



Make Poetry part of your World Book Day celebrations!

National Poetry Day is an annual celebration of poetry and all things poetical.

It will take place on Thursday 3 October when everyone will be sharing, reading and writing poetry.

But you can enjoy poetry any day of the year, and certainly have lots of fun with it on World Book Day. Why not share this poem by Rachel Piercey, and use it to inspire poetry writing in class?

Poor Pluto

Plenty of people presume: *Poor Pluto!*
Poor Pluto was just politely pacing
round the piping-hot sun
when it was promptly packed off
from the planetary party:
too piddly and powerless!
Poor Pluto, people pronounce,
praised as a planet
then plucked from position!
What a pride-popping pity.

But Pluto protests: *Please!*
Don't pour pessimism on me!
I am pottering at peace.
I prefer it parky,
and this pirouette of polar pieces
is my own private party.
I still parade past the pulsing sun.
I still perceive the pointed stars
on their patterned perches in the pitch.
Not a planet: not a problem. Being Pluto is perfect.



from **Poetry For a Change: A National Poetry Day Anthology** (Otter-Barry Books)

Talking about the poem

When you share the poem together read it through more than once, maybe a few times. Ask who would like to read it aloud to the class. Then talk about it – start by asking ‘Why do you like – or not like – this poem?’

Make it clear that everyone is right – there is no right or wrong answer. Everyone will find their own likes and dislikes, and that makes for great arguments and discussion! Here are some more questions you could ask:

- What do you think is the main thing being said in this poem?
- How does the poem make you feel? Why?
- Are there any lines or words which you specially like?

Here’s what Rachel Piercey says:

I co-edited an anthology of space poems a couple of year ago, and I have enjoyed researching and writing on the subject ever since. I always knew that I wanted to write about Pluto, which was discovered and named as the ninth planet in 1930, then reclassified as a dwarf planet in 2006. Throughout the 1990s, lot of other objects of similar and even greater size were discovered, and eventually the International Astronomical Union decided that Pluto did not count as a planet.

At first, I thought my poem was going to explore how Pluto might feel left out by this change in status – but when I started, I realised that Pluto wouldn’t care at all! It still gets to trundle around the sun and look at the stars, and it makes absolutely no difference which label those alien humans decide to use. I had fun thinking of words beginning with ‘p’ to create my alliterative poem, and it’s very satisfying (if a little tongue-twisting) to read aloud.

Why not write your own poem for a planet? What would Mars or Neptune or Jupiter says to us? How might you describe them?

Some thoughts about writing a poem

The word 'poet' comes from the Greek word 'poietes', which means 'someone who makes or creates things.

In creating a poem think about:

- Crafting your poem – looking for the right words, and the best place for them
- Shaping your poem – will it rhyme or be in free verse?
- Your poem's sound and rhythm

Fun with words – Alliteration!

Choosing words starting with the same letter, as Rachel has, gives wonderful sounds to poems. Have a go – you could make up your own sentences and phrases, describing the different planets – magnificent Mars, just-about-ready Jupiter, or naughty Neptune. Build up the poem using the planet's name, and lots of words starting with the same letter as its name.

Have fun, and we'd love it if you could share your poems with us on Twitter @PoetryDayUK or by email poetryday@forwardartsfoundation.org. Find out [more about National Poetry Day](#) and sign up to receive our newsletters, offers and free resources.

