

## Michael Rosen: A Great Big Cuddle, illustrated by Chris Riddell (Walker)

Subtitled ‘Poems for the Very Young’ this is a collection children can have fun and identify with, enabling them to see the point of poetry. There are high production values surrounding this large and beautiful book with a happy marriage between word and pictures, the illustrations being like another version of each poem. The design of each spread is a joy, incorporating the use of different colours and sizes of fonts. Look at ‘I Am Angry’ for an example where a fierce looking red-eyed mouse appears opposite a verbal expression of ire laid out in rhyming couplets expressed in red typeface, segueing into orange, brown and eventually grey for the final and abrupt denouement. The language is playful and rhythmic and impossible to read out loud without wanting to share it. There are conversations to be had around the pictures and poems, not all of which are happy. ‘Bendy Man’ is quite scary with its hints at someone strange lurking in familiar places and ‘Lost’ expresses emotions felt by a little one left behind.

This collection is shortlisted for the 2016 CLPE Poetry Award.

### Overall aims of this teaching sequence.

- to listen with enjoyment, join in and respond to poetry
- to develop spoken language and understanding through visualising, artwork, drama and dance
- to talk about personal experiences of the world in relation to those of the poems
- to bring a poem to life by reading aloud together, responding to rhythm, rhyme and pattern
- to clarify word meanings and understanding of poetic language and devices through recital and performance
- to explore and play with language
- to compose own rhymes and poems
- to begin to develop a repertoire and appreciation of a wide range of poetry
- to make choices in selecting poems for anthologies

**This teaching sequence is designed for a Year 1 or 2 class.**

### Overview of this teaching sequence.

This is a rich collection of poems - sometimes humorous, other times poignant – with which children will be able to relate in terms of personal and emotional experiences from their early years. The interplay between the poems and illustrations provide young readers much stimulus to respond in a

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range of ways. *This teaching sequence is around three weeks long although it is divided into three sections which can be taught together or as separate units of work over the year.* The first section offers ideas around creating a poetry friendly classroom and introduces children to the poet Michael Rosen. It is recommended that this is taught prior to and throughout the following sections. As this sequence is written to accommodate Reception and Key Stage 1 year groups, teachers will need to use discretion as to how to adapt the sessions and how long their children remain engaged in the sequence, based on their age and experience. ‘When We Were Very Young’ explores the early childhood experiences so vividly captured in the collection and through Chris Riddell’s illustrations. ‘Words Are Ours’ enables children to delight in Rosen’s playful use of language and investigate devices used that make poems memorable. Children will have plenty of opportunity to hear, chime in and lift the words off the page through performance of all kinds. They will be inspired to compose their own poetry using familiar structures, revel in their play with words, and respond to the imagery through talk, artwork, dance and drama. This lively collection is a fantastic introduction to the poetry of Michael Rosen and enables children to begin their discovery that poems offer unique opportunity to experiment with language, be uninhibited by rules and bring to life the spoken word.

### Teaching Approaches

- Reading aloud and re-reading
- Shared reading
- Word collections
- Responding to illustration
- Book talk - responding to poetry
- Role-play, drama and Freeze-Frame
- Visualising
- Drawing and annotating
- Poetry Box
- Performing poetry
- Shared writing
- Creating anthologies

### Outcomes

- Experience and appreciation of a wider range of poetry through the compilation of anthologies
- Understanding and appreciation of the use of language and vocabulary by creating word and phrase collections and playing with words
- Understanding and appreciation of the power of illustration and the role presentation plays in conveying meaning
- Deeper understanding of meanings and poet’s intent through performance of poems
- Mastery of language in pieces of writing
- Understanding of poetic devices and structure and seeing oneself as a poet by composing poems inspired by the collection

### Developing Phonological Awareness:

- Discriminating environmental sounds
- Onomatopoeia
- Exploring voice sounds

### Exploring Vocabulary and Language Structure:

- Generate vocabulary experientially
- Drawing to describe and think

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exploring instrumental sounds</li> <li>▪ Keeping and following a rhythm</li> <li>▪ Identifying rhyming words</li> <li>▪ Onset and rime</li> <li>▪ Syllabification</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explore onomatopoeia, alliteration and other devices that make words memorable</li> <li>▪ Identify and playing with rhyming words</li> <li>▪ Joining in with predictable patterned phrases</li> </ul> |
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### Cross Curricular Links:

#### Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

- This collection provides the ideal platform for children to talk about how they and others show feelings and talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences. They can use the characterisation and themes in the poems as a safe vehicle through which to explore personal experiences, emotions and behaviour.

#### Understanding the World

##### Science:

- Children can be given the opportunity to explore and describe the similarities and differences in people of all ages from first-hand observation, personal experience and secondary sources.
- Children can make close observations of younger children from babyhood, through the toddler years and into pre-school age; recording the way they look, their language, their behaviour, the way they play and interact with children and adults, their abilities and their dependency on parents.

##### Geography:

- Children could explore the local environment through first hand experience, maps and aerial photographs, identifying landmarks and create maps on routes to safe places that would help should they ever get left behind or lost.

#### Expressive Art and Design

##### Art:

- Children use drawing and painting to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination in response to poetry.
- Children can develop illustrative techniques in using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space using drawing pencils, and watercolour paint and pencils.
- Children can develop ability to read pictures and develop appreciation of how the relationship between text and image creates layers of meaning.
- Children can learn about and develop an appreciation of the work of famous artists who express emotion effectively, such as Alison Wilding and abstract expressionists: Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, Robert Motherwell or Hans Hofmann.
- Children can learn more about the work of the illustrator and current Children's Laureate, Chris Riddell, as well as comparing and contrasting his style to that of other well known illustrators that have worked with Michael Rosen, for instance: Quentin Blake, Helen Oxenbury, Alan Baker, Arthur Robins, Tony Ross, Bob Graham, Korky Paul, Clare Mackie, Herve Tullet, Neal Layton.

##### Music:

- Children use their voices expressively and creatively by speaking chants and rhymes in reading poetry and in performing.

- When rehearsing poetry recitals and performances, children could be encouraged to experiment with, create, select and combine sounds using the inter-related dimensions of music.

#### Technology and Computing:

- Children can explore how to use technology effectively to manipulate font text in order to represent their poetry in print, e.g. creating concrete poems to convey meanings of words and phrases, play with colour theory to affect the reader's responses. The *TypeDrawing* App enables children to create typography drawings on Apple IOS devices.

#### Physical Development / Physical Education

- Children might incorporate simple sequences of dance movements into performance readings.

#### Links to other books and resources:

There are so many anthologies and collections that are inspired by childhood experiences and will provide the children with a broad range of poetry to listen to, read aloud and perform, as well as enabling children to choose poems when creating their own anthologies on given themes.

- *Here's a Little Poem* collected by Jane Yolen and Andrew Fusek Peters, illustrated by Polly Dunbar. Walker
- *The Puffin Book of Fantastic First Poems* edited by June Crebbin. Puffin
- *Caribbean Playground Song* read by James Berry (*Poetryline*)
- *Dog in the Playground* read by Allan Ahlberg (*Poetryline*) from his *Collected Poems* Puffin
- *Poems to Perform* edited by Julia Donaldson. Macmillan

#### Other books by Michael Rosen:

- *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* illustrated by Helen Oxenbury. Walker
- *The Bear in the Cave* illustrated by Adrian Reynolds. Bloomsbury
- *Bear Flies High* illustrated by Adrian Reynolds. Bloomsbury
- *Little Rabbit Foo Foo* illustrated by Arthur Robins. Walker
- *Quick, Let's Get Out of Here* illustrated by Quentin Blake. Puffin

#### Nursery Rhyme Collections:

- *Little Miss Muffet and other Rhymes* by Patrick George. PatrickGeorge
- *The Oxford Treasury of Nursery Rhymes* by Sarah Williams and Karen King, illustrated by Ian Beck. Oxford University Press
- *My Favourite Nursery Rhymes* by Tony Ross. Andersen Press

#### Resources to support work around the collection:

- *Tell Me: Children, Reading and Talk with The Reading Environment* by Aidan Chambers. Thimble Press 2011
- Watch Michael Rosen perform his poetry and stories on own website, his Youtube channel or CLPE's Poetryline:
  - <http://www.michaelrosen.co.uk/>
  - <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1A647BA0576977F2>
  - <https://www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline>
- *Angry Arthur* by Hiawyn Oram and Satoshi Kitamura. Andersen Press
- *The Bad-tempered Ladybird* by Eric Carle. Puffin
- *The No No Bird* in the anthology *Here's a Little Poem* collected by Jane Yolen and Andrew Fusek

Peters, illustrated by Polly Dunbar. Walker

- Alison Wilding's 'Angry Drawing' series housed at the Tate:
  - <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/wilding-untitled-angry-drawing-i-t05859>
- The gestural paintings of Abstract Expressionist artists, Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, Robert Motherwell or Hans Hofmann, would make an ideal starting point from which the children could explore the expression of emotion through artwork.
- *On the Ning Nang Nong* by Spike Milligan
- *The Owl and the Pussycat* by Edward Lear
- *Ping Pong Song* by Allan Ahlberg, Ahlberg performed on Poetryline: <https://www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poets/ahlberg-allan>
- The *TypeDrawing* App enables children to create typography drawings on Apple IOS devices

**Links to other resources on the Poetryline Website:** <https://www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline>

- Watch Michael Rosen perform his own poems from this and other collections.
- Look up poets by age range or themes, enabling you to access a wide range of poetry to inspire budding poets.
- Find examples of children's work around poetry, including videos of performances submitted for the 2016 CLiPPA School Shadowing Scheme.

### Before beginning this book:

One of the best ways of involving children in poetry is to make a habit of reading aloud to them as often as possible from a wide range of books and anthologies. This experience of being read to is likely to be the real foundation of their knowledge of poetry and is also going to be a major influence on how they write themselves. Children will benefit from being immersed in a wide range of poetry; routinely listening to poems read aloud, sharing enjoyment by joining in, revisiting and playing with language, and deepening understanding by performing poems.

Invite parents to read or tell poems and to talk about them afterwards, enriching and enlarging the children's experiences of poetry; poems that speak of their personal experiences, home lives and heritage as well as those that increase their understanding of the wider world.

Engage the enthusiasm of a wider audience by creating a poetry area in which members of the school community can display their favourite poem, recommending it to others alongside poetry books, poem cards, rhymes and posters. Compile and present anthology of these poems with the children to be revisited and enjoyed; in printed form or as an audio recording, perhaps to be distributed in some way. Find photographs of some of the poets; laminate them and display them alongside their work. Make a listening corner in which children can listen to audio recordings of poems. Some of these could be made by the children themselves or recorded 'live' during class read aloud times. It would also be nice to invite parents in to record some of the poems; these could also be translated into home languages for bilingual children to enjoy or drawn from their own cultural source. You might raise the profile of poetry by asking the children to create illustrated poetry posters which present poetry or publicise a school poetry event in which poetry is shared through drama, performance or reading aloud. Make a class collection of poetry books; collections by the same author and anthologies,

planning in regular browsing and independent reading time when the children can access the books.

Become familiar with CLPE's Poetryline website as well as those belonging to the poets themselves and other sites that enable the children to watch the poet reading their own poems, bringing them alive. Through hearing poetry read aloud and told in a variety of languages, regional accents and styles, the children will be inspired to find their own voices and to express themselves in poems of their own.

## Teaching Sessions:

### Part 1: Introducing Michael Rosen - Creating a Poetry Friendly Classroom

*This section provides opportunity for children to share what they already know and like about Michael Rosen's work, which will likely include well thumbed picture books including, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. It enables children to explore more of his stories with patterned language as well as his poetry collections. Teachers, children and parents can work together to create poetry friendly classrooms and begin to nurture a love of language through engagement with rhythm, rhyme and play with words.*

### Reading Aloud – known works of Michael Rosen

- Prior to this session, create a poetry corner in which to display the collected works of Michael Rosen, including his poetry collections, anthologies, stories with repeated and patterned language, and picture books.
- Ask the children what they think they know about Michael Rosen and the books that he has written. Most children will have experienced *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* at home or school and perhaps other stories with patterned language, such as *Little Rabbit Foo Foo* and *The Bear in the Cave*. They may have shared books like *This is Our House* and *Howler, Rover and Monster* which they can relate to personal experience. Some children may have shared his poetry with parents or teachers or seen him perform his poems on his website or even live.
- Allow time for the children to talk about and share their favourite Michael Rosen picture books, stories and poems with each other, referring to the displayed collection so that they can revisit recommendations afterwards.
- Scribe the children's ideas and preferences in the class poetry journal as well as their ideas about the poet himself, if he is familiar to them:
  - *How would you describe him? Why? What makes you think that?*
- Some children may think he is funny and be able to cite examples of poems, stories or watching him. Collect these examples and make reference to them in the collection displayed

and in future teaching sessions, e.g. in showing a video recommended by a child from his own website, his Youtube channel or CLPE's Poetryline:

- <http://www.michaelrosen.co.uk/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1A647BA0576977F2>
- <https://www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline>
- Read aloud one or more of the children's favourite works by Michael Rosen.
- Provide plenty of opportunity for the children to share his works with each other and to hear them read aloud. Encourage children to revisit and perform his poems in small groups, allowing them to enjoy the patterns and sounds of the words and the language play for themselves.

### Introducing Michael Rosen and Performing Poetry - *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*

- Read aloud the picture book *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, exploring the illustrations with the children and encouraging them to chime in with familiar refrains.
- Show the children a film of the story being performed by Michael Rosen himself:  
<http://www.michaelrosen.co.uk/videos.html>
- Play the performance *We're going on a Bear Hunt* again, this time encouraging the children to stand up and join in with the rhythm of the march, the repeated refrain and with some of memorable actions. Share their delight in the change in pace for the second half of the story as the breathless family, desperate to return to the safety of home, are being chased by the bear.
- The children may well want you to repeat the performance as soon as it is finished, enabling them to remember more of the memorable refrain and actions.
- Ask the children what they enjoy about the story being read to them and being performed, drawing out their thinking around reader involvement and participation, humour, pace and rhythm and illustration. Scribe ideas in the class poetry journal.
- Provide opportunity for the children to rehearse and hone their performance for an audience.
- You could make provision for them to revisit and re-enact the story independently through shared reading, artwork, role-play and small world and physical development.
- The children could create collaborative storymaps and props in order to support oral retellings or written retellings in a handmade book, developing their sense of readership through publishing their own writing.
  
- Rosen's well loved story *Little Rabbit Foo Foo*, illustrated by Arthur Robins, would work particularly well as an alternative, with children collaborating to develop performance readings once they had become familiar with all or parts of the book. The children could be supported by Kevin Whately's narration in the Walker animated book trailer:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cOT4T2jDho>

### Exploring and collecting words - *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*

- Perform *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* again as a large group.
- Ask the children to share any words or phrases that they enjoyed hearing or saying.
- Encourage the children to talk about why they like those particular words or find them most memorable.
- List the words or phrases the children have shared and read out with the class, paying attention to the way in which we can read them with expression or perform them like Michael Rosen.
- Draw attention to the onomatopoeic quality of many of Rosen's word choices: *splish splashing* through water, *swishy swashy* grass, *squelching* through mud. Encourage the children to make links with the word choices and the atmosphere he wanted to create by taking the children to real woodlands, muddy paths or streams. Demonstrate onomatopoeia explicitly by having the children listen carefully to the sounds created when, for example, walking through sticky mud and comparing them to how the words *squelch* and *squerch* sound when voiced.
- Alternatively set up areas in the outdoor setting where the children can practise performing their favourite words and phrases whilst listening to the swishy grass or squelchy mud.
- Can the children think of any other noun phrases to describe going through a particular setting which would support their adaptation of the text?

### 'Words are Ours' by Michael Rosen

- Remind the children of the stories and poems by Michael Rosen that you have shared, referring to his books on display in the poetry corner.
  - *What do you like about his poems and stories? ...is there anything you dislike? Why? Why not?*
  - *Do they remind you of anything in real life or stories?*
  - *What are his poems and stories about? Where do you think he get his ideas?*
  - *Which do you remember most vividly? Why?*
  - *Are any words or phrases memorable? Why do you think you can remember them easily?*
  - *Does anything puzzle you about his stories or poems? Do you have any questions?*
- Encourage the children to talk about what they think of his writing, using some of Aidan Chambers' book talk prompts: *Tell me...*
  - Scribe the children's responses in the class poetry journal, and then turn your attention to their ideas about memorable stories, poems, words or phrases. Share Michael Rosen's belief that words are everywhere and that they belong to all of us; that we use them for many reasons; that they can be played with and enjoyed.
  - Ask groups of children to talk to each other about where they hear words, who uses them and



what do they sound like. Where do they find written or printed words, what they look like, how words help us, why we write words down and why we read them? They could record their ideas on a large sheet of paper and begin to make a list of places they see and hear words in the environment. Elicit from the children their ideas about the purpose of given examples of writing, who is meant to read it and why.

- Have the children explore their ideas further by taking them on a word hunt around the school and into the local area. They could bring their own poetry journals, digital cameras and voice recorders so that they can collect the printed and heard words visually and aurally.
- Begin to create a word collection display in the classroom comprising of photographs and sourced examples of the printed and heard word, e.g. train announcements, tickets, posters, advertising slogans, radio commentary, jingles, timetables, recipes, menus, Lego instruction cards, books of all kinds, comics, newspapers, road signs, street names, letters, cards, texts, food packaging, etc.
- Enable the children to explore the voice and rhythm in each form of writing by reading them aloud.
- Embrace opportunities to savour the language that has been chosen and focus the children's attention on some of the devices used to grab the reader's attention and enable recall, e.g. alliteration (*Percy Pig sweets, Thomas the Tank Engine, Betty Botter* nursery rhyme, *She Sells Sea Shells* tongue twister), rhyme (*Curly Wurly bars, Humpty Dumpty*), coined or invented words and the art of conveying meaning through well-chosen nonsense words, famously used by Lewis Carroll and more recently Roald Dahl (*'He rolled and he wiggled, he fought and he figgled, he squirmed and he squiggled.'* *The BFG*).
- Engage families in the collection so that printed or heard words that have significance at home or home languages can be shared and explored. Children could keep a listening or reading record over a weekend to demonstrate the part words play in their lives. They might write, draw, voice record, take photographs or create a collage of their weekend experiences to share with the class.
- You could draw this project together by watching Michael Rosen talk about and perform his poem, 'Words Are Ours' on Poetryline. Watch this performance and read it aloud several times for the children to pick up on more items that they recognise in his list.
- Take up his invitation to create further verses by compiling a class list that brings together the children's word investigation.
- Continue to create daily opportunities to watch Michael Rosen perform his stories and poems that the children will enjoy and that illustrate his repertoire, the devices he uses, his inspiration, and his belief that poems and words belong to all of us.

### Developing a Canon of Poetry, Rhyme and Song – Creating Rhyme cards and tuning in to rhyme and print

- Share with the children a wide range of rhyme and song: nursery rhymes; songs for

instruction, learning, routines and transition; playground or street rhymes; rhymes remembered by parents and grandparents; action, clapping, scanning or finger rhymes. Make rhyme and song central to the curriculum and to the children's sense of community and well being.

- Engage children and adults in drawing up a core collection of poetry, rhyme and song that everyone considers essential for children to experience in each of the year groups across the Early Years and Key Stage One.
- Once the list has been established, plan in regular opportunities for the children to learn each by heart, for example: building them in to everyday routines and transition times; developing early phonological awareness and later tuning in to spelling patterns; linking them to all areas of the curriculum and book themes; introducing new mathematical or scientific concepts or using them to consolidate knowledge; and develop gross and fine motor skills or scanning for reading and writing.
- Create colour, laminated rhyme and song cards that could be handwritten and illustrated by the adults and children, using them as a good model of writing in the environment or generated on computer for mass production. (If choosing two or three favourite poems from *A Great Big Cuddle*, you may wish to colour copy the poems from the book to allow for impact of the text presentation and the rich layers of meaning that Chris Riddell's illustrations offer.)
- Create a corresponding collection of audio recordings so that children can revisit the rhymes, songs and poems and tune in to the print as they do so.
- You could develop a lending library of poetry, rhyme and song cards so they can be learned at home. Perhaps pop the cards in bags that could also house supportive props, audio recordings and games that relate to the theme and encourage talk and play amongst families.
- You could ask families to talk about poems, rhymes and songs that are significant to them and have parents contribute to a collection of audio recordings, supporting the children's sense of security, strengthening their personal and cultural identity and easing their transitions through the school

### **Introducing the book, 'A GREAT BIG CUDDLE': Reading aloud, sharing and discussing poems**

*This is a rich collection of poetry, playing with language in interesting ways and demanding to be read aloud, lifting the words off the page and bringing the poems alive for the children. Reading aloud slows written language down so that children can hear and absorb the words, tunes and patterns. It enables children to experience and enjoy stories they might otherwise not meet, enlarging their reading interests and providing access to texts beyond their level of independence as readers. By listening to the poems read aloud, the children will be able to tune into memorable words and phrases and the distinctive patterns of the language in poetry, enabling them to join in and share the enjoyment of reading aloud communally. As children become more familiar with poetry, they will begin to regard it as something that they can engage in themselves as readers or writers.*

- You may wish to introduce the book as a whole once you have unfolded it through Parts 2 and 3 of this teaching sequence. Many of the sessions rely on the text or the illustration being

revealed after the children have given their initial responses.

- Browse through the book with the children, exploring Children's Laureate Chris Riddell's illustrations, text presentation and reading aloud poems. Encourage them to talk a little about their first responses to the illustration, title and the poems themselves:
  - *Why did you choose this poem?*
  - *What did you like about this poem?*
  - *What did it make you think of?*
- Many of the poems can be related to your children's sense of humour, personal experiences or of their emerging knowledge of the world; enabling them to tap into the vocabulary, language and themes. Children may find an aspect of the poem particularly enjoyable, such as the play on words or sound or the use of poetic device.
- Re-read the poems, encouraging the children to join in if they wish. Discuss which words or phrases were most memorable or those that encouraged them to start joining in. Discuss what is special about these words or phrases; whether they are known or unfamiliar.
- Invite children to choose a favourite poem from the book each day to read aloud and pin up as the 'poem of the day'. Talk together about how it makes them feel and what in particular they like about it.
- Are there any words or sounds that they enjoy particularly?
- Collect what the children say on prepared speech bubbles and pin these up alongside the poem

### Poetry appreciation: compiling an anthology of favourite poems

- Prepare a Big Book Class poetry journal, ready to collect into it some of the class's favourite poems from the book as you progress through the teaching sequence.
- Leave room beside each one where you can scribe some of what the children say as you talk together about individual poems. Encourage children to add their own individual responses, later using drawing or writing.
- The poems could be recorded to create an audio collection so that the children can listen to the poems independently, perhaps whilst tuning into the printed pages and looking at the illustrations. Children could take these recordings home to share and enjoy with family members.
- Children can draw on this collection when reading on their own or with a friend during independent reading time, or borrow poems from it to take home. As children get to know the book better more poems can be added.
- Children can continue to compile a range of illustrated poetry anthologies drawing on specific themes, linked to interests or the curriculum, or incorporating family favourites or poems, songs and rhymes of cultural or personal significance.

### Poem of the day

*In his introduction to CLPE's publication 'A Year with Poetry' (Barrs and Rosen, eds. 1997), Michael Rosen observes that making a classroom 'poetry-friendly' might be achieved at the outset by not directly linking the writing of poetry with the reading of poetry. Reading aloud a poem, lifting it off the page and providing regular opportunity for the children to indulge themselves in poetry, talk about what they enjoy and what interests them is a meaningful learning experience in itself.*

- Invite children to choose a favourite poem from the book each day to read aloud and pin up as the 'poem of the day.' Talk together about how it makes them feel and what in particular they like about it.
- Are there any words or sounds that they enjoy particularly?
- Collect what the children say on prepared speech bubbles and pin these up alongside the poem.

### Responding to poetry - creating a poetry box

*A poetry box creates a special opportunity to revisit the setting, character or theme of a chosen poem. It might consist of a shoebox containing a range of small toys and inspirational objects. The box itself can be turned into a setting for the story using a variety of collage materials and with sides cut to fold down. Children can use the box to story tell aspects of the narrative shaped by the poem or create another story poem with similar or contrasting setting or characters.*

- Poems that work well for this are those with unusual or distinct settings, such as: *LOST* or *ONCE*. However, it is important to let the children choose and support them in representing their interpretations in poetry box form.
- Make a poetry box for a chosen poem using a shoebox to create a context for the poem. Children can collaborate to decorate it, adding objects which illustrate the poem.
- The box can be used to encourage children to play with the ideas and language of the poem, to develop word play and talk.

### Poetry display

- Make a poetry display with books, poem cards, rhymes and posters.
- Find photographs of some of the poets; laminate them and display them alongside their work. Make a listening corner in which children can listen to audio recordings of poems. Some of these could be made by the children themselves or recorded 'live' during class read aloud times. It would also be nice to invite parents in to record some of the poems; these could also be translated into home languages for multilingual children to enjoy or drawn from cultural, linguistic heritage of the home.

## Part 2: When I was Very Young – Looking back, making observations and exploring personal experiences

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*This section provides opportunity for children to embrace the theme of early childhood explored in the collection. Using a range of forms, Michael Rosen demonstrates the power of poetry in expressing what has been observed, experienced or felt in early childhood. The interplay between his words and Riddell's illustrations, and indeed the way in which they are presented on the page spreads, evoke reader response through talk, drama, movement and artwork. Children are able to draw on their own and observable childhood experiences through the poems and be inspired to write their own.*

### Session 1: Responding to illustration and drama – Freeze-Frame

*Children will need time and opportunity to enjoy and respond to the pictures and to talk together about what they contribute to their understanding of the text. As the sessions unfold, there could be opportunities for children to develop their responses by drawing with pen in a similar style to Hilda Offen.*

#### Poem: LOST (p.16)

- Show the children the illustration of the mouse without sharing the poem or revealing the title. Ask the children to respond to the image, using techniques taken from Aidan Chambers' book *Tell Me: Children, Reading & Talk with The Reading Environment*. Thimble Press 2011. His basic questions can be adapted to give children accessible starting points for discussion:
  - *How is the mouse feeling? How do you know?*
  - *What do you think it is thinking?*
  - *Where is it? Where is everyone else?*
  - *What do you think will happen next?*
  - *If you were there, what do you think you would see or hear around you?*
  - *Do you like what you see? Is there anything you dislike about it? Why? Why not?*
  - *Does it remind you of anything in stories or real life?*
  - *Does anything puzzle you?*
  - *What do you think the poem will be about?*
- Scribe the children's responses and ideas around a copy of the illustration, eliciting descriptive vocabulary and helping them to relate their understanding to their predictions; when have they felt this way? How did it feel? What is like to be alone?
- You might like to support the children's understanding of viewpoint and language development further by creating a freeze-frame of the illustration. It would enable the children to recognise the relationship between the character and reader in that the mouse is looking directly out of the page as if in appeal to the reader. The monologue voice of the poem can then be clearly established and better accessed before even reading it aloud to the children.
- Ask the children to take on the role of the mouse, creating a freeze-frame that mirrors its body positioning and facial expression in the illustration. Have the children looking in the same direction as each other to emphasise the sense of looking outward in appeal. Support the

children to voice their thoughts or feelings in role as the mouse when you tap them on the shoulder.

- An adult or the children can take photographs of each other in freeze-frame as the mouse in the illustration then record its thinking on thought bubbles to form the beginning of a class display around the poem.

*Freeze-frames are still images or a tableau. They can be used to enable groups of children to examine a key event or situation from a story and decide in detail how it could be represented. When presenting the freeze-frame, one of the group could act as a commentator to talk through what is happening in their version of the scene, or individual characters could be asked to speak their thoughts out loud.*

## **Session 2: Reading aloud and Responding to poetry – Exploring personal experiences and note writing.**

### **Poem: LOST (p.16)**

- Read the title 'LOST' to the children and gather responses to this. How does this support their predictions of what the poem will be about? Refer back to their ideas scribed around the illustration and their freeze-frame display.
- Read the poem aloud, modelling intonation appropriate to the distressed mouse as it explains its situation then begins to ask questions with increasing desperation. The poem is written in rhyming couplets but at this stage, focus on developing empathy for the mouse as it narrates how it became lost and how it feels. You may prefer to have the children watch Michael Rosen recite his poem on his YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKdXZ3drv2g>
- Ask the children to discuss the pictures that formed in their minds as you read aloud:
  - *Where do you think the mouse is lost? Where is the staircase?*
  - *Who is 'everyone else' and where might they be? Why did they disappear so quickly? What do you think happened?*
  - *Is the mouse safe staying on the staircase? Why? Why not? What should it do?*
- Ask the children to share their own experiences of being in similar situations; perhaps losing their grownups whilst out shopping, at the park, on trips. How did it make them feel to be lost and alone? Why? How did they deal with the experience? Who did they turn to?
- This is a good opportunity to develop the children's sense of personal safety when out and about and the safest strategies to adopt if they found themselves lost and surrounded by strangers or even all alone. What could they do? Where could they go? Who could they trust? You might consider working with the children in more depth around this important issue, perhaps inviting the school's Community Police Officer in to class to chat with the children about staying safe and making sensible decisions.
- Read the poem aloud again, or watch Michael Rosen perform it on his Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKdXZ3drv2g>, asking the children to discuss how they

could respond to the mouse's questions or to offer words of advice or reassurance. They may even have questions they would like to ask the mouse.

- Scribe the children's ideas, clarifying, recasting and modelling sentence structure in statement, command or question form so that the ideas are expressed as the children intended.
- The children can go on to write their responses, questions or words of advice or reassurance to the mouse in the form of an informal note which they can post in the class or a real post box. Ensure that the class receives an appreciative response from the mouse a few days later, further consolidating the relationship between the reader and the mouse and the sense of purpose and audience in the children's writing.

### Session 3: Responding to poetry – word collections, visualising and artwork

*Asking children to picture or to 'visualise' a character or place from a story is a way of encouraging them to move into a fictional world. Children can be asked to picture the scene in their mind's eye or 'walk around it' in their imagination. Once they have done so, they can bring it to life by describing it in words or recreating it in drawing or painting.*

**Poem: I AM ANGRY** (pp.38-39)

- Read the poem to the children without showing them the printed poem or the accompanying illustration in the book. Ask them to close their eyes and picture the poem in their minds as you read it aloud. The children can listen to Michael Rosen perform this poem on his YouTube channel (again, hide the image): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G93ECKkscYU>.
- Elicit the children's ideas around who could be the voice of the poem, how they are expressing anger and what might have been the trigger for such rage. Does it remind them of anything in poems, stories or real life? Encourage the children to relate the poem to their own bedtime routines, their experiences of being angry, having a tantrum or even their observations of toddlers they know. Scribe the children's ideas, observations and experiences in the class poetry journal.
- Read the poem aloud again. Ask children to draw a picture that reflects their own interpretation of the poem, using sugar paper and crayons or oil pastels to support bold mark making. Children can create artwork individually or they might like to collaborate to represent what they have each visualised collectively. Ask them to consider carefully the colour palette they are choosing to represent the anger expressed in the poem and the marks they are using that they think best expresses the poem's theme. They may wish to depict the anger in the poem in abstract terms or create figurative images to represent each threat expressed.
- Read the poem aloud several times to enable the children to discuss and add detail to their drawings. They could be encouraged to annotate their drawing with memorable words or phrases from the poem or further vocabulary that it has provoked.
- Display the pieces of art together to resemble a gallery and have the children conduct a gallery walk. Paper on clipboards, large post-it notes or journals can be provided to record the children's ideas and comments. They might be encouraged to pin up their responses next to the artwork to further develop sustained shared thinking around their depiction of the theme



in this poem.

- Talk together about what shaped their pictures. Where did their ideas come from; the language in the poem; something from their own lives and experience; books, films or pictures they were reminded of? Are there any similarities in the pieces of art created? Why do we think that is? Did they enjoy the experience? Do they like the poem? Why? Why not?
- Which phrases in the poem were particularly memorable to the children and provided most vivid imagery? Why do they think this is? Children could be encouraged to enact the threats in question to appreciate fully the range of reactions and the facial expression, body tensions, actions and mood being expressed. Make a note of these on the flipchart or in the journal to refer back to.
- Display an enlarged version of the poem and its illustration on the IWB and have the children explore both the way in which the poem and title have been presented as well as the illustration, comparing and contrasting the spread to the way they visualised it in their own artwork. Is it what they imagined it to look like? How does the way in which the words and phrases of the poem are organised add to the illustrative effect; impact on our understanding of the meaning? Have the children pay close attention to the character's body position and facial expression. How is it similar or different from the mouse looking out at us in the poem 'LOST'? How is the poem presented in comparison? Why is this? Scribe the children's responses around the illustration.
- Read aloud the poem again, encouraging the children to join in with memorable phrases and tuning them in to the print as you read.
- Discuss the threats that the character intends to carry out and ask the children to pick out the ones that created the precise imagery in their minds or that they find particularly humorous or fascinating.
- Stand up and, together, read these aloud in turn, modelling and encouraging appropriate intonation, gesture, facial expression, pitch and volume. Refer to the discussion around the character, presentation and language.
- Re-read as many times as is enjoyable, inviting the children to suggest actions that will support their reading, increasing ability to recite, and enhance their performance.
- The children could go on to play a game of charades with the poem whereby they each take turns to mime a given threat for the onlookers to guess, using the printed poem as reference.
- You may wish to draw out further connections across the curriculum by studying and emulating the work of artists that have depicted anger or other emotions, such as Alison Wilding's 'Angry Drawing' series housed at the Tate:  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/wilding-untitled-angry-drawing-i-t05859>
- The gestural paintings of Abstract Expressionist artists, Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, Robert Motherwell or Hans Hofmann, would make an ideal starting point from which the children could explore the expression of emotion through artwork

#### Session 4: Performing poetry

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*The experience of performing poetry enables children to respond to the rhythms, patterns and word play in poems. Giving voice and sound to poetry is an important key to unlocking the meanings and music contained in each poem. It is through reading poetry aloud that the quality of rhyme and verse form, and the power of language can be explored and realised.*

*In preparing for presenting poetry to an audience, and in the performance itself, children gain deeper understanding of vocabulary meanings, bring their own interpretations to the poem, begin to inhabit characters and reflect more thoughtfully on its message.*

**Poem: I AM ANGRY** (pp.38-39)

- Shared read the poem aloud, encouraging the children to read along and chime in with memorable words and phrases; being careful not to break the flow of the poem but modelling the expression and intonation of the piece and drawing on the rhythm and rhyming couplet pattern to support memorisation as well as emphasising poetic devices such as, assonance (*Pull/Bully...spiders/tigers...Mash/Crush/Squash*), alliteration and repeated phonemes (*Stop all smiles. Silence Birds...Grind up games...Rattle the radiators. Frighten alligators. Cut down flowers. Bring down towers*) and repetition of certain verbs (*Make, Pull, Scare*).
- Ask the children to discuss the way in which the monologue poem has been structured into a series of threats following the statements in the title and introduction:
  - *'I am angry. really angry. angry,*
  - *angry, angry. I am so angry*
  - *I'll jump up and down. I'll roll on the ground...*
- Model text marking a few select lines from the poem to give directions for it to be read aloud and performed. How could we group ourselves to add impact to the performance? How could we use our voices as a group to best effect? When might silence be most effective? What if we were to add actions, gesture or facial expression? Instruments? Draw attention to the way in which each line is printed in comparison with the others, in terms of tone and colour, font boldness, size. How will this impact on the decisions made around performance reading? Remind the children that it is a monologue poem and discuss ideas around how this would impact on their decisions around performance, even looking at the way in which Riddell has employed white space around the image of the character but for the loud statement it makes in the title, *'I AM ANGRY'*; the way the body of the poem is closely knit into pairs of threats (in the main), creating a bold rectangle that fills the opposite page.
- Using the marked text, try out a performance of these lines as a class or using a group to demonstrate. How could it be improved? Make further annotations or marks to show these revisions.
- Assign a few lines (not including the introduction) to each group and ask them to mark the text ready for performance. Rehearse and make revisions ready to perform to the class in turn. Less experienced readers or performers will need more adult support but it is important that the children benefit from mixed ability groupings.
- Read aloud the introduction then have the children perform the sections of the poem in order, watching other groups carefully. Evaluate and compare performances, commenting on

particularly successful elements in the performances as well as considering new ideas. Refer back to the way in which the presentation of the poem as well as the language used and the rhyming pattern has impacted on the children's decisions around their performances.

- The children could go on to refine their performances following this response session.

### Extended Session: Composing poetry – list poem

*Poetic form is often a big obstacle to children who are beginning to write poetry. This is because a lot of people's ideas of what a poem ought to look like are based on traditional poetry, with its regular verse forms and strict rhyme schemes. It is important that we encourage children to pay attention to the content of their writing rather than forming too rigid an attachment to form, particularly rhyme. You might like children to ignore form completely and have them focus completely on the experience they want to write about; the resulting poem taking its own shape. Another way still is to recognize the importance of pattern in poetry by introducing children to certain forms which are less technically demanding in rhyme and regular metre, but which can be used to shape experience and may even provide an extra stimulus for writing. This collection of poems will support a teacher's repertoire of poetic forms, including talking poems and lists.*

#### Poem: I AM ANGRY (pp.38-39)

- In preparing for this piece of creative writing, read aloud a range of books and stories that are similar in theme, such as Hiawyn Oram and Satoshi Kitamura's *Angry Arthur* or *The Bad-tempered Ladybird* by Eric Carle or poems like *The No No Bird* in the anthology *Here's a Little Poem* collected by Jane Yolen and Andrew Fusek Peters, illustrated by Polly Dunbar
- Engage children and their families to share stories of tantrums that the children might have had in the past that are memorable, either because they were particularly dramatic or humorous in hindsight. It will be more palatable to the children to talk about episodes from further back in their childhood rather than having to discuss more recent events so perhaps guide this by asking them to think back to being two or three years old.
- You might like to take small groups of children into a nearby Children's Centre, Nursery or Toddler Playgroup so that the children can benefit from observing very young children interact with each other and with their grown ups. This might be the start of a longer term project in which the children could form partnerships with younger children to ease their transition into school whilst your older children develop crucial social and emotional skills. Children could play with, observe and record what they see and hear in the setting, reporting their findings back to the class later. They might use technology to film or voice record the younger children's utterances which may prove interesting or humorous and certainly material from which to draw when composing poetry about the experience of toddlers.
- Begin to collect words and phrases that the children can use to describe how they feel when they are angry or what they observe in others. *What does feeling angry and frustrated make you want to do?* Give the children plenty of opportunity to share and collect ideas with family, peers and in response to wider literature. Support the children's ability to express and manage

these feelings as part of wider cross-curricular work.

- Reflect on the artwork inspired by this poem and consider how Rosen has created precise imagery through the idea of a series of threatened and spectacular actions that are easily conceived yet not necessarily manageable in real life.
- You might cut the poem up into individual threats and the children could consider which expressions are more dramatic than others, playing around with their order to develop a sense of escalation, reading aloud and comparing their choices to the poet's. You might return to discussing the way in which he plays with language and uses poetic devices to create effects when the poem is read aloud.
- Ask each of the children to compose a threat of their own, adopting the language structure of simple present tense for a threatened future action, in keeping with mood of the poem and inspired by the various stimuli and language collecting thus far. This could be written, scribed or mediated by an adult on to a strip of paper in tones of red. Some children may benefit from further support by enacting the action or revisiting the collected words and phrases on display.
- This might be an ideal opportunity to introduce the children to formulaic phrases and saying in the English language that could be incorporated in the new poem, e.g. *burn your bridges, stop the clocks*.
- Ask the children to collaborate to arrange each of their lines to create a group poem - using a simple structure, inspired by Michael Rosen's poem, for example:

#### I AM ANGRY

- *'I am angry. really angry. angry,*
  - *angry, angry. I am so angry*
  - *I'll jump up and down. I'll roll on the ground...*
  - *Tear down curtains.*
  - *Burn your bridges.*
  - *Squash clouds.*
  - *Smash the lights.*
  - *And then go to Bed*
- The children can collaborate to make simple revisions to their lines so that they flow, reading aloud and re-reading until they feel the verse is cohesive. Some children might be able to identify opportunities to employ alliteration or assonance to create effect. Others may enjoy emulating the rhyming couplet pattern in the original poem but this is not necessary. It is important that children who are starting their journey into poetry have opportunity to work freely and enjoy it as a means of self expression.
  - Each group could rehearse and perform their poem to the larger group, discussing aspects of their poetry that they enjoyed listening to or performing.
  - In publishing the final draft of their poems, the children could play with handwritten or typed font style and size on the text of the poem, emulating that in the book and illustrate them in a

style similar to Chris Riddell or even use photographs of themselves in angry poses and their previous artwork to enhance presentation and lift meaning for their readers

### Creating a Poetry-writing Friendly Classroom

- Children could go on to read, collect and create a series of poems which express a range of emotions or speak to us of relatable childhood experiences, guided by sessions similar to these.
- Poems and illustrations in the collection that could stimulate similar learning experiences to *LOST* and *I AM ANGRY* are:
  - *I AM HUNGRY*
  - *ARE YOU LISTENING?*
  - *I DON'T WANT*
  - *LET ME DO IT*
  - *YOU CAN'T SEE ME*
- Children could be provided with a personal poetry journal of their own in which they could sketch ideas through drawings, observations and creative writing.

### Broadening experience of poetry - creating an anthology: Poems About the Very Young

*The kind of poetry books children are most familiar with will be anthologies, and these can take many forms. Putting an anthology together, as an audio collection or in book form, is a very pleasurable activity which can go on the whole period of time when the class is working on a theme. It may also be a good opportunity for calligraphy, as children write their chosen poems out themselves. Or you may want to produce the anthologies in typed or printed form for the book corner. As children complete their anthologies they have to take decisions about how the poems should be juxtaposed, and what order they should come in. Children might be encouraged to write a commentary to go between the poems, explaining why each one was chosen and how it connects with the theme.*

- The class could also go on to create an anthology of poems about childhood experiences, taking poems from a range of poetry books and adding to their own anthology.
- Conduct a library session during which the children are able to browse the poetry section and make choices as to the content of their own anthology. Try to provide poetry collections that the children choose from rather than ready-made anthologies so they are making genuine choices and the children's anthology feels more authentic.
- Children can make handmade books, e-books or publish their anthologies in a prepared journal that can be illustrated and the poems word-processed or handwritten neatly for presentation.
- Provide the children with a range of art materials and be prepared to model techniques

employed by their favourite illustrators as this is as much a part of the anthology as the poem.

### Part 3: Words belong to us

*This section provides opportunity for children to lift the poems off the page and revel in the language play. The poems in the collection demand to be read aloud and heard by the children, bringing alive the rhythm and the meaning. Children will delight in hearing the sounds the words make, chiming in and feeling the words in their mouths; playing with them for their own enjoyment rather like, as Allan Ahlberg says in his introduction to his poem 'Ping Pong Song' (film on Poetryline), 'playing with a ball of plasticine and rolling it into different shapes.' Children can talk about how, for instance, nonsense words can be chosen for pure pleasure, can convey meaning through association with known words and language structures, and poetic devices can be used to make words memorable. There is ample opportunity for the children to perform the poems and revisit them in a range of ways, allowing them to experience poetry as 'memorable speech' (W.H. Auden).*

#### Building on prior experiences:

- Before beginning this part of the sequence, ensure your children are provided experiences of hearing and joining in with nursery rhymes and songs with strong beats and memorable refrains. Make rhyme and song central to the curriculum, making up jingles relating to everyday experiences, observations and routines and chanting them together.
- *Provide the foundations for learning around poetry by modelling having fun with language, playing with sounds, and innovating familiar rhymes for amusement and purpose. Support children's growing sense of rhythm and explore the musicality of language through a growing repertoire of poetry, rhyme and song.*
- *Develop children's articulation of sounds through rhyme and song, encouraging them to talk about how the sounds feel in their mouths as they enunciate them. If playing with sounds or exploring alliteration and tongue twisters, elicit ways in which the sequence of words can be expressed by controlling the pace and muscles in the mouth. Provide children with opportunities to sing songs that broaden and develop their vocal range as well as the phonemes they encounter in the English language. Ask them to describe the sounds they make and hear with both their voices and instruments.*

#### Session 1: Reading aloud and Responding

**SUGGESTED POEMS: TIPPY-TAPPY (pp.0-1), THE BUTTON BOP (pp.2-3), MUSIC (pp.10-11), WHAT A FANDANGO! (pp.22-23), MR. HOBSON-JOBSON SAYS (pp.36-37), I DON'T WANT (pp.46-47)**

- Build in regular opportunities for the children to hear poetry read aloud, lifting not only the meaning but also the enjoyment in the spoken sounds off the page.
- Engage the children in responding to the poetry:
  - *Tell me...was there anything you liked about this poem? Why?*
  - *Was there anything that you particularly disliked...? Why?*
  - *Was there anything that puzzled you?*
  - *Were there any words or phrases that you liked the sound of? Why is that?*
  - *Were there any patterns...any connections that you noticed in the words...the rhythm or rhyme?*
- Re-read and revisit the poems with the children and give them plenty of opportunity to share the poems with each other.
- The children will soon pick up the patterns of sound in the poetic language and enjoy moving their bodies to the rhythm of the poems and express a steady beat or create sound effects through body percussion. Provide tuned and percussion instruments so that the children can explore performing alongside the poem read aloud, creating sounds, movement and gestures resonant of the repeated phonemes in the words.
- Encourage the children to chime in with memorable words, phrases or repeated refrain and as they begin to familiarise themselves with hearing it read, provide them with the book so that they can tune in to the familiar print.
- As children join in or talk about words or phrases that they like the sound of, ask them to consider how the words actually *feel* as they mouth them. Nonsense words might be chosen by poets for a range of reasons, one being to develop pleasure in saying them in poetry and hearing the way they sound in relation to other chosen words. Taking pleasure in the feel and sound of real and imagined words enables all children to access poetry and engenders in children an enjoyment of language that will stay with them in all their literary endeavours.
- Once the poems have been heard and read for enjoyment, they can help support children to develop an appreciation of the patterns in words by introducing them to 'onset and rime', i.e. the comparable spelling patterns visible in printed words from the first vowel onwards, e.g. *tippy, nippy, stippy, pippy, lippy, dippy, mippy, hippy, kippy, ippy*. Providing children with opportunities to explore rhyme and analogy will enable them to develop analytic methods of contextualising phonics and therefore increase their accuracy in decoding and spelling within the complexities of the English language.

## Session 2: Responding to illustration, Reading aloud and Responding to poetry

### POEM: LET ME DO IT (pp. 62-65)

- Without revealing the title, the poem or the final illustration with the moon, show the children the illustrations from the first three pages of the spreads, involving the pan of beans, the balloon, the ball, the jar and the toy car. Elicit the children's responses, scribing them around



copies of the illustration in the class poetry journal:

- *Who is this? What do you think you know about the character? What makes you think this?*
- *How is the character feeling?*
- *What is happening? What might happen next? Why?*
- *Does it remind you of anyone you know in real life or stories?*
- *Do you have any questions?*
- *What do you think this poem is going to be about?*
- You could create a role on the wall of the character at this stage, drawing an enlarged outline version of one of the illustrations and on the outside recording what the children can say for sure about the appearance of the character and on the inside, what they infer from the behaviour they observe so far to record ideas around personality. This can be revisited as the children learn more through hearing the poem itself.
- Show the children the title, *LET ME DO IT*, ensuring the children understand what the ‘L’ sign means and discussing its significance here. *Why has Chris Riddell drawn a learner sign within the title of this poem? Who is the learner? What do you think is going to happen if or when this character tries to do things for itself? What makes you think that?*
- Watch Michael Rosen taking on the voice of the child and savouring the language as he performs this poem on his YouTube channel:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIER8vwq8g8>. *Is it what you expected from the illustrations? What do you like / dislike about the poem? Why? Why not?*
- Swiftly re-read it aloud, this time, asking the children to listen out for anything that sounds interesting or unusual.
- Ask the children to talk about what they noticed in pairs then encourage them to share their ideas more widely. Elicit the children’s responses and show them an enlarge version of the illustrated poem on the IWB so that they can identify the mixed up verbs in the verse lines and read them aloud with support, e.g. *Let me cook the beans...Let me drive the beans...Let me kick the beans...*
- Re-read the poem aloud as many times as the children find enjoyable, encouraging them to chime in with the repeated refrain and any other memorable words and phrases. Once the children have experienced the enjoyment of reading aloud the mixed up lines, ask them why they think the poet has done this. Return to the role on the wall or the children’s initial responses to illustration to support them to make the connections between the muddled text and the way in which a small child, insistent on doing things independently, may not yet have the skills to carry out the tasks without getting in a muddle. This is a wonderful demonstration to the children that the word choices and humorous effect are a deliberate choice, in this instance reflective of the characteristic being illustrated.
- The children could go on to use their observations of younger children or memories in their own lives to write a new line depicting an act of independence, e.g. *Let me shut the door...Let me zip my coat*. Children could collaborate to create a new four line verse in which they can

substitute the verbs to create a poem, using the repeated refrain between each verse in the structure of the original poem, e.g.:

*Let me do it, let me do it  
 Let me blow up the balloon  
 Let me do it, let me do it  
 Let me go to the moon  
 Let me plant the seeds  
 Let me shut the door  
 Let me zip my coat  
 Let me turn the key  
 Let me do it, let me do it  
 Let me blow up the balloon  
 Let me do it, let me do it  
 Let me go to the moon  
 Let me turn the seeds  
 Let me zip the door  
 Let me shut my coat  
 Let me plant the key  
 Let me do it, let me do it  
 Let me blow up the balloon  
 Let me do it, let me do it  
 Let me go to the moon  
 etc.*

- Poems could be published in a class anthology or in individual handmade zig-zag books, illustrated in the style of Chris Riddell.
- Read aloud poems for like *GRUFF AND DAVE* (pp.52-53) for enjoyment and pleasure in the language play.

### Session 3: Reading aloud and Performance Reading

#### POEM: OH DEAR (pp.48-49)

- Read the title initially and ask the children what they think this poem will be about and why they think that. Scribe ideas in the class journal.
- Watch Michael Rosen perform the whole poem enabling the children to see the intended rhythm and intonation.
- Re-read it aloud again, encouraging the children to chime in with and enjoy expressing the repeated refrain and any other memorable words or phrases. The children will respond well to a repeated action like a hand to the head when reading *Oh dear!* Or hands on hip and shaking heads rhythmically alongside *No I do NOT!* As you read, pause at the rhyming words to enable the children to pre-empt the silly thing being given by the shopkeepers.
- Provide opportunities for the children to perform the poem, perhaps allocating a verse to each small group and asking them to think about the way in which they can use vocal expression,

gesture, intonation, role play and interaction with the audience to tell the exasperating story of each unfortunate visit to the shop.

- Groups could perform their verse in the order it appears in the poem with the whole class reading the repeated refrain in unison for impact.
- You could show Michael Rosen performing his poem, *Down Behind the Dustbin*, in which he pauses to invite the audience to participate and join in with the last rhyming word with hilarious results:
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eL6VB56RxPM>
- Provide regular opportunity to play around with rhyming couplets, asking the children to invent increasingly silly rhymes.

#### Session 4: Reading aloud, Visualising and Artwork and Storymapping

**POEM: ONCE** (pp.32-35)

- Read the poem to the children without showing them the printed poem or the accompanying illustration in the book. Ask them to close their eyes and picture the poem in their minds as you read it aloud. The children can also listen to Michael Rosen perform this poem on his YouTube channel (again, hide the image): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CelwbH4PZSO>
- Elicit the children's responses to the poem:
  - *Who is the poem about? What are their names? What are they like? How do you know?*
  - *What happens in the poem? What is the story?*
  - *What do you think a Berrible looks like? What makes you think that?*
  - *Are there any words or phrases that you like? Why is that?*
  - *Is there anything special about this poem?*
  - *Does it remind you of any other poems or stories that you know? Why?*
- Draw out the relationship between the nonsense words used and the meaning they are intended to support, e.g. *Berrible* sounds like 'terrible' so it will likely conjure up unpleasant images whereas *Gom*, *Flom* and *Chom* are resonant of words a tiny child uses before learning to enunciate, in keeping with their dependence on their mother. Even nonsense words are carefully chosen by poets to create enjoyment for the reader and support meaning through the connections we make to known language and sounds.
- Provide the children with a range of art materials and large scale paper upon which the children can draw what they imagine they see in their mind's eye as you re-read aloud, as many times as they need so that they can add detail and descriptive annotations.
- Reveal the illustrations of the characters on the IWB, asking the children to discuss if this is what they expected and drawing comparisons with their own depictions of the characters. Many of the children will have created artwork that in some way maps the events or the setting in the story whilst Chris Riddell has chosen to depict the characters in white space

again. Consider why this might be and take the opportunity to browse the collection to see if this is a recurring theme in his illustrations of the poems.

- Ask the children to work collaboratively on creating a story map, exchanging ideas and sharing what they understand of the unfolding events in the narrative poem, lifting dialogue and description from the poem to add detail to the map. Have the children use the storymap to retell and re-enact the story.
- The children could also use props or small world and even recreate scenes using a poetrybox. Discuss the settings that the children imagined the Gom, Flom and Chom would live with their mom and where they drew their imagery given that it isn't described in either the poem or the illustration. Each box could represent the children's individual interpretations with their own versions or Chris Riddell's characters as props with which to re-enact.
- Encourage the children to revisit and re-read the poem with adults and peers, tuning in to the print and using the storymaps or poetryboxes to enable them to begin to recite parts by heart. Talk about which parts of the poem are particularly memorable and why. Share ideas around creating triggers and using actions or intonation that support memorisation.

### Session 5: Reading aloud and Performance Reading

**POEM: ONCE** (pp.32-35)

- Create a display of the children's storymaps and use them to support a retelling of the narrative poem.
- Display an enlarged version of the printed poem and share reading it with the children, modelling memorable intonation and prosody and encouraging them to revel in the lines that they are beginning to know by heart.
- Ask the children which parts they visualised most vividly when they were drawing what they saw in their imaginations previously. Model text marking these particular lines to prepare for a performance reading, asking the children to consider vocal expression, sound effects, body percussion, use of instruments, actions and gesture, pitch and volume and how the reading will be organised within a group, e.g. in unison or in turns, etc.
- Practise the performance using the children's ideas and the marked text to support. Refine the performance after first responses.
- Have small groups of children take all or part of the poem and prepare a performance reading, negotiating, text marking and refining ideas.
- Children can perform to the wider group, commenting on successful aspects of each performance and making suggestions for refinement.
- Read the children other poems for pleasure that employ a similar rhythmic structure or contain similar word patterns, such as: *On the Ning Nang Nong* by Spike Milligan, *Ping Pong Song* by Allan Ahlberg and *The Owl and the Pussycat* by Edward Lear. Children can watch Ahlberg perform *Ping Pong Song* on Poetryline:  
<https://www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poets/ahlberg-allan>

### Drawing the learning together

- To draw together all the work done in this unit, hold a discussion about the collection as a whole.
  - *What are your most memorable poems? Why?*
  - *What have you learnt about poetry that you didn't know before?*
  - *Would you like to read more poetry after reading A GREAT BIG CUDDLE Poems for the Very Young? Why? Why not?*
- If you were to write a letter to the poet, what would you say about the collection? What questions would you ask him?
- You might like to find out more about Michael Rosen's other work, even invite him in to visit the children.

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