

# NATIONAL POETRY DAY TOOLKIT 2017

## FREEDOM

### 3. HAIKUS & JUMPING FROGS BY SHAZEA QURAIISHI

Haikus teach restraint - very few adjectives are used, no abstracts, no expression of emotion.

Poems come from all over the world – for this session we're going to Japan.



#### WHAT IS A HAIKU?

A haiku is a Japanese poem. Like the frog described in the example below, a haiku is small. It describes a moment using just a few words to create a picture/image in the mind.

Modern haiku poets tend to disregard the rules that stated haikus should follow a 5-7-5 syllable format believing that it tends to make them too wordy and stilted. A genuine haiku is characterized by a freshness and spontaneity of images and ideas.

- ◆ Look at the Haikus below. What do the children notice?
- ◆ It uses very few words
- ◆ It has 3 lines (or even 2)
- ◆ It's about nature, often about a season
- ◆ Focuses on one thing, then another, with a pause between, (putting two different things together is juxtaposition)
- ◆ Uses specific details – observe closely
- ◆ Can be said in one breath
- ◆ Haikus don't usually talk about emotion - instead the poet shows an image that makes them feel something

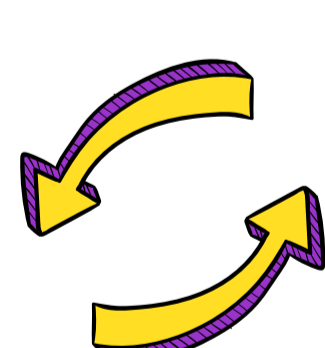
#### ACTIVITY

Write about a place outside you know well – somewhere you were today or yesterday. or better still, go out and observe carefully. Details are important. It could be a park, a street or a playground.



Pay attention to the weather, to nature and wildlife.

On strips of paper, write down your images – use only the most necessary words.



Now play with putting the images beside each other – move them around and notice the difference.

Here are some famous haikus by Matsuo Basho (1644-1694)  
Translated from Japanese

The old pond;  
a frog jumps in  
- splash!

autumn winds in  
the sliding door's opening  
a sharp voice

Tethered horse;  
snow  
in both stirrups

a clear waterfall –  
into the ripples  
fall green pine needles

#### THANKS

This resource was developed by poet Shazea Quraishi for National Poetry Day and first used with children at St Mary Queen of Martyrs Primary School, Hull.