

How to Teach Children in UKS2 to Learn a Wider Range of Poetry by Heart

"In key stage 2, pupils should be taught to understand what they read by: learning a wider range of poetry by heart."

National curriculum statement

Poetry is a vital part of the national curriculum and is an important element in a child's reading, language and phonetic development.

Key Vocabulary

poetry, perform, rhyme, form, language, feelings, poet, poem

Common Misconceptions and Errors

Poetic form can often be an obstacle for children. For example, many people's ideas of what a poem should look and sound like are based on traditional poetry with strict rhyme schemes and regular verse forms. To remedy this, provide children with a wide variety of different poetry forms.

Bringing English to Life

Provide time and space for children to read a wide variety of poems. It is important that poetry is lifted from the page and that children have opportunities to hear them being performed, including the use of different accents and dialects. Using videos and audio recordings can be effective too.

Example Questions to Develop Understanding

- What did you like about this poem? Why?
- What did you like about the performance of this poem?
- How could we bring this poem to life?

Teaching and Learning Points:

- Make sure your learning environment is 'poetry friendly' so that children have the opportunity to read, listen to and share a wide range of poems.
- Read poems regularly and allow children to listen to or watch poets performing their poetry.
- Share poems that link to concepts in other curriculum areas.

- Allow time for children to read poetry aloud and join in with others as poems are read aloud.
- Provide a wide range of poems by different poets in different forms for children to become immersed in.
- Performing poetry is a great way for children to learn the poems by heart. Provide children with the time and space to practise their performances and give them an audience to perform to. You could record the children practising their performances and allow them to analyse their work.
- Where possible, work with professional poets to help children understand the process of creation and performance.
- Include drama, music, art and dance activities when learning about poetry to help enhance your children's understanding and enjoyment of poetry.



KS2 Classic Poems Resource Pack

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