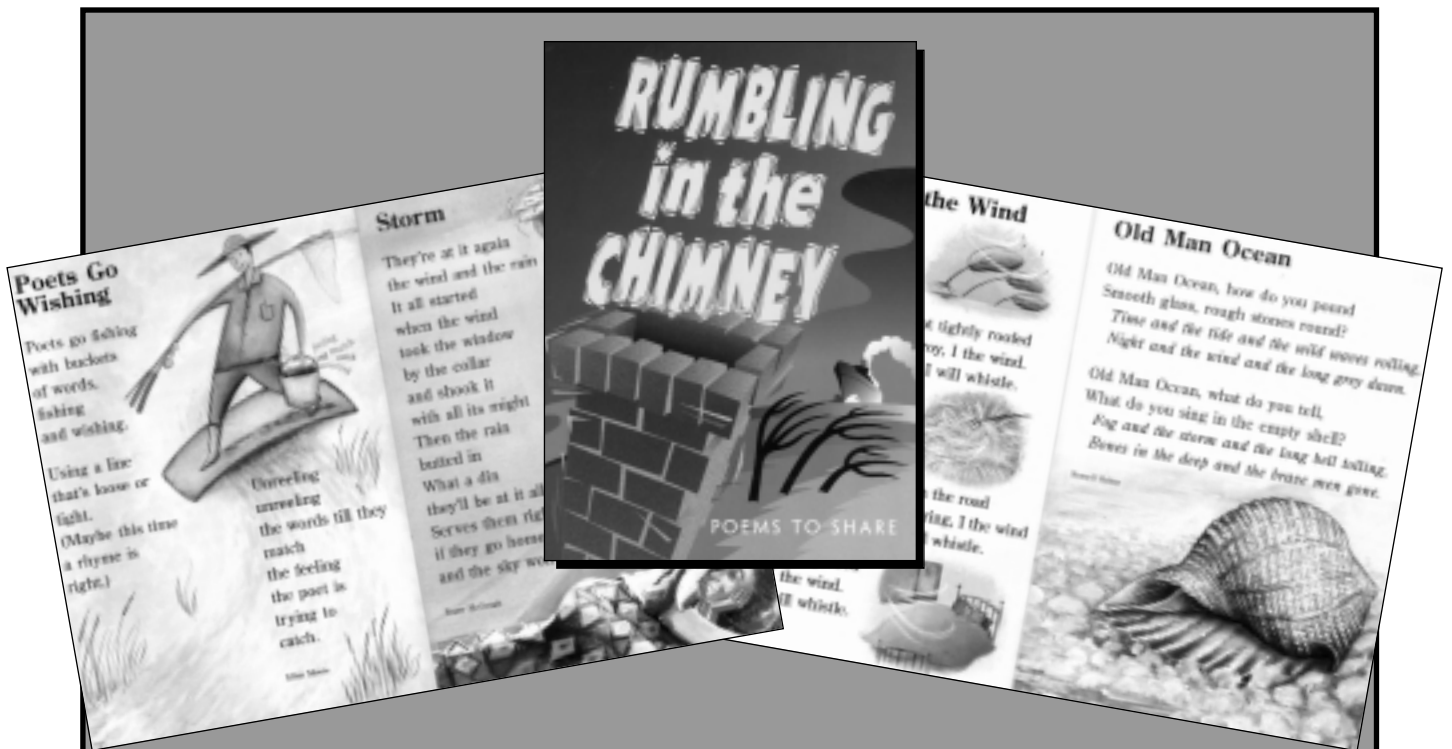


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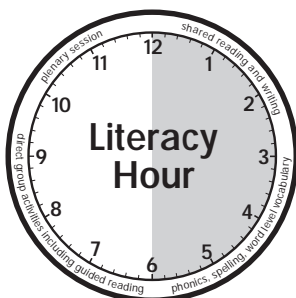
LITERACY HOUR LESSON PLANS

Shared Reading and Writing
Text, Sentence and Word Level Work

YEAR 5



POETRY: Big Book & Small Books



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Rumbling in the Chimney (Year 5 Poetry) and the NLS

Poems		Key Skills and Strategies (specific NLS references are listed on each lesson plan)
1 Term 1	<p>Poets Go Wishing <i>Free verse</i></p> <p><i>Lilian Moore's whimsical poem about fishing for the perfect words is an ideal starting point for exploring the aims of poetry and focusing on figurative language.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysing poetic style • identifying distinctive features of poems, and comparing poetry and prose • adapting writing for different purposes • discussing and composing similes and metaphors • understanding the conventions of standard English
2 Term 1	<p>Storm <i>Contemporary free verse</i></p> <p><i>a wonderfully energetic and humorous poem by Roger McCough, in which personification makes a familiar experience come to life in a whole new way</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysing and comparing language styles • identifying distinctive features of a poem, and the distinctive style of a particular poet • investigating personification • investigating and writing from different points of view • understanding the conventions of standard English
3 Term 1	<p>A Remarkable Adventure <i>Narrative rhyming poem</i></p> <p><i>a rollicking narrative poem by Jack Prelutsky, which will delight the children with its exaggeration and its skill in capturing the power of a child's imagination</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigating rhyme, rhythm and alliteration • identifying distinctive features of a poem's style • inferring meanings of unfamiliar words from context; developing dictionary skills • adapting writing for different purposes and audiences • investigating verb tenses
4 Term 1	<p>Snake Glides <i>and</i> On the Doorstep <i>Concrete poems</i></p> <p><i>two carefully crafted concrete poems, providing an opportunity for children to explore different aspects of imagery and encouraging them to extend their own range of writing styles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reading, comparing and writing concrete poems • analysing and comparing language styles • identifying distinctive features of poems and comparing poetry and prose • investigating verbs • understanding the conventions of standard English
5 Term 1	<p>Waiting <i>and</i> A Tree <i>Haiku and concrete poem</i></p> <p><i>a haiku and a concrete poem, linked by theme but contrasting in structure and tone</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing an active attitude towards reading • analysing and comparing poetic style • identifying distinctive features of poems • writing poems • adapting writing for different purposes and audiences
6 Term 1	<p>Two Snows <i>and</i> The Snowflake <i>Concrete poem and lyrical rhyming poem</i></p> <p><i>two nature poems (one a contemporary concrete poem, and the other a lyrical rhyming poem by Walter de la Mare), providing excellent opportunities for children to compare and contrast poetic styles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysing and comparing poetic style • identifying distinctive features of poems • adapting writing for different purposes • investigating and practising descriptive writing in poetry and prose • investigating the importance of word choice and word order in creating impact
7 Term 2	<p>Sea-Fever <i>Classic rhyming poem</i></p> <p><i>a well-known poem by John Masefield, using strong rhythm, descriptive language, rhyme and repetition</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substituting own words and ideas to help clarify a poem's meaning • performing poetry in a variety of ways • consolidating conventions of standard English • writing for specific purposes and audiences • investigating figures of speech • <u>investigating antonyms</u>
8 Term 2	<p>Going Too Far <i>Humorous narrative poem</i></p> <p><i>a comical narrative poem written in the 19th century in a traditional rhyming couplet format</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reading narrative poems • investigating different versions of the same story • understanding how writing can be adapted for different purposes • using possessive pronouns • investigating connections between spelling and punctuation

Poems		Key Skills and Strategies
9 Term 2	From a Railway Carriage <i>Classic rhyming poem</i> <i>Robert Louis Stevenson's masterful poem of motion, in which the rhythm of the poem "acts out" the subject.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substituting own words and ideas to help explain the impact of particular lines in a poem • identifying types of poems and their typical features • investigating and evaluating the use of different text types in exploring specific topics • practising expressive reading; developing performances of poetry
10 Term 3	Inuit Chant <i>Traditional chant from another culture</i> <i>a poem about the seasons with "chant" qualities the children will enjoy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigating texts from different cultures • identifying specific language features and their impact • using connectives to link clauses within sentences and to link sentences • securing basic conventions of standard English • writing from different points of view
11 Term 3	Windy Nights and Sparrows Sitting <i>Word play and haiku</i> <i>two nature poems: one using strong alliteration and word play, the other a traditional haiku</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding a variety of purposes of writing • investigating sound patterns (such as alliteration), imagery and mood in poetry • performing poetry • writing descriptive poetry and/or other descriptive texts based on poems read • changing verbs to nouns
12 Term 3	Mind Your Language! <i>Humorous word play</i> <i>a good-natured rhymed poem with tongue-twisting word play, highlighting some of the irregularities of English spelling</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing an active attitude towards reading, across a variety of text types • investigating word play and its use for engaging, comical effect • discussing, and writing in, the style of the author • identifying the writer's point of view • securing conventions of standard English
13 Term 3	Praise Song of the Wind <i>Traditional poem from another culture</i> <i>a translation of an old Siberian poem with powerful repetition; ideal for choral reading</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigating poems from other cultures • investigating language patterns sometimes found within free verse, such as repetition • identifying point of view, and its effect on the reader • using connectives • developing skill and confidence in using a variety of punctuation marks
14 Term 3	Old Man Ocean <i>Rhyming conversation</i> <i>Russell Hoban uses a question and response format to great effect in this poem, which is ideal for choral reading and/or performing in groups.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigating a poem's meaning and style and preparing for choral reading/performance • discussing, and writing in, the style of the author • identifying point of view and its effect on the reader; writing from different points of view • writing for different purposes and audiences
15 Term 3	Rhamporynchus <i>Descriptive rhyming poem</i> <i>an engaging and lively poem by the well-known poet, Wes Magee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying specific language features and their impact • using a poem as a model for writing • writing from the point of view of a character • investigating different purposes of writing • identifying prepositions and investigating their effect on meaning
16 Term 3	The Leader and Friendship <i>Humorous free verse</i> <i>informal, humorous poems by the well-known writers Roger McGough and Shel Silverstein</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussing the style of the author • investigating different purposes of writing • exploring, and writing from, different points of view; considering the likely impact on the reader • understanding how writing can be adapted for different purposes • using punctuation effectively

YEAR TERM

5 1

Poets Go Wishing is a poem about writing poetry. It is built around the metaphor of “fishing”, which will be easy for children to grasp, and provides an ideal starting point for exploring figurative language. Lilian Moore is a prolific American poet and the children will enjoy reading more of her poetry, which they will find readily in many anthologies.

NLS REFERENCES

- W2 identifying and using known spelling patterns
- W3 using independent spelling strategies
- S1 investigating word order
- S2 understanding conventions of standard English
- S4 adapting writing for different purposes
- T6 identifying distinctive features of poems
- T7 analysing poetic style

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- work in pairs, with one child choosing “a bucket of words” at random from a dictionary or word list, and the other child composing sentences or a story that would make use of all the words. A limit on the number of words might be a helpful suggestion. The children can reverse tasks after a time.
- work in groups to find and list examples of metaphors in newspaper headlines (“Budget slashed” “Football fever” and so on)
- write in their own words what the poem is saying, but without using any metaphors at all
- find as many rhymes as possible for some of the unrhymed words in the poem (such as “poet”, “go”, “line”, “loose”)
- write a poem or a story about wishing.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Ask the children what they think is special about poets and the kind of writing that they do. Discussion could include subjects that poets might write about (such as feelings); the fact that poems are shorter than many other forms of writing; and some common features of poetic language, such as rhythm and rhyme.
- Display *Poets Go Wishing* and read it aloud. Re-read the poem together. Ask the children what they think is meant by “Poets Go Fishing”. Introduce and explain the term “metaphor” if the children are not yet familiar with it. Ask the children how we know that we are supposed to use our imaginations when reading the poem. (For example, can a person really go fishing with words?)
- Discuss how fishing relates to writing poetry. For example, *Bait: The poet's words are like bait, but instead of catching fish, they catch what the poet is trying to express. Reeling and unreeling a fishing line: The poet has to “reel and unreel” words, play with words, try them in different ways to get the meaning and feeling right.* This could become a shared writing activity, with you scribing children’s ideas on chart paper.
- Invite children to comment on ways in which the poet is “having fun” with words. For example, *words* almost sounds like *worms* (“real” bait); rhyme and non-rhyme are playfully mixed, and *line* could be referring to a fishing line or a line in a poem.
- Ask the children what similes they might use about poets. They could suggest *painting pictures like an artist, using words like ingredients in a delicious meal; shaping ideas as carefully as a sculptor shapes clay*, and so on. List the similes and then ask the children to work with you to “change” each simile into a metaphor with similar meaning; for example, *painting pictures with words; mixing words so that they melt in your mouth.* Write the metaphors and then read them together. Discuss words we are likely to see in similes but *not* in metaphors, such as *like* and *as*.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Work with the children to identify verbs in the poem; for example, *go fishing, catch*. Invite children to suggest sentences starting with *Poets...*, and help them to identify the verbs in each case. For example: *Poets describe. Poets imagine. Poets use words carefully.*
- Ask the children what rhyme might be found if *loose or tight* were changed to *loose or taut (caught)*. Ask them what other rhyme might be found for *match (snatch)*. Then ask what effect these changes would have. For example: Would the grammar still be correct? Would the fishing metaphor still work?
- Write the three stanzas that make up the poem on the board, in prose format. Ask the children which of these contains a complete sentence. (The first is a complete sentence, and the section in brackets in the second stanza is a sentence.) Discuss why the other sections would not stand as sentences by themselves. (Neither has a subject.) Invite the children to add words (at the beginning or the end) or rephrase the text to make the sentences complete. Scribe their suggestions on the board.

YEAR TERM

5 1

Storm cheerfully characterises features of the weather on a night of rain and wind. The conflict is seen as the sort of rowdy fisticuffs you might witness on the street. The language is unforced and engaging. *Storm* is an excellent example of Roger McCough's skill in presenting the familiar in an unfamiliar way.

NLS REFERENCES

- W3 using independent spelling strategies
 W5 investigating spelling patterns in pluralisation
 S1 investigating word order
 S2 understanding conventions of standard English
 S6 understanding the need for punctuation
 T6 identifying distinctive features of poems
 T7 analysing and comparing language styles

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- write an apology from the wind to the window, or from the wind to the rain, using everyday language similar to that of the poem
- write and role-play the conversation that might take place between the wind, rain and sky when the wind and rain arrive "home" in the morning
- research myths from other cultures, showing the way in which forces of nature such as the wind and the rain are given human characteristics
- write a weather report or forecast, giving human characteristics to the features of the weather. For example, "The hail has been making a fool of itself out in the Midlands..." "The sky is growing angry and is expected to start throwing cold water at us..." "The sun is in a happy mood today and has told all clouds to stay at home..."

Shared Reading and Writing

- Before displaying *Storm*, discuss the idea of "formal" and "informal" language. You might ask the children for an example of a formal and an informal greeting, and the occasions on which they would be used. Scribe the children's suggestions on the board. Then ask the children to keep the idea of "formal" and "informal" language in mind as the poem is read.
- Display *Storm* and read it aloud. Re-read the poem together. Ask the children if the language of the poem seems formal or informal. Encourage them to use the text to back up their views. Acting as scribe, write some of the children's examples of "informal" language on the board. Now invite the children to give a formal version of some of the lines; for example, *They're at it again*, might become, *They are fighting once more*.
- Discuss the poem more generally and encourage the children to talk about:
 - the poet's use of personification (for example, giving the wind and the rain human characteristics);
 - whether or not there is a rhyming scheme;
 - why the poet might have chosen not to punctuate the poem, and
 - whether more punctuation would change the poem for better or worse.
- As a shared writing activity you could work with the children to compose what the sky might say to scold the wind and the rain for their fighting. Discuss the use of first-person as you write (that is, using "I" as if the sky were speaking) and point out that *Storm* also uses the first-person.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Draw the children's attention to the words "they're" and "they'll" and discuss how the apostrophe in each word shows where one or more letters have been dropped to form a "contraction" of two words. Make a special case of "won't" in the last line. Ask the children what words it stands for, but explain, also, that the "wo" part of the word stands for "woll", an old spelling of "will". Acting as scribe, write the children's examples of other contractions. Ask the children to guide you with spelling as you write.
- Remind the children that we also use apostrophes to show possession. Invite them to suggest some words that use apostrophes of possession, together with sentences in which they could be used. Scribe the sentences on the board. (Be sure to explain the special case of "its" and "it's", where the apostrophe is used only in the contraction, never to show possession.)
- Ask the children where the apostrophe is placed if the person or thing having possession is made plural. For example, *The tree's leaves* and *The trees' leaves*. Now ask the children where the apostrophe would go if a word (or noun) is already plural without the addition of an "s", as in *children*. Ask them if they can think of other words that are plural without an "s". Scribe their suggestions on the board.

YEAR TERM

5 1

A Remarkable Adventure is a poem that satirises, in a mild way, the powerful imagination of childhood. Almost every young reader will be familiar with the temptation to over-dramatise acted out in the poem.

A Remarkable Adventure contains a number of sophisticated words, such as “trepidation”, that will challenge the children. Some other words may require definition:

- *anaconda*: a very large snake of South America that crushes its prey and digests it whole.
- *raptor*: bird of prey (eagle, hawk, falcon, et cetera).
- *talon*: the clawed foot of a raptor.
- *troll*: a carnivorous cave-dwelling dwarf or giant from Scandinavian mythology.

NLS REFERENCES

- W2 identifying and using known spelling patterns
- W3 using independent spelling strategies
- S4 adapting writing for different purposes
- S8 investigating the past tense of verbs
- T6 identifying distinctive features of poems
- T7 analysing and comparing styles of language

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- write individual accounts of an imagined “greatest excuse”, which could then be read aloud for the prize of “All-time Greatest Excuse”
- work in groups to script and role-play an exchange between a child offering a complicated excuse for having failed to complete a task, and a teacher or parent
- write a glossary for the poem
- write a letter to the child in the poem, explaining why or why not his excuse was believable, and advising him on how he should approach his homework in future.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Read the title and author’s name. Invite the children to suggest what features they might find in the poem. They could discuss ideas associated with the words *remarkable* and *adventure*, and/or suggest typical features of Prelutsky’s poems, such as rhyme, humour and nonsense.
- Write *What goes into a good excuse?* on the board and ask the children to keep the question in mind. Display the poem and read it aloud. Discuss any words that might be unfamiliar, such as *talons*, *raptor*, *anaconda* and *trolls*. Encourage the children to work out the meaning of other words, such as *trepidation*, by looking at the context.
- Re-read the poem together. Ask the children what they thought of the excuse offered in the poem. Ask, *Is it the adventure or the excuse that is remarkable? Why?* Encourage the children to name some of the features of a good excuse (believability, for example). Scribe the features on the board.
- Draw the children’s attention to the phrase *tumultuously tussled*. Ask them to find one other example of alliteration in the poem (*suddenly surrounded*). Then ask them to think of similar combinations of adverb and verb, such as *furiously fought*. Have the children try out other verbs in the poem in this way, such as *retreat* (for example, *rapidly retreated*) and *elude* (*expertly eluded*). Scribe the suggestions, asking the children to guide you with spelling as you write.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Write the words *tumult*, *malice*, *apprehensive* and *elusive* on the board. Have the children work in groups with dictionaries to look up each of these words. Then discuss what is different and what is similar about the forms of these words in the poem. For example, you could point out that *tumult* and *malice* are nouns, and discuss the use in the poem of the adverbs *tumultuously* and *maliciously*. Ask the children to write sentences that make correct use of the words you wrote on the board and the words used in the poem.
- Discuss the meaning of *trepidation* and *intrepid* and the relationship between these two words. This could lead into a further discussion about the various ways in which antonyms and negatives are formed by the addition of a prefix (such as *de*, *dis*, *mis*, *in* or *un*) to the whole or part of a word. Ask the children to suggest other *dis*, *mis*, *in* and *un* words that work in this way.
- Ask the children to find a word in the poem formed by adding a prefix to another word (*disappear*). Then ask them to find another word in the poem that can be made into an antonym by the addition of a prefix (*winding*).
- Remind the children that the past tense is used in recounts. Ask them to check that the convention is followed in *A Remarkable Adventure*. Invite individual children to identify and read examples of the past tense from the poem.

YEAR TERM

5 1

Snake Glides, by Keith Bosley, and *On the Doorstep*, by John Rice, are examples of concrete poems. In poetry of this sort, the layout of the words on the page enacts some feature of the poem. These two poems provide children with the opportunity to compare and contrast the use of the concrete poetic form.

NLS REFERENCES

- W3 using independent spelling strategies
- S2 understanding conventions of standard English
- S4 adapting writing for different purposes
- S6 understanding the need for punctuation
- S8 investigating verbs
- T6 identifying distinctive features of poems
- T7 analysing and comparing poetic style
- T16 writing poems

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- work in pairs to create their own concrete poems. Subjects can be suggested (animals, adventures, mountains, trees and so on). A good reminder before the work begins would be: "Make the shape of your words on the page tell us something important about your poem."
- copy various shapes from the board (such as a triangle, a circle, a square, an oval) and write a poem that would suit one of the shapes
- write a poem, with or without a special shape, that consists entirely of words of action, or verbs. A helpful example might be: "Running running running running running running...collapsing."
- imagine that they each have a bag of punctuation marks: two commas, one full stop, three exclamation marks, two question marks. Ask them to rewrite *Snake Glides* and *On the Doorstep* using as many of these punctuation marks as they need.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Ask the children why a poem is usually easy to recognise on a printed page. Talk about the shape a poem makes on a page. Open a book of poems to demonstrate the distinctive layout of printed poetry. Discuss possible reasons for the way poetry is printed. Suggest that layout can influence us by making us slow down or speed up in our reading. Tell the children that the layout of these two poems has its own special point to make. Introduce the term *Concrete poem*.
- Display *Snake Glides* with the second poem on the page covered with a vertical strip of paper. Read *Snake Glides* aloud. Ask the children to comment on the shape of the poem. Then ask the children to choose the word in the poem that best matches the motion of a snake (*glides*). Read the poem aloud a second time, bringing out the hissing sound in *whispers* and *listen*. Ask the children to say *whispers* and *listen* aloud, slowly. Discuss why the poet might have used these two words close together.
- Re-read the poem together.
- Remove the vertical strip to reveal the second poem, *On the Doorstep*. Ask the children to read it aloud, without your assistance. Read it aloud again, with you joining in. Ask the children what the shape of the poem has to do with the beetle. Then ask the children how the poet has made special use of the shape of the letter "Z".
- On chart paper, write the phrase *black back blazing* from *On the Doorstep*. Ask the children to find the three-word phrase from *Snake Glides* that matches it in structure (*forked tongue working*). Ask the children why the two phrases match. Also discuss how they differ, focusing on the alliteration in the phrase from *On the Doorstep*.
- As a shared writing activity, build a list of other alliterative phrases describing the appearance and/or movement of various creatures.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Write the words *glides*, *working*, *speaking*, *whispers* and *listen* from *Snake Glides* on the board. Ask the children to say what task these words have in the poem. If the term "verb" does not arise, provide it. Invite the children to describe a snake and someone watching the snake, using the verbs above in other forms; for example, *The snake was gliding through the grass*. Write the suggestions on the board.
- Work with the children to identify the verbs in *On the Doorstep*. Ask the children to suggest verbs which could replace those in the poem. Discuss what these changes might do to the poem.
- Write the words of *Snake Glides* and *On the Doorstep* on the board, each as a single sentence. Invite the children to suggest the punctuation and additional words that would be required to make the sentences grammatically correct. Ask the children which of the versions (sentence, poetry) they prefer, and why. Discuss the liberty that poets have in their writing, compared to the writing of standard sentences.

YEAR TERM

5 1

Waiting is a traditional haiku (with the 5/7/5 syllable format). It is built around the single, strong image of a tree in winter. *A Tree* is a concrete poem, also using a tree as its focus. The multiple images and word-play in *A Tree* contrast nicely with the economy and strength of *Waiting*.

NLS REFERENCES

- W2 identifying and using known spelling patterns
 W3 using independent spelling strategies
 S2 understanding conventions of standard English
 S4 adapting writing for different purposes
 T6 identifying distinctive features of poems
 T7 analysing and comparing poetic style
 T9 developing an active attitude towards reading
 T16 writing poems

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- script and role-play a conversation or an argument between the two poems, with the haiku perhaps complaining about the space that the shape poem takes up. The children could mention features of the poems in their script; for example, Haiku: *What's happened to all your adjectives? Call yourself a poem, you haven't got a single adjective!*
- make a "shape poem" from the haiku, adding words as needed. Invite them to repeat words, such as "bare" and "grey" to enhance the picture
- turn *A Tree* into a haiku, keeping the line and syllable format and dropping words from the text as needed
- create other "shape" poems to fit contrasting trees; for example, a towering poem about an oak on one side of the page, and a bunched-looking concrete poem about a shrub on the other side.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Cover *A Tree*, and then display and read *Waiting* to the children. Discuss the haiku format and explain the 5/7/5 syllable format.
- Ask the children to comment on the rhythm given to the poem by the repetition of the /ill/ sound in "chill stillness", the alliteration in "bare branches" and the importance of a single, strong image in haiku. Re-read the poem together.
- Uncover and read *A Tree*, tracing the lines of print as you read. Discuss the features of concrete poetry, and how *A Tree* matches this form. Re-read the poem together.
- Now ask the children why the phrase "leaves left" is detached from the shape of the tree. Ask them, also, if the verbs *branched*, *twigged*, *blossomed*, *appled* and *barked* have been used correctly, or playfully. How would we normally use the verb "bark"? Do twigs really "twig"? Do apples really "apple"?
- Invite the children to think of *matching* constructions of noun and verb. You might discuss examples such as *mirrors mirror*, *flies fly*, *lights light*. Scribe the suggestions on the board.
- As a follow-up, you could brainstorm with the children some more nouns and verbs that match in spelling (such as *bark/bark*). Examples might include *ring/ring*, *shape/shape*, *spy/spy*, *heat/heat*, *book/book*, *drink/drink*, and so on. Work with the children to compare different examples and decide whether or not the nouns and verbs "go together" in terms of meaning. You could scribe sentences coming out of this discussion; for example, *Flies fly but books don't book*.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Write the words of *A Tree* on the board as a single sentence. Invite the children to suggest the punctuation and any other changes that would be required to aid a reader and make a grammatically correct text. Discuss the impact each version (sentences, concrete poetry) has on the reader and which is the more interesting.
- Work with the children to identify all the adjectives in *Waiting* (including *winter*, which acts as a modifier in the poem). Then ask if they can find any adjectives in *A Tree*. You may wish to point out that *A Tree* has many more images than the haiku, but no adjectives. Suggest to the children that they add adjectives to *A Tree* in a way that would enhance the shape of the poem; for example, *A beautiful tree grew and...*, and *slender branches branched...* Acting as scribe, create the shape of the new tree on the board, according to the suggestions.
- Have the children suggest how *Waiting* might be adapted for younger readers. Discuss the words, *stark* and *chill*, and encourage children to suggest simpler words, such as *stiff* and *cold*. Encourage the children to discuss the shades of meaning between the different words. Write the new version, and compare it to the original.

YEAR TERM

5 1

The Snowflake (Walter de la Mare, 1873–1956) is written in the typical “swooning” style of nature poems by this author, with strong rhymes and a regular rhythm (a continuing pattern of an unaccented syllable followed by an accented syllable). Robert Froman’s *Two Snows* is an example of a concrete poem. It provides a contrast with *The Snowflake* in its representation of snow as both gentle and harsh.

NLS REFERENCES

- W3 using independent spelling strategies
 W5 investigating spelling patterns in pluralisation
 S1 investigating word order
 S2 understanding conventions of standard English
 S4 adapting writing for different purposes
 T6 identifying distinctive features of poems
 T7 analysing and comparing poetic style

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- identify similes from their reading to add to the list you started together
- add examples of singular/plural forms of words to the class list
- find and read other weather poems from a variety of poetry collections; they could select some for a class-made collection of weather poems
- write descriptive phrases to describe their feelings in a particular kind of weather; encourage them to develop these into a poem
- write (in poetry or prose) a text from the point of view of a raindrop, the sun, a snowman, a puddle, a rainbow, or something else associated with the weather.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Tell the children that they will be looking at different ways of writing poetry. Ask them to “watch out” for any special features of the poems as they read them.
- Cover *The Snowflake* and then display and read *Two Snows* aloud. Ask children to comment on how shapes are used to enact or help create the feeling of the softness of snowflakes drifting, and the hardness of driving snow. Remind the children that in concrete poetry the shapes help to convey the meaning.
- Ask the children to identify the three words that describe the drifting snowflakes, and the cutting snow. Write *soft as kisses* and *like frozen knives* on chart paper. Use the term *simile*. Encourage the children to compare the two examples, and the images they present. Invite them to say each phrase, using their voices expressively to emphasise the meaning.
- Re-read the poem together.
- Uncover *The Snowflake* and read the poem to the children. In the follow-up discussion, explain any words the children have not been able to understand from the context. Also discuss the “made-up” word *skyeey* and why the poet might have used it. Re-read the poem together.
- Encourage the children to compare the writers’ different styles and perspectives, and possible reasons for these. They might suggest that *Two Snows* tells how a person feels the snow, while *The Snowflake* is told from a snowflake’s viewpoint. Also invite comparison of the rhymed and non-rhymed language.
- Invite the children to suggest other soft and hard similes about softness and hardness to add to those you copied from *Two Snows* earlier. When you have written their ideas, read the list together. Then copy *a wilderness of white* from *The Snowflake*, and invite the children to suggest other descriptive phrases that could be written about the snow-covered forest; for example, *a hiding place for trees*. When you have listed their suggestions, read them together.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- On chart paper, write *snowflakes*. Ask the children to spell the singular form of the word. Write it next to *snowflakes*. Repeat this for *kisses*, *knives* and *crystals*. Encourage the children to discuss the different spelling patterns used forming plurals.
- Suggest to the children that some of the phrases in *The Snowflake* use words in unusual order; for example, *that you my beauty see*, or *on your finger laid*. Ask them to suggest how they could change the word order while maintaining the meaning. Discuss the reasons the poet might have had for choosing that word order.
- Ask the children to compare the poems’ suitability to be read to younger children. Work with them to compose a poem that conveys the same ideas and feelings as *The Snowflake* but uses simpler language. Discuss spelling, punctuation, and word order as you scribe. Read the new text together.

YEAR TERM

5 2

Sea-Fever, a well-known poem by John Masefield (1878–1967), features strong rhythm, richly descriptive language, rhyme and repetition. Masefield, who often wrote about the sea, was a sailor for four years from the age of 13.

Children will need support with some unfamiliar vocabulary; for example:

- *spume*: foam whipped up by the waves
- *running tide*: a tide that is moving quickly
- *vagrant gypsy life*: a wandering life
- *whetted*: newly sharpened
- *rover*: someone who leads a wandering life; can also mean a pirate
- *trick*: a sailor's turn of duty at sea

NLS REFERENCES

- W10 investigating antonyms
- W12 investigating figures of speech
- S2 consolidating conventions of standard English
- T5 performing poetry in a variety of ways
- T12 substituting own words and ideas

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- work in groups to prepare a "performance"; for example, having different children read alternate verses or pairs of lines, or adding sound effects
- write a glossary for the poem
- write about a place they have been to and would like to revisit
- write a letter describing a real or imagined sea voyage or seaside holiday; they could include some of the descriptive phrases generated during shared writing
- look through poetry collections to find poems on the sea, travel, or favourite things.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Talk with the children about the sea. Ask them what "the sea" makes them think about and what might make the sea a good subject for a poem. Discuss and list responses. Tell the children that they will be reading a famous "older" poem about the sea. This could lead to further discussion; for example, children might suggest that sailing ships and pirates would make good subjects for a poem.
- Display the poem and read the title. Ask children what they think *fever* might mean. Introduce the idea that *fever* can mean illness, but can also refer to attraction and excitement.
- Read the poem to the children. In the follow-up discussion, talk with the children about any words or terms in the poem that may be unfamiliar (*wheel's kick*, *spume*, *whetted knife*, for example).
- Re-read the poem together.
- Ask the children to compare things spoken about in the poem with the list of ideas from the earlier discussion of the sea. Ask them what aspects of the sea and a "sea-faring life" the poet *does* emphasise, and how these help to explain why the poem is called *Sea-Fever*.
- On chart paper, write *grey dawn breaking* and *white clouds flying*. Discuss the idea that each phrase gives a "picture" of something taking place. As a shared writing activity, work with the children to compose other phrases about the sea that use this structure; for example, *sleek dolphins leaping*, *huge waves crashing*. After scribing several phrases, re-read them with the children and discuss possible improvements (for example, alternative adjectives or verbs that might be more effective).

Word and Sentence Level Work

- On chart paper, write *whetted knife*. Discuss what the phrase means, and what its opposite might be (*blunt knife*). Then invite children to substitute an adjective with a *similar* meaning to *whetted*; for example, *sharp knife*. Ask children why *whetted* is an effective adjective in the poem. They could talk about the "old" sound of the word, and also the alliteration created by the repeated /w/ sound in *wind like a whetted knife*.
- Children could clarify the meaning of other phrases from the poem by suggesting their opposites. For example, they might suggest that *merry yarn* is the opposite of a *sad story*, or that *vagrant life* is the opposite of a *settled life*.
- Explain that *wind like a whetted knife* is a figure of speech known as a *simile* (describing something by suggesting that it is like something else). Brainstorm with the children some similes that are common in everyday speech; for example, *cries like a baby*, *eats like a horse*. They could include similes that use the pattern: *as ___ as a ___*, such as *as cunning as a fox*. Ask them to suggest some complete sentences that include similes.

YEAR TERM

5 2

Going Too Far, written in the 19th century, is a narrative poem in a traditional rhyming couplet format. The leap from the everyday into the comically fantastic is typical of many poems that have come down to us anonymously and been enjoyed by many generations of children.

NLS REFERENCES

- W5 investigating connections between spelling and pronunciation
 W7 using possessive pronouns
 S1 investigating word order
 S3 understanding how writing can be adapted for different purposes
 T2 investigating different versions of the same story
 T4 reading narrative poems

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- work in groups to write and role-play an interview with the woman of Holland in space, with some of the children in the group taking the role of reporter, and some the role of the woman explaining what she loves about cleaning
- write about a comical character, real or imagined, who is carried away by his or her hobby, like the woman in the poem
- work in pairs or individually to rewrite the story of the woman of Holland from the point of view of the pig; they might imagine the pig's relief when the woman is swept away by the wind
- prepare a script for a performance based on the woman's return to the village, with the villagers setting out rules for what she can and cannot clean in the future
- write their own light-hearted rhyming couplets.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Tell the children that the poem they will be looking at today tells the story of an unusual woman who lived in Holland long ago. Use the term *narrative poetry*, and explain its meaning. Display the poem and draw the children's attention to the title. Ask them to keep the title in mind as the poem is read.
- Read the poem aloud. Ask the children at what point in the poem they thought the story became difficult to believe. Then refer to the title and ask the children in what two ways it could be understood (going too far in behaviour and/or in distance). Discuss other figures of speech that use the idea of distance to suggest excessiveness (*far out; over the top; wide of the mark; out of sight; above and beyond*, and so on).
- Re-read the poem together. Allow time for children to comment on the various aspects of its humour: the rollicking rhythm, the exaggeration, and so on.
- As a shared writing activity, work with the children to compose a non-rhyming text telling the story of the woman of Holland as simply as possible. As you help the class to agree on sentences for you to scribe, remind them that they need to be sure their story has a beginning, middle and end. Encourage and discuss the use of linking words to help connect the different events and times; for example, *Before long...*, *Finally...* Read the text together.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Write the rhyming words of each couplet on the board (*old/gold; meals/squeals*, and so on). Discuss the way in which the sound of a word makes the rhyme, not necessarily the spelling. Ask the children to point out the rhymes that have a spelling match, such as *night/bright* and those that do not, such as *though/so*. Ask the children to suggest as many different non-spelling matches for each rhyme as they can; for example, *so, though, oh, toe, below*. Scribe the suggestions on the board and discuss the different spelling patterns.
- Write the term *Pronouns* on the board. Discuss what work a pronoun does in a sentence. Remind the children that it must be clear to what or to whom a pronoun refers. Lead the discussion so that it becomes clear that there are different pronouns with different tasks. You could discuss and write brief definitions of different kinds of pronouns; for example, *Pronouns*, write *Personal – stands for a person or number of people; Objective – stands for an animal or object, and Possessive – shows what belongs to a person or to an object*.
- Ask the children to name the possessive pronoun in line two of the poem (*Her*). Ask the children to find the personal pronoun in line three (*She*). Discuss what words would have to be used to replace the two pronouns. The awkwardness of doing this will highlight the importance of pronouns.
- Tell the children that only three lines in the poem contain no pronoun at all. Go through the poem line by line, asking the children to name the pronouns and what/who they refer to.

YEAR TERM

5 2

From a Railway Carriage (Robert Louis Stevenson, 1850–1894) is a masterful poem of motion. A strong feature of the poem is the way the rhythm “acts out” the motion of a train. The final line leaves a hint of sadness in its wake, typical of all Stevenson’s work. The children may be interested to know that the poet is also the author of such well-known novels as *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *Treasure Island*. He wrote many poems, a number of them especially for children.

NLS REFERENCES

- W2 identifying and using known spelling patterns
 S2 consolidating conventions of standard English
 T2 investigating different versions of the same story
 T6 identifying types of poems and their typical features
 T12 substituting own words and ideas

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- invent new versions of the traditional comic phrases that steam trains are said to make as they travel along, mimicking the clickety-clack rhythm. “I *think* I can, I *think* I can,” and “Apricot *jam*, Apricot *jam*” are two traditional phrases.
- invent more modern comparisons for rapid travel than *Faster than fairies, faster than witches...*
- write a comic or serious travel guide for the route of the journey taken by the train in the poem, perhaps in rhyme, or in the form of an advertisement written to make more travellers want to take the journey
- write a letter from a passenger on the train in the poem, describing the journey to a friend.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Discuss the idea of “mood” in poetry and music with the children. Ask them why a disco dance tune, for example, has a faster beat than a ballad, or a sad song. Children could suggest a number of words they associate with mood, such as *excitement, sadness, happiness*. Tell the children that *From a Railway Carriage* has a beat to it, just like a song, that helps to create a special mood.
- Display the poem and discuss children’s ideas about when the poem was written (in the age of steam trains). Read it aloud, bringing out the clickety-clack stress of the lines. Ask the children if the way the poem sounds has something to do with what it is describing.
- Read the poem together. In subsequent readings, children could form groups, with some reading and some providing an accompanying rhythm or a whispered repeated “clickety clack” in time with the words. Ask the children if a slow reading of the poem would be right. Then ask them to suggest words to describe the mood and/or rhythm of the poem. You might suggest inappropriate words such as *gloomy* that the children could contradict. Once a number of suggestions have been gathered, ask the children to help you put them into a few summarising sentences; for example, *The poem has a rapid rhythm that suits the motion of a fast train.*
- As a shared writing activity, build two lists of words and phrases, one for *slow (lumbering, crawling, like a snail, and so on)* and one for *fast*. Ask the children to guide you with spelling as you write. Suggest that children use some of the words and phrases later in independent writing.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Ask the children to identify the words and phrases the poet has used to suggest the speed of the journey (*faster, charging along, and so on*). Scribe the suggestions on the board under the heading, *Speed*. Invite children to suggest another way in which the poet gives us the feeling of rapid motion. (The quick change of images seen from the window.) Ask the children to name the images, and also discuss why *fairies* and *witches* would not be included. (These are mentioned in similies but are not “real” parts of the scene.)
- Work with the children to identify the verbs in the poem. Emphasise the repeated use of *here is* and *there is*. Scribe the suggestions on the board. Then ask the children whether the action of the poem is taking place in the past, present or future, according to the verbs.
- Write the words *train* and *station* on the board and invite children to identify the letters in each that represent the long /a/ sound (“ai” and “a”). Ask children to suggest other words that have a long /a/ sound (including some from the poem), and to guide you with spelling as you list them. Examples might include *painted, rain, race, place, away, pay, and so on*. Discuss the different spelling patterns. You could repeat this activity for another sound, such as short /e/, beginning with two words from the poem that have different spelling patterns for this sound, such as *meadow* and *ever*.

YEAR TERM

5 3

Inuit Chant is translated from the original. The children will enjoy the “chant” quality of the poem and appreciate the insight into Inuit culture, through this portrayal of the changing seasons.

NLS REFERENCES

- W2 using known spellings to spell other words with similar patterns or related meanings
- W6 transforming words
- S1 securing the basic conventions of standard English
- S7 using connectives to link clauses within sentences and to link sentences
- T1 investigating texts from different cultures
- T7 writing from the point of view of another character

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- research Inuit culture, perhaps explaining why the term *Inuit* is preferred to *Eskimo* by people of this culture. They might also find other examples of songs and poems from Inuit culture.
- imagine and write about the occasions of “joy and fear” for people living in an extremely hot climate. Would rain be more welcome than sun, for example?
- write a letter from Greenland (or other Inuit habitats) describing the coming of warm weather, and what the winter has been like. Suggest that the children take the role of an Inuit for the purpose of writing the letter.
- put themselves in the role of a heating-product distributor at the North Pole, and write radio advertisements for heaters.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Tell the children that the poem they will be reading comes from Inuit culture. Explain that Inuits were formerly called “Eskimos” and inhabit areas of Canada, Alaska, Greenland and Eastern Siberia. You may wish to point out these regions on a large map of the world.
- Display *Inuit Chant* and read the poem aloud to the children. Ask them what they think the term “footprints” in the poem refers to. A helpful suggestion might be that the footprints are the reflections of the sun and the moon on surfaces below. An important point to bring out would be the value in Inuit life of footprints in following prey.
- Re-read the poem together. In the follow-up discussion, you could invite the children to comment on various aspects of the poem, including:
 - the feelings it conveys about the welcome appearance of the sun
 - the simplicity of the poem
 - the song-like flow of the words, helped along by the repetition of *ing* verb-endings and the alliteration of *warmth/world* and *cold/come*.
- Invite the children to describe some of the things in their own culture that might make the coming of warm days very welcome. *What freedoms might warm weather offer? What feelings might warm weather produce? What changes will your different senses perceive?* Scribe their suggestions on the board, encouraging the children to guide you with spelling as you write. Then ask the children if they can imagine people in their own culture who might especially “fear” the cold (such as the homeless, the poor, frail people, people more accustomed to warmth).

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Write the following words from the poem on the board: *joy, warmth, sun, fear, cold*. Remind the children that all of these words are nouns. Then challenge them to think of other words – nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs – that “grow” from these words, including opposites. To start the children off, you could give examples of words that “grow” from *joy*, such as *joyful, enjoy, enjoyable, joyless*. As the children suggest words, scribe the words on the board and ask them to say what part of speech each word is. As a follow-up, discuss any common spelling patterns that have emerged; for example, prefixes and suffixes.
- Remind the children of the role of conjunctions (or connectives) in sentences: to join individual words, phrases, clauses, and whole sentences. Ask the children for examples of conjunctions, and scribe the suggestions on the board. Then ask the children: *How many sentences make up the poem?* and *How many conjunctions are to be found in the poem and where?* Now ask the children to think of a single conjunction that could be used to connect the two sentences of the poem (*but* or *yet*).

YEAR TERM

5 3

The children will be impressed with the strong alliteration and verve of *Windy Nights*. The poem also provides many opportunities to engage in word play. *Sparrows Sitting* is a traditional haiku. The multiple images of *Windy Nights* contrast neatly with the single, still image of *Sparrows Sitting*.

NLS REFERENCES

- W2 identifying and using known spelling patterns
- W6 changing verbs to nouns
- S1 securing conventions of standard English
- S2 understanding the various purposes of writing
- T4 performing poetry
- T7 writing from a different point of view

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- create a set of alliterative phrases for other subjects, such as a flood (possibly "the flood flowed furiously"), the sky, a forest, a city
- turn *Windy Nights* into a haiku, and/or write a short alliterative poem about sparrows or other birds
- work in groups to prepare a performance of *Windy Nights*; for example, with one child saying lines one and five, another child lines two and six, and so on; or by having some children recite the words while others provide sound effects
- write a weather forecast based on the atmospherics of *Windy Nights*; for example, "We should expect some rumbling in chimneys tonight, and possibly some door-rattling, too..."
- rewrite and illustrate *Sparrows Sitting* after changing *bitter* to *sunny*. Remind the children to preserve the syllabic format of a haiku.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Before reading *Windy Nights* and *Sparrows Sitting*, tell the children that the two poems they will be reading today have very different ways of getting our attention. Now display the two poems. Read *Windy Nights* aloud to the children. Ask them if they noticed the repetition of the /r/ sound. As they discuss some examples from the poem, introduce the term *alliteration* to describe the repetition. Re-read the poem together and invite further discussion of how the poet captures our interest and attention.
- Now read *Sparrows Sitting*, using the term *haiku* to describe its format and explaining the 5/7/5 syllable format. Discuss the economy of words in the poem, and how the meaning of the final line is related to the word *bitter*. Re-read the poem together.
- Ask the children if both the poems have succeeded in making an impression. Why? In what ways?
- Invite them to compare the rush and hurry of *Windy Nights* to the stillness of *Sparrows Sitting* in terms of images. Ask them which poem has the greater number of images, and how this affects the mood of each poem.
- Ask the children how *Windy Nights* preserves the /r/ sound in the last line (within the "gr-" blend). Ask them also what new letter becomes alliterative ("g"). Then ask the children to identify words in the poem that help to bring the wind to life (such as *raging* and *rumbling*). Invite the children to suggest other words that would fit the mood of the poem; for example, *whistling*, *wild*, *fast*, *furious*. Scribe the suggestions on the board. Then ask the children to put the new words into phrases or sentences for you to scribe; for example, *The wind is fast and furious*. As a follow-up, you could challenge the children to think of as many alliterative "pairs" of "-ing" words as possible that might relate to the wind; for example, *hammering* and *howling*; *pounding* and *pestering*; *crashing* and *crying*, and so on. Scribe the suggestions, encouraging the children to guide you with spelling as you write.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Work with the children to identify and list the nouns in both poems (*nights*, *chimneys*, *roofs*, *doors*, *roads*, *wind*, *darkness*, *seas*, *sparrows*, *morning*, *necks*). Discuss the concept of nouns and the idea that most, but not all nouns have singular and plural forms.
- Now ask the children which of the *verbs* in the poems could be made into nouns, with some change made to the spelling (for example, *rumbling* to *rumble*) as in *The wind gave a loud rumble*. Scribe their suggestions on the board, and then work together to compose sentences in which the nouns could be used.
- Ask the children to identify the one line in *Windy Nights* that can stand as a complete sentence. (*The rude wind roars.*) Then invite them to select any other line and suggest words that could be added to make it complete as a sentence; for example, (*The wild wind is*) *rumbling in the chimneys*; or *Rumbling in the chimneys, (the wind sounds angry)*.

YEAR TERM

5 3

Mind Your Language! is a rhymed poem that good naturedly “pokes fun” at eccentricities of English spelling. It contains much that will delight children, including some tongue-twisting word play, and will inspire valuable discussion and many follow-up activities.

NLS REFERENCES

- W2 using knowledge of spellings to spell other words with similar patterns or related meanings
- S1 securing the basic conventions of standard English
- S2 understanding how writing can be adapted for different purposes
- T2 identifying the writer’s point of view
- T9 writing in the style of the author

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- write name labels for a Strange Barnyard (or Zoo), with the animals’ names spelt using letters that produce certain sounds in other words; for example “cow” could be spelt “chough” using the /c/ of “chemist” and the /ow/ of “bough”. Invite children to show their mis-spelt labels and challenge others to guess what the animal’s name is and give its correct spelling.
- attempt to compile a list of ten words that could not possibly be spelt any other way. Ask the children to read their lists aloud so that the class can contradict them, if possible, by pointing out the way in which certain sounds can be made by other combinations of letters.
- write a script entitled, “You should know better...”, in which a teacher goes through a list of spelling errors in a child’s work; for example: “You should know better than to spell *skei* s-c-q-u-a-y.”
- write lists of words that have a common sound, grouping the words by spelling patterns; for example, *each*, *tea*, *seat*; *tree*, *bee*; *key*; *me*, *he*, *we*, and so on.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Display *Mind Your Language!* Cover the section of the poem beginning, *Beware of heard...* with a sheet of paper and read the opening section aloud to the children. Now ask them what they think the rest of the poem will be about. You may need to read the opening a second time before the children realise that the poem is focusing on the oddities of spelling.
- Remove the sheet of paper to reveal the rest of the poem. Read the rest of the poem aloud, with pauses between couplets. Re-read the poem together, allowing time for some trial and error!
- Return to the opening couplet of the rhyme. Ask the children if they can think of sound matches for *tough*, *bough*, *cough* and *dough* where the sound is created by a different spelling in each case (*tough/cuff*, *bough/now*, *cough/off*, *dough/woe*) and then by the same spelling (*tough/rough*, *bough/plough*, *cough/trough*, *dough/though*). Scribe the children’s suggestions on the board.
- Draw the children’s attention to the last couplet of the rhyme. Ask the children if they think the poet’s claim is true. Why/Why not? (The poet would not have mastered *spelling* – the subject of the rhyme – when he was five.) Discuss this with the children, bringing out the idea that it takes a long time to learn about all the different spelling patterns used in English writing. You could ask children to suggest a letter or letter cluster and then invite the class to suggest at least two different sounds it can represent; for example, “o” in *top*, compared to “o” in *mother* or “o” in *do*; or the different sounds of “ea” in *each/feather*. Scribe the children’s suggestions, encouraging them to guide you with spelling. You might ask them, individually, for examples of words they use or hear often in speech but would not be sure how to spell. Scribe these words on the board.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Ask the children if there are any unfamiliar words in the poem. Write these words on the board and discuss their meanings.
- Divide the class into four groups with an approximately equal number of children in each group. Assign each group two couplets from the rhyme. (The sixteen lines of the second section will be couplets 2 to 8.) Challenge each group to find (where possible) two sound matches for each featured word in the assigned couplet, and one sound and spelling match (if it exists) for each featured word. As in the Shared Reading and Writing stage, practise the game with the couplet from the first section: *hiccough* could rhyme with *lick up*, or *pick up*, but there is no spelling match; *laugh (staff, half)*, but no spelling match. Invite the children to read their results aloud. Acting as scribe, write the results on the board. Invite the class as a whole to add to the lists on the board.
- Involve children in a “silly spelling” game. Write on the board, *If pudding followed the spelling pattern of “would”, it would be “poulding”*. Ask how each of the following words would be spelt if it followed the pattern of the word or words in brackets. *kite [night]*; *wart [thought]*; *cheered [weird]*; *say [weigh]*; *football [phrase, could, awe]*.

YEAR TERM

5 3

This translation of an old Siberian poem shows how very simple devices, such as repetition, can have a very powerful effect. The poem provides opportunity for the children to reflect on the great variety of subject matter and language styles found in poetry. It is also ideal for choral reading.

NLS REFERENCES

- W3 using independent spelling strategies
 S1 securing conventions of standard English
 S4 using punctuation marks
 S7 using connectives
 T1 investigating texts from different cultures
 T2 identifying point of view and its effect on the reader
 T5 selecting poetry

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- write from the wind's point of view about a very windy day in the city
- research the region of Siberia, particularly its geography and climate, and present a report
- look through anthologies of poems to find other poems about the wind, especially those in which the wind is given a character
- rewrite the entire poem in the past tense; for example, "Trees with weak roots, I struck..."
- work in groups to prepare performances or choral readings of *Praise Song of the Wind*.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Tell the children that *Praise Song of the Wind* is an anonymous, traditional poem from Siberia. Then show the children where Siberia is on a map of the world. Tell them that Siberia is a land of mountains and forests and plains, and, at the time the poem was written, of farms and wilderness. Tell them, also, that the poem has been translated into English, but was originally written in Ukrainian.
- Display the poem and read it aloud to the children. Ask them what they think the term "slug-a-bed" might mean. Re-read the poem together. In the follow-up discussion, invite the children to comment on:
 - the point of view of the poem (it is written as though the wind were speaking);
 - the character of the wind (mischievous, or punishing or proud);
 - how the text supports their view of the wind's "personality";
 - how the repetition of "I" reinforces the arrogance of the wind, and how the phrases *I will roar, I will whistle* resemble the wind's ceaseless motion;
 - where commas could be inserted (after "I" in *I the wind*).
- Now ask the children if they think that *Praise Song of the Wind* could be described as a "rural" poem. Ask them to identify phrases in the poem to support their answers. Then ask them to put into sentences other things that the wind might do in a rural landscape. Scribe the suggestions on the board, asking the children to guide you with spelling as you write. As a follow-up, you could work with the children to write about the wind in a city setting.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Ask the children if the order of words in the poem strikes them as unusual. Write *Trees with weak roots I will strike* on the board, together with an imitative second sentence, such as *A new umbrella with a wooden handle I will buy*. Acting as scribe, ask the children to change each of the sentences so that the subject (*I*) and verb (*will*) come first. Point out that it is common in English for the subject and verb to be placed at the start of a sentence. However, also brainstorm some ways of varying this; for example, starting with an adverbial phrase: *Roaring and whistling, the wind tears the hay apart*; or *On a windy day...*, and so on.
- Point out to the children that this poem is also unusual in that it contains no connectives, (words such as *and, but, though*, and so on which join words, clauses or phrases). Ask the children where a connective might be inserted in the poem (between *I will roar, I will whistle*). Ask the children whether they think the poem would be improved or not by such a change.
- Write two sentences; for example, *The wind blows. Fires start flickering*. Challenge the children to suggest more than one way of making them into one sentence; for example, *When the wind blows, fires start flickering. The wind blows and fires start flickering*. Ask the children to identify the connective in each case. Brainstorm a list of connectives, such as *and, when, because, although*, and ask children to give an example of each one in use.

YEAR TERM

5 3

Russell Hoban (born February 4, 1925) is a well-known writer of literature for children. *Old Man Ocean* is notable for its brevity and for its deft use of an ages-old question and response format found in ballads such as *Lord Randall*. The poem provides many opportunities for choral reading, and/or working in groups to perform the poem, including sound effects and movement.

NLS REFERENCES

- W3 using independent spelling strategies
- S2 understanding how writing can be adapted for different purposes
- S4 using punctuation marks accurately
- T2 identifying point of view, and its effect on the reader
- T7 writing from the point of view of a different character
- T11 using poems as models for writing

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- script a conversation between the oceans of the world, varying the character and gender. The South Pacific might be happy, for example, and the Arctic rather glum.
- research the character given to ocean gods in certain cultures. You might cue the children to look up “Neptune”, “Poseidon” and “Oceanus” in an encyclopedia.
- work in pairs to script and role-play an interview with Old Man Ocean. One child poses the questions while the other takes the part of Old Man Ocean. Questions might include Old Man Ocean’s favourite sea creatures, the biggest fish he has ever seen, as well as topics related to the poem.
- write their own responses for the poem, in imitation of Old Man Ocean’s responses
- write question-and-answer poems (rhyming or not) focusing on other aspects of nature, such as the sun, the moon, a high mountain, or a desert.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Display *Old Man Ocean* and discuss the title. Ask the children if they have heard of other features of nature, or objects, being spoken of as masculine or feminine; for example, ships and boats as “she”. You could tell them that the moon is considered feminine in many cultures, while we speak of the “man” in the moon. Discussion could bring out the idea that, whether the gender is male or female, personification is a way of giving human characteristics to non-human things.
- Read *Old Man Ocean* to the children, emphasising the rhyme and rhythm. Discuss any unfamiliar or interesting words and phrases, and the meaning of each question. Ask children if they have ever heard the sea in a large empty shell. Then ask them how many speakers there are in the poem and how the second speaker is indicated (with italics). Read the poem again, with half the class reading the question lines, and half the response lines.
- Ask the children what ideas they might associate generally with “old man”; for example, wisdom, experience, slowness, a deep voice. Now ask the children to describe Old Man Ocean’s character. You might suggest terms that they would wish to contradict, such as *light-hearted*, *jolly*, *nasty*. Scribe the children’s suggestions on the board.
- Ask the children what they think the last line of the poem means, and how it might relate to *the long bell tolling* (perhaps a bell to warn sailors of a storm, or to signal to a lost ship). As a shared writing activity, work with the children to compose one more question and response. Discuss features that will need to be included to keep the pattern; for example, to match the rhyme and rhythm. You could suggest a starter before working together on a response; for example, *Old Man Ocean, what do you hear, / What do you hear from far and near?* As you scribe for the children, encourage them to guide you with spelling and punctuation.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Write the words of *Old Man Ocean* on the board. Ask the children where quotation marks could be placed to show that it is direct speech. Where would the question marks be placed? Then ask the children to go further and suggest attributions (such as *I asked, he replied*) with correct punctuation.
- Ask the children to identify the adjectives in the poem (*smooth, rough, round, wild, long, grey, empty, brave*). Scribe the suggestions on the board, helping the children with their search, if necessary. Now ask the children to name those adjectives that are capable of being made into adverbs when given an *ly* ending; for example, *bravely, wildly*. Scribe the suggestions on the board. Now ask the children to suggest sentences in which these adverbs could be used. Finally, challenge them to think of adverbs that could be used to qualify the verbs *rolling* and *tolling*; for example, *angrily rolling, loudly tolling*.

YEAR TERM

5 3

Rhamphorynchus is brief and lively. Its subject – a flesh-eating creature of the Upper Jurassic period – will engage the children with its resemblance to the monsters of myth and fantasy.

Encourage the children to read other poems by Wes Magee, which they will find readily in many anthologies.

NLS REFERENCES

- W3 using independent spelling strategies
- S2 investigating different purposes of writing
- S3 identifying prepositions and investigating their effect on meaning
- T7 writing from the point of view of a character
- T11 using a poem as a model for writing

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- gather names of different creatures from the age of dinosaurs and write brief rhymes or fun sentences about them. Examples might be: "*Kill, Kill, Kill,*" is the *Tyrannosaurus chorus*; *Before we saw the dinosaur the brontosaurus saw us*.
- find and read other poems by Wes Magee
- research the different types of flying creatures from the age of dinosaurs and present their findings to the class
- invent new, everyday names to replace the Latin and Greek names of various dinosaurs; for example, *Tyrannosaurus Rex* might become *King Chomp*
- write a confession by *Rhamphorynchus* in which he regrets his life as a scary meat-eater and promises to eat only vegetable dishes from now on
- use information from the poem as a starting point for writing a radio or newspaper report of an eyewitness sighting of *Rhamphorynchus*.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Tell the children that the poem they will be reading is an eyewitness description of a creature that really existed, but that no human being has ever seen. Tell them that the creature can fly but is not a bird. Invite them to guess what sort of creature the poem is about.
- Display the poem and read the title. Let the children practise the pronunciation of *Rhamphorynchus* (*Ram-for-ink-us*). You might like to explain that the word is a mixture of Latin and Greek, and means *thorny snout*, a reference to the creature's sharp teeth and beak.
- Read the poem aloud. Then re-read the poem together. Ask the children to name the "creature" (starting with *d-r-a*) that *Rhamphorynchus* is compared to (*Dracula*). Ask them why the poet chose that comparison. Ask them, also, if they think *squadrons of teeth* is a good description. Invite the children to think of other ways of describing *Rhamphorynchus* using ideas of warfare and attack, such as the simile *claws like swords* and the metaphor *skin made of armour*. Scribe the suggestions on the board. Briefly discuss the difference between similes and metaphors.
- Draw the children's attention to the term *blood-curdle*. Ask them what the term means. (You may need to explain what "curdling" actually involves.) Invite the children to think of other colourful descriptions of the experience of fear, such as *hair standing on end* and *blood freezing*. Scribe the suggestions on the board. Encourage the children to guide you with spelling as you write. Continue the shared writing to include sentences using some of these phrases. Children could stay with the subject of dangerous creatures as they compose sentences for you to scribe.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Choose letters from *Rhamphorynchus*, such as "ch" or "ph" and ask children to suggest other words in which these letters represent the same sounds; for example, *chemist, phone*.
- On the board, write: *He had squadrons ___ teeth, claws ___ his wings*. Discuss the words that are needed to fill the spaces (of, on), and use this as a starting point for discussing prepositions and the importance of using these "little" words appropriately. Discuss some prepositions, such as *off, into* or *over*, that would not make sense in the above example. You could point out that prepositions help to show the relationship between, or to link, nouns in a sentence (for example, *squadrons/teeth; claws/wings*).
- Write the following phrases/sentences on the board: *The rugged face (of) the cliff; Rhamphorynchus plucked the fish (from) the water; Rhamphorynchus is bad news (for) careless fish; Attacks (on) lizards (by) Rhamphorynchus have not occurred (since) the age (of) dinosaurs*. Ask the children to provide a preposition to fill each space.
- Challenge the children to suggest other sentences, possibly based on the subject of the poem, that would allow the use of the following prepositions: *before, after, under, below, near, over, by, to*.

YEAR TERM

5 3

The Leader and *Friendship* both focus with informality and humour on situations with which children will be familiar. In *The Leader*, the desire to occupy top spot is gently lampooned. In *Friendship*, one strategy for dominance is presented in a nutshell. Roger McGough and Shel Silverstein are both prolific and very popular writers for children (*Storm* by Roger McGough is also in this series). If possible, obtain other works of theirs for the classroom to encourage wider reading and comparison of their poetry.

NLS REFERENCES

- W3 using independent spelling strategies
- S1 securing conventions of standard English
- S2 understanding how writing can be adapted for various purposes
- S4 using punctuation
- T2 identifying point of view and its effect
- T7 writing from a different point of view

Independent Work

Children could:

- re-read the poem in the small book
- write an alternative way of staying "friends forever", starting with the words, "To stay friends forever, you should..." some children might like to approach this by writing a letter of advice to the speaker in *Friendship*
- write another verse of *The Leader* in the same style, following on from "OK, what shall we do?" and telling what happens when you do become the leader
- write a character profile of the speaker in *Friendship* and/or a profile of the speaker in *The Leader*. Encourage the children to name the characters and write about them as if in a factual, third-person report.
- write a poem or story about friendships.

Shared Reading and Writing

- Display *The Leader*, with a strip of paper covering *Friendship*. Read the poem aloud. In the follow-up discussion, ask the children what age the speaker in the poem might be, and how he or she might be feeling. Ask them to use the words of the poem to back up their opinions. Children could discuss what the poet might be trying to show by using "wanna" instead of want to. (Is the child speaking in excitement? Is he/she trying to seem "cool"?) Re-read the poem together.
- Reveal *Friendship*. Read the poem aloud, and then re-read it together. Ask the children about the identity of the speaker in *Friendship*. Would the speaker be the same person in both poems? What sort of person would the speaker in *Friendship* be?
- Ask the children if they agree that the language in *Friendship* is more "formal" than the language in *The Leader*. Then ask them to rewrite *The Leader* using more formal language. You might suggest that the words in *The Leader* would be spelt correctly, and that there would be no repetition. Scribe the new version provided by the children on the board, encouraging them to guide you with spelling and punctuation. Ask them what they think the new version does to the feeling of the poem.

Word and Sentence Level Work

- Ask the children to invent a name for the speaker in *The Leader*, and to decide on a gender. Once the name and gender have been agreed (say, "Jenny" and "she") write these four attributions on the board: *said Jenny, she asked, she shouted, then she asked*. Ask the children to put the words of the poem into quoted speech, using inverted commas, commas, and the four phrases on the board. As a start-up, you might provide the first line: "I wanna be the leader, I wanna be the leader," *said Jenny*... Scribe the suggestions on the board, correcting where necessary. Try this exercise with *Friendship*, varying the attributions to include adverbs, such as *Maria said smugly*.
- Draw the children's attention to the word *Yippee* in *The Leader*. Point out that there are a number of words in English like *Yippee*, often followed by an exclamation mark. Ask the children to think of other exclamations (such as *hooray, wow, yahoo* and *oh*). Scribe the suggestions on the board, and then ask the children to suggest in which each example could be used within direct speech; for example, "Ouch!" *exclaimed Tom*. "You just stood on my toe!"
- Tell the children that there is one word in *The Leader* which is unique, or one-of-a-kind. Ask the children to look at the words of the poem closely and suggest what the word might be (*OK*). Point out to the children that *OK* is a "shorthand word" (sometimes spelt *okay*) and can mean more than one thing. Ask them what it means in the poem (possibly, "very well, then...", or, "in that case..."). Scribe the suggestions for a replacement word or phrase on the board. Then ask the children if the replacement suits the poem.