



Writers in the Schools (WITS) *A Poem A Day* Resource Guide

Sharing Poetry:

- 📖 Read poems aloud and encourage children to read poems aloud
- 📖 Discuss children's thoughts and feelings about a specific poem with them
- 📖 Post poems in a central location, such as a bulletin board, door, or refrigerator
- 📖 Create a binder for poems and encourage children to add their favorites
- 📖 Support children in memorizing poems for recitation
- 📖 Make a special notebook for collecting and writing poetry
- 📖 Ask children to write journal responses to poems
- 📖 Encourage children to write a poem in response to another poem
- 📖 Suggest children write a letter (to be mailed or not) to a poet
- 📖 Make the last line of one poem the first line of a new poem to be written
- 📖 Collaborate on writing a list poem, (suggested models: Pablo Neruda's *The Book of Questions* (original poems in Spanish) and *The List Poem* by Larry Fagin)
- 📖 Risk and share your own poetry with children

Making Poetry Part of a Learning Community:

- 📖 Read poems aloud over a public address system or before a family meal
- 📖 Create a reading corner for reading poetry and other books
- 📖 Write a group poem as a class or a family where each person contributes a line
- 📖 Challenge children to write a poem using at least 7 words from a list of 10 interesting nouns and verbs and have them compare their poems with others
- 📖 Encourage children to create original haiku or other short poems to be given as gifts (suggested models: *The Really Short Poems of A. R. Ammons* by A. R. Ammons; *Small Talk: A Book of Short Poems* edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins with illustrations by Susan Gaber; *Small Poems and More Small Poems* by Valerie Worth with illustrator Natalie Babbitt; *Cricket Never Does A Collection of Haiku and Tanka* by Myra Cohn Livingston with illustrations by Keese de Kieft; *Essential Haiku* by Robert Hass)
- 📖 Distribute poems at lunch or tuck poems into children's lunch boxes
- 📖 Host a "poetry coffeehouse" and invite children to bring their favorite poems or poetry books to share
- 📖 Publish an anthology of children's poems
- 📖 Launch a poetry contest
- 📖 Start a poetry newsletter or literary magazine

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Interdisciplinary Ideas:

- 📖 **Current Events:** select short daily news articles and create found poems with children using words and phrases from the news
- 📖 **Math:** use formal poetry (ballads, cinquains, haikus, tankas, pantoums, sestinas) to talk about patterns, repetition, and variation (suggested book: *The Handbook of Poetic Forms* by Ron Padgett); encourage children to invent their own poetry forms
- 📖 **Geography/Social Studies:** lead children in exploring poems from different countries and learning about the places where those poems come from (suggested anthology: *This Same Sky* edited by San Antonio poet Naomi Shihab Nye)
- 📖 **Science:** encourage children to closely observe the natural world and record their observations; children can then use these details to shape a descriptive poem
- 📖 **Theater/Dance:** work with children on staging a dramatic interpretation of a poem or choreographing creative movement for each line of a poem
- 📖 **Music:** use musical instruments or methods of choral reading in writing and sharing poems to develop an awareness of rhythm (suggested model: *Joyful Noise* and *I Am Phoenix*, poems for two voices by Paul Fleischman)
- 📖 **Art:** have children create collages to reflect their favorite poems, then have them guess which collage goes with which poem

More unusual, active learning ideas for classrooms, community centers, and the whole family:

- 📖 *The Adventures of Dr. Alphabet* by Dave Morice
- 📖 *Versability: The Poetry Game* by Silver Burton and Melissa de Souza
- 📖 *I am Writing a Poem About...A Game of Poetry* edited by Myra Cohn Livingston

Web Resources:

Academy of American Poets
www.onlinepoetryclassroom.org

Children's Book Council
www.cbcbooks.org/html/poetry_week.html

Library of Congress (Poetry 180)
www.loc.gov/poetry/180

Poetry Daily
www.poems.com

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