from Granny Is

Granny is
fried dumplin’ an’ run-dung,
coconut drops an’ grater cake,
fresh ground coffee smell in the mornin’
when we wake.

Extract © Valerie Bloom 2000
from Let Me Touch the Sky (Macmillan Children’s Books)

Listen to the full poem at The Children’s Poetry Archive
www.childrens.poetryarchive.org/poem/granny-is
OBJECTIVES

- To explore how poems can put images in our heads as we listen.
- To discuss the way the poem uses metaphors to describe character.
- To explore how we can all make poems by using metaphorical descriptions of a family member.

GETTING STARTED

Listen to ‘Granny Is’ here: [www.childrens.poetryarchive.org/poem/granny-is](http://www.childrens.poetryarchive.org/poem/granny-is)

Write down or discuss your responses to the poem. What pictures did you see in your mind? Did the poem remind you of anyone in your own life? Play the poem a second time. What is Granny doing? How does the speaker feel about her? How can you tell? What visual images of Granny do we have? What does she look like?

DEVELOPMENT

Explore how each stanza paints a different picture of what Granny is doing. Draw attention to metaphors – how Granny not only DOES these actions but IS them. Notice how the poem pulls the reader in by using sensory detail, images, and concrete language such as loadin’ and scrubbin’. What does this tell us about Granny?

WRITING

Choose a family member and write down the name you call them. It could be Mum, Dad, Auntie, Gran, or something more personal. Write down all the things you like about them, such as what they eat, what they wear or cook, what they do, say or sing. Each item on the list acts as a starting point for a stanza about your family member. Try writing a poem where each stanza starts with ‘Granny/Dad/Auntie/Teddy (etc) is...’. You might like it just as it is, or you might want to add more to make it into a poem. It is more important for the details of the poems to be honest than it is for them to rhyme.

PLENARY

What has each group learned about using metaphor? How many ways did children think of to describe the same person? What difference does it make to end each stanza with a rhyme? How does this poem move in and out of Standard English, and why has the writer done this?

Check out The Children’s Poetry Archive Glossary for examples of what poetic terms mean and how they are used:

[www.childrens.poetryarchive.org/teach/glossary](http://www.childrens.poetryarchive.org/teach/glossary)

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[www.nationalpoetryday.co.uk](http://www.nationalpoetryday.co.uk)