



Write a minibeast poem

Inspired by the poem 'Be a snail' by Roy Moss. Resource written by Rachel Piercey.

Getting to know the poem

Ask your class to sit with their eyes closed while you read aloud the poem 'Be a snail' by Roy Moss (see below). Which images did they like? Which lines stuck in their heads?

Display the poem and then read it again. What is the message of the poem, for your listeners? There are no wrong answers!

Repetition and alliteration

This poem doesn't rhyme, but it still sounds good. Look together at the alliteration and repetition which Roy has used to weave the poem together: partly / partly, partly / pummel, raindrops / rocks, is fine / is fine.

Poems don't have to rhyme, but poets are always thinking about how they sound.

Making an impact

What is the effect of the simile "Raindrops fall like rocks"? How else does Roy get across the force of the raindrops?

The effect of punctuation

In the last line of the poem, Roy has chosen to use punctuation in an interesting way. Is this technically a proper sentence? No! Poems give you the freedom to be creative with language and grammar.

Using unexpected words and grammatical structures makes a line stand out and feel special and unique, like this one.

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Class writing

Write a list of minibeasts on the board, for example: spider, butterfly, earthworm, centipede, slug, woodlouse, ladybird, ant.

Choose one, then discuss together how the creature moves around and thrives in its environment, and how we could take inspiration from its behaviour.

Jot down these ideas, then loosely following the structure of Roy's poem, write your own 'Be a...' poem.

Look at your first draft together and if it doesn't already include alliteration, repetition and a simile, see if you can redraft the lines to add in these elements.

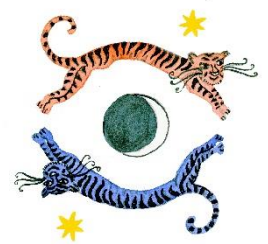
Individual writing

Invite your pupils to choose a new minibeast to write about, inspired by 'Be a snail' – it can be something on the class list or something new. They can follow Roy's structure or make up their own.

Encourage them to be creative and to redraft, scribble out and change things – poets almost never get their poems right first time and their notebooks tend to be very messy! When they're ready to write it up neatly, you may like to use the print-out template below. What will they choose as their title?

Explain that if you have written a poem inspired by someone else, it's important to acknowledge them – and the easiest way to do this is with a short line underneath the title (see below).

We would love to see what your pupils come up with! Tag us on X @tygertygermag with a picture or email us on tygertygermagazine@gmail.com for some personalised feedback.



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Inspired by the poem 'Be a snail' by Roy Moss

by





Be a snail

partly wandering, partly home

and keep moving in the rain.

Raindrops fall like rocks,

they pummel the ground

and the snail is fine.

Is fine.

Roy Moss

