



NATIONAL POETRY DAY

4TH OCTOBER 2018

Key stage 3

**Change a memorable
experience into a poem**

***A National Poetry Day
resource created by the
National Literacy Trust***



National
Literacy
Trust

The National Literacy Trust is an independent charity working with schools and communities to give disadvantaged children the literacy skills to succeed in life.

www.literacytrust.org.uk

The Both of Us

I used to be a butterfly
But now I'm just a slug.
I used to be a toothy grin
But now I'm just a shrug
I used to be a rainforest
but now I'm just a tree.
It used to be the both of us
but now it's only me.
I used to be an estuary
but now I'm just a brook.
I used to be a library
but now I'm just a book.
I used to be a sanctuary
but now I'm just a zoo.
It used to be the both of us
but now there isn't you.

Joshua Seigal

From *Poetry For a Change*, a
National Poetry day anthology,
Otter-Barry Books



Activities:

Discussion: Start with a list of common events that most students will have experienced e.g. first day at school, the birth of a sibling or arrival of a pet, a birthday party, going to visit a family member, a time you felt proud, sports day etc. Ask the students to discuss the topic in pairs or a small group, sharing their experience of an event. Swap the topics around once or twice so that every student has the chance to talk about more than one event. Thinking time: Ask the students to think individually about a particularly memorable experience they have had. It could be one they've just shared or something different. It could have been a positive or a negative experience. The only rule is that it must have happened to them.

Writing activity: Look at Joseph Seigal's list poem, other examples of list poems are *What a poem's not* by John Hegley or *No. 115 Dreams* by Jackie Kay.

The students are going to write their own list poem about the memorable experience. They should start each line with the same words (such as "I'm from...") and should provide as many specific details as they can to describe the experience and help the reader feel like they were there.

Editing: Ask the students to share their poem with a partner (be aware of any who are not comfortable sharing their memorable

experience). They should each read their poems aloud and share positive and constructive feedback e.g. "I really liked the word...", "I really liked the way you...", "I wanted to hear more about the bit where...", "Could you use an even better word than..."

Performance: Encourage students to perform their poems to the class. It may be useful to remind them of good performance techniques such as not looking down, speaking loudly and clearly, not reading too fast and standing on both feet. Encourage the rest of the class to be an appreciative audience.

Glossary: List poem - a list poem details the poet's thoughts or observations about a place, person or event. It usually includes repetition but does not need to rhyme.

Further resources from that National Literacy Trust:

Landscape and literacy: linking geography and poetry at Key Stage 3 - <https://literacytrust.org.uk/resources/landscape-and-literacy-linking-geography-and-poetry-key-stage-3/>
Poetry slam toolkit - <https://literacytrust.org.uk/resources/write-poetry-slam/>

Suggested worksheet:

A template poem with blank lines at the top for their title and name and then up to 15 lines which say "I'm from _____"

