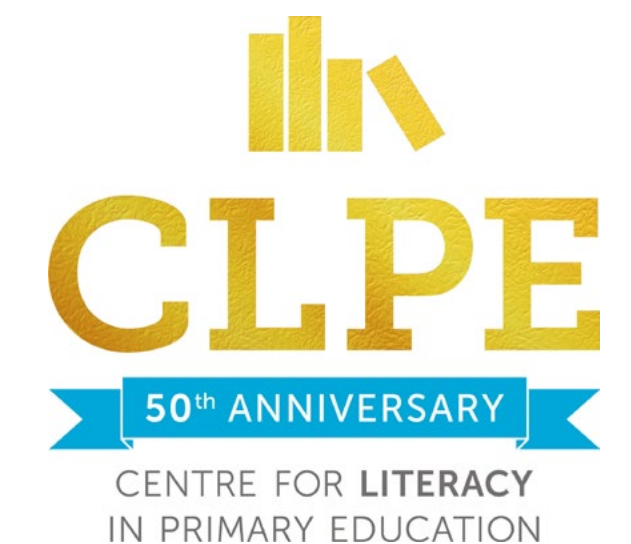


Finding a friend in nature

A National Poetry Day resource from CLPE

Key Stage 1-2

#NationalPoetryDay
www.nationalpoetryday.co.uk



Finding a friend in nature

from CLPE

WE ARE FRIENDS

don't worry shadow
I'll be watching you
whenever I can
and
even if you slip under some
swish-darting fish or
w a g g l i n g tadpole or hide
under a lotus-pink lily pad
I promise to be there
when you surface again all
smiles
close to the water's top
and
even if you roll your jiggly spins
round those tall marshy grasses
I'll be watching
and
even if you carelessly bob along
chasing every dragonfly, water strider and pond skater

you don't have to worry about a thing
I'll still be here when you finish
because I know
shadow
you would never leave me either...
wherever I am
no matter how
slippery you are

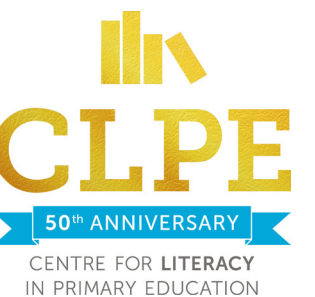
after all

we are friends

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from *When Poems Fall From the Sky* by Zaro Weil, illustrated by Junli Song (Welbeck Editions, 2022)



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Read and talk about the poem:

Read the poem out loud together and talk about it.

Think about the title of the poem: 'We Are Friends.'

Talk together about the friendship that you read about in the poem.

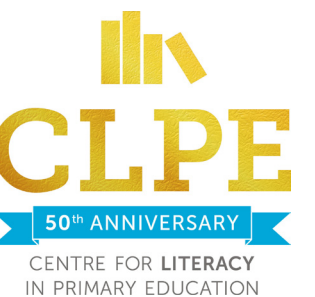
What do you think is it about? How does it make you feel? What makes you feel this way?

What do you think it means to be friends? Who are your friends? What makes you friends?

How do you know the character is friends with the shadow? What words and phrases show you that the character is the shadow's friend? How do they show the shadow that they look out for them and care for them?



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Explore the concepts:

Talk and think about how, in a friendship, each of the friends offers something to the other. In the poem, the character watches out for the shadow and promises to be there for it.

What do your friends offer to you? What do you think you offer to your friends?

The friend in this poem is the shadow.

Do you think you can be friends with a shadow?

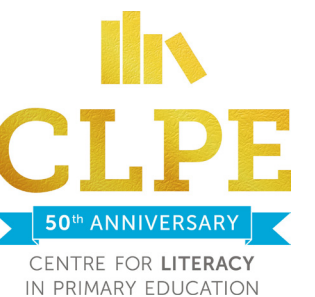
Now, go outside with a piece of paper and a pencil and think about elements of nature you could become friends with.

What could it mean to be a friend with nature? What element of the natural world in particular might you be friends with?

Spend some time watching and observing this element of nature. It could be a plant, a creature, an element of the weather, or a natural phenomenon. You might choose to be friends with a sun beam, a leaf, or a bee buzzing round the garden. As you watch your friend, think about what it looks like, and what it does. You could even try to draw it, to help you look really closely.



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Perform the poem:

Re-read the poem again, and think about how the character in the poem might speak to their friend, the shadow.

Look at where the lines in the poem break, and what this might tell you about how it should be performed.

Practice reading the poem through a few times, trying out different ideas and then invite a friend or family member to listen to you perform it.

Now, watch Zaro Weil, the poet, perform the poem: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/zaro-weil>.

What sense are they trying to give the shadow? How might you bring this out in a performance? What tone might you use in your voice to reassure and comfort a friend? What volume would your voice take?

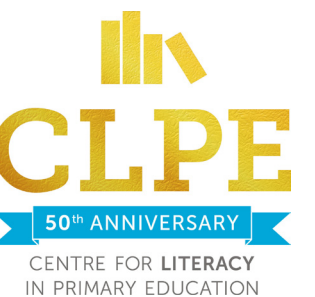
Where might you take a pause? Where might you speed up? How might you use your voice to emphasise the meanings of certain words?

Did they get a sense of friendship and care from your performance?

How did her performance compare with your own? What did her performance make you think about? How did it make you feel? What made you feel this way?



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Activate your imagination:

Come back to the natural element you thought you might be able to be friends with.

If you were to speak to it, what would you say?

Take a piece of paper and a pen and write down all your ideas of what you might say to your new friend.

How will you make them see how much you respect them and care for them? How will you show how much you have paid attention to them, to know how they behave and what they do?

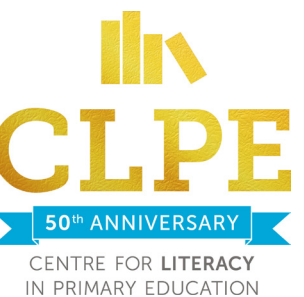
When you have some ideas written down, see if you can use these to make your own poem, titled 'We Are Friends' about the element of nature you have chosen. You could also have a go at illustrating your poem.

Find more poets and poetry on CLPE's website: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry>

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Your words. Your voice. Your work.

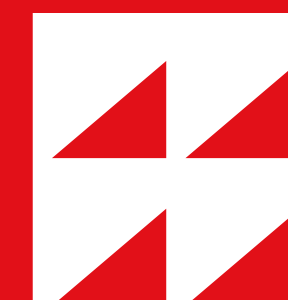
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