

## Poetry Prompts: Week 2

# Describing something using a single word

This sheet is to accompany the first Poetry Prompt video featuring Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022–2024 Joseph Coelho. This week, Joseph takes the word 'bug' and adds a descriptive word to create fantastical different bugs and explore their behaviours.



### Read the poem:

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

### Bug Poem

*Hanging from a silken web,  
landing on my sister's head!  
A hairy bug.*

*Living under the toilet seat,  
smelling like my brother's feet!  
A stink bug.*

*Wearing lipstick and make-up,  
landing on my mum's teacup.  
A lady bug.*

*Drawing pictures without a care,  
sitting in my grandad's chair.  
A doodle bug.*

*Always asleep and in a doze,  
curled up in my grandma's clothes.  
A snug bug.*

*On my head and under my hat  
I pulled too hard and it went splat!  
A dead bug.*

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

### Think about the poem:

What did you feel as you were reading the poem?  
Were your feelings the same in each verse or did they change throughout the poem?

Have you heard of any of these bugs before? Which do you think are real and which are just Joseph Coelho playing with words?

What did you think about as you were reading the poem? Which bug was most memorable for you? Why do you think this was? Use the descriptions to draw the bug which was most memorable to you. Which words helped to build a picture in your mind?



### Look at the language:

- Read the poem again. **Circle the name of each bug** as you read. Now look back at each verse individually. How did Joseph Coelho play with the bug's name to **build the description**? What words and phrases specifically **relate to the meaning** of the bug's name?

## Perform the poem:

- Think about how you can **bring the descriptions of the bugs to life** through a performance of the poem. How will you **use your voice, facial expressions and actions** in different ways to bring out the character of each individual bug that Joseph Coelho has created? Where can you slow down or speed up, make your voice louder or quieter? Will you change the tone or pitch of your voice? How will you make sure any facial expressions or actions **add to your performance**, rather than distract from it?
- You could **put together a performance** with friends or family members, splitting up the verses between you, with each person performing a different bug.
- Rehearse until you are happy with how it sounds, then **perform the poem** to someone else or record your performance to watch back for yourself. Were you able display the descriptions of each bug in your performance?

Find all Poetry Prompts as well as more information about Joseph Coelho at [www.booktrust.org.uk/childrenslaureate](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/childrenslaureate)

## Write your own!

- There are many other different types of bugs. Here are the names of just a few more:  
**Bed bug, lightning bug, plant bug, ambush bug, water bug, spittlebug, lace bug, toad bug, shield bug**
- Take one of the bugs mentioned above and **write some descriptive lines** to play with the name of the bug, as Joseph Coelho does in the original poem. Think about the definition of the word as you come up with ideas. What does the word mean to you and what does it make you think about? Look it up in a dictionary to see if that gives you any more ideas. How could you **play with the word's meaning** to describe what the bug might be doing? You could even create a drawing of your bug in action to help bring your ideas together.
- **Put your ideas into an additional verse** for the poem. You can try this with more than one bug name.
- **Find out more** about the bug you chose and what it is like in real life by researching it on the internet or in reference books.

You can explore a range of children's poems like this on CLPE's Website.

This sequence of activities was designed in collaboration with CLPE. CLPE is a UK 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 [www.clpe.org.uk](http://www.clpe.org.uk).