



In Celebration of  
NATIONAL POETRY MONTH

# A POEM A DAY

courtesy of **writers in the schools**

## Writers in the Schools (WITS) A Poem A Day Resource Guide, Page 1

### Sharing Poetry

- Read poems aloud and encourage children to read poems aloud
- Discuss children's thoughts and feelings about a specific poem
- 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 that 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)
- Take a 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 a literary magazine



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## Writers in the Schools (WITS) *A Poem A Day* Resource Guide, Page 2

### Interdisciplinary ideas

- Current Events: select short daily news articles and create found poems with children using words and phrases from the news
- Math: use the 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 came from (suggested anthology: *This Same Key* 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 exercises 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](http://www.poets.org/page.php/prmID/6) (http://www.poets.org/page.php/prmID/6)
- [Children's Book Council](http://www.cbcbooks.org/) (http://www.cbcbooks.org/)
- [Library of Congress \(Poetry 180\)](http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/) (http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/)
- [Poetry Daily](http://poems.com/) (http://poems.com/)