

# Poetry Builders Classroom Library Collection

## Collection Description

Poetry Builders takes the reader into the process of writing a specific type of poem by watching its creation unfold between the two main characters. As the characters discuss a specific type of poem, they also start to “write” one of their own

## The Role of Poetry in Reading

Writing poetry gives you the chance to fall in love with language again and again (Janeczko, 1999).

Awareness of rhyme, rhythm, and alliteration in addition to phonemic awareness are characteristics that often distinguish effective readers from readers “at risk” (Parr & Campbell, 2006).

Poetry isn’t just whimsical but contributes to increasing reading abilities. Lower primary teachers use nursery rhymes to develop phonic awareness and one-to one correspondence, and poetry helps children of all ages develop vocabulary. Reading poetry aloud over and over creates fluency with expression (Manning, 2003).

While we do not want students to rely solely on structured, formula-based poems, they do have merit when introducing and building confidence. They provide valuable opportunities for creative and expressive wordplay and exploration of grammatical concepts. (Parr & Campbell, 2006).

## Titles in the Poetry Builders Classroom Library Collection

1. Ana and Adam Build an Acrostic
2. Connor and Clara Build a Concrete Poem
3. Henry and Hala Build a Haiku
4. Luke and Leo Build a Limerick
5. Nina and Nolen Build a Nonsense Poem
6. Penelope and Pip Build a Prose Poem
7. Rena and Rio Build a Rhyme
8. Sophie and Sadie Build a Sonnet

## Types of Poems in the Poetry Builders Classroom Library Collection

Type	Description
<b>Acrostic</b>	A poem that uses the letters in a topic word to begin each word or line. All words or lines of the poem relate to or describe the topic.
<b>Concrete</b>	A poem that is written in a shape to create a picture of the topic.
<b>Haiku</b>	A form of Japanese poetry that uses 17 syllables in lines of 5, 7, and 5 each.
<b>Limerick</b>	A humorous poem consisting of five lines and a distinct AABBA rhythm and rhyming pattern in which the first, second, and fifth lines have the same rhythm and end in a matching rhyme; the third and fourth, another (shorter) rhythm/rhyme pattern.
<b>Nonsense</b>	Poetry that is simply for fun and typically uses rhyme or play with sounds. Alliteration and personification are common among nonsense poems. Nonsense poetry usually involves silly characters and made-up words.
<b>Prose</b>	This type of poem combines prose and poetry. Prose uses the natural grammar and flow of speech. Prose poetry is written as prose, but reads like poetry—using sounds and language to conjure images in the mind. Prose poetry does not focus on line breaks and can range in length from a few lines to several pages.
<b>Rhyme</b>	Poems that use repeating rhymes in a variety of patterns (e.g., ABAB, AABB). The rhymes may occur at the end or inside the lines and may use words that sound similar, but don't rhyme exactly.
<b>Sonnet</b>	Poetry constructed of 14 lines with 10 syllables in each line. The first twelve lines use an iambic pentameter rhyme pattern (i.e., ABAB, CDCD, EFEF) and end with a rhyming couplet (two lines that end in a rhyme, GG).

# Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy

The common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy emphasize the importance of an integrated model of literacy in which poetry is a process of communication that includes nursery rhymes and the subgenres of the narrative poem, limerick, and free verse poem:

## Reading Standards for Literature, Foundational Skills, and Writing 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Grade 3 Students:		Grade 4 Students:		Grade 5 Students:	
<b>Key Ideas and Details</b>					
1	Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	1	Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	1	Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
		2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.	2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.
<b>Craft and Structure</b>					
4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.	4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).	4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.
5	Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.	5	Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.	5	Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.
<b>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</b>					
7	Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).	7	Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.	7	Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).
<b>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</b>					
10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 2–3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.	10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
<b>Fluency</b>					
4	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. a. Read on-level text with purpose and understanding. b. Read on-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.	4	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. a. Read on-level text with purpose and understanding. b. Read on-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.	4	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. a. Read on-level text with purpose and understanding. b. Read on-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.
<b>Range of Writing</b>					
10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.	10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.	10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

## **Tips for Teaching Poetry in Your Classroom**

1. Examine preconceived notions toward poetry—both yours and your students.
2. Build a love of and respect for poetry by immersing yourself and your students in it.
3. Find the poetry in everyday experiences.
4. Keep the enjoyment in poetry—focus on the process.
5. Be a poet in practice or a poet in action; start where you are and challenge yourself gradually. Develop poetitude.
6. Encourage your students to be poets in practice.
7. Challenge them slowly, reward their efforts, and encourage risk taking.
8. Create a safe, low-risk environment in which to share and experience poetry.
9. Have fun!

Source: Parr & Campbell, 2006.

## **Sample Poetry Writing Lesson**

1. Share Models of Student Poets Work (10-15 minutes)
2. Demonstrate Writing Poems: Write for and With Children (10-20 minutes)
3. Brainstorm to Get Kids Started (5-10 minutes)
4. Provide Sustained Time for Writing (20-25 minutes)
5. Regroup and Celebrate the Poems (10-15 minutes)

Source: Routman, 2001

## Tools for Writing Poetry

Poetry uses a variety of figurative language. Familiarizing students with these tools, or devices, will help them in recognizing them in poems they read and support them in writing their own. Below are a few examples of figurative language devices appropriate for elementary school students:

Device	Description	Example
<b>Alliteration</b>	The repetition of the first sound in a series of words or phrases.	She sells seashells by the seashore.
<b>Assonance</b>	The repetition of vowel sounds to create internal rhyming.	The cool moon bloomed over the school.
<b>Cliché</b>	An expression that uses analogy or exaggeration and has become commonplace to the point of overuse.	You can't teach an old dog new tricks.
<b>Hyperbole</b>	Humorous exaggerations to create effect or emphasis.	I was so tired, I slept like a log.
<b>Idiom</b>	Common expressions that are not meant literally.	Living high on the hog.
<b>Metaphor</b>	A word analogy (using is and was) that compares two unlike things to make a strong image.	Time is money.
<b>Onomatopoeia</b>	Words that sound like an action or noise.	Bang, Woosh, Grrr, Hiss, Slurp, Buzz
<b>Personification</b>	Giving human qualities to something non-human.	The stars winked at the people below.
<b>Simile</b>	A phrase comparing two things, often using like or as.	Sly as a fox.

*For a collection of kid-friendly websites to teach, practice, and apply these devices, visit: <http://www.kidskonnnect.com/subject-index/20-language-arts/343-figurative-language.html>*

## Writer's Word Book

Using either a store-bought notebook or one made out of folders and binder paper (e.g., folders with pockets and fasteners), have students label each page with a letter of the alphabet. As students encounter words of interest or those they've used in crafting their poetry, have them write the words on the corresponding letter page. Students could even highlight the words they've used to both see their use of language as well as to encourage them to expand their use of new words.

Some students may not naturally be drawn to language. In order to help them build their repertoire, you might encourage some regular "word warm ups" to foster their confidence and identify words to include in their Writer's Word Book:

- Select read alouds with rich language and expansive vocabulary. As you read aloud, have students make note of special words to include in their word books.
- Share copies of poetry with students and have them highlight words they find special, interesting, or even unknown and record them in their word books.
- Have students work with partners. With one partner's eyes closed, the other opens the dictionary to a random page. The partner with the closed eyes points to a word, opens his or her eyes, and reads the word and the definition. The partners discuss the word and decide whether or not to include it in their own dictionary. They repeat this several times until they have added a designated number of words to their books.
- In the literacy/writing center, have a box or envelope in which you've placed index cards (or a list) with common words written on them. Students draw out the cards and look the words up in the thesaurus (hard copy or online) to find at least three more interesting alternate words to use in their own writing.
- Make several rhyming dictionaries available and encourage students to find words that rhyme with the others they have collected in their Writer's Word Books. For an online rhyming dictionary, visit [www.rhymezone.com](http://www.rhymezone.com).
- Encourage students to brainstorm a variety of topics they are interested in. Demonstrate how to make a table on a page in their word books to organize words that they've collected based on the topics generated—many words will be used more than once.

## References

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- Manning, M. (2003). A poetic awakening. *Teaching PreK-8*, 33(5), 85-87.
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