

Poetry Prompts: Week 21

Pancake poem

This sheet is to accompany Poetry Prompt 21 that features Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022–2024 Joseph Coelho. This week's Poetry Prompt served up a delicious recipe for a pancake poem, focussing on the actions that you do while making or eating them. Here's another recipe poem. See if you can spot all the baking actions...

Read the poem:

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

Recipe For This Boy

Take two cried-out eyes,
a pinch of loneliness,
mix in a bowl.

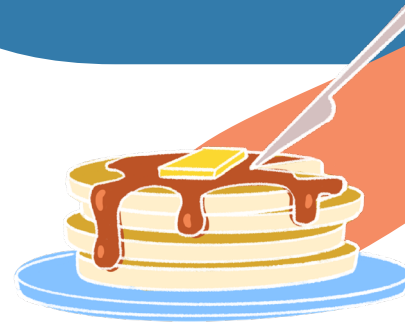
Add a dash of bravery,
two heaped teaspoons of brotherly love,
fold in fear.

Crack a box of giggles,
beat into stomach-aching guffaws,
blend until smooth.

Add a cup of heart,
pour in three thick handfuls of hair,
knead with tickling fingers.

Roll out onto a city pavement
egg-frying hot with summer heat,
cookie cut the shape of a boy.

Decorate with giggles,
dust with smiling tears,
leave to rise
under the heat of a happy sun.



Think about the poem:

Consider the meaning of this poem. Is this a real recipe? What is the recipe really for?

Read the text again. What do you think you find out about the boy from reading the poem? What do you think he is like? How do you feel about him when you read the poem? What words or lines make you think or feel these things?

Look at the language:

- Read the poem again and **circle or underline** any words or phrases that are used to describe the **cooking actions** that take place in one colour and any other **cooking specific words or phrases** in another colour, for example those that describe the quantities. **Look at these words again.** How do these words work to **shape our thoughts and feelings** about the boy? Why do you think Joseph Coelho chose specific words to go with specific characteristics?
- Now, consider **how you might write a recipe** for yourself. What do you think **makes you, you?** What characteristics do you think you have that you might share? Take a piece of paper and **draw a gingerbread person shape** in the middle. **On the outside** of the shape, write words that describe what **people might see or think about you** on the outside. This might include whether you are a child or sibling to someone else, what you look like or first impressions people might have of you. **On the inside** of the shape, write what you think **you are really like** inside. What might people not see or realise about you on first sight? This might include feelings you have that others might not see, or things about you that it takes longer to get to know.

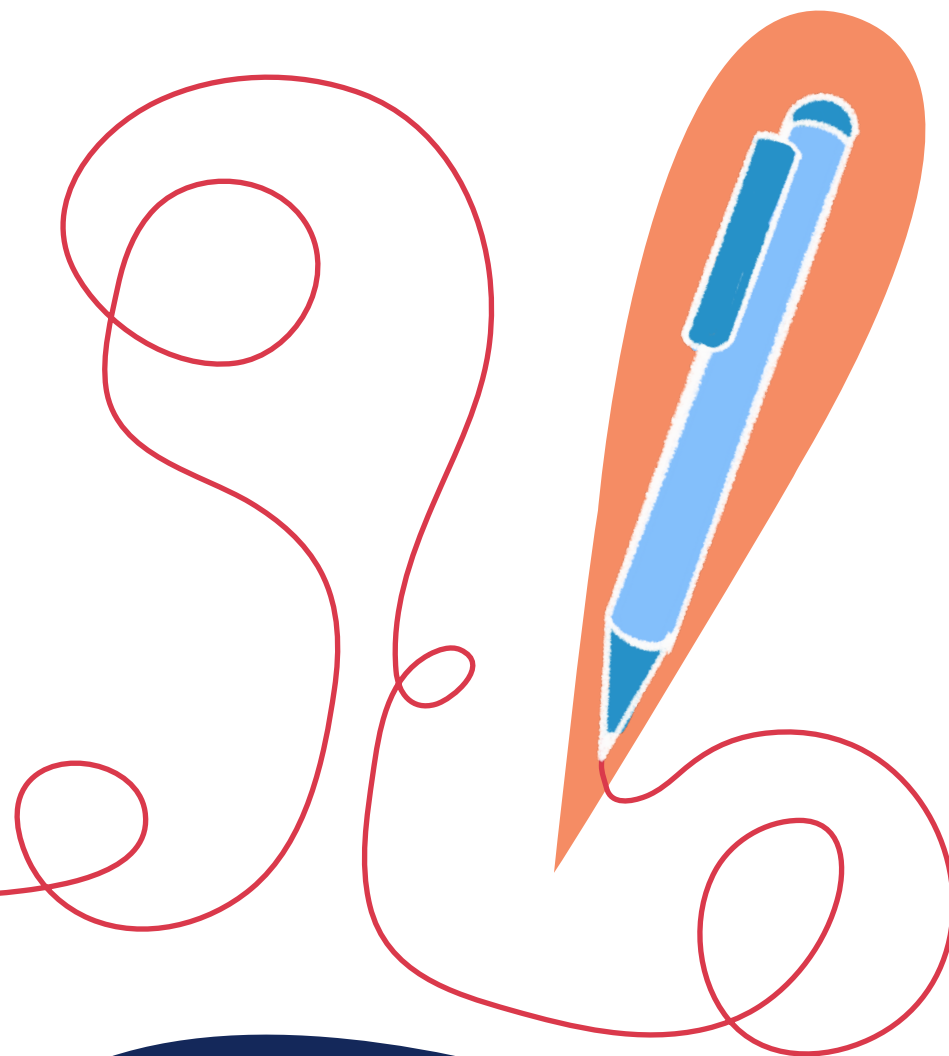
Perform the poem:

- Think about how to bring the recipe **idea of the poem to life** in a performance. Think about the **actions and cooking specific words** you've identified. Could you **bring these to life** in your performance? How will you make sure this **adds to the meaning**, rather than detracts from it?
- Try out **different ways to read** each verse. Think about the different characteristics and emotions that are explored in each verse. How can you **use your voice in different ways** to bring out the different feelings? Will some parts be louder or quieter, faster or slower, higher or lower?
- **Rehearse your performance** a few times until you are happy with it, then **perform it to someone else**. What sense of the boy did they get from your performance? What did they think you did that was most effective?



Write your own!

- Think about a way to **make a recipe for yourself** in a poem. Come back to the words **you wrote in and around the gingerbread person** you drew. Which of these characteristics might you share in a poem?
- Now, think about the **cooking specific actions or words** you could use to build these things into a poem. Think about the things Joseph Coelho did that **left an impression** on you. For example, what might **two heaped teaspoons of brotherly love** tell you about this boy? Or **a pinch of loneliness**? Why do you think he chose the verb **crack** when talking about the **giggles**? Have a go at **using cooking specific imagery** to create the same effect for the people who will read your poem.
- When you've finished, **try reading your poem aloud** to explore how to **use your voice and any actions in a performance** to bring out a sense of what you are like. You could also **create an illustration** to show **what you might look like** as a gingerbread person, seeing how you can share your characteristics in the way its arms or legs are placed, or in how it's decorated.



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

Find and explore more poems about empathising with others 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.