

Daisy Chains

A National Poetry Day resource
from The Poetry Society

This resource asks you to think about how our environment can be transformed through description and detail, as the daisy is woven into a chain. How might we use setting as a metaphor for relationships?

Key Stages 2-3

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Daisy Chains

Daniel Wale

They never took
long to make,
nor did they lack
that tender sloppiness
which made the petals
melt pink in the palms,
like juiced hearts.

These were when
we ran our
fingers through the
wilting stems; supposed
they were her hair
or her hands.

These were when
we laboured those
shy hours away
in a shivering line
of blushes, making
a short-lived toy
of short-lived love.

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Winning poem, Foyle Young Poets of
the Year Award 2021.



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In Daisy Chains, the narrator likens the flower's petals to juiced hearts, the wilting stems to hair.

Warm up

Think about a recent memory of going outside.

Share these memories with a partner, note down any particularly striking images.

1. Reflect: Pick out one particular feature of the environment, and see how many contrasting ways your partner is able to describe it

2. Discuss: How does the description change the mood of the scene? How does it alter the relationship of the speaker to the environment?

How does it impact the way the we understand the action taking place in the scene?

3. Reflect: Go back to the original memory: what do you want to communicate to a listener? Which description would best fit this message?

4. Discuss: Repeat the original sharing, this time adding in the descriptions you've developed. How does this affect the story?

What were you doing? Who were you with? What did you see?

e.g. 'the leaves were minty green/the leaves were crisp as autumn'

e.g. are they scared, excited, content?

are we, the readers, intrigued, disgusted, empathetic?



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Read

Read Daisy Chains aloud as a class. Highlight each adjective and adverb. The language in the poem is precisely selected by the poet. What do they bring to the poem? What effect does the vivid description have?

Write

Think of another vivid memory – one you are comfortable writing about and sharing. Now begin a poem – it can take any form, but it must take its title from an object found in the natural environment. This object/plant must be transformed through vibrant description into something brilliant (e.g. a poem titled 'The Pinecone' might compare its weight to a bag of sweets, its colour to a chestnut horse).

How far and fantastical can you make your description? How much can you heighten the mood of the scene?



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Wrap it up

In 'Daisy Chains', the poem ends on a turn: the final lines reflect the fleeting nature of the speaker's relationship, the way a beautiful flower comes to wilt.

This adds a deeper dimension to the poem, making it more complex and satisfying to read.

Add a final line to their poem: what is the central message? How can you cleanly unite this with the natural object you've described?

The Poetry Society is the UK's leading organisation for poetry. With innovative education and commissioning programmes, and a packed calendar of performances and readings, The Poetry Society champions poetry for all ages. poetrysociety.org.uk



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