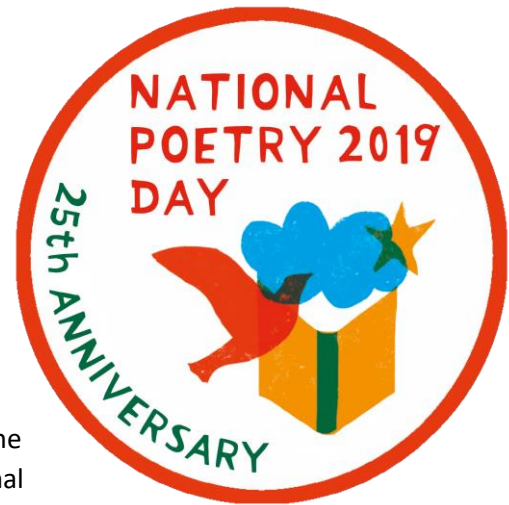


In Poetry, Truth: National Poetry Day and CLPE Writing Challenge

In association with CLPE and with the support of ALCS, National Poetry Day is launching a special nationwide poetry challenge for schools at the CLIPPA ceremony on Wednesday 3rd July. Picking up on the poetry excitement generated by the CLIPPA, MyNPDpoem will invite children – via their teachers and schools – to write a poem on the National Poetry Day 2019 theme of Truth and we'd like schools/teachers to share them on National Poetry Day, 3rd October, using #NationalPoetryDay or #MyNPDpoem.



Aims of the teaching notes:

- To explore and understand the importance of poetry as a genre
- To enable children to listen and respond to a wide range of poetry around the National Poetry Day theme of Truth
- To understand that poems are written for different reasons
- To understand how to interpret poems for performance
- To explore techniques to gain and maintain the interest of the listener during poetry performances
- To explore how the way poetry is presented on the page can enhance our understanding
- To draft, compose and write poems based on personal interests, experiences and emotions using language and form with intent and for effect on the reader around the theme of Truth.

These teaching notes are designed to be used with children in Years 1-6.

Overview of the Teaching Notes:

These teaching notes support schools in carrying out the National Poetry Day and CLPE writing challenge across the primary years. The notes begin with a whole school assembly to introduce National Poetry Day and the 2018 theme of Truth before exploring differentiated in-class activities for Years 1&2, Years 3&4 and Years 5&6.

After exploring poems written by different poets, the activities designed for each phase of the school will go on to focus on the different ways in which the poets explore language and concepts to discover different ideas linked to the theme of Truth. Throughout each bank of activities, pupils will respond to published poems in different ways and consider how performance can convey the meaning behind the words before dedicating time to drafting their own poetry.

Pupils will have the opportunity to read poetry, listen to poems being read, offer personal responses to the poems, prepare poems for performance and to write their own poetry.

Each sequence of activities builds up towards the chance for the class to write their own poems on the National Poetry Day 2018 theme of Truth. The pupils will have the opportunity to use the knowledge they have gained about form and structure throughout the sequence to decide how to present their poem on the page as well as consider how these could be performed to an audience.

The poems can go on to be shared with the wider school community in a variety of ways as suggested at the end of the notes.

Shared Experiences and Outcomes:

Teaching Approaches:

- Reading Aloud
- Listening to a variety of poems and sharing personal preferences
- Reading poems
- Deeper responses to poems
- Visualising and Drawing
- Shared writing of poems
- Independent poetry writing
- Response and editing
- Publishing poetry

Outcomes:

- Personal responses to individual poems
- Art and illustration related to poems studied
- Poetry performance
- Text marking
- Written responses to poems studied
- Drafts and redrafts of own written poetry
- Published poems

Whole School Introduction to National Poetry Day:

Explain to the children that the first Thursday in October (this year, on the 3rd October) marks a special day in the calendar, National Poetry Day. Talk to the children about poetry. What do they already know about poetry? What favourite poems do they have? What poets do they know? Why might it be considered important to have a day that is especially dedicated to poetry? Listen to and take note of the children's responses, then following the session, allocate a display table or board somewhere prominent in the school as a poetry corner. Display examples of children's favourite poems or collections to share and discuss, and other collections or anthologies to broaden their choices, ensuring each class has a time when they can see this display and borrow books on show to share in their own classes.

Share with the children that the theme of National Poetry Day in 2019 is Truth. What does this word mean to the children? Explore different meanings and understandings of this word.

Share the National Poetry Day video that introduces the writing challenge and explain that all year groups will be writing their own poems around the theme of Truth to take part in this special writing challenge. They will listen to, read, perform, talk about and respond to specific poems in their classes and at the end, they will be writing and/or publishing their own poems on the theme of Truth.

What do they think poems around the theme of Truth might be about? Play a performance of Roger McGough's 'Give and Take', from *All The Best*, illustrated by Lydia Monks, Puffin: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/give-and-take>. Explore how he has interpreted the theme of Truth. What is the truth that underpins this poem? Why do you think he chose to write it? Now ask the children to suggest all the different types of truths that might exist that they can think of. Roger McGough chose to share a truth about the environment, what else might we share truths about? Encourage the children to think as widely as they can and note their ideas on a flip chart.

Leave the children with performances from two other CLiPPA shortlisted poets, Rachel Rooney and Philip Gross, around the theme, which could also be talked about back in classes:

Teaching notes for Years 1&2:

Focus poems:

- 'This is the city' by Kathy Henderson (from *The Dragon with a Big Nose*, Frances Lincoln): <https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/city>
- 'I Am Angry!' by Michael Rosen (from *A Great Big Cuddle* by Michael Rosen, illustrated by Chris Riddell, Walker): <https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/i-am-angry>.
- 'Lost' by Michael Rosen (from *A Great Big Cuddle* by Michael Rosen, illustrated by Chris Riddell, Walker): <https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/lost>
- 'Seeing Granny' by James Berry (from *Only One of Me* by James Berry, Macmillan): : <https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/seeing-granny>

Session 1: The Truth About Places

Watch Kathy Henderson perform the poem 'This is the city':

<https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/city>. Allow time for the children to talk about their initial responses. What did they like? Dislike? What questions do they have? What connections do they make with real life experiences or other things they have seen or read? How do the children think it relates to the National Poetry Day theme of Truth? What is she sharing the truth about? Make notes of significant responses on post-it notes which can be placed around a large copy of the text on a working wall display.

Now share a large copy of the text of the poem and re-read the poem two or three times to the children. Ask them this time to think about the pictures they see in their mind as the poem is read. Now give the children access to some quick drawing materials such as pastels and read the poem a third time, allowing the children to draw a significant image that they see as the poem is read. This may be a drawing of something specific based on language in the text, such as the buildings or the cars, or more abstract shapes and colours that they feel the poem represents. Draw alongside the children as they work, under a visualiser if you have one available. Stick the children's artwork up around the room and allow the children time and space to walk around and look at each other's interpretations, discussing similarities and differences.

Come back to the poem a final time and talk about what the poem means to the children. What words, phrases or stanzas were most powerful to the children when creating their images? What did Kathy Henderson do to help us visualise the place and feel like we were there? Highlight examples of effective language on the large copy and annotate with the children's thoughts and ideas.

Now help the children discuss the truth about a place that is special to them. This may be their own village, town or city, their school or their house. What would they tell someone else about this place? Model how to write an alternative poem, drawing on what they found effective in Kathy Henderson's

work. If the children are confident, they may wish to go on to write poems of their own based on places special to them.

Session 2: The Truth About Feelings

Begin this session by watching Michael Rosen perform 'I Am Angry!':

<https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/i-am-angry>.

Allow time for the children to talk about their initial responses. What were they thinking of as the poem was read? How did it make them feel? What did they like? Dislike? What questions do they have? What connections do they make with real life experiences or other things they have seen or read? Make notes of significant responses on post-it notes which can be placed around a large copy of the text on a working wall display.

Now compare this to his performance of 'Lost': <https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/lost>. How do your thoughts and feelings about this poem compare to the last poem? What changed the way you felt about the poem? Can they remember a time where they or someone else has ever felt this way? How do the children think both of these poems relates to the National Poetry Day theme of Truth? Do you think its beneficial for the characters in these poems to be truthful about the way they are feeling? How might it help them? You may want to link this to a wider discussion around the benefits of recognising and sharing emotions as part of personal, social and emotional development.

Come back to look at the poem on the page. What did Michael Rosen do to highlight the emotion the character was feeling? What words, phrases or lines were most powerful to the children in sharing the emotion? Highlight examples of effective language on the large copy and annotate with the children's thoughts and ideas.

Next, give time for the children to work up one of these poems for performance. Would it be best performed individually, in pairs or as a group? How will you pace the performance? How will you use your voice(s) to help convey the emotions felt? Will you use your voices, faces or bodies to help with the storytelling? Give time for the pupils to build up their poems, text marking with performance notes and ideas, practising, editing and polishing to a finished performance.

Give time for the pupils to watch, reflect on and evaluate each other's performances. What did each interpretation add to your understanding of the narrative? Could you feel the emotions experienced by the characters?

You could move on to discussing other feelings and emotions, e.g. being happy, worried, surprised etc. Model how to write an alternative poem, drawing on what they found effective in Michael Rosen's work. This could be making a list poem in the style of 'I Am Angry!', or diving into a specific moment like in 'Lost'. If the children are confident, they may wish to go on to write poems of their own based on other emotions they have experienced.

Session 3: The Truth About People

Begin this session by watching James Berry perform 'Seeing Granny':

<https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/seeing-granny>

Allow time for the children to talk about their initial responses. What were they thinking of as the poem was read? How did it make them feel? What did they like? Dislike? What questions do they have? Did it remind them of anyone in their own lives? What connections do they make with real life experiences or other things they have seen or read?

Now look at the poem on the page. Read it aloud to the children and discuss the poem together. What do you think about the character of Granny? What is she like? How would you describe her? What is in the poem to make you think or feel like this? Look at how the poet recalls actions or events that make us feel the way we do about her? Text mark words and phrases in the poem that help us build a picture of the person and annotate a copy of the poem with the children's thoughts, questions and ideas. Look at the way the poet repeats the word *she* throughout the poem, what effect does listing all of the things she does have on you?

Now come together to think of someone that is special to all the children. This might be a teaching assistant, lunchtime supervisor, another teacher in the school. Ask the children to close their eyes and picture the person, or a specific memory they have about the person. What would we say about this person to describe them to someone else? What things would help show a picture of what the person was like rather than just telling them, e.g. that he or she is kind or happy? If the children are confident, they may wish to go on to write poems of their own based on people that are special to them.

Session 4: Finding our own Truths

Reflect on all the poems that have been shared so far. It would be a good idea to conduct a 'poetry papering' exercise where you copy all the poems and blu-tac them up on the walls around the classroom, allowing the children to walk round, re-reading and remembering and choosing the ones they liked best. You could give them post-its to write their names on and stick on the poems they liked most – to allow them to really think critically about their choices, you might want to give just one or two to each child.

Give time and space for the children to talk about the poems they have selected, talking about why they have chosen the ones they did. You could ask them to write short explanations for their choices and stick these around copies of the poems in the shared journal, or on the display. Were some poems more popular than others? Why was this? What do they think they have learnt about poetry from looking at these poems and the activities they have done? How do they feel about poetry? Do they enjoy listening to it? Performing it? Writing it?

Talk about the poems they have created so far; which ones do they like best? What else might they write about that could link to the theme of Truth, what else could this mean? Show the children how you as a writer come up with ideas and poetic language inspired by experiences you have had, things around you or your own imagination. Demonstrate how you use these to draft initial ideas, making additions, changes and improvements as you write. Share attempts through reading aloud to experience how the poem sounds off the page and collect responses from the children and then explore how to redraft for publication, thinking about how the poem looks on the page. Allow the children time and space to go through this process with their own poems, either working up one they have already started in one of the sessions or creating a new one, giving time for you as the teacher or other children to respond to their poems, making changes or additions and re-drafting if necessary. You may also be inspired by hearing advice from some of the poets studied, e.g.

Michaela Morgan's advice for young poets: <https://vimeo.com/218382695>

Rachel Rooney's advice for young poets: <https://vimeo.com/162519398>

When the words sound right to the children, you may also want to look at how they have arranged these on the page, going back to the original poems for support. How might they separate the lines and sections of their work? Could they illustrate these with drawings or photographs? Where might the words sit in relation to their illustrations? Model this, using your own poem and illustration. When children are happy, have them write up their finished poems for publication. This can be a wonderful opportunity to focus on presentation handwriting or to use a word processor to type and experiment with layout.

Teaching notes for Years 3&4:

Focus poems:

'The Newcomers' by Michael Rosen (from *Quick, Let's Get Out of Here* by Michael Rosen, Puffin):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RP39GZ8TjfY>

'Truth or Dare?' by Rachel Rooney: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iEwUulbQrE>

'For Forest' by Grace Nichols (from *A Caribbean Dozen* ed. John Agard and Grace Nichols, Walker):

<https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/forest>

Session 1: The Truth about People

Watch Michael Rosen perform his poem 'The Newcomers':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RP39GZ8TjfY>. Allow time for the children to talk about their initial responses. What were they thinking of as the poem was read? How did it make them feel? What did they like? Dislike? What questions do they have? What connections do they make with real life experiences or other things they have seen or read? How do the children think it relates to the National Poetry Day theme of Truth? Make notes of significant responses on post-it notes which can be placed around a large copy of the text on a working wall display.

Now share a large scale copy of the poem with the children, on an IWB if possible, reading again and allowing them to follow the words in the text. Explore the use of enjambment, the running-over of a sentence or phrase from one poetic line to the next, without terminal punctuation, and model how not to pause between the stanzas where this occurs.

Re-read the poem and consider what Michael says about why he used repetition. Did you notice this? Did you think this was effective in making you feel the love he had for the jacket? What else in the poem focuses your attention on his love for the jacket? Look at how he juxtaposes:

*a few old papers,
a few old photos*

with

*and - oh yes -
a hulky bulky thick checked jacket*

Give mixed groups of children time to work up the poem for performance. Would it be best performed individually, in pairs or as a group? How will you pace the performance? How will you use your voice(s) to help share a clear picture of this moment? Will you use any movement or action? Will you emphasise the rhythm in the words? Give time for the pupils to build up their poems, text marking with performance notes and ideas, practising, editing and polishing to a finished performance.

Give time for the pupils to watch, reflect on and evaluate each other's performances. What did each interpretation add to your understanding of the poem?

To finish the session, give each child a small notebook that they can use as a poetry journal throughout this sequence. These could be handmade. Talk about how many poets keep a notebook to jot down ideas that they could use to build up into poems. You can hear poet Joseph Coelho talk about this here: <https://vimeo.com/130340837>. Allow them time to think of something, someone or somewhere that is special to them. How can you write about it in a poem that shows the reader how you truly feel or felt about it or them without directly telling them in the way Michael Rosen does here? It might help to visualise the object, person or place first in your mind's eye, and then write down your thoughts and feelings before building your ideas into a poem.

Session 2: Truth or Dare?

Begin this session with watching Rachel Rooney perform 'Truth or Dare?':

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

Discuss whether the children were aware of the game of truth or dare, checking they understand the concepts involved before re-reading and looking at the poem on the page. What does it make them think? How does it make them feel? Make notes of significant responses around a large copy of the text on a working wall display.

Look at how she has arranged the stanzas, with each one giving the choice between the truth question and the dare to complete if you don't want to answer. How would you feel about the choices you were given, would you want to play this game? Do you think everyone would?

Ask the children to think about how they could write a response to this poem. They could write as themselves or a fictional character - an 'I' - about how they feel while they are sitting in the circle before or as the game is being played. They could think of questions and dares for their own truth or dare poem and arrange these in stanzas as the poet has done. They may also wish to write more freely about a time they've been faced with a question they don't want to answer or a challenge they haven't wanted to complete and the feelings associated with this.

Once they have had time to work on their compositions, give the children time to read them aloud to check for flow and meaning and make any edits they feel are needed. The poems could then be worked up for publishing, either using presentation handwriting or ICT, or prepared for a performance.

Session 3: The Truth About Nature

Listen to Grace Nichols perform the poem 'For Forest', accompanied by John Agard:

<https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/forest>

What did they visualise or feel as the poem was read? What did they like? Dislike? What questions do they have? What connections do they make with real life experiences or other things they have seen

or read or in other texts, films or poems? Make notes of significant responses around a large copy of the text on a working wall display.

Now re-read the poem to the children. Ask them this time to think about the colours and pictures they see in their mind as the poem is read. Now give the children access to some quick drawing materials such as pastels and read the poem a third time, allowing the children to draw a significant image that they see as the poem is read. This may be a drawing of something specific based on language in the text, such as the leaves of the forest, the howler monkeys, water, or more abstract shapes and colours that they feel the poem represents. Draw alongside the children as they work, under a visualiser if you have one available. Stick your own and the children's artwork up around the room and allow the children time and space to walk around and look at each other's interpretations, discussing similarities and differences. What are the recurring images, themes and colours? Why do you think this is? What does this poem mean to you? What feelings and thoughts does it leave you with after hearing it re-read and completing the drawing exercise? Allow time for the children to feedback responses, scribing ideas around a large scale copy of the poem.

Now re-read the poem again, allowing the children to follow the text. What language has the poet used to allow us to feel the threat to and empathy towards the forest? The children may identify phrases such as: *darkness wrap her like a gown, forest is bad dream woman, forest dreaming of the caress of gold, forest rooting with mysterious eldorado*. Explore the use of simile and metaphor to create a powerful picture of the forest and look at what is being inferred as to the dual 'wealth' of the forest. Why is the forest rich for nature and for others? Why '*we must keep forest*'? Why do you think '*forest don't broadcast her business*' and '*forest keep her business down*'? How do you think it relates to the National Poetry Day theme of Truth? What do you think the truth is about the forest?

They could go on to compare this to 'Give or Take' by Roger McGough and explore other ideas for poems based on the truth of the human impact on our environment. This could link to the recent climate change protests, or messages on plastic pollution that the children may have seen on the BBC programme, *Blue Planet 2*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unOqVELbTr0> or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_HBgvmrhGU

Session 4: Finding our own Truths

Reflect on all the poems that have been shared so far. It would be a good idea to conduct a 'poetry papering' exercise where you copy all the poems and blu-tac them up on the walls around the classroom, allowing the children to walk round, re-reading and remembering and choosing the ones they liked best. You could give them post-its to write their names on and stick on the poems they liked most – to allow them to really think critically about their choices, you might want to give just one or two to each child.

Give time and space for the children to talk about the poems they have selected, talking about why they have chosen the ones they did. You could ask them to write short explanations for their choices

and stick these around copies of the poems in the shared journal, or on the display. Were some poems more popular than others? Why was this? What do they think they have learnt about poetry from looking at these poems and the activities they have done? How do they feel about poetry? Do they enjoy listening to it? Performing it? Writing it?

Talk about the poems they have created so far; which ones do they like best? What else might they write about that could link to the theme of Truth, what else could this mean? Show the children how you as a writer come up with ideas and poetic language inspired by experiences you have had, things around you or your own imagination. Demonstrate how you use these to draft initial ideas, making additions, changes and improvements as you write. Share attempts through reading aloud to experience how the poem sounds off the page and collect responses from the children and then explore how to redraft for publication, thinking about how the poem looks on the page. Allow the children time and space to go through this process with their own poems, either working up one they have already started in one of the sessions or creating a new one, giving time for you as the teacher or other children to respond to their poems, making changes or additions and re-drafting if necessary. You may also be inspired by hearing advice from some of the poets studied, e.g.

Kate Wakeling – How do you go about writing your poetry?: <https://vimeo.com/218278922>

Joseph Coelho – How do you work on your poems?: <https://vimeo.com/130341918>

When the words sound right to the children, you may also want to look at how they have arranged these on the page, going back to the original poems for support. How might they separate the lines and sections of their work? Could they illustrate these with drawings or photographs of themselves engaged in play with the element? Where might the words sit in relation to their illustrations? Model this, using your own poem and illustration. When children are happy, have them write up their finished poems for publication. This can be a wonderful opportunity to focus on presentation handwriting or to use a word processor to type and experiment with layout.

Teaching notes for Years 5&6:

Focus poems:

'A Poem for January' by Joseph Coelho (from *A Year of Nature Poems* by Joseph Coelho, illustrated by Kelly Louise Judd, Wide Eyed Editions): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lvHQ81K2wI>

'The Misinformation Age' by Karl Nova: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPgEv5nLfTc>

'Dada's Stories' by Joseph Coelho (from *Werewolf Club Rules* by Joseph Coelho, Frances Lincoln): <https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/s/dada>

'Miss Flotsam' by Joseph Coelho (from *Werewolf Club Rules* by Joseph Coelho, Frances Lincoln): <https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/miss-flotsam>

Session 1: The Truth About The Natural World

Listen to poet Joseph Coelho read 'A Poem for January':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lvHQ81K2wI>. Allow time for the children to talk about their initial responses. What were they thinking about as the poem was read? How did it make them feel? What did they like? Dislike? What questions do they have? What connections do they make with real life experiences or other things they have seen or read? Make notes of significant responses on post-it notes which can be placed around a large copy of the text on a working wall display.

Re-read the poem and give mixed groups, pairs or individuals a larger scale copy of the poem to discuss, text mark and annotate with responses. This might be language they think is effective or needs clarification, comments or questions about phrases or parts of the poem, personal connections or ideas about what the poem means to them, or comments about the illustration.

Allow time for the children to feed back their own responses. Do everyone else's observations match their own? Does it matter if they are different? Explore how poetry can mean different things to different people and how our personal responses to poems read can be different based on our own personal experiences.

Now give time for the children to work up the poem for performance. Children could be given the choice to work in groups, pairs or individually. Allow time for the children to discuss ways of working, taking control and making independent decisions about how this would best enhance the meaning. Would it be best performed individually, in pairs or as a group? How will you pace the performance? How will you use your voice(s) to help share the meaning and emotions behind the words? Will you use any movement or action? Will you emphasise the rhythm in the words? Give time for the pupils to build up their poems, text marking with performance notes and ideas, practising, editing and polishing to a finished performance.

Give time for the pupils to watch, reflect on and evaluate each other's performances, this could be done in the order the poems come up in the text. What did each interpretation add to your understanding of the narrative? What did performance make you think and feel about the poem that you didn't think before?

Look back at the poem and think about the figurative language Joseph Coelho has used to describe the starlings. What do you know about them from the poem? If the children have not seen a murmuration of starlings and do not know what they look like, allow time for them to watch videos and look at photographs of starlings so that the language of the poem makes sense to them. They may pick out how verbs and adverbs allow us to picture their movements; metaphorical phrases like cloaked in oil slicks describe the sheen of their feathers or how descriptive phrases such as:

needle-beaked
and strong of claw

give us a sense of their power. How do the children think it relates to the National Poetry Day theme of Truth? Discuss the children's responses and make a note of significant observations around a large scale copy of the poem.

Give each child a small notebook that they can use as a poetry journal throughout this sequence. These could be handmade. You could watch a video of a poet talking about their writing process to put this idea into context, for example how poet Aoife Mannix talks about the importance of keeping a notebook for ideas in this video: <https://vimeo.com/162508641>

To finish the session, allow children to pick an aspect of nature that interests them and draw on some of the poetic devices used by Joseph Coelho to write their own poem about the natural world. It could be a creature, a naturally occurring event, an aspect of seasonal change or an element of environmental change

Session 2: The Truth about the World

Begin the session by listening to Karl Nova perform 'The Misinformation Age':
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPgEv5nLfTc>

Allow time for the children to talk about their initial responses. What did they think or feel as it was read? What did they like? Dislike? What questions do they have? What connections do they make with real life experiences or other things they have seen or read? Make notes of significant responses on post-it notes which can be placed around a large copy of the text on a working wall display.

When you listened to the poem, what did it make you think about? How did it make you feel? How do the children think it relates to the National Poetry Day theme of Truth? Why do you think he wanted to write this poem at this particular time? How do you think the poet felt as he wrote the poem? How can we tell through the words and phrases he uses?

Allow children to discuss the poem in pairs or small groups, giving them access to a copy of the poem to text mark and annotate as they discuss their ideas. Come back together to talk about what the children noted and their extended thoughts and ideas about the poem. Investigate the way in which Karl Nova juxtaposes ideas in lines like:

We have a lot of information but very little truth

And

*We have a lot of information
but little revelation*

Why do you think he has done this? What impact does this have on you as a reader?

Look at the way in which he uses rhetorical questions towards the end of the poem:

*What are you buying into?
What holds your attention?*

Why do you think he ends the poem in this way? What effect does it have on you as a reader? Where is his focus shifting towards at the end of the poem? Why do you think he does this?

Ask the children to think about a key issue they are passionate about in the current climate. This might be a local issue, such as lack of play facilities in the local area, local environmental issues such as fly tipping, national issues such as Brexit or bigger world issues like fake news as discussed in this poem. Encourage them to draw on effective techniques like juxtaposing ideas and asking rhetorical questions to make the reader think more deeply about the issue you are presenting.

Session 3: The Truth About People

Watch poet Joseph Coelho read his poem, 'Dada's Stories': <https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/s/dada>

Allow time for the children to talk about their initial responses. What did the poem make them think about? How did it make them feel? What did they like? Dislike? What questions do they have? What connections do they make with real life experiences or other things they have seen or read? How do the children think it relates to the National Poetry Day theme of Change? Make notes of significant responses on post-it notes which can be placed around a large copy of the text on a working wall display.

Now watch Joe perform a second poem, 'Miss Flotsam': <https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/miss-flotsam>. What do the two poems have in common? What differences are there between them?

Give mixed groups, pairs or individuals copies of each of these poems. Ask the children to discuss in pairs or small groups how the poet paints a picture to let us know the truth about each of the characters represented. Allow time and space for them to discuss, text mark and annotate with responses. This might be language they think is effective or needs clarification, comments or questions

about phrases or parts of the poem, personal connections or ideas about what the poem means to them, or comparisons or contrasts between the poems. Allow time for the children to feed back on their responses, drawing on the effective language, devices and techniques used by the poet to show us what the characters are like, rather than directly telling us.

Come back to the poem Miss Flotsam, re-reading it aloud to the children. This time focus their attention on the child in the poem. What truths can we infer about this child? What has the poet done to share these truths with us? Once again, text mark a large copy of the poem and annotate with the children's ideas, thoughts and questions.

Lead on to the children thinking and writing about a special person in their wider life. If they were to write about a special person in their life, who would it be and why? Allow time for children to think about who they want to write about and why, how they will show not tell what this person is really like and give time and space for the children to draft and write focussing on descriptive language and language that evokes emotion, drawing on understandings gained from the poems they have read.

Session 4: Finding our own Truths

Reflect on all the poems that have been shared so far. It would be a good idea to conduct a 'poetry papering' exercise where you copy all the poems and blu-tac them up on the walls around the classroom, allowing the children to walk round, re-reading and remembering and choosing the ones they liked best. You could give them post-its to write their names on and stick on the poems they liked most – to allow them to really think critically about their choices, you might want to give just one or two to each child.

Give time and space for the children to talk about the poems they have selected, talking about why they have chosen the ones they did. You could ask them to write short explanations for their choices and stick these around copies of the poems in the shared journal, or on the display. Were some poems more popular than others? Why was this? What do they think they have learnt about poetry from looking at these poems and the activities they have done? How do they feel about poetry? Do they enjoy listening to it? Performing it? Writing it?

Talk about the poems they have created so far; which ones do they like best? What else might they write about that could link to the theme of Truth, what else could this mean? Show the children how you as a writer come up with ideas and poetic language inspired by experiences you have had, things around you or your own imagination. Demonstrate how you use these to draft initial ideas, making additions, changes and improvements as you write. Share attempts through reading aloud to experience how the poem sounds off the page and collect responses from the children and then explore how to redraft for publication, thinking about how the poem looks on the page. Allow the children time and space to go through this process with their own poems, either working up one they have already started in one of the sessions or creating a new one, giving time for you as the teacher or other children to respond to their poems, making changes or additions and re-drafting if necessary. You may also be inspired by hearing advice from some of the poets studied, e.g.

Valerie Bloom - How do you work on your poems?: <https://vimeo.com/130417210>

Roger McGough - How do you work on your poems?: <https://vimeo.com/166520958>

Karl Nova - How do you work on your poems?: <https://vimeo.com/267159336>

When the words sound right to the children, you may also want to look at how they have arranged these on the page, going back to the original poems for support. How might they separate the lines and sections of their work? Could they illustrate these with drawings or photographs of themselves engaged in play with the element? Where might the words sit in relation to their illustrations? Model this, using your own poem and illustration. When children are happy, have them write up their finished poems for publication. This can be a wonderful opportunity to focus on presentation handwriting or to use a word processor to type and experiment with layout.

Whole School End Celebrations:

Poetry Performances:

A whole school event could be organised where parents, carers and the wider school community come to see children perform poetry. This could be a performance of one of the focus poems the children have studied or one of the poems they have written themselves. Tickets could be sold for the event to support the school in broadening the range of poetry texts the children have access to in class book corners and libraries.

Building a school anthology:

Children's own poems could be selected and curated into a whole school anthology, this could then be published online, in a copied pamphlet or made into a bound book using a project such as the Scholastic We Are Writers!: <https://writers.scholastic.co.uk/> You could also share video or audio performances of children's own poems on the school website with appropriate permissions.

Displaying published work:

Whole school displays can be put up to share information about National Poetry Day, the poet ambassadors and their poems and children's own poems across the school on the theme of Truth. These are especially effective in communal areas where the whole school and wider school community can see the impact.

Exploring some of the focus poets' wider work:

Kathy Henderson, Michael Rosen, Rachel Rooney, Karl Nova and Joseph Coelho all have poet pages on CLPE's Poetryline website, where you can see them performing poems and talking about poetry. Find these at: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poets>. Teachers can also access further teaching sequences for their collections.

A focus poetry text display:

Consider creating a special class, library or school display of poetry texts. These may be books and anthologies that share the theme of messages or alternatively could be a display to showcase the best of the poetry stock you have. This display could be maintained over the course of the year and routinely changed to showcase particular poets or illustrate how poetry can support key themes that will be of significance at different stages of the academic year. If you have a tablet in this area you could also open the poet performances on CLPE's poetryline site as part of this display: :

<https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline>

Poet Visit:

Many poets provide school visits. Having the opportunity to see and learn from a professional writer's practice can be aspirational for children as writers and help them to see the process of writing from a new and exciting perspective. Authors can bring a greater level of depth to learning about authentic

writing processes, working as writer-educators, sharing practice from the perspective of a practicing expert.

When planning an author visit, it is important that schools and settings ensure they have good contact with the author before their visit, discussing what would fit with current classroom work and what would be welcome as learning for the children. It is important that this is a collaborative process so that the visit is part of a planned programme of learning rather than being something of a 'strange interruption'.

Share Poems on National Poetry Day:

Select poems written by the children (and the teachers!) on the theme of Truth on Twitter, Instagram or Facebook on National Poetry Day, 3rd October, using #NationalPoetryDay or #MyNPDpoem.

Text for NPD Poems:

NEWCOMERS by Michael Rosen

My father came to England
from another country
My father's mother came to England from another country
but my father's father
stayed behind.

So my dad had no dad here and I never saw him at all.

One day in spring
some things arrived:
a few old papers,
a few old photos
and – oh yes –
a hulky bulky thick checked jacket that belonged to the man
I would have called 'Grandad'. The Man Who Stayed Behind.

But I kept that jacket and I wore it
and I wore it
and I wore it

till it wore right through at the back.

Truth or Dare by Rachel Rooney

Have you peed in a swimming pool?

Count to fifty without blinking.

What do you secretly wish for most?

Say exactly what you're thinking.

Do you privately pick your nose?

Reveal the name of your crush.

Have you ever cheated a test?

Sing Jingle Bells into a brush.

When were you your happiest?

Kiss the person on your right.

What's the biggest lie you've told?

Act out an imaginary fight.

Would you say you're good looking?

Stand on your head for a minute.

D'you really want to play this game?

Take the bottle and spin it.

January by Joseph Coelho

There is a legend of two murmurations of Starlings warring above the City of Cork in Ireland in the 1600s – Starlings have never been known to war in flocks but they certainly do flight.

They were the Rorschach of the winter months,
the folding of sky-shadows,
of air-shoals pirouetting into the January nip,
swarms riding frosted winds,
silently testing the sky with their ink-magic.

Not ready for the tentacle gathering
that rose from the east
the heat of spring starlings
cloaked in oil slicks
needle beaked
and strong of claw.

The clash of murmurs
was whispered

in a rain of birds
as flightless feathers fell
in the war of winds.

Winter flew into spring,
black storms colliding with hot nights.
The murmurations twisted through one another
winter desperate to stay,
spring determined to arrive.

The people watch as feathers cloak them
farmers clutching hopeful seeds
children gazing with eager fingers
on buttoned jackets.
Which swarm will win this war?

But the birds that come with the sun
are always victorious – the winter flock is tired
their wings have beaten cold into existence
it is time for them to leave.

Beaten and flight-sore the winter murmuration
rides its ribbon away
as spring's flock swoops into longer days

and brighter skies,
as farmers test the warmth of soil
and children release that first coat button.

The misinformation age by Karl Nova

We're in a time when everyone thinks their opinion is truth

They think every thought they spew is absolute

everyone seems to be an expert and a critic

that seeks to speak for everyone

I don't get it

Conspiracy theories are making souls grow weary

The fear of the unknown has got people feeling eerie

We have a lot of information but very little truth

A lot of speculation but hardly any proof

Some think everything is true on YouTube

That's why perceptions are skewed on cue

Some think everything has a message subliminal

but if you say truth is in you,

how can you continue

to live in fear

and remain paranoid

Tossed to and fro by deceptions and decoys

Lack of knowledge of the truth it destroys

Sadly empty vessels still make the loudest noise

We have a lot of information

but little revelation

that's why there's hardly transformation of situations

What are you buying into?

What holds your attention?

'cause what holds your attention

holds you like detention