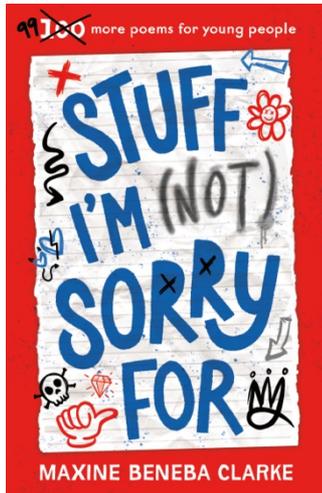


Teacher's Notes



Stuff I'm (Not) Sorry For

Written by Maxine Beneba Clarke

Teacher's Notes by Murray Nance

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Ages 9–15

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

ACELA1501 ACELT1798
ACELA1504 ACELY1698
ACELA1512 ACELY1699
ACELT1609 ACELY1700
ACELT1611 ACELY1704

SYNOPSIS

The unbearable itch of chicken pox. The annoyance of sharing a Spotify account with your parents. The delight of smearing tomato sauce over everything you eat.

The bright rainbow lights of the roller derby. The glorious sticky sweetness of fairy floss. The rebellion of the fake tattoo you know your nan will hate. The satisfaction of turning your childhood Barbie into a punk-novelist.

Maxine Beneba Clarke is back with 99 new poems for young people, following on from her multi-award-winning collection, *It's the Sound of the Thing*. In sonnets, pantoums, narrative verse, free verse, blackout poems, tongue-twisters, limericks, found poems, concrete poems, rhyming couplets, haiku and more, *Stuff I'm (Not) Sorry For* makes magic from the ordinary.

WRITING STYLES COVERED IN THESE NOTES:

- Limericks
- Rhyming Couplets
- Free Verse
- List Poems
- Tongue Twisters
- Blackout Poems
- Circular Poems
- Concrete Poems
- Pantoums



ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

Maxine Beneba Clarke is the author of over fourteen books for adults and children, including the ABIA and Indie award-winning short fiction collection *Foreign Soil*, the critically acclaimed bestselling memoir *The Hate Race*, the self-illustrated picture book *When We Say Black Lives Matter*, which was longlisted for the UK's Kate Greenaway medal, and the CBCA Honour Book *The Patchwork Bike* (illustrated by Van T Rudd), which won the 2019 Boston Globe Horn Prize for Best Picture Book. Her poetry collections include *Carrying the World*, which won the 2017 Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Poetry, *How Decent Folk Behave*, and *It's the Sound of the Thing: 100 new poems for young people*, which won the 2024 ABIA for Book of the Year for Younger Readers. Maxine is the inaugural Peter Steele Poet in Residence at the University of Melbourne.

LIMERICKS

1. 'Horse'

Form and Structure:

- This poem is a limerick, a five-line poem with a specific structure:
 - Lines 1, 2 and 5 rhyme and have a similar syllable count (typically 8–10).
 - Lines 3 and 4 rhyme and have a similar syllable count (typically 5–7).
 - The rhyme scheme is AABBA.
- Limericks are usually humorous or nonsensical in subject matter.
- This limerick is longer than a traditional limerick, consisting of four stanzas instead of one. This provides a good opportunity to discuss how poets can adapt traditional forms.

Rhythm and Emphasis:

- Discuss the rhythm and meter of the poem. Which words should be emphasised in each line to create the limerick's characteristic bounce? (e.g., "A spoilt teenager wanted a horse.") Guide students to identify the stressed and unstressed syllables. This will help reinforce understanding of meter.

Creative Response:

- **Freeze Frame:** Have students draw or act out a scene from the poem. This could be the teenager demanding the horse, the arrival of the Shetland pony, or the parent's exasperated response. Encourage them to consider facial expressions and body language.
- **Extension Activity – Alternate Ending:** The poem ends with the parent stating they hope the experience gives the teen pause. Discuss what a different ending might be. What if the teen actually learned a lesson? What if the pony caused more chaos?

Research and Extension:

- **Shetland Ponies:** Research where Shetland ponies come from (the Shetland Isles of Scotland) and why they are small and hardy (adaptation to a harsh environment). This provides a link to geography and natural science.
- **Spoilt Teenager Demands:**
 - Brainstorm a list of other things spoiled teenagers might demand from their parents (e.g., specific brands of clothing, the latest phone, a car, a gaming console, a trip abroad).
 - Collaborative Writing: Divide students into pairs and challenge them to write their own limerick stanza about the next thing the spoiled teenager demands in the poem. Emphasise the



importance of maintaining the limerick structure and rhyme scheme. Provide a word bank of rhyming words for each demand brainstormed (e.g., phone, home, alone, prone; car, far, bar, star).

- Vocabulary: Research the definitions of the following words and discuss their meaning in the context of the poem: spoilt, livid, tantrum, predicament, diminutive.

2. 'There Once Was a Poet'

Form and Structure:

- This poem is a limerick, a five-line poem with a specific structure:
 - Lines 1, 2 and 5 rhyme and have a similar syllable count (typically 8–10, but variation is acceptable).
 - Lines 3 and 4 rhyme and have a similar syllable count (typically 5–7).
 - The rhyme scheme is AABBA.
- Limericks are usually humorous or nonsensical in subject matter. This limerick plays on the idea of a poet and their creative process, using humour in the final line.

Rhythm and Emphasis:

- Discuss the rhythm and meter of the poem. Which words should be emphasised in each line to create the limerick's characteristic bounce? (e.g., "There once was a poet, she wondered"). Guide students to identify the stressed and unstressed syllables.

Meaning and Interpretation:

- Discuss the meaning of the poem. What does it say about the creative process?
- The poem humorously portrays a poet's dedication to their craft (reaching 100 poems) and the sudden interruption of that process ("she chundered").
- The word "chundered" is colloquial and adds to the humour. Discuss the effect of using such informal language in a poem. Why might the poet have chosen this word?

Creative Response:

- Extension Activity – Alternate Endings: How else could the poem have ended? Brainstorm alternative final lines that maintain the limerick form and rhyme scheme. For example: She reached ninety-nine, then she slumbered.
- Why do you think the author wrote 99 poems instead of 100? What might the 100th poem be about? Write a limerick that could be the 100th poem. Share them with the class.

Research and Extension:

- Research: Discuss other famous limericks and their authors (e.g. Edward Lear). What common themes or structures do they share?

Vocabulary:

- Discuss the definition of the following words and their meaning in the context of the poem: chundered, gig.

RHYMING COUPLETS

3. 'The Five-Second Rule'

Form and Structure:

- Rhyming Couplets: This poem consists of rhyming couplets, where pairs of lines rhyme with each other.



- Discussion: Ask students to identify the rhyming couplets in each pair (e.g., floor/more, air/where). Discuss how rhyme enhances the poem's flow and contributes to its light-hearted tone.

Poetic Devices:

- Italics for Emphasis: Certain words in the poem are italicised for emphasis (e.g., “disgusting”, “dry”, “know”).
- Discussion: Discuss why these particular words might be emphasised. How does the emphasis affect the poem's meaning and tone?

Meaning and Deeper Understanding:

- Five-Second Rule Variations: Discuss the variations of the "five-second rule" (10, 20, 30 seconds). Who do you think created this rule? Why? What purpose might it serve? (It's likely a rule created by children to justify eating dropped food. It serves the purpose of allowing them to enjoy their snacks without worrying too much about germs.) Do you think there is any truth to the rule?
- Create Your Own Rule: In groups or individually, have students create their own humorous "rule" about food or another aspect of childhood. Ask students to write a short rhyming couplet stanza about their rule. Encourage them to use rhyme and a playful tone.

Creative Response and Extension Tasks:

- Rhyming Word Webs: Create word webs with rhyming words from the poem. Analyse different spelling patterns that create similar sounds (e.g., "air" and "where"). This activity reinforces rhyming skills and awareness of phonics.
- Colloquial vs. Formal Language:
 - Analysis: Discuss the use of colloquial language (e.g., "tummy", "poo", "gross") versus formal language in the poem. Find examples of each. Why do you think the author primarily uses colloquial vocabulary? (Colloquial language creates a casual, relatable tone that reflects how children speak, making the poem more engaging for young readers.)
 - Activity: Create a list of colloquial words from the poem and their formal counterparts (e.g., poo/excrement, tummy/stomach, gross/disgusting). Discuss how the different language choices affect the poem's tone.

Vocabulary:

- Context Clues and Dictionary Skills: Ask students to use context clues in the text to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words before looking them up in a dictionary.
- Key Vocabulary: Discuss the meaning of words like "germs", "scientific", "legend" and "proof" in the context of the poem.

Additional Discussion Points:

- Food Safety: Discuss the importance of food safety and hygiene. Is the five-second rule actually safe? When should you definitely not eat food that has fallen on the floor?
- Humour: How does the poem use humour to engage the reader?
- Childhood Rules: What other "rules" do children create amongst themselves? Why do they create these rules? Do you have any “rules” you live by? Share them with a partner.

4. ‘I Am Not a Beach Kid!’

Form and Structure:

- Rhyme and Rhythm: The poem utilises a consistent rhyme scheme (ABCB) and rhythmic pattern.
- Repetition: The lines “I AM NOT A BEACH KID! I DO NOT LIKE THE BEACH!” are repeated, emphasising the narrator's strong feelings.
- Capitalisation: Discuss why some words are capitalised in the poem. How does this indicate how it should be read? Where else might we see writing in all capitals? (e.g., for emphasis, to convey shouting, in signs and warnings).



- **Humorous Tone:** The poem employs humour and exaggeration to convey the narrator's aversion to the beach.

Poetic Devices:

- **Hyperbole:** The poem uses hyperbole (exaggeration) to emphasise the narrator's dislike for the beach (e.g., "a joy for seagulls stealing chips," "seaweed-slimed," "ice-cream melts real fast").
- **Imagery:** Vivid imagery creates a sensory experience, allowing readers to imagine the beach through the narrator's eyes (e.g., "sand, all gritty, sticking to your bather-bums").

Meaning and Deeper Understanding:

- **Reasons for Dislike:**
 - **Activity:** Write a list of all the reasons the narrator hates going to the beach (e.g., sand, seagulls, seaweed, melting ice cream, rips, nappy-free toddlers).
 - **Group Discussion:** Discuss the pros and cons of going to the beach and what students prefer, supporting their arguments with examples.
- **Differing Interests:**
 - **Group Discussion:** In small groups, students discuss things they don't like that their family or friends enjoy. Discuss why it's important to have different interests within friendship groups.

Creative Response:

- **Rhyming Word Web:** Make a list of the rhyming words in the poem (e.g., beach/teach, feller/umbrella, lick/stick). Create a word web and explore other rhyming words related to the poem's themes. This reinforces rhyming skills and expands vocabulary.
- **Persuasive Writing:** Write a letter to the narrator's family, trying to convince them to stay home from the beach for a day. Use persuasive language and counterarguments to their reasons for disliking the beach.

Vocabulary:

- **Context Clues:** Before looking up definitions, discuss if students can use context clues to determine the meaning of unknown words.
- **Word Research:** Research the definitions of unfamiliar words (e.g., gritty, bather-bums, moat, rips).

Additional Discussion Points:

- **Perspective:** How does the narrator's perspective shape our understanding of the beach? Would the poem be different if written from someone who loves the beach? Experiment by writing a version from this perspective using a similar structure to the original poem.
- **Family Dynamics:** How does the narrator's family respond to their dislike of the beach? What does this reveal about their family relationships?

5. 'My Favourite Place'

Form and Structure:

- **Rhyming Couplets:** This poem consists of rhyming couplets, where pairs of lines rhyme with each other.



- **Sensory Details:** The poem is rich in sensory details, creating a vivid and immersive experience for the reader. Ask students to highlight and share rich vocabulary used in the poem (e.g., “galore”, “twirls”, “delight”, “lurking”).
- **Personal Reflection:** The poem is a personal reflection on a favourite place, encouraging readers to connect with their own special places. Brainstorm a list of places students find special.

Poetic Techniques:

- **Imagery:** The poem uses vivid imagery to describe the sights, sounds and feelings associated with the favourite place. Using a 5 senses template, ask students to classify the sensory language used in the poem.
- **Rhyming:** Identify rhyming words used in each stanza.

Creative Response:

- **My Favourite Place:** Ask students to write their own poem or descriptive paragraph about their favourite place. Encourage them to use sensory details, imagery and figurative language to capture the essence of their special spot. Start by brainstorming sensory vocabulary and then building some rhyming word webs off these. Use websites such as <https://rhyming.wordhippo.com/> or <https://www.rhymezone.com/> to help.
- **Artistic Representation:** Students can create a visual representation of their favourite place, using painting, drawing or collage.
- **Sensory Walk:** Take students on a sensory walk around the school or local area. Encourage them to observe their surroundings closely and record their sensory experiences.

Vocabulary:

- **Tier 2 Vocabulary:** Identify any Tier 2 vocabulary words in the poem (e.g., tranquil, glistening, dappled). Discuss their meanings and how they contribute to the poem's imagery.
- **Word Choice:** Discuss the poet's choice of words and how they create a specific mood or atmosphere.

Discussion Points:

- What makes a place special? Discuss the qualities that make a place meaningful and memorable.
- Libraries as a sanctuary: Why do you think many people find libraries to be a favourite place to go? Use examples from the poem as well as your own knowledge when answering. What is a ‘sanctuary’?
- How do our senses connect us to places? Explore how sight, sound, smell, touch and taste contribute to our experiences of place.
- How can we use language to capture the essence of a place? Discuss the role of descriptive language, imagery and figurative language in creating vivid descriptions of places.

6. ‘I Do Not Like Consequences’

Form and Structure:

- **Rhyme Scheme:** The poem follows an ABCB rhyme scheme, where the second lines and fourth lines rhyme. This creates a sense of predictability and rhythm.
- **Repetition:** The phrase "I do not like Consequences" is repeated throughout the poem, emphasising the narrator's strong feelings about the theme.

Poetic Devices:

- **Formal Language:** The use of "do not" instead of the contraction "don't" creates a slightly more formal tone, which adds a touch of irony and humour to the poem. The use of formal language helps to express the author's dislike for rules and consequences. Compare this to instances where a teacher or parent may use a student's full name to add emphasis or express dissatisfaction.



- **Italics:** Some words are italicised in the poem. Identify which words are in italics and how they should be read. What is the purpose of italics in this poem?

Creative Response and Extension Tasks:

- **Role Play:** In small groups, ask students to act out a scenario where a child is facing consequences for misbehaviour. Encourage them to explore the emotions involved and consider alternative ways to handle the situation.
- **Writing Activity:** Ask students to write a short story or poem about a time they faced consequences for their actions. How did they feel? Did they learn anything from the experience?
- **Debate:** Organise a debate on the importance of consequences. Have students argue for and against the idea that consequences are necessary for learning and growth.

Vocabulary:

- **Consequences:** Discuss the meaning of the word "consequences" and its importance in everyday life.
- **Grounded:** Explain what it means to be "grounded" as a punishment and discuss other forms of consequences that parents or teachers might use.
- **Pocket Money:** Discuss the concept of pocket money and how it can be used as a tool for teaching children about responsibility and financial management.

Discussion Points:

- How does the narrator feel about consequences? Why do they dislike them so much?
- What are some examples of "naughty" behaviour that might lead to consequences? What do you think happened in order for the narrator to be given consequences? Are all the consequences listed similar or are some worse than others? Discuss in pairs and share your reasoning.
- Do you think consequences are necessary? Can we learn from them?
- What are some alternative ways to teach children about right and wrong without using punishment?

FREE VERSE

7. 'Sunlight'

Form and Structure:

- **Free Verse:** This poem is written in free verse, meaning it doesn't follow a specific rhyme scheme or metrical pattern.
- **Discussion:** What does the name "free verse" suggest about the structure of the poem? (It's free from strict rules, allowing for more flexibility and creative expression).
- **Layout and Structure:** Examine how the poem is laid out on the page. Notice the use of space between words and lines. How does this affect the way the poem should be read?
- **Partner Activity:** Experiment with reading the poem aloud with a partner. Pay close attention to the spaces and discuss how they influence the poem's pace and rhythm. Consider how the spaces might represent pauses or moments of reflection.

Poetic Devices:

- **Sensory Language Activity:** Create a list of words and phrases that appeal to the senses of sight, sound and touch.
- **Group Discussion:** How do these words and phrases create a vivid picture in the reader's mind? Discuss particularly effective descriptions and how the language evokes the atmosphere of the morning.
- **Imagery and Metaphor:**



- o Identify the Main Image: The poem primarily paints a picture of dawn breaking over a suburban neighbourhood.
- o Metaphors and Similes: Discuss how the poet uses metaphors (e.g., "dusty pink, bleeding into faded tangerine") and similes to describe the colours and light of dawn. How do these comparisons enhance the imagery and create a mood? What is a simile or metaphor that could be used to describe the weather at your school right now?

Creative Response:

- Personal Reflection and Creative Writing:
 - o Think of a morning you remember vividly. What did you see, hear and feel?
 - o Writing Activity: Using 'Sunlight' as inspiration, write a short descriptive paragraph or poem about your remembered morning. Focus on sensory details and use imagery or metaphors to bring your experience to life.

Vocabulary:

- Research and Definition: Look up the definitions and origins of these words: tangerine, silhouette, hue, thermometer.
- Discussion: How do these words contribute to the poem's imagery and meaning? Ask students to experiment by using these words in their own writing.

Additional Points for Discussion:

- Mood and Tone: What is the overall mood or feeling of the poem? How does the language create this mood? (e.g., The soft colours and gentle verbs create a calm and peaceful atmosphere.)
- Theme: What do you think the poem is about? What message or idea is the poet trying to convey? (e.g., The poem could be about the beauty of everyday moments, the stillness of dawn, or the passage of time.)

8. 'Fake Tattoo'

Form and Structure:

- This poem is written in free verse, without a set rhyme scheme or rhythm. This allows for a natural flow of thoughts and feelings, reflecting the conversational tone of the poem.
- The poem is structured as a dialogue between two friends, creating a sense of intimacy and immediacy.
- Discussion: What do you notice about the way the poem is written? What do you think about the narrator's feelings towards the tattoo? What do you wonder about the relationship between the narrator and Finn? What is 'show and tell'? What might it refer to in this poem?

Meaning and Deeper Understanding:

- Motivation: Discuss why Finn recommends the author keep the tattoo from their nan? (Possible answers include: Nan might not understand, she might be old-fashioned, she might worry, or it might be fun to keep it a secret.)
- Perspective: Whose voice or perspective is this poem written from? How do we know? Find evidence from the poem to support your opinion. (The poem is written from the perspective of the person with the fake tattoo, evidenced by the use of "I" and "my".)
- Grandparents: Can grandparents have tattoos? How are grandparents portrayed in the poem? Discuss. (Grandparents can have tattoos, but the poem portrays Nan as someone who might not approve, highlighting generational differences.) Are there other things that parents or grandparents may not approve of but younger generations might think are acceptable/unacceptable?

Creative Response and Personal Connection:



- **Tattoo Design:** Design your own fake tattoo. What would it look like? What would it represent?
- **Alternative Ending:** How else could the poem have ended? What if Nan found out about the tattoo? Write a new ending exploring this scenario.

Research and Extension:

- **Tattoo Culture:** Research the history and cultural significance of tattoos in different societies.

Vocabulary and Language:

- **Contrast:** What does the word "washable" mean? Discuss how the word "washable" contrasts with the idea of a permanent tattoo. What does this contrast reveal about the narrator's feelings?
- **Conversational Language:** Discuss why you think the author has written this poem using conversational language? (The poem is a dialogue between two young friends.)

Discussion Points:

- Do you know anyone with a tattoo? How do they compare to those with tattoos in the poem? How are they the same? How are they different?
- What are some reasons people get tattoos?
- What are some potential consequences of getting a real tattoo at a young age?

9. 'The Smallest and Most Important Gestures'

Form and Structure:

- The poem is written in free verse.
- The use of short lines and stanzas creates a sense of pauses and reflection, emphasising the weight and significance of the "smallest and most important of gestures."

Poetic Techniques:

- **Symbolism:** The gesture of acknowledging the land is symbolic of respect, reconciliation and a commitment to understanding Indigenous history and culture.
- **Imagery:** The poem uses vivid imagery to describe the land ("beauty beneath our feet", "knotted red gum branches") and evoke a sense of place.

Meaning and Deeper Understanding:

- **Significance of Small Gestures:** Discuss why a small gesture like acknowledging the land can be considered so important. How do we show respect to others? Why is respect so important?
- **Other Small Gestures:** Brainstorm other small gestures that can have a big impact on others (e.g., a smile, a kind word, helping someone in need).

Creative Response:

- **Summarising Routine:** Use a summarising routine such as 4-2-1 to summarise the poem's mood. Students write down 4 words that capture the overall feeling, then narrow it down to 2, and finally 1 word. This activity encourages close reading and emotional connection to the poem. Share responses with the class where students explain their reasoning behind their choices.

Research and Extension:

- **Land Acknowledgement:** Discuss the importance of land acknowledgment and what it means to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land.
- **Indigenous Land Mapping:** Use resources like <https://gambay.com.au/> and <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia> to identify the Aboriginal land your school is on and learn about its history and culture.



- Reconciliation Actions: Brainstorm ways your class can acknowledge the land and contribute to reconciliation (e.g., learning about Indigenous culture, inviting an Elder to speak, creating art or writing that reflects respect for Indigenous heritage).

Vocabulary:

- Key Vocabulary: Research the definition and origin of these words: acknowledge, stolen, marvel, knotted, gestures, re-commit.
- Discussion: Discuss how these words contribute to the poem's meaning and message.

10. 'Blueberry'

Form and Structure:

- This poem uses descriptive language to capture the sensory experience of eating a blueberry.
- It does not follow a strict rhyme scheme or syllable structure, allowing the focus to remain on the vivid imagery and sensory details. Discuss any observations students have about this poem, comparing it to more familiar rhyming forms of poetry.

Poetic Techniques:

- Phrasing: The poem uses short phrases and enjambment (breaking lines mid-sentence) to create a sense of pause and reflection, mimicking the act of savouring a blueberry.
- Vivid Imagery: The poet employs rich and evocative language to create a strong sensory experience for the reader, focusing on taste, smell and visual elements.
- Figurative Language: The use of similes ("as fine as salt") enhances the imagery and creates unexpected connections between the blueberry and other sensory experiences.

Creative Response:

- Sensory Exploration:
 - Create a table with five columns, each headed with a sense (Looks like, Smells like, Feels like, Tastes like, Sounds like).
 - Choose a different fruit (e.g., mango, watermelon, pineapple).
 - Brainstorm Tier 2 vocabulary to describe each sense. Encourage students to use descriptive words and phrases that go beyond simple, everyday language.
 - Compile a class list of sensory words, then highlight all the Tier 2 vocabulary. Indicate that these will be the words to focus on when writing their free verse poem.
 - Students write a free-form poem using vocabulary from the brainstorm.
 - Share and provide feedback, focusing on vocabulary choices and poetic devices.

Vocabulary:

- Tier 2 Vocabulary: This poem is rich in Tier 2 vocabulary, which are high-frequency words that occur across a variety of domains and are crucial for reading comprehension. If necessary, students may benefit from a refresher on the difference between tiered words.
- Pre-Research Discussion: Encourage students to use context clues to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words before researching.
- Research and Discussion: Research the definition and origin of key words: tart, palate, heady, musk, gothic, khaki, medicinal, lingering, delectable, subtle.
- Vocabulary Impact: Discuss how these words contribute to the poem's overall tone and imagery.
- Tier 1 Substitution: Experiment with replacing Tier 2 words with simpler synonyms, such as yummy for delectable. Discuss how this changes the poem's effect and sophistication.

Discussion:



- Compare and Contrast: Discuss the contrasting tones and imagery in the two stanzas. The first stanza focuses on sweetness and pleasure, while the second stanza introduces darker, more complex imagery.
- Discussion Questions: How does the shift in tone affect the reader's understanding of the blueberry? What might the poet be suggesting about the nature of taste and experience?

LIST POEMS

11. 'Stuff I'm Not Sorry For'

Form and Structure:

- This poem is a list poem, meaning it presents a series of items in a list-like format. This structure creates a rapid-fire delivery, emphasising the accumulation of the narrator's actions. The short, declarative sentences contribute to this effect.
- Discussion: Brainstorm different types of lists we use in everyday life (e.g., grocery lists, to-do lists, wish lists, packing lists).
- Discuss how lists are different from other forms of writing:
 - Structure: Lists often use bullet points or numbers, while other writing uses paragraphs and sentences.
 - Sentence Length: Sentences in lists are typically short and concise, while other writing can have longer, more complex sentences.
 - Language: Lists may use abbreviations and fragments, while other writing generally uses complete sentences and proper grammar.
 - Purpose: Lists are often used for practical purposes, while other writing can have a wider range of purposes, such as storytelling, persuasion or explanation.

The Narrator and Their Actions:

- Discuss the narrator in the poem:
 - What are some of the things the narrator is not sorry for? (e.g., refusing to share the swing, yelling at their dad and brother, taking biscuits from Mum's special tin, refusing to apologise, tipping out their toy box, creating a mess and not cleaning it up.)
 - Why do you think the word 'not' is in parentheses? (The parentheses around "(Not)" suggest a slightly rebellious or defiant tone. It's as if the narrator is whispering it, or adding it as an afterthought, reinforcing their lack of remorse. It also creates intrigue; implying the poem will be about things the narrator *is* sorry for, when it is in fact the opposite. It could also be seen as a way of highlighting the internal conflict of a child going through a tantrum: they may be subconsciously sorry, even if they outwardly express they aren't.)
 - Why do you think they are not sorry for these things? Perhaps the narrator feels justified in their actions, or perhaps they are simply too caught up in their tantrum to feel remorse. The poem allows for exploration of different emotional responses. It could even be interpreted as the child feeling sorry, but unable to admit it yet.

Reflection and Discussion:

Empathy and Perspective:

- What are some things you might be sorry for or have apologised for in the past? Share some examples with each other.
- This poem describes a child who is having a tantrum. As we age, our perspective shifts, and things that worry us change. Think of a time when you were younger—what is something that you remember being really upset about that maybe you're not anymore? How has your point of view changed?



Creative Response:

- In pairs, brainstorm a list of things you are not sorry for (keeping it appropriate for the classroom). Experiment with writing it in a similar style to the poem (e.g., “Wouldn’t get in the car. Yelled at my dad.”). Share responses with the class.

TONGUE TWISTERS

12. ‘Which Witch Wished’

Form and Structure:

- This poem is a tongue twister, a phrase designed to be difficult to say aloud due to the repetition of similar sounds. Tongue twisters often play with alliteration (repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words) and assonance (repetition of vowel sounds within words). They are primarily designed for playful pronunciation.
- Discuss any other well-known tongue twisters. Share examples with the class.

Poetic Techniques:

- The poem relies heavily on alliteration and assonance to create its tongue-twisting effect:
 - Alliteration: Note the repetition of the 'w' sound (which, witch, wished, withered, wiggled, wispy, witty, withers, wishing, wicca-wish). This is the dominant sound device.
 - Assonance: The short 'i' sound is repeated (which, witch, wispy, wiggly, wishing, withers).
- Discuss the effect of these sound devices:
 - How do they make the poem fun to say?
 - Why do you think poets use sound devices? (To create rhythm, emphasis, and musicality.)
- Discuss the difference between alliteration and assonance. Ask students to make posters or anchor charts with examples explaining the difference. This could also prompt discussion of consonance (repetition of consonant sounds within words) creating a good opportunity to compare and contrast these terms.

Creative Response:

- Performance: In pairs or small groups, practise reading the poem aloud. Experiment by placing emphasis on different words. Perform the poem to another group or the class. Encourage expressive delivery and focus on clear enunciation despite the difficulty. This helps develop confidence in public speaking and allows students to experience the poem kinaesthetically.
- Rhyming Word Web: Make a word web of rhyming words from the poem. Use websites such as <https://rhyming.wordhippo.com> or <https://www.rhymezone.com> to help. Pay attention to any differences in spelling patterns. Encourage students to come up with their own tongue twisters using the rhyming words from the web.

Research and Extension:

- Tongue Twister Research: Research other tongue twisters (such as Peter Piper, She Sells Seashells). Practise reading these out in partners. This provides a broader context and shows students the variety within the form. It could also prompt comparison. Which tongue twisters are the hardest to say? Why?

Vocabulary:

- While the primary focus isn't complex vocabulary, it is an opportunity to research and define some of the key words to support understanding: wispy, withered, wiggled, wicca-wish*, witch, witty.



- *Wicca-wish: this is a made-up term likely referencing wicca, a modern pagan religion associated with witchcraft. This is an opportunity to briefly explain that not all witches are portrayed negatively, and differ between cultures and locations.

BLACKOUT POEMS

13. 'Change We Can Believe In'

Form and Structure:

- This poem is an example of blackout poetry, where a poet takes an existing text and blacks out words to create a new poem within the original.
- The original text here was Barack Obama's 2008 campaign slogan 'Change We Can Believe In'.
- This form encourages close reading and creative interpretation of existing material.

Poetic Techniques:

- Repetition: The words "change", "we", "can" and "believe" are repeated throughout, emphasising the core message of hope and possibility.
- Rhythm and Emphasis: Read the poem aloud multiple times, experimenting with different words to emphasise. Discuss how the rhythm changes depending on which words are stressed. Consider how the repetition of words creates a rhythm.

Meaning and Interpretation:

- Theme of Change: Discuss the multiple meanings of "change" within the poem. It can refer to personal, social or political change.
- Hope and Belief: Explore how the poem conveys a sense of hope and the importance of belief in creating change.
- Blackout Poetry as a Form of Found Poetry: Discuss how blackout poetry transforms existing text and encourages new interpretations.

Creative Response:

- Create Your Own Blackout Poem: Provide students with newspaper articles, speeches or other texts. Old novels could also serve as a basis for a blackout poem. Ask students to create their own blackout poems by selecting and highlighting words to form a new message. Students should use pencil first to circle words that stand out before using a permanent marker to black out unwanted words or phrases.
- Visual Representation: Encourage students to create a visual representation of the poem, focusing on the arrangement of words and the use of negative space.

Research and Extension:

- Barack Obama's Campaign Slogan: Research the context of Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign and the meaning behind the slogan 'Change We Can Believe In'.
 - Discuss other important speeches from history and their impact. What is it about those speeches that makes them so important? (Other examples of speeches include Martin Luther King's 'I Have a Dream' speech, Paul Keating's 'The Redfern Address', Greta Thunberg's UN address).
- Found Poetry: Explore other examples of found poetry, where poets use existing text as source material.

Vocabulary:

- Research the definition and origin of these words: believe, change, blackout poetry, found poetry.



CIRCULAR POEMS

14. 'Hat Trick'

Poetic Structure and Devices:

- Rhyme Scheme: The poem follows an ABCB rhyme scheme, where the second and fourth lines of each stanza rhyme.
- Rhyming Words: Identify the rhyming pairs in each stanza (e.g., hat/that, park/hard, play/day).
- Repetition: The first and last stanzas are almost identical, creating a circular structure and emphasising the brother's persistent behaviour.
- Italics:
 - The author has used italics for certain words. Why do you think they have done this? What effect does it have?
 - The use of italics for certain words (e.g., "No hat, no play!", "Outrageous") adds emphasis and draws attention to key moments in the poem.

Meaning and Deeper Understanding:

- Title – 'Hat Trick':
 - Idiom: Explain that "hat trick" is an idiom originating from sports, meaning three successes in a row.
 - Discuss if any students have achieved a "hat trick" with something in their life. Share responses with the class.
 - Double Meaning: Discuss the two meanings of the title in the context of the poem.
 - Literal: The brother successfully gets rid of three hats.
 - Figurative: The brother's repeated actions demonstrate his stubbornness and defiance.
- Circular Structure: Discuss how the poem's circular structure mirrors the repetitive nature of the brother's actions and the parents' frustration.
- Compare and Contrast: The first and final stanzas highlight the brother's consistent behaviour despite various attempts to make him wear a hat. This contrast emphasises the humour and irony of the situation.

Creative Response:

- Continue the Poem: Challenge students to write additional stanzas, exploring new strategies the parents might use to get the brother to wear a hat.
- Sequel: Write a sequel to the poem, focusing on the brother's eventual acceptance (or continued refusal) to wear a hat.
- Brother's Perspective: Rewrite the poem from the brother's point of view, explaining his reasons for not wanting to wear a hat.

Vocabulary and Language:

- Informal Language and Rhyme: Discuss the use of informal words like "yelly" and "no thing". Explain how these words fit the poem's rhythm and rhyme scheme, and how they create a more casual and childlike tone. Discuss any other informal or abbreviated words that students know (e.g. arvo for afternoon, brekky for breakfast, sanga for sandwich, etc.). Create a list.

Discussion Points:

- Why do you think some children don't like wearing hats? Encourage students to share their own experiences and opinions.
- What are some other strategies the parents could have tried to get the brother to wear a hat?



- How does the poem make you feel? (e.g., amused, frustrated, sympathetic.)

CONCRETE POEMS

15. 'Broken-hearted'

Form and Structure:

- **Concrete Poem:** This poem is an example of a concrete poem, also known as visual poetry. In concrete poems, the arrangement of words or letters visually represents the poem's subject. Here, the words are arranged to form the shape of a broken heart, mirroring the poem's theme.
- **Structure and Meaning:** The poem's visual structure reinforces its message. The fragmented heart represents the narrator's emotional state, while the placement of words like "breaking" and "heart" within the cracks emphasises the feeling of heartbreak.

Poetic Techniques:

- **Visual Impact:** The poem's visual impact is its primary technique. The shape of the poem helps to add another layer of meaning to the poem.
- **Brevity and Simplicity:** The poem's concise language and simple sentence structure effectively convey the narrator's raw emotion.

Creative Response:

- **Alternative Readings:** Discuss different ways this poem could be read. Should the words be read left to right, following the curve of the heart, or in another order? How does the reading style affect the poem's impact?
- **Concrete Poems:** In pairs, have students brainstorm other poems that could be written in distinct shapes, such as a tree, fruit or an animal. Discuss how the shape would connect to the poem's theme and message. Students should then experiment by writing their own concrete poems. Share responses with the class.

Research and Extension:

- **Concrete Poetry Examples:** Research other examples of concrete poetry and discuss how different poets have used this form to convey meaning.

Discussion Points:

- How does the shape of the poem contribute to its meaning?
- How does the poem's visual form impact the reader's experience?
- What emotions does the poem evoke?
- How does the poem's brevity and simplicity contribute to its impact?

PANTOUMS

16. 'Loop Your Hoop'

Form and Structure:

- This poem is a pantoum, a poetic form with a specific structure where lines are repeated in a set pattern.
- Each stanza uses lines from the previous stanza, creating a sense of echoing and interconnectedness. This repetition reinforces the rhythmic and cyclical nature of the hula hoop activity.



- Ask students to identify which lines are repeated between stanzas.
- Discuss the effect these have on the poem (adding rhythm and echo throughout).
- Discuss the connection between repetition and rhyme in the poem with hula hooping.

Poetic Techniques:

- **Repetition:** The poem uses repetition of both phrases and sounds to create rhythm and emphasise key actions.
- **Alliteration:** Notice the repetition of 'l' and 'h' sounds in "Loop-oh-loop your hula hoop" and "Fluoro yellow flash."

Creative Response:

- **Class Activity:** Choose a PE game or sport (e.g., skipping rope, soccer, dodgeball). Brainstorm action verbs associated with the game. Using those verbs and keeping the pantoum structure in mind, co-construct a pantoum about the chosen game. This reinforces understanding of the pantoum structure and allows for collaborative creativity.
- **Pair Activity:** Students choose a fundamental movement skill (e.g., running, jumping, throwing, catching), brainstorm a list of verbs, then create a pantoum about their chosen activity. Use the Playing for Life resources at <https://www.sportaus.gov.au/p4l> to assist students in choosing and understanding these skills.
- **Rhyming Word Web:**
 - Make a word web of other words that rhyme with 'loop' (e.g., hoop, scoop, troop, coop, droop). Use websites like <https://rhyming.wordhippo.com/> or <https://www.rhymezone.com/> to help students find appropriate rhyming words.
 - **Extension:** In pairs, use these rhyming words to extend the poem by writing your own stanzas. Pay attention to the rhythm and meter of the original poem to maintain consistency.
- **Hula Hoop Competition:**
 - Collect some hoops and see how long students can hula hoop for.
 - Discuss tips for techniques.
 - **Variation:** students practise hula-hooping while reciting the poem.

Research and Extension:

- **Hula Hoop History:** Research the origins and history of the hula hoop. When was it invented? How did it become popular?
- **Movement and Physical Activity:** Discuss the benefits of physical activity and how games like hula hooping contribute to health and well-being. Make a list of other activities that students could play that might have similar benefits.

Vocabulary:

- Research the definition and origin of these words: fluoro, hula.
- Experiment by using these words in original sentences.

