

National Poetry Day 2023

Nature Trail

Session plans for pupils aged 5–7 (KS1)



National Poetry Day 2023: refuge

To celebrate National Poetry Day and the 2023 theme of refuge, National Literacy Trust have created **two 60-minute learning sequences** designed to help pupils reflect on the theme of refuge, all whilst encouraging a love of reading and writing poetry.

The resource consists of a series of poetry reading and discussion, freewriting exercises and reflective writing activities, which will guide pupils on a learning journey, culminating in the composition of a poem.

The learning sequence is aimed at **pupils aged 5 to 7** and can be delivered as part of the English curriculum.

Vocabulary and background knowledge

For the purpose of this learning sequence, we are using the following definition of refuge:

Refuge is a place or situation providing safety or shelter.

We recommend spending time before the sessions exploring the word 'refuge' as a class. *What do pupils think of when they hear the word refuge?*

Some pupils may link the word to 'refugee'. Reflect on the relationship between the words refuge and refugee. The term 'refugee' comes from the Latin word 'refugium', which means 'the act of taking refuge'.

Once pupils have a clear understanding of what refuge is, invite them to spend a few minutes sketching a picture of what refuge means to them. This may be a place, a person or an object which makes them feel safe. Pupils may wish to label their picture with words or phrases that they associate with refuge. Pupils can continue to add words or phrases to their picture throughout the sessions. They can then refer back to their ideas when they come to composing their own poems.

Session one

Learning objective

To explore the idea of refuge in a poem, as well as what it means to me and others.

Success criteria

- I can share my ideas about a poem
- I can discuss who, what or where feels safe.
- I can describe a place using my senses

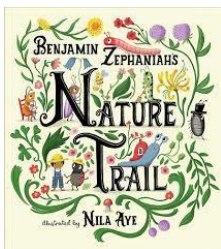
Starter (15 minutes)

Spend time outside with your pupils, in your school outdoor area; this may be a school field, a playground or a quad area. Invite pupils to walk around the space, thinking about what they can see, hear, feel, touch and taste.

Bring pupils back together to reflect on the following:

- *What do they notice about the outdoors?*
- *How does being outdoors feel?*
- *What might live here?*
- *How do you think they feel?*

Poetry reading and discussion activity (20 minutes)



Awaken your poetry ears and read aloud the rhyming book **Nature Trail** by Benjamin Zephaniah. You can find a great read-aloud on YouTube if you do not have access to the book.

You may wish to read this outside with pupils or once you are back inside the classroom.

The rhyming book explores a garden and all who live within it. Animals visit for safety, for food and for shelter. Benjamin Zephaniah leaves you reflecting on the importance of having a place of safety, and how if you have this, you will never be alone.

Read the poem aloud to the class, modelling expressive reading, followed by reflection time, using the questions below to guide discussion. Ensure pupils are

given time to discuss their ideas in pairs before sharing with the whole class, to allow the opportunity for all pupils to reflect on and enjoy the poem.

Discussion questions

- *Who is welcome in the garden?*
- *What sounds can you hear in the garden? What can you see in the garden?*
- *Why do you think the animals visit the garden? What makes the garden a place of refuge (a special, safe place) for the narrator?*
- *How does the outside make you feel? You may wish to encourage pupils to think about the school grounds or their own garden. (It's okay to feel differently to someone else!)*



Give pupils time to think before sharing their thoughts on the following questions.

- *Is there a place that makes you feel safe? Where is your refuge?*
- *Is there a person who makes you feel safe? Who is your refuge?*
- *Is there an object that makes you feel safe? What is your refuge?*
- Collate your class's ideas on a large piece of paper (you can reuse this in session two) and marvel at pupils' safe people, places, and things.

Main activity (20 minutes)

Invite pupils to draw a picture of their safe place: their refuge. In the story, the narrator's refuge is the garden because it's full of life, and when they are in the garden, they never feel alone. Pupils may choose to draw a place that makes them feel safe. This might be a special outside space, a space at home, one in their local community, or a space at school. It might be safe because of the people there, or because of a special object they have there, like their bed, a teddy bear or a blanket.

Once this is completed, invite pupils to describe their refuge using their senses. Pupils could write their ideas around their picture, or provide verbal descriptions in pairs or small groups with an adult.

- *What can they hear in their place of refuge? (It could be the quiet that they enjoy)*
- *What can they smell in their place of refuge?*
- *What can they touch/feel in their place of refuge?*

- What can they see in their place of refuge?
- If relevant, what can they taste in their place of refuge?

Plenary (5 minutes)

Invite pupils to write three adjectives on their pic refuge.

Session two

Learning objective

To write a poem about refuge



Success criteria

- I can describe my place of refuge using my senses
- I can write a poem about my refuge: a safe place, person, or object

Starter (15 minutes)

Invite pupils to return to their refuge pictures and remind themselves of the safe place that they were thinking about in the last session. Invite pupils to create a freeze frame, imagining they are inside their special place. *How does their special place/object/person help them to feel safe?*

When time is up, ask pupils to share their freeze frames if they wish too.

Discussion activity (15 minutes)

Use the discussion questions and sentence stems to encourage pupils to further explore the theme of refuge.

1. Is there anyone that makes you feel safe? How do they make you feel safe?

This could be a friend, a family member or someone in the wider community.
I feel safe and happy with... because...

2. Why does your place of refuge make you feel safe?

I feel safe and happy when I am at/in... because...
I can touch/smell/hear/see... when I am in...

3. How might we help somebody feel safe/welcome?

This might be inviting them to join in a game or learning to say hello in their language.

I can help someone feel safe and happy by...

Main activity (25 minutes)

Invite pupils to compose a poem about their safe place using ideas from session one, and the discussion activities. In the poem, the narrator's refuge is their garden.

Invite pupils to look at the picture of their safe place that they created in session one, and imagine they are there now; this will help inspire the poem they are about to write.

Once pupils have a clear understanding of their refuge, it's time to start writing, using the prompt: *My refuge is...*

For younger pupils/for support, you may wish to use the below sentence prompts. You may also wish to use an area in the school (this could be a field or playground) as a class refuge and write a shared poem about this space

*In my safe place,
I can see...*

*In my safe place,
I can hear...*

*In my safe place,
I can feel...*

*In my safe place,
I can smell...*

*In my safe place,
I can taste...*



Invite pupils to share their poems with each other if they would like to.

Plenary (5 minutes)

If you were one of the animals in the poem, how would you finish this sentence?

The garden makes me feel happy, safe, and welcome because...

Curriculum links

English programmes of study: Key stages 1 and 2 National Curriculum in England

Reading

Pupils should be taught to:

develop positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by:

- listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks

Comprehension

- participate in discussion about books, poems and other works that are read to them and those that they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
- explain and discuss their understanding of books, poems and other material, both those that they listen to and those that they read for themselves.

Programme of Study for PSHE education (KS1–5)

Learning opportunities in Living in the Wider World

- the importance of having compassion towards others; shared responsibilities we all have for caring for other people and living things; how to show care and concern for others.

Curriculum for excellence in Scotland

English

- Having explored the elements which writers use in different genres, I can use what I learn to create stories, poems and plays with an interesting and appropriate structure, interesting characters and/or settings which come to life.

ENG 2–31a

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

- I know that friendship, caring, sharing, fairness, equality and love are important in building positive relationships. As I develop and value relationships, I care and show respect for myself and others.

HWB 2–05a

The Northern Ireland Curriculum Primary – Foundation Stage**Reading**

- listen to a range of stories, poems and non-fiction texts read to them by adults/other pupils

Writing

- use rhymes, poems and patterned stories as models for structuring their own writing
- experiment with rhymes, rhythms, verse structure and all kinds of word play and dialect;

Language and thinking through:

- talking about experiences, pictures and stories
- taking part/contributing to group oral language activities

The World Around Us

- understand the need to respect and care for themselves, other people, plants, animals and the environment

National Literacy Framework: Curriculum for Wales**Reading**

- look for key words to find out what the text is about

Writing

- talk about what they are going to write
- understand different types of writing
- write for different purposes

Programme of Study for PSHE education**Learning opportunities in Living in the Wider World**

- the importance of having compassion towards others; shared responsibilities we all have for caring for other people and living things; how to show care and concern for others.