

National Poetry Day 2023

Comparing refuge

Session plans for pupils aged 7-11 (KS2)



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 that culminates in the composition of their own poem.

The learning sequence is aimed at pupils aged 7 to 11 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 the state of being safe or sheltered from pursuit, danger, or difficulty.

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 word 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: Discussing and exploring poetry

Learning objective

To explore the theme of refuge in poetry.

Success criteria

- I can discuss the different ways refuge is described in a selection of poems
- I can discuss who, what or where feels safe
- I can describe what my own refuge feels like

Starter: read aloud (20 minutes)

Take time to read aloud and enjoy the poems below with your class. You may wish to pre-teach any new vocabulary beforehand. We recommend familiarising yourself with the poems before you read them aloud, so that you can effectively model expressive reading of the poems.

- **I Opened a Book** written by Julia Donaldson, found [here](#).
- **The Magic of the Mind** written by Clive Webster, found [here](#).
- **Ten** written by Matt Goodfellow, found [here](#).
- **Ride** written by Matt Goodfellow, found [here](#).

After reading aloud the poems, invite pupils to discuss with each other which poem they enjoyed the most. *How did it make them feel? What made this poem stand out above the others?*

Discussion activity (15 minutes)

Invite pupils to select a poem in pairs to explore further. Ask them to first read the poems again in their pairs, taking it in turns to read a verse each, before reflecting on the questions below.

- *What is refuge described as in this poem?*
- *What is refuge for the narrator? Where do they find refuge?*

For support: some pupils may require support with word-reading and/or comprehension. We suggest working in a teacher-guided small group to read aloud and discuss the poem for this activity.

Once pupils have had a chance to reflect on the poem, open the discussions to the wider class. You may wish to spend time collating pupils' ideas into a 'refuge word

bank', which pupils can use in the next session when creating their own refuge poems. You may also wish to remind pupils to add to their own personal word banks that they began at the start of the session.

After exploring the different ways refuge is described in the poems, invite pupils to think about where else people *might find safety or shelter from pursuit, danger, or difficulty? Why is it important to have a place of refuge?*

Personal response activity (20 minutes)

Ask pupils to reflect on the questions below and create a class list of pupils' places of safety, and ways in which pupils can help others to feel safe and welcome in their communities.

1. *Is there anyone that makes you feel safe?*
2. *Do you have a place that makes you feel safe? Where is this? Why do you think it makes you feel this way?*
3. *How do you make somebody feel welcome and safe? Why do you think it is important to do this?*
4. *What would you say your 'refuge' is? This could be a person, a place, or an object.*

Invite pupils to describe their own refuge (whether this be a person, place or object) using their senses.

My refuge feels like...

My refuge smells like...

My refuge sounds like...

My refuge looks like...

My refuge tastes like...



Plenary (5 minutes)

Choose three of your favourite words from the poems you have explored. Can you use these in a sentence?



Session two: Writing poetry

Learning objective

To explore the theme of refuge through poetry

Success criteria

- I can explore ways in which to show care and concern for others
- I can write a poem inspired by refuge

Starter (10 minutes)

Help pupils to warm up their writing muscles through freewriting. Set a timer for three minutes.

Invite pupils to freewrite without fear of layout, spelling or grammar, using one of the prompts below. Encourage pupils to write without hesitation. Explain that they don't have to share their writing afterwards if they don't want to.

Invite pupils to use one of the prompts below to kick start their freewriting.

I feel safe with... because...

I feel calm when I am in/at... because...

My refuge is... because...

Discussion activity (15 minutes)

- *Why do you think it is important to have a safe person, place or object?*
- *Does everybody have refuge? Why/why not?*
- *How would it feel if you did not have refuge?*
- *In which ways can we provide refuge to another person?*

Main activity (30 minutes)

Invite pupils to compose a 'collom lune' inspired by the theme of refuge, shelter and safety, using ideas from previous answers and discussions.

Ask them to create a mental image of their safe place or sense of refuge, before creating their lune.

A collom lune is a three-line poem, with five words in the first line, three words in the second line and five words in the third line.

Example:

*My refuge is a cloud,
Warm, soft, welcoming
A place I count sheep.*

Layout

What do you think is this poet's refuge?

Plenary (5 minutes)

Write down three ways you can help others who do not have a place of refuge.

Bonus activity

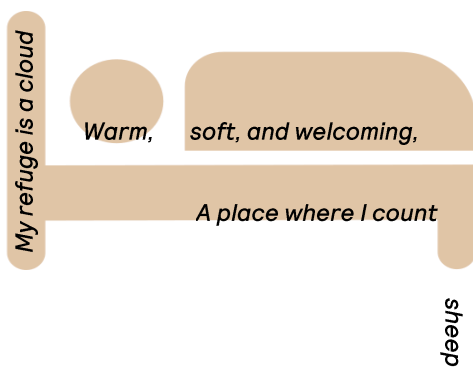
Reread the refuge poems found in session one.

If this poem were a shape poem, how do you think it would be presented? And why?

A shape poem is a poem that is shaped like the thing it describes. The shape adds to the meaning of the poem.

Encourage pupils to use all they have learnt throughout the activities to compose their own poem and present this in a shape that represents their refuge.

Example:



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

- preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action
- recognising some different forms of poetry (for example, free verse, narrative poetry)
- 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.

Writing

- develop positive attitudes towards and stamina for writing by
 - o writing poetry
 - o writing for different purposes

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

Talking and listening

- listen and respond to a range of fiction, poetry, drama and media texts through the use of traditional and digital resources

Writing

- experiment with rhymes, rhythms, verse structure and all kinds of word play and dialect.
- write for a variety of purposes and audiences, selecting, planning and using appropriate style and form
- express thoughts, feelings and opinions in imaginative and factual writing,

The World Around Us

Develop an awareness and respect for:

- be aware of how we rely on each other
- understand their own and others' feelings and emotions

English Programmes of Study: Curriculum for Wales Key Stage 2

Reading

Learners should be given the opportunity to:

read a wide range of continuous and non-continuous texts, in printed and dynamic format, as a basis for oral and written responses. These should include:

- traditional and contemporary poetry and prose
- classic children's fiction and poetry

Writing

Learners should be given the opportunity to:

write for a variety of purposes, including to:

- produce poetic writing, using imagery and poetic devices, e.g., rhyme and form
- use a wide range of written and dynamic stimuli, e.g., stories, picture books, images, poems, experiences, film, paintings, music

Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales

Learning opportunities in Living in the Wider World

- develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others
- empower learners to participate in their schools and communities as active responsible citizens locally, nationally, and globally