



## Write a poem about the importance of small things

*Inspired by the poem 'Small Things and Big Awe' by Abbie Werner James. 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 'Small Things and Big Awe' by Abbie Werner James (see below). Which images did they like? Which lines stuck in their heads?

Display the poem. They will see that Abbie has included lots of exclamation marks. What do they think these add to the poem? Discuss this, then read the poem again, all together. Encourage your class to put lots of expression into the reading!

Discuss the message of the poem together. Even the smallest, most ordinary thing becomes fascinating if you look closer. Can they think of any other examples of this? Jot these down.

### Structure and repetition

Did they notice anything about the structure of the poem? They may have spotted that Abbie has used lots of different kinds of repetition. Go through and identify these together.

Repetition is impactful because it creates a pleasing pattern for the ear and eye. It also makes the message more memorable.

When you repeat something, it doesn't have to be exactly the same each time. Where has Abbie used a pattern but with some changes? Establishing a pattern and then changing it makes the changed word or words stick out, in a good way!

### The power of three

Abbie's repetitions are based around the number three. Look through the poem again and note this together. Writers often use patterns of three – there's something very satisfying about it.

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## Class writing

Go back to your list of ordinary things which become more interesting when you look closer. Build on this together, e.g. pencil, web, pebble, acorn, leaf, paper, dirt, apple...

Choose three of these and for each one, take ideas for what it might look like when you “grow near”, as in Abbie’s poem. For example, paper might be “full of a story”, an acorn might be “future oxygen”, a web might be “a work of art”.

For each object, choose three exclamations to go with it. For example, the story could include “Dinosaurs! Volcanoes! Aliens!” You might see “Breath! Growth! Life!” in the acorn, and “Silk! Strength! Silver!” in the spider’s web – or maybe “Flies! Flies! More flies!”

Are you happy with the order on the board, or would you like to reorder your objects and lines before you write up the final poem?

## Individual writing

Invite your pupils to choose three new objects to write about, inspired by ‘Small Things and Big Awe’ – it can be something on the class list or something new. They can follow Abbie’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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by .....





## Small Things and Big Awe

It looks like a puddle from here,  
but it's bursting with life  
when you grow near.

Algae!

Tadpoles!

Snails!

It looks like an old log from here,  
but it's teeming with critters  
when you grow near.

Salamanders!

Millipedes!

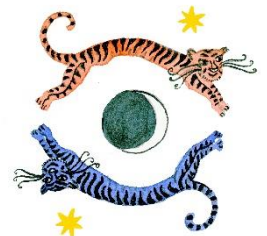
Beetles!

It looks like some garbage from here,  
but it's composting brilliance  
when you grow near.

Worms!

Worms!

More worms!



*Abbie Werner James*