

# Write an (actually genuinely good) 5 line poem in 5 minutes

NATIONAL  
POETRY  
DAY 2020

See It Like a Poet



Simon Mole: Poems, raps and writing games for kids

National  
Literacy  
Trust

Changing life stories

## Learning outcomes:

- Pupils will learn what a kenning is and write some of their own
- Pupils will select rich and varied vocabulary
- Pupils will draft and edit a poem about who they are and what they like doing

## You will need:

- “Yes, and” video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cninAGtPKsE&t>
- All about me dice template worksheet, ordinary dice or a random number generator on the board
- Write a 5 line poem prompt video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMHgf6jBpc>

## Simon Says:

If you only have 10-15 minutes in total you can just put [this video](#) on and watch them go for it!



## Taster: (5 minutes)

Explain to pupils that they are going to work with a poet to write their own poem. The poet won't be physically in the classroom but speaking to them via YouTube.

- Share one of Simon's poems, this one is all about words and the effect they have on us: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UoudsbsU2ys>
- Discuss the poem, particularly focusing on whether they enjoyed it or not and what the poem is about. Do any of the children have a favourite word?

## Warmer (10 minutes):

Play the “Yes, and” video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cninAGtPKsE&t>

Pupils play the “yes, and” game twice in pairs or small groups.

After the first game, ask the pupils whether they found it easy to ignore the ‘editors in their heads’? Did anyone have a moment where they didn't know what to say?

If so, perhaps the second time they play they could be brave enough to say “yes and...” before they know what they are going to say. Sometimes the act of moving your mouth to say those words makes some other words fall out!

Even if you just say “yes and... chair!” the next person could make that chair talk, or explode or run away.

## Simon Says:

“The game works well with all ability levels, but is particularly helpful for getting less confident or reluctant writers started. The activity will help children say yes to their own ideas, and support them to keep their critical inner voice quiet - but also remind them that the very same voice will be useful later on when editing.”

### Ideas generating activity: Roll the dice (5 minutes)

Each pair should get a dice and the list below. Or you could use a random dice generator on screen for whole class if equipment is a problem – either way they share their answers with their partner. Keep going until every number has been rolled. If one comes up twice give a different answer to the same question, or do a different version of the same action.

1. Your name or a nickname you get called
2. A hobby you like doing
3. Your favourite animal
4. Pretend to play an imaginary trumpet or air guitar
5. Name one thing that makes a good friend
6. Pull a funny face

### Main writing activity: write a 5 line poem (15 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMHgf6jBpc>

Use the video to write an (actually genuinely good) 5 line poem in 5 minutes. Realistically this may take 15 minutes (but it didn't sound as good as a title!) depending how independently your children scribe and/or how much assistance and motivation is needed to get them writing.

Simon asks a series of simple but fun questions, and gives step by step guidance on how to turn their answers into the 5 lines of the poem. The children should have all the 'answers' they need in their minds after playing 'roll the dice' meaning they're free to get creative with how they write them down.

## Simon says:

This poem features kennings! You could tell your class that a kenning is a poetic way of talking about something without actually naming it. They're usually 2 or 3 word phrases ending in -er. Some kennings are a little bit trickier to work out than others, almost like a puzzle or a riddle!

### **Sharing (5 minutes)**

Especially if you are a new class/group or a group seeing each other for the first time after a while, sharing the finished results is a great way for children to (re)introduce themselves to each other.

Keep in mind that these poems are likely to be similar, to ensure every child has an attentive audience the poems could be shared throughout the week. Using lolly sticks, a name out of a hat, or similar to select performers could also be useful.