

# Night to write

My teacher says  
I have to write  
A homework poem  
For tonight

And she said  
It has to rhyme,  
Have a rhythm  
Line by line.

Surely, it can't be  
That hard, so...  
Pen and paper  
Here I go!

Boy, oh, boy!  
You know what,  
Can't wait to read  
You out this lot!



by J.R.Poulter, 2019

POETRY

# Bryan Appleyard on the emotive force of poetry

We turn to poetry in times of need, but can it really help? And why doesn't it sell more copies?

Bryan Appleyard

July 24 2016, 12:01am,  
The Sunday Times

Poetry offers a language of defiance

FRANCOIS MORI

After a policeman shot and killed Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, in August 2014, Maggie Smith's poem *Good Bones* went viral. It wasn't even about Ferguson, it was about life being short and often terrible — "though", she wrote, "I keep this from my children". It was, in its way, consoling. Poetry is the language of crisis, of profound thought and deep emotion. It may not be much read these days, but it is certainly felt.

Another poem that went viral recently was Patricia Lockwood's response to a spate of rape jokes. Disgusted, Lockwood wrote in *Rape Joke*: "Who drinks...

## TEACHER NOTES & ACTIVITIES

Being asked to write a poem or story can be daunting. However, if you are asked to talk about something you LOVE and then to write that down, the process is not as painful!

*Activity:* Have the students write down words that describe their favourite activity or food. Try to find words that rhyme with the words on their list.

*Activity:* Write a quatrain, limerick or haiku using their ideas about their chosen topic.

*Discussion:* Ask students to think about poetry in day to day life. Can they think of any? Ask them if they can think of an advertising jingle or a song in the Top Ten. Are they forms of poetry?

Historically, poets were important members of court. They had to write poems to celebrate events like victories on the battlefield or royal weddings. Today, both the USA and Britain have Poet Laureates. Read more - <https://www.loc.gov/poetry/laureate>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poet\\_Laureate\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_Kingdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poet_Laureate_of_the_United_Kingdom)

*Discussion:* For older students, consider this excerpt from an article in The Times.

Brian Appleyard doesn't seem to think poetry is read much these days. What are some forms of poetry popularly read today. Consider love poetry, poetry in greeting cards, advertising jingles, nursery rhymes, pop songs and popular children's stories like "We're Going on a Bear Hunt" and "Hairy MacLeary" and the various Dr Seuss books like "The Cat in the Hat".

*Discussion:* Can they think of poems about serious or emotional topics? What about 'protest verse' and 'war cries' - are they viable forms of verse?

A very famous song about peace, war and freedom from the 1960s was "Blowing in the Wind" by Bob Dylan. Others 'protest' songs were "The Times They Are a-Changin" by Bob Dylan, "Get Up, Stand Up" by Bob Marley and "Give Peace a Chance" by Plastic Ono Band.

*Activity:* Share a war cry or protest poem they have found online, or have written themselves, with the class.