Tyger Tyger Magazine

Poetry reading and writing activity: fairy poems

A guide to reading the poem 'Lightning Fairy' by Moe Phillips (see below), exploring poetic techniques in the poem, and writing in response as a class and individually.

Getting to know the poem

Ask your class to sit with their eyes closed while you read 'Lightning Fairy' out loud. Which parts did they like? Which bits stuck in their heads?

Display the poem and read it again. Have they ever encountered a fairy like this before? The poem doesn't give us her name – can they dream up some names that would suit her fiery spirit?

Word choice

Go through the poem and pick out the words that make us think of lightning and storms. You'll find them in every line except for the couplet about the Sugar Plum Fairy – which we'll come back to! Moe has filled her poem with sizzling, crackling energy.

Onomatopoeia

Lots of these words are onomatopoeic. Recap onomatopoeia and find these words together, relishing the sound of them: hissing, booming, cracking, howling, sizzles…

Class performance

This poem is calling out to be performed! Divide the class into six groups and give them each two lines to rehearse, bringing out the drama and the elemental power of the lines. Then perform the poem all together.

Using contrast

Moe has contrasted her Lightning Fairy with a Sugar Plum Fairy – a character from the ballet *The Nutcracker*. You might be able to find a video of The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy online. What words would your class use to describe this very different kind of fairy?

Poets like using contrast because it draws out and emphasises the unique characteristics of both things. The Sugar Plum Fairy in the poem dances in the moonlight, which is pale and cool, while the Lightning Fairy makes fiery sparks – which are bright and hot – dance on her fingertips! The sweet, gentle Sugar Plum Fairy makes the Lightning Fairy seem even more powerful.

What other fairies could your class invent to contrast with the Lightning Fairy? Kitten Fairy, Cupcake Fairy, Rainbow Fairy, Drizzle Fairy, Blossom Fairy…? What do these fairies look like? How do they move? What are their special powers?

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Resource © Rachel Piercey, 2026

Class warm-up

Jot down some ideas for other kinds of weather fairies on the board, for example: Thunder Fairy, Rain Fairy, Wind Fairy, Frost Fairy, Fog Fairy, Snow Fairy, Hail Fairy…

Choose one together then write down words, phrases and sound words associated with your weather on the board. For example, if you choose Snow Fairy, you might write down: shiver, flakes, teeth chattering, ice, icicles, white, silver, glitter, crunch, quiet, whispers, drifts, flutters, twirls, swirls, snowballs, footprints, sinking, winter…

Write a poem all together following Moe's structure:

- four couplets exploring the fairy's powers
- introducing a different fairy for contrast in the fifth couplet
- final couplet about what's in your fairy's heart and how he/she flies

You don't need to make it rhyme – focus instead on choosing words that capture a sense of the fairy's unique spirit.

Read it aloud together. Are there any edits you'd like to make?

Individual writing

Invite your pupils to write their own fairy poem, on a new theme. As with the class poem, they don't need to make it rhyme.

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 their poem 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! Email us on tygertygermagazine@gmail.com for some personalised feedback.

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Inspired by the poem 'Lightning Fairy' by Moe Phillips

by .....

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Lightning Fairy

Sparks dance on her fingertips.
Jagged hair stands on end.
Hissing voice crackles
as she makes the lightning bend.
Challenged by booming thunder,
she answers its angry call.
Cracking her electric whip
into the howling squall.
This Fairy is no sugar plum
dancing under moonlit skies.
Heart filled with fiery embers,
she sizzles when she flies.

by Moe Phillips

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