the educational needs of each particular language level, and that responsibility lies with the educators.

From a linguistic perspective, the employment of poetry helps to make students see the language they are learning in its free real-life context. The use of realia complies with the application of Communicative Approach principles in the classroom (Widdowson, 1985). Apart from boosting creativity and fostering collaborative work, it involves research, and thus general cultural enrichment. Moreover, if students are challenged to perform, compose, translate or illustrate poetry, and carry out self-assessment afterwards, the development of other creative skills is triggered as well. Thus, the activities presented in the Didactic part of this TFM are designed in accordance with the principles of Communicative Approach, Task – Based Learning and Action – Oriented Approach, among whose ultimate goals is “to enable learners to use the language as a communicative tool in real – life context” (CEFR, 2020).

Although technological advances allow us to innovate and improve, they have also served to create a world immersed in mass media, social media, misinformation and violence, making humanitarian and artistic education even more crucial, since it may help young people to better understand and appreciate both themselves and the world around them. Simultaneously, poetry, like all types of literature, allows to contemplate the world from a different perspective, and its creation does not require strict rules, explanation or justification. Poetry has often been defined as ‘mental food’, and, as we are well aware nowadays, it is not only vital to keep physical health in good shape, but mental health as well, especially at the age when personal identity is being shaped. The educational system is largely accountable for the period of time when young people’s identities are being formed. In order to provide high – quality education it is essential to ensure cultural heritage is passed on to younger generations, and poetry is, beyond doubt, a perfect tool to that end.

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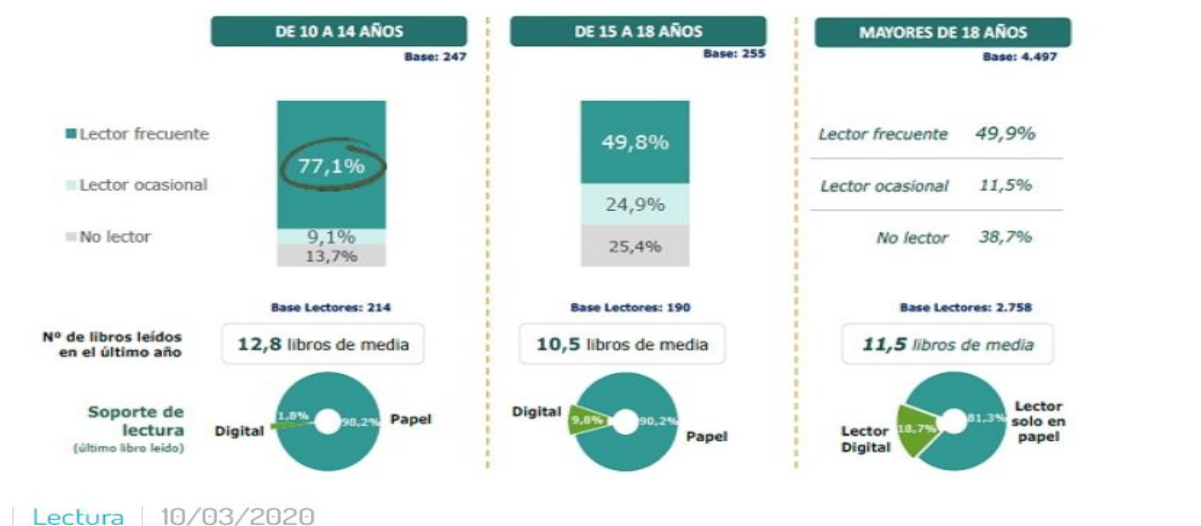
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1



Appendix 2

Miracles

Why, who makes much of a miracle?
As to me I know of nothing else but miracles,
Whether I walk the streets of Manhattan,
Or dart my sight over the roofs of houses toward the sky,
Or wade with naked feet along the beach just in the edge of the water,
Or stand under trees in the woods,
Or talk by day with any one I love, or sleep in the bed at night with any one I love,
Or sit at table at dinner with the rest,
Or look at strangers opposite me riding in the car,
Or watch honey-bees busy around the hive of a summer forenoon,
Or animals feeding in the fields,
Or birds, or the wonderfulness of insects in the air,
Or the wonderfulness of the sundown, or of stars shining so quiet and bright,
Or the exquisite delicate thin curve of the new moon in spring;
These with the rest, one and all, are to me miracles,
The whole referring, yet each distinct and in its place.

To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,
Every cubic inch of space is a miracle,
Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with the same,
Every foot of the interior swarms with the same.

To me the sea is a continual miracle,
The fishes that swim—the rocks—the motion of the waves—the
ships with men in them,
What stranger miracles are there?

Walt Whitman

Appendix 3

Once

Once there was a boy who
wanted to be beautiful
and a girl who
wanted to be strong.
The boy was worried
that he wasn't beautiful enough.
The girl was worried
that she wasn't strong enough.

One day they went out to seek
their fortunes.
But there was nothing.

There was nowhere for them to go
Nothing for them to see
No one for them to meet.
There was no story for them
to be in.

They couldn't even meet each other.
You may have thought they had already met
but they hadn't
because there wasn't anywhere
for them to meet.

Until you came along
and decided that you can do
something about it.

Michael Rosen

Appendix 4

The Time

Summer is the time to write. I tell myself this
in winter especially. Summer comes,
I want to tumble with the river
over rocks and mossy dams.

A fish drifting upside down.
Slow accordions sweeten the breeze.

The Sanitary Mattress Factory says,
"Sleep is life".
Why do I think of forty ways to spend the afternoon?

Yesterday someone said,
'It gets late so early.'
I wrote it down. I was going to do something with it.
Maybe it is the title and this life is a poem.

Naomi Shihab Nye

Appendix 5

How Falling in Love is like Owning a Dog

First of all, it's a big responsibility,
especially in a city like New York.

So think long and hard before deciding on love.

On the other hand, love gives you a sense of security:

when you're walking down the street late at night
and you have a leash on love

ain't no one going to mess with you.

Because crooks and muggers think love is unpredictable.

Who knows what love could do in its own defence?

On cold winter nights, love is warm.

It lies between you and lives and breathes
and makes funny noises.

Love wakes you up all hours of the night with its needs.

It needs to be fed so it will grow and stay healthy.

Love doesn't like being left alone for long.

But come home and love is always happy to see you.

It may break a few things accidentally in its passion for life,
but you can never be mad at love for long.

Is love good all the time? No! No!

Love can be bad. Bad, love, bad! Very bad love.

Love makes messes.

Love leaves you little surprises here and there.

Love needs lots of cleaning up after.

Sometimes you just want to get love fixed.

Sometimes you want to roll up a piece of newspaper

and swat love on the nose,

not so much to cause pain,

just to let love know Don't you ever do that again!

Sometimes love just wants to go out for a nice long walk.

Because love loves exercise. It will run you around the block
and leave you panting, breathless. Pull you in different directions

at once, or wind itself around and around you

until you're all wound up and you cannot move.

But love makes you meet people wherever you go.

People who have nothing in common but love

stop and talk to each other on the street.

Throw things away and love will bring them back,

again, and again, and again.

But most of all, love needs love, lots of it.

And in return, love loves you and never stops.

Taylor Mali

Appendix 6

Keep Going

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all up hill,
When the funds are low and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest if you must—but don't you quit.

Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As every one of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about
When he might have won had he stuck it out;
Don't give up, though the pace seems slow—
You may succeed with another blow.

Often the goal is nearer than
It seems to a faint and faltering man,
Often the struggler has given up
When he might have captured the victor's cup,
And he learned too late, when the night slipped down,
How close he was to the golden crown.

Success is failure turned inside out—
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems afar;
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit—
It's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit.

Edgar Guest

Appendix 7

Dearest creature (The Chaos)

Dearest creature in creation,

Study English pronunciation.

I will teach you in my verse

Sounds like corpse, corps, horse, and worse.

I will keep you, Suzy, busy,

Make your head with heat grow dizzy.

Tear in eye, your dress will tear.

So shall I! Oh hear my prayer.

Just compare heart, beard, and heard,

Dies and diet, lord and word,

Sword and sward, retain and Britain.

(Mind the latter, how it's written.)

Now I surely will not plague you

With such words as plaque and ague.

But be careful how you speak:

Say break and steak, but bleak and streak;

Cloven, oven, how and low,

Script, receipt, show, poem, and toe.

Hear me say, devoid of trickery,

Daughter, laughter, and Terpsichore,

Typhoid, measles, topsails, aisles,

Exiles, similes, and reviles;

Scholar, vicar, and cigar,

Solar, mica, war and far;

One, anemone, Balmoral,
Kitchen, lichen, laundry, laurel;
Gertrude, German, wind and mind,
Scene, Melpomene, mankind.

Billet does not rhyme with ballet,
Bouquet, wallet, mallet, chalet.
Blood and flood are not like food,
Nor is mould like should and would.
Viscous, viscount, load and broad,
Toward, to forward, to reward.
And your pronunciation's OK
When you correctly say croquet,
Rounded, wounded, grieve and sieve,
Friend and fiend, alive and live.

Ivy, privy, famous; clamour
And enamour rhyme with hammer.
River, rival, tomb, bomb, comb,
Doll and roll and some and home.
Stranger does not rhyme with anger,
Neither does devour with clangour.
Souls but foul, haunt but aunt,
Font, front, wont, want, grand, and grant,
Shoes, goes, does. Now first say finger,
And then singer, ginger, linger,
Real, zeal, mauve, gauze, gouge and gauge,
Marriage, foliage, mirage, and age.

Query does not rhyme with very,
Nor does fury sound like bury.
Dost, lost, post and doth, cloth, loth.
Job, nob, bosom, transom, oath.
Though the differences seem little,
We say actual but victual.
Refer does not rhyme with deafer.
Foeffer does, and zephyr, heifer.
Mint, pint, senate and sedate;
Dull, bull, and George ate late.
Scenic, Arabic, Pacific,
Science, conscience, scientific.

Liberty, library, heave and heaven,
Rachel, ache, moustache, eleven.
We say hallowed, but allowed,
People, leopard, towed, but vowed.
Mark the differences, moreover,
Between mover, cover, clover;
Leeches, breeches, wise, precise,
Chalice, but police and lice;
Camel, constable, unstable,
Principle, disciple, label.

Petal, panel, and canal,
Wait, surprise, plait, promise, pal.
Worm and storm, chaise, chaos, chair,

Senator, spectator, mayor.
 Tour, but our and succour, four.
 Gas, alas, and Arkansas.
 Sea, idea, Korea, area,
 Psalm, Maria, but malaria.
 Youth, south, southern, cleanse and clean.
 Doctrine, turpentine, marine.

 Compare alien with Italian,
 Dandelion and battalion.
 Sally with ally, yea, ye,
 Eye, I, ay, aye, whey, and key.
 Say aver, but ever, fever,
 Neither, leisure, skein, deceiver.
 Heron, granary, canary.
 Crevice and device and aerie.

 Face, but preface, not efface.
 Phlegm, phlegmatic, ass, glass, bass.
 Large, but target, gin, give, verging,
 Ought, out, joust and scour, scourging.
 Ear, but earn and wear and tear
 Do not rhyme with here but ere.
 Seven is right, but so is even,
 Hyphen, roughen, nephew Stephen,
 Monkey, donkey, Turk and jerk,
 Ask, grasp, wasp, and cork and work.

Pronunciation — think of Psyche!

Is a paling stout and spikey?

Won't it make you lose your wits,

Writing groats and saying grits?

It's a dark abyss or tunnel:

Strewn with stones, stowed, solace, gunwale,

Islington and Isle of Wight,

Housewife, verdict and indict.

Finally, which rhymes with enough —

Though, through, plough, or dough, or cough?

Hiccough has the sound of 'cup'...

My advice is: give it up!!!

Charivarius (Gerard Nolst Trenité)

Appendix 8

Pronunciation poem

I take it you already know
of tough and bough and cough and dough.
Others may stumble, but not you,
On hiccough, thorough, lough and through.
Well done! And now you wish, perhaps,
To learn of less familiar traps.

Beware of heard, a dreadful word
That looks like beard and sounds like bird.
And dead – it's said like bed, not bead.
For goodness sake, don't call it deed!
Watch out for meat and great and threat.
They rhyme with suite and straight and debt.

A moth is not a moth in mother,
Nor both in bother, broth in brother,
And here is not a match for there,
Nor dear and fear for pear and bear.
And then there's dose and rose and lose
Just look them up — and goose and choose.
And cork and work and card and ward.
And font and front and word and sword.

And do and go, then thwart and cart.

Come, come I've hardly made a start.

A dreadful language? Man alive,

I'd mastered it when I was five!

Retrieved December 7, 2022 from <https://www.speechactive.com/english-pronunciation-poem/>

Appendix 9

Who Am I?

The trees ask me,
And the sky,
And the sea asks me

Who am I?

The grass asks me,
And the sand,
And the rocks ask me

Who I am.

The wind tells me ,
At nightfall,
And the rain tells me

Someone small.

Someone small

Someone small

But a piece
Of
it
all.

Felice Holman

Appendix 10

Mind your own business

I'm the youngest in our house

So it goes like this:

My brother comes in and says:

"Tell him to clear the fluff
out from under his bed."

Mum says:

"Clear the fluff out from under your bed."

Father says,

"You heard what your mother said."

"What?" I say.

"The fluff", he says.

"Clear the fluff
out from under your bed."

So I say,

"There's fluff under his bed too,
you know."

So father says,

"But we're talking bout the fluff
Under your bed."

"You will clear it up, won't you?" mum says

So now my brother – all puffed up – says,

"Clear the fluff
Out from under your bed,
Clear the fluff
Out from under your bed."

Now I'm angry. I am angry.

So I say – what shall I say?

I say,

"Shuttup stinks,
YOU CAN'T RULE MY LIFE."

Michael Rosen

Appendix 11

Get Out of Bed!

"Get out of bed, you silly fool!

Get up right now, it's time for school.

If you don't dress without a fuss,

I'll throw you naked on the bus!"

"Oh, Mom, don't make me go today.

I'm feeling worse than yesterday.

You don't know what I'm going through.

I've got a strange, rare case of flu."

"My body aches, my throat is sore.

I'm sure I'm knocking on death's door.

You can't send me to school-achoo!-

'Cause everyone could get it, too."

"Besides, the kids despise me there.

They always tease and always stare.

And all the teachers know my name.

When something's wrong, it's me they blame."

"You faked a headache yesterday.

Don't pull that stuff on me today.

Stop acting like a silly fool-

The principal cannot skip school!"

Diane Z. Shore

Appendix 12

Let me try again

I could bore you with the sunset, the way water tasted
after so many days without it,
the trees,
the breed of dogs, but I can't say
there were forty people
when we found the ranch with the thin white man,
his dogs,
and his shotgun.

Until this 5 a.m. I couldn't remember
there were only five,
or seven people—

We'd separated by the paloverdes.

We, meaning:

four people. Not forty.

The rest. . .

I don't know.

They weren't there
when the thin white man
let us drink from a hose
while pointing his shotgun.
In pocho Spanish he told us
si correr perros atacar.
If run dogs trained attack.

When La Migra arrived, an officer
who probably called himself Hispanic at best,
not Mejicano like we called him, said
buenas noches
and gave us pan dulce y chocolate.

Procedure says he should've taken us
back to the station,
checked our fingerprints,
etcétera.

He must've remembered his family
over the border,
or the border coming over them,
because he drove us to the border
and told us
next time, rest at least five days,
don't trust anyone calling themselves coyotes,
bring more tortillas, sardines, Alhambra.

He knew we would try again
and again,
like everyone does.

Javier Samora

Appendix 13

Remember

Remember the sky that you were born under,
know each of the star's stories.

Remember the moon, know who she is.

Remember the sun's birth at dawn, that is the
strongest point of time. Remember sundown
and the giving away to night.

Remember your birth, how your mother struggled
to give you form and breath. You are evidence of
her life, and her mother's, and hers.

Remember your father. He is your life, also.

Remember the earth whose skin you are:
red earth, black earth, yellow earth, white earth
brown earth, we are earth.

Remember the plants, trees, animal life who all have their
tribes, their families, their histories, too. Talk to them,
listen to them. They are alive poems.

Remember the wind. Remember her voice. She knows the
origin of this universe.

Remember you are all people and all people
are you.

Remember you are this universe and this
universe is you.

Remember all is in motion, is growing, is you.

Remember language comes from this.

Remember the dance language is, that life is.

Remember.

Joy Harjo

Appendix 14

Richard Cory

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him:
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favoured, and imperially slim.

And he was quietly arrayed,
And he was always human when he talked;
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
«Good morning», and he glittered when he walked.

And he was rich—yes, richer than a king—
And admirably schooled in every grace:
In fine, we thought that he was everything
To make us wish that we were in his place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;
And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
Went home and put a bullet through his head.

Edwin Arlington Robinson

Appendix 15

Theme for English B

The instructor said,
Go home and write
a page tonight.

And let that page come out of you—

Then, it will be true.

I wonder if it's that simple?

I am twenty-two, colored, born in Winston-Salem.

I went to school there, then Durham, then here
to this college on the hill above Harlem.

I am the only colored student in my class.

The steps from the hill lead down into Harlem,
through a park, then I cross St. Nicholas,
Eighth Avenue, Seventh, and I come to the Y,
the Harlem Branch Y, where I take the elevator
up to my room, sit down, and write this page:

It's not easy to know what is true for you or me
at twenty-two, my age. But I guess I'm what
I feel and see and hear, Harlem, I hear you.

hear you, hear me—we two—you, me, talk on this page.

(I hear New York, too.) Me—who?

Well, I like to eat, sleep, drink, and be in love.

I like to work, read, learn, and understand life.

I like a pipe for a Christmas present,

or records—Bessie, bop, or Bach.

I guess being colored doesn't make me not like
the same things other folks like who are other races.

So will my page be colored that I write?

Being me, it will not be white.

But it will be

a part of you, instructor.

You are white—

yet a part of me, as I am a part of you.

That's American.

Sometimes perhaps you don't want to be a part of me.

Nor do I often want to be a part of you.

But we are, that's true!

As I learn from you,

I guess you learn from me—

although you're older—and white—

and somewhat more free.

This is my page for English B.

Langston Hughes

Appendix 16

The Mower

The mower stalled, twice; kneeling, I found
A hedgehog jammed up against the blades,
Killed. It had been in the long grass.

I had seen it before, and even fed it, once.
Now I had mauled its unobtrusive world
Unmendably. Burial was no help:

Next morning I got up and it did not.
The first day after a death, the new absence
Is always the same; we should be careful

Of each other, we should be kind
While there is still time.

Philip Larkin

Appendix 17

Ten Tall Oaktrees

Ten tall oaktrees,
Standing in a line,
“Warships,” cried King Henry,
Then there were nine.

Nine tall oaktrees,
Growing strong and straight,
“Charcoal,” breathed the furnace,
Then there were eight.

Eight tall oaktrees,
Reaching towards heaven,
“Sizzle,” spoke the lightning,
Then there were seven.

Seven tall oaktrees
Branches, leaves and sticks,
“Firewood,” smiled the merchant,
Then there were six.

Six tall oaktrees,
Glad to be alive,
“Barrels,” boomed the bre, wery,
Then there were five.

Five tall oaktrees,
Suddenly a roar,
“Gangway,” screamed the west wind,
Then there were four.

Four tall oaktrees,
Sighing like the sea,

“Floorboards,” beamed the builder,
Then there were three.

Three tall oaktrees,
Groaning as trees do,
“Unsafe,” claimed the council,
Then there were two.

Two tall oaktrees,
Spreading in the sun,
“Progress,” snarled the by-pass,
Then there was one.

One tall oaktree,
Wishing it could run,
“Nuisance,” grumped the farmer,
Then there was none.

No tall oaktrees,
Search the fields in vain:
Only empty skylines
And the cold grey rain,

Richard Edwards

Appendix 18

Sound of Water

The sound of water is:

Rain,
Lap,
Fold,
Slap,
Gurgle,
Splash,
Churn,
Crash,
Murmur,
Pour,
Ripple,
Roar,
Plunge,
Drip,
Spout,
Skip,
Sprinkle,
Flow,
Ice,
Snow.

Mary O'Neill

Appendix 19

Sick

"I cannot go to school today,"
Said little Peggy Ann McKay.
"I have the measles and the mumps,
A gash, a rash and purple bumps.
My mouth is wet, my throat is dry,
I'm going blind in my right eye.
My tonsils are as big as rocks,
I've counted sixteen chicken pox
And there's one more--that's seventeen,
And don't you think my face looks green?
My leg is cut--my eyes are blue--
It might be instamatic flu.
I cough and sneeze and gasp and choke,
I'm sure that my left leg is broke--
My hip hurts when I move my chin,
My belly button's caving in,
My back is wrenched, my ankle's sprained,
My 'pendix pains each time it rains.
My nose is cold, my toes are numb.
I have a sliver in my thumb.
My neck is stiff, my voice is weak,
I hardly whisper when I speak.
My tongue is filling up my mouth,
I think my hair is falling out.
My elbow's bent, my spine ain't straight,
My temperature is one-o-eight.

My brain is shrunk, I cannot hear,
There is a hole inside my ear.
I have a hangnail, and my heart is--what?
What's that? What's that you say?
You say today is. . .Saturday?
G'bye, I'm going out to play!"

Shel Silverstein

Appendix 20

Translation for Mamá

What I've written for you, I have always written
in English, my language of silent vowel endings
never translated into your language of silent h's.

Lo que he escrito para ti, siempre lo he escrito
en inglés, en mi lengua llena de vocales mudas
nunca traducidas a tu idioma de haches mudas.

I've transcribed all your old letters into poems
that reconcile your exile from Cuba, but always
in English. I've given you back the guajiro roads
you left behind, stretched them into sentences
punctuated with palms, but only in English.

He transcrito todas tus cartas viejas en poemas
que reconcilian tu exilio de Cuba, pero siempre
en inglés. Te he devuelto los caminos guajiros
que dejastes atrás, transformados en oraciones
puntuadas por palmas, pero solamente en inglés.

I have recreated the pueblecito you had to forget,
forced your green mountains up again, grown
valleys of sugarcane, stars for you in English.

He reconstruido el pueblecito que tuvistes que olvidar,
he levantado de nuevo tus montañas verdes, cultivado
la caña, las estrellas de tus valles, para ti, en inglés.

In English I have told you how I love you cutting
gladiolas, crushing ajo, setting cups of dulce de leche
on the counter to cool, or hanging up the laundry
at night under our suburban moon. In English,

En inglés te he dicho cómo te amo cuando cortas
gladiolas, machacas ajo, enfrias tacitas de dulce de leche
encima del mostrador, o cuando tiendes la ropa
de noche bajo nuestra luna en suburbia. En inglés

I have imagined you surviving by transforming
yards of taffeta into dresses you never wear,
keeping Papá's photo hinged in your mirror,
and leaving the porch light on, all night long.

He imaginado como sobrevives transformando
yardas de tafetán en vestidos que nunca estrenas,
la foto de papá que guardas en el espejo de tu cómoda,
la luz del portal que dejas encendida, toda la noche.

Te he captado en inglés en la mesa de la cocina
esperando que cuele el café, que hierva la leche
y que tu vida acostumbre a tu vida. En inglés
has aprendido a adorar tus pérdidas igual que yo.

I have captured you in English at the kitchen table
waiting for the café to brew, the milk to froth,
and your life to adjust to your life. In English
you've learned to adore your losses the way I do.

Richard Blanco

Appendix 21

Like you

Like you I

love love, life, the sweet smell
of things, the sky-blue
landscape of January days.

And my blood boils up
and I laugh through eyes
that have known the buds of tears.

I believe the world is beautiful
and that poetry, like bread, is for everyone.

And that my veins don't end in me
but in the unanimous blood
of those who struggle for life,

love,

little things,

landscape and bread,
the poetry of everyone.

Roque Dalton

Como Tú

Yo, como tú,

amo el amor, la vida, el dulce encanto
de las cosas, el paisaje
celeste de los días de enero.

También mi sangre bulle
y río por los ojos
que han conocido el brote de las lágrimas.

Creo que el mundo es bello,
que la poesía es como el pan, de todos.
Y que mis venas no terminan en mí
sino en la sangre unánime
de los que luchan por la vida,
el amor,
las cosas,
el paisaje y el pan,

Appendix 22

An Alphabet Poem

ABC Love Poem

Again I'm sitting with pen in my hand and paper in front of me,
Breaking all the doors, trying to set my feelings free.
Carefully I'm choosing the words to write.
Don't want to keep anything inside.
Everything inside me I want to say.
For so long I've been trying day after day.
Guessed it's easy, but it's not in any way.
How hard I tried to tell you
In every way, but I couldn't do so.
Just simple words I have to write,
Kinda magical words that'll make everything right.
Love you deeply from the bottom of my heart.
My life means nothing when we're apart.
No one but you can make me feel that complete.
Ooh, my love we are meant to be; that's our fate.
Please stay with me for always and forever.
Quit anything, but leave me never.
Right inside my heart you will always be.
So happy I feel when you are with me.
To you I hope to be always near.
Unique is the way along you I feel.
Very happy, flying without wings.
What a joy to my heart your touch brings.
X-tremely perfect I feel near you.
Yes, my love, that's what I want you to know.
Zillions of words I have in my heart to say, and all of them are true.

Noha Nader

Appendix 23

If I were in charge of the world

I'd cancel oatmeal,
Monday mornings,
Allergy shots, and also Sara Steinberg.

If I were in charge of the world

There'd be brighter nights lights,
Healthier hamsters, and
Basketball baskets forty eight inches lower.

If I were in charge of the world

You wouldn't have lonely.
You wouldn't have clean.
You wouldn't have bedtimes.
Or 'Don't punch your sister.'
You wouldn't even have sisters.

If I were in charge of the world

A chocolate sundae with whipped cream and nuts would be a vegetable
All 007 movies would be G,
And a person who sometimes forgot to brush,
And sometimes forgot to flush,
Would still be allowed to be
In charge of the world.

Judith Viorst

Appendix 24

Two Lists

I'm going out now
To the shops for my dad
I've got two lists
One of things to buy

Carrots
Peas
Bread
An apple pie

One of things to remember:
Don't talk to strangers
Go straight there
Be careful crossing the roads
Don't talk to strangers
Come straight back
Don't talk to strangers
Don't get lost
Don't forget the change

And Tommy...
Yes, dad?
Don't talk to strangers

I'm back now from going
To the shops for my dad.

I didn't talk to strangers
I went straight there
I was careful crossing the roads

I didn't talk to strangers
I came straight back
I didn't lose the money
I didn't talk to strangers
I didn't get lost
I didn't forget the change
And... I didn't talk to strangers

So what did you forget?
Dad said
The carrots
The peas
The apple pie
And...
Yes?
The bread

Tony Bradman

Appendix 25

The Turkey Shot Out Of The Oven

The turkey shot out of the oven
and rocketed into the air,
it knocked every plate off the table
and partly demolished a chair.

It ricocheted into a corner
and burst with a deafening boom,
then splattered all over the kitchen,
completely obscuring the room.

It stuck to the walls and the windows,
it totally coated the floor,
there was turkey attached to the ceiling,
where there'd never been turkey before.

It blanketed every appliance,
it smeared every saucer and bowl,
there wasn't a way I could stop it,
that turkey was out of control.

I scraped and I scrubbed with displeasure,
and thought with chagrin as I mopped,
that I'd never again stuff a turkey
with popcorn that hadn't been popped.

Jack Prelutsky

Appendix 26

If Only

(Poem About Hope For The World)

If Only...

A prayer was held in our nation,
Beauty was seen in more ways than one,
Children who are lost could find their salvation,
Death was slain and torture was done.

If Only...

Earth was awakened after years of endurance,
Forgotten feelings were rekindled anew,
God was man's only path and assurance,
Hope was the foundation of the world we knew.

If Only...

I knew more stories than those that were told,
Joy was a plague, and peace a disease,
Knowledge was worth more than silver and gold,
Love was sacred and endless as the seas.

If Only...

Miracles were seen more than daylight,
Never was replaced with forever,
Our eyes could see through the dark of the night,
Passion lived in us more than ever.

If Only...

Questions were answered, and answers were questioned,

Roses were pure and without thorns,

Sadness received only love and affection,

The empty knew why it was they were born.

If Only...

Us as a nation would join hands in song,

Victory was a gift to the humble,

When tears were shed, the earth felt strong,

Exalted men would fall and crumble.

If Only...

You and I would last forever.

If Only...

Petra Sheane

Appendix 27

How Many, How Much

How many slams in an old screen door?

Depends how loud you shut it.

How many slices in a bread?

Depends how thin you cut it.

How much good inside a day?

Depends how good you live 'em.

How much love inside a friend?

Depends how much you give 'em.

Shel Silverstein

Appendix 28

Thanksgiving

Gettin' together to smile an' rejoice,
An' eatin' an' laughin' with folks of your choice;
An' kissin' the girls an' declarin' that they
Are growin' more beautiful day after day;
Chattin' an' braggin' a bit with the men,
Buildin' the old family circle again;
Livin' the wholesome an' old-fashioned cheer,
Just for awhile at the end of the year.

Greetings fly fast as we crowd through the door
And under the old roof we gather once more
Just as we did when the youngsters were small;
Mother's a little bit grayer, that's all.
Father's a little bit older, but still
Ready to romp an' to laugh with a will.
Here we are back at the table again
Tellin' our stories as women an' men.

Bowed are our heads for a moment in prayer;
Oh, but we're grateful an' glad to be there.
Home from the east land an' home from the west,
Home with the folks that are dearest an' best.
Out of the sham of the cities afar
We've come for a time to be just what we are.
Here we can talk of ourselves an' be frank,
Forgettin' position an' station an' rank.

Give me the end of the year an' its fun
When most of the plannin' an' toilin' is done;
Bring all the wanderers home to the nest,
Let me sit down with the ones I love best,

Hear the old voices still ringin' with song,
See the old faces unblemished by wrong,
See the old table with all of its chairs
An' I'll put soul in my Thanksgivin' prayers.

Edgar Guest

Appendix 29

I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings

A free bird leaps on the back
Of the wind and floats downstream
Till the current ends and dips his wing
In the orange suns rays
And dares to claim the sky.

But a BIRD that stalks down his narrow cage
Can seldom see through his bars of rage
His wings are clipped and his feet are tied
So he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings with a fearful trill
Of things unknown but longed for still
And his tune is heard on the distant hill for
The caged bird sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze
And the trade winds soft through
The sighing trees
And the fat worms waiting on a dawn-bright
Lawn and he names the sky his own.

But a caged BIRD stands on the grave of dreams
His shadow shouts on a nightmare scream
His wings are clipped and his feet are tied
So he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings with
A fearful trill of things unknown
But longed for still and his
Tune is heard on the distant hill
For the caged bird sings of freedom.

Maya Angelou

Appendix 30

Facebook Sonnet

Welcome to the endless high-school
Reunion. Welcome to past friends
And lovers, however kind or cruel.
Let's undervalue and unmend

The present. Why can't we pretend
Every stage of life is the same?
Let's exhume, resume, and extend
Childhood. Let's all play the games
That occupy the young. Let fame
And shame intertwine. Let one's search
For God become public domain.
Let church.com become our church.

Let's sign up, sign in, and confess
Here at the altar of loneliness.

Sherman Alexie

Appendix 31

You reading this be ready

Starting here, what do you want to remember?

How sunlight creeps along a shining floor?

What scent of old wood hovers, what softened
sound from outside fills the air?

Will you ever bring a better gift for the world
than the breathing respect that you carry
wherever you go right now? Are you waiting
for time to show you some better thoughts?

When you turn around, starting here, lift this
new glimpse that you found; carry into evening
all that you want from this day. This interval you spent
reading or hearing this, keep it for life.

What can anyone give you greater than now,
starting here, right in this room, when you turn around?

William Stafford

Appendix 32

The Three Little Pigs

The animal I really dig,
Above all others is the pig.
Pigs are noble. Pigs are clever,
Pigs are courteous. However,
Now and then, to break this rule,
One meets a pig who is a fool.
What, for example, would you say,
If strolling through the woods one day,
Right there in front of you you saw A pig who'd built his house of STRAW?
The Wolf who saw it licked his lips,
And said, 'That pig has had his chips.'
'Little pig, little pig, let me come in!'
'No, no, by the hairs on my chinny-chin-chin!'
'Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in!'
The little pig began to pray,
But Wolfie blew his house away.
He shouted, 'Bacon, pork and ham!
Oh, what a lucky
Wolf I am!'
And though he ate the pig quite fast,
He carefully kept the tail till last. Wolf wandered on, a trifle bloated.
Surprise, surprise, for soon he noted
Another little house for pigs,
And this one had been built of TWIGS!
'Little pig, little pig, let me come in!'
'No, no, by the hairs on my chinny-chin-chin!'
'Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in!'
The
Wolf said, 'Okay, here we go!'
He then began to blow and blow.
The little pig began to squeal.
He cried, 'Oh

Wolf, you've had one meal!
Why can't we talk and make a deal?
The Wolf replied, 'Not on your nelly!'
And soon the pig was in his belly.
'Two juicy little pigs!'
Wolf cried,
'But still I'm not quite satisfied!
I know how full my tummy's bulging,
But oh, how I adore indulging.'
So creeping quietly as a mouse,
The Wolf approached another house,
A house which also had inside A little piggy trying to hide.
'You'll not get me!' the Piggy cried.

'I'll blow you down!' the
Wolf replied.
'You'll need,' Pig said, 'a lot of puff,
And I don't think you've got enough.' Wolf huffed and puffed and blew and blew.
The house stayed up as good as new.
'If I can't blow it down,'
Wolf said,
I'll have to blow it up instead.
I'll come back in the dead of night
And blow it up with dynamite!'
Pig cried, 'You brute! I might have known!'
Then, picking up the telephone,
He dialed as quickly as he could
The number of red Riding Hood.
'Hello,' she said. 'Who's speaking? Who?'
Oh, hello, Piggy, how d'you do?'
Pig cried, 'I need your help, Miss Hood!
Oh help me, please! D'you think you could?'
'I'll try of course,' Miss Hood replied.
'What's on your mind...?' 'A

Wolf!' Pig cried.
'I know you've dealt with wolves before,
And now I've got one at my door!'
'My darling Pig,' she said, 'my sweet,
That's something really up my street.
I've just begun to wash my hair.
But when it's dry, I'll be right there.' A short while later, through the wood,
Came striding brave Miss Riding Hood.
The Wolf stood there, his eyes ablaze,
And yellowish, like mayonnaise.
His teeth were sharp, his gums were raw,
And spit was dripping from his jaw.
Once more the maiden's eyelid flickers.
She draws the pistol from her knickers.
Once more she hits the vital spot,
And kills him with a single shot.
Pig, peeping through the window, stood
And yelled, 'Well done, Miss Riding Hood!'
Ah, Piglet, you must never trust Young ladies from the upper crust.
For now, Miss Riding Hood, one notes,
Not only has two wolfskin coats,
But when she goes from place to place,
She has a PIGSKIN TRAVELLING CASE.

Roald Dahl

Appendix 33

Common Things

The most common thing in the world
is a statue with its arms broken off.
The brokenness a flatness exposing the texture of the marble or clay.
The second most common thing are the arms.
The right to bear them.
Which is something even those who do not want the right have.
Having something or someone to pray for
doesn't mean you have to pray.
Who gave you something or someone to pray for, think of that.
In the third most common thing, grass still wet
from rain overnight, which you did not participate in by watching.
You were asleep in the fourth most common thing.
You wake now and walk on the fifth most common thing.
The smooth surface of it.
Without meaning to be reductive.
You say the name of a country to refer to its ongoing conflict.
The word conflict a rag that wipes the blade clean.
A clean blade above a fireplace is the sixth most common thing.
Which means you have a neighbour, either
to the east or west, who is currently displaying a weapon.
Even if you do not own a weapon, you could.
And because of this you are complicit.
But you cannot do anything about most things.
You cannot put the arms back onto a statue
is another way of saying you can't put a bullet back into a gun.
The body subsumes bullets as though it is in love.
It inculcates bullets in the ways of the flesh.
Which is torn by the time the bullet is convinced.
You aren't convinced of anything you don't already believe in.
In this way you are always standing your ground.
The ground under someone standing it

is the seventh most common thing.
The eighth is the air in which you openly carry.
You like the feel, the weight, the heft of it in your hand.
But mostly you like the ability to take another's life should you need to.
It was your grandfather's ability, your father's.
Before you know it, it will be your child's.
Whose body in the fetal position resembles a finger curling over a trigger.
Whose whole life is still in the magazine.
Until it isn't and the sound is like that of a sternal saw
cutting through the breastbone of the world.
Finally buckling under the tink, tink, tink of the hammer against the saw.
And you thought you had hid the key to the drawer where you keep the gun.
But a key whose location is known is the ninth most common thing.
The tenth most common thing is a thoracic cavity
opened with a few cranks of the rib-spreader.
And the esophagus and lungs are fished around by the hands of a surgeon
who begins to massage the heart.
To clamp the aorta.
So that more blood is directed into the brain.
Instead of into the bowels, which have emptied by now.
While what is being filled are the gun racks of those
Whose child is not on the table.
Is not statuesque in the beauty sense of the word.
But in the way rigor mortis sets in.

Christopher Kondrich

Appendix 34

Dusting the Phone

I am spending my time imagining the worst that could happen.
I know this is not a good idea, and that being in love, I could be
spending my time going over the best that has been happening.

The phone rings heralding some disaster. Sirens.

Or it doesn't ring which also means disaster. Sirens.

In which case, who would ring me to tell? Nobody knows.

The future is a long gloved hand. An empty cup.

A marriage. A full house. One night per week

in stranger's white sheets. Forget tomorrow,

You say, don't mention love. I try. It doesn't work.

I assault the postman for a letter. I look for flowers.

I go over and over our times together, re-read them.

This very second I am waiting on the phone.

Silver service. I polish it. I dress for it.

I'll give it extra in return for your call.

Infuriatingly, it sends me hoaxes, wrong numbers;

or worse, calls from boring people. Your voice

disappears into my lonely cotton sheets.

I am trapped in it. I can't move. I want you.

All the time. This is awful – only a photo.

Come on, damn you, ring me. Or else. What?

I don't know what.

Jackie Kay

Appendix 35

One Today

(A Poem for Barack Obama's Presidential Inauguration)

One sun rose on us today, kindled over our shores,
peeking over the Smokies, greeting the faces
of the Great Lakes, spreading a simple truth
across the Great Plains, then charging across the Rockies.
One light, waking up rooftops, under each one, a story
told by our silent gestures moving behind windows.

My face, your face, millions of faces in morning's mirrors,
each one yawning to life, crescendoing into our day:
pencil-yellow school buses, the rhythm of traffic lights,
fruit stands: apples, limes, and oranges arrayed like rainbows
begging our praise. Silver trucks heavy with oil or paper—
bricks or milk, teeming over highways alongside us,
on our way to clean tables, read ledgers, or save lives—
to teach geometry, or ring-up groceries as my mother did
for twenty years, so I could write this poem.

All of us as vital as the one light we move through,
the same light on blackboards with lessons for the day:
equations to solve, history to question, or atoms imagined,
the "I have a dream" we keep dreaming,
or the impossible vocabulary of sorrow that won't explain
the empty desks of twenty children marked absent
today, and forever. Many prayers, but one light
breathing color into stained glass windows,
life into the faces of bronze statues, warmth
onto the steps of our museums and park benches
as mothers watch children slide into the day.

One ground. Our ground, rooting us to every stalk

of corn, every head of wheat sown by sweat
and hands, hands gleaning coal or planting windmills
in deserts and hilltops that keep us warm, hands
digging trenches, routing pipes and cables, hands
as worn as my father's cutting sugarcane
so my brother and I could have books and shoes.

The dust of farms and deserts, cities and plains
mingled by one wind—our breath. Breathe. Hear it
through the day's gorgeous din of honking cabs,
buses launching down avenues, the symphony
of footsteps, guitars, and screeching subways,
the unexpected song bird on your clothes line.

Hear: squeaky playground swings, trains whistling,
or whispers across café tables, Hear: the doors we open
for each other all day, saying: hello / shalom,
buon giorno / howdy / namaste / or buenos días
in the language my mother taught me—in every language
spoken into one wind carrying our lives
without prejudice, as these words break from my lips.

One sky: since the Appalachians and Sierras claimed
their majesty, and the Mississippi and Colorado worked
their way to the sea. Thank the work of our hands:
weaving steel into bridges, finishing one more report
for the boss on time, stitching another wound
or uniform, the first brush stroke on a portrait,
or the last floor on the Freedom Tower
jutting into a sky that yields to our resilience.

One sky, toward which we sometimes lift our eyes
tired from work: some days guessing at the weather

of our lives, some days giving thanks for a love
that loves you back, sometimes praising a mother
who knew how to give, or forgiving a father
who couldn't give what you wanted.

We head home: through the gloss of rain or weight
of snow, or the plum blush of dusk, but always—home,
always under one sky, our sky. And always one moon
like a silent drum tapping on every rooftop
and every window, of one country—all of us—
facing the stars
hope—a new constellation
waiting for us to map it,
waiting for us to name it—together

Richard Blanco

Appendix 36

It's September

It's September, and the orchards are afire with red and gold,
And the nights with dew are heavy, and the morning's sharp with cold;
Now the garden's at its gayest with the salvia blazing red
And the good old-fashioned asters laughing at us from their bed;
Once again in shoes and stockings are the children's little feet,
And the dog now does his snoozing on the bright side of the street.

It's September, and the cornstalks are as high as they will go,
And the red cheeks of the apples everywhere begin to show;
Now the supper's scarcely over ere the darkness settles down
And the moon looms big and yellow at the edges of the town;
Oh, it's good to see the children, when their little prayers are said,
Duck beneath the patchwork covers when they tumble into bed.

It's September, and a calmness and a sweetness seem to fall
Over everything that's living, just as though it hears the call
Of Old Winter, trudging slowly, with his pack of ice and snow,
In the distance over yonder, and it somehow seems as though
Every tiny little blossom wants to look its very best
When the frost shall bite its petals and it droops away to rest.

It's September! It's the fullness and the ripeness of the year;
All the work of earth is finished, or the final tasks are near,
But there is no doleful wailing; every living thing that grows,
For the end that is approaching wears the finest garb it knows.
And I pray that I may proudly hold my head up high and smile
When I come to my September in the golden afterwhile.

Edgar Guest

Appendix 37

Mediterranean Girl's War Phobia Poem

Indoors by technology, outdoors by speedy transport

I travel the world

Today in Japan, tomorrow in Rome,

Next day by an ancient civilization or in Hawaii or Coast Ivory,

I see, I observe human, nature, society, civilization, earth's form

Develop feelings with the people from country to country

Know their features, culture

I am not self; they, you and me together; friend and brother

I have nothing alone

We share what we have and to what we belong;

Climate and weather are not fit for long ways

Full of calamities, pollutions spread bitter, musty smell

Neither technologies nor transports work well

Idle times were idly passing along its ancient broadways;

Some long tiring and gloomy days later

A Mediterranean girl, whom I love, has sent me a long letter

In a grey-black envelop asking me to tell something

As if, shortly I make out a time;

I was neither indifferent nor interested

But the tension was tearing me for my friend;

Mesopotamia, the most ancient civilization

Is known not only to you and me but to everyone,

By it the basin of the Mediterranean Sea full of vast water

Around that line after line localities, spirited children's noisy tour

Know them, too, the people of the world

For them the kind obviously have empty space deep in mind;

To her writings, things changed a lot suddenly and horribly

Since we had met first near the green locality gaily,

Had observed people living there peacefully

Happiness, pleasure, contentment surrounded them heavenly;
Their every dream bloomed as flower
Spread fragrance everywhere;

She will tell me the reasons of so long gap
And what really were happening in fact,
That there were invasions and forcible wars so violent
Where exercising evil powers man shot man like pig,
Exploded heavy, dreadful atom, nuclear and various bombs
Used fatal chemical and poisonous weapons,
To destroy all the relics of the ancient civilizations,
To turn the green world into complete desert,
To abuse and pollute the other spheres
And they had aggressively, hypocritically succeeded
To draw magically black plots everywhere
So, here the rest of humans are living on sands forever;
She will also tell me how she lost everything
How extreme, hazardous troubles the country faced,
How the generations suffered and absolutely fell
How their blooming hopes and dreams were faded away,
Also that the whole world was against their cry
And now why she is quite dumb to say;

Her letter reminds me the chronological history of the wars
Before and after Christ around the human world,
How many kill how many no real statistics of that
And how much are destroyed no such real measures,
Human beings have seen the severe abuses of powers,
The savageries of wars and massacres,
Especially in the 1st and the 2nd two gigantic world wars, as well as
In various wars between armed and armless forces;
And what recently the world has thunderstruckly experienced
To which even the elements shed tears
No sooner had 20th century's bloody battle fields dried up

Than the wars in force, aggression, genocide, holocaust
In 21st century's early morning tormenting people began to walk
And broke world's all the past records in atrocities;
Thus, the destructions always faces the human world
Are chaos, wars, violence, massacres, miseries and loss,
All these curses cause them inborn pained
For some narrow minded, dull headed and brutal natured leaders;

A time I will make out and a place choose soon
For our meeting and conversation,

However and from wherever does blow the melancholic air
My sail will bound for
The red-grey bough and red-ash-silver stream
Where all the oppressed souls crawl and scream;
I will also invite all human beings there
To share over which we are lamenting and shedding tears,
And to take part in centuries' smallest slogan:
'Fill the earth with peace; no chaos, no weapons, no wars, no pangs.'

Muzahidul Reza

Appendix 38

Peer Evaluation of Group Presentation

Evaluation done by _____

Presenters _____

Presentation effectiveness criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	In need of improvement	Comments
Purpose communicated clearly					
Organized and easy to follow					
Presenters exhibited a good knowledge of topic					
Presenters were well-prepared					
Presenters spoke clearly/effectively					
Use of media and visual aid enhanced presentation					
Presenters responded effectively to audience questions and comments					
Presentation was done in a way that engaged the audience					

Appendix 39

Final task: An inspiring poet.

1. Investigate the life and personal history of a poet you like to make a ten-minute presentation for the class. You have to speak for about 2-3 minutes each.
2. Collect interesting facts, funny stories and curious information about the poet. The more interesting the information, the more fun and engaging your presentation will be. Prepare short samples of their poems to be read to class.
3. Choose an online presentation tool like Powerpoint, Prezi, Sutori or other and make sure that all the group members have access to it. Discuss the design of the presentation. There are no rules, just make it as fun and attractive as possible.
4. Attach your part of the work and materials, revise it and rehearse the presentation with your peers.
5. Each group will display their work on the digital whiteboard, making an oral presentation to the class and asking and answering questions at the end of each presentation. You are also going to assess other groups' work filling in a rubric provided by the teacher.
6. You are going to be evaluated by the teacher on group work and both oral and written parts of the presentation.