

Poetry Prompts: Week 50

Bubbles

This sheet is to accompany Poetry Prompt 42 that features Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022–2024 Joseph Coelho. This week Joseph Coelho explored acrostic poetry. In an acrostic poem, you write a word vertically down one side of the page and then each letter of that word starts each sentence of your poem. This poem by Joseph contains three words that relate to the subject of the poem, bubbles – but they are hidden within the lines, rather than appearing at the start. See if you can spot them as you read...



Read the poem:

Read the poem aloud. You might do this yourself, with a friend or someone else could read it to you:

Bubble Writing

Bubbled letters float.
Rounded swells speaking stars,
rainbow sheens swimming in whisper-thin skins.
Lifespans like raindrops,
like vibrations on tongues.

An **A** ascends, tilts its roof as it rises.
An **i** isochronally spins around its dot,
slipping into the curving hug of an **r**'s grasp.

From *Werewolf Club Rules* by Joseph Coelho
(Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2014)



The bubbled letters form words,
an alphabet aerial array.

A large **P** pogos up the ladder of an **E**,
an **a** rolls apple-like down an **r**'s kick.
The right angle of an **L** softens into a bend.

Bubbled letters float.
Two **P**s flank the wet burst wisp of an **@**.



Think about the poem:

Consider the poem you just read. What is being described here? What does the poem make you think about? How does it make you feel?

Re-read the poem again. Were there any words you weren't sure of the meaning of? What do you think they might mean? What makes you think this? Use a dictionary, either a physical one if you have one to hand, or an online one like:
<https://kids.britannica.com/kids/browse/dictionary>

Look at the language:

- **Re-read the poem for yourself.** Can you see the **words hidden inside the poem**? One is in the **second verse**, one is in the **fourth** and one is in the **last verse**. **Write the words out** for yourself. Why do you think Joseph Coelho has chosen to highlight these particular words? **How do they relate to the poem?**
- Think about the bubbles that were being described. Have you blown bubbles before? Or seen them being blown? **What were they like?** How could you **describe them**? If you haven't, you could make some bubble mix to blow bubbles yourself. **Watch the bubbles** form and float, before they pop. **What words and phrases come to mind as you watch them?**
- Consider the images placed in your mind by the phrases chosen to describe the bubbles by Joseph Coelho: **'rounded swells speaking stars', 'rainbow sheens swimming in whisper-thin skins', 'lifespans like raindrops', 'like vibrations on tongues'** as well as the three hidden words: **'air', 'pearl' and 'pop'**. How do these relate to the bubbles you saw? What do these words make you **think or feel about the bubbles**?



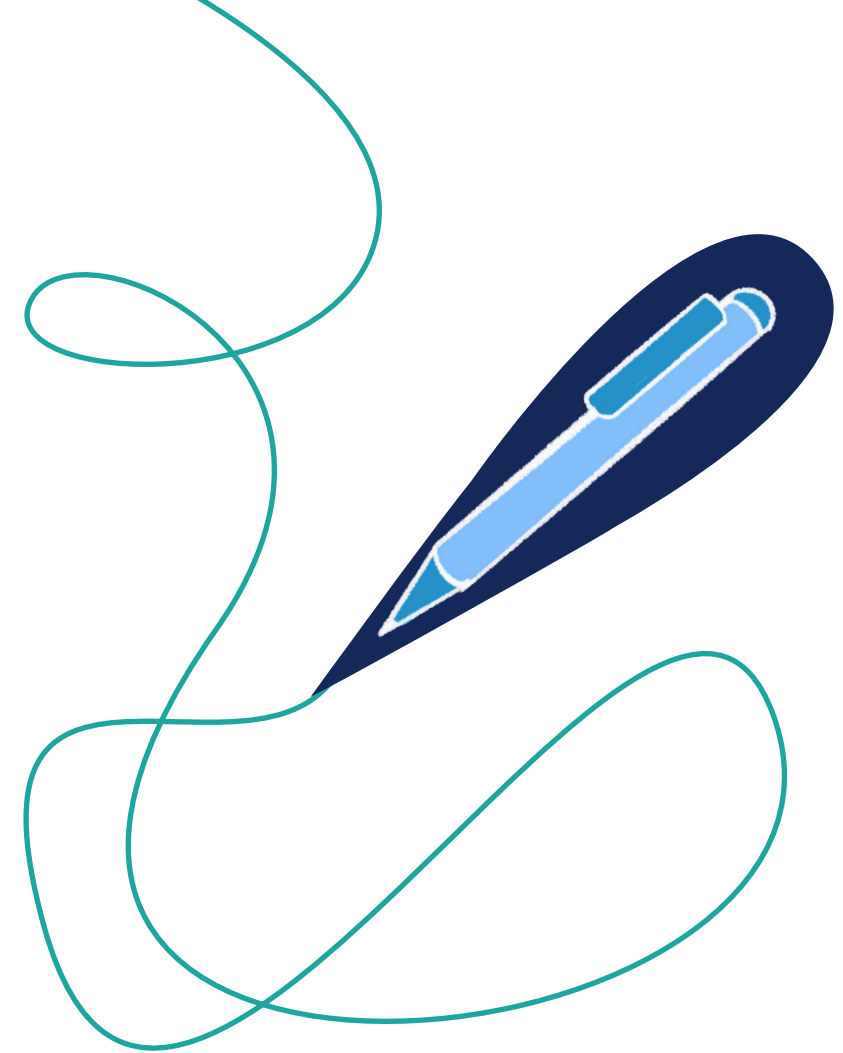
Perform the poem:

- **Think about** how you might capture the wonder of watching the bubbles in a performance of the poem. **What mood do you want to create** for the audience? **How might you do this?**
- Try out **different ways of using your voice** to read the poem. Make sure you **keep your words clear** as you perform, **so your audience can understand them**. How can you **use your voice in different ways** to bring out the **meaning of the words** and the **mood of the poem**? Will some parts be **louder or quieter, faster or slower, higher or lower**? How will you make sure any actions you may decide to include **add to the performance, not detract from it**?
- **Rehearse your performance** a few times until you are happy with it, then **perform it to someone else**. What did they think was **most successful about your performance**? Do they have any suggestions of **how to improve it**?



Write your own!

- Consider the things that you are **most interested** in or that **capture your attention**. It could be anything at all, **a person, a place, an object, an aspect of nature, a hobby or interest**.
- Think about **why you are interested** in this particular thing. What words or phrases would you use to **describe it to someone else?** Jot your ideas down on a page.
- Now, think about how you can **draw attention to the thing you have described** by the way in which you **highlight words related to the subject** in your writing. You could:
 - **write an acrostic poem**, you write a word vertically down one side of the page, using each letter to start a word on each new line;
 - **write a mesostic poem**, with a word spelled out using letters in the middle of each line, rather than at the start;
 - **write a telestich poem**, where the final letter of the word in each line spells out the word;
 - **hide words anywhere within your poem**, making the letters that spell them out bold, so they can be seen as in the poem above.
- When you have a **draft of your poem**, **read it aloud** to check it flows and **makes sense**, then type it up or write it out in your best handwriting to **share with others**.



Find all Poetry Prompts as well as more information about Joseph Coelho at booktrust.org.uk/childrens-laureate

Find and explore more poems about food on CLPE's website.

This sequence of activities was designed in partnership with CLPE. CLPE is a UK-based children's literacy charity working with primary schools to raise the achievement of children's reading and writing by helping schools to teach literacy creatively and effectively, putting quality children's books at the heart of all learning. Find out more about their work, and access further resources and training at: clpe.org.uk.