



Key Stage 1-2

WRITE YOURSELF AN ESCAPE PLAN

Books are a great way to escape from the world around us. In this poem words are used as a route to freedom by the fictional Kurt Chisholm.

Before you read the poem

Do you know what these words mean?

- Jailbird
- Life-sentence
- Descend
- Captivity

Look at the shape of the poem. What is interesting about it? What do you think it is meant to symbolise?



THEPOETRYSOCIETY

An activity by The Poetry Society for National Poetry Day

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THE GREAT ESCAPE

jailbird Kurt Chisholm,
life-sentenced to prison,
turned to poetry as a form of escape
and threw the rhyme-book out of the window
by stringing words together

l
i
k
ek
n
o
t
t
e
db
e
d
s
h
e
e
t
s

down which to descend
(for poetry was an activity
to put an end to captivity)

by Brian Bilston

Reading the poem

You might find it easier to read it out loud, stringing the letters together to see if they make words you recognise.

What is happening in the poem? Does the jailbird really escape from prison?

What is the simile that the poet uses in the poem? Can you guess why some lines have only one letter and others two? Draw a picture of how you imagine Kurt escaping from prison based on the poem.

Now for your own poem

Look around the room you are in – maybe it is your classroom or a room in your home. What would be an unusual way of exiting the room? Picture an item that would help you escape like a ladder, a spade or a hot air balloon. Write a poem about escaping the room and try to make the poem the shape of this item.