

Poetry Prompts: Week 14

New Year

This sheet is to accompany Poetry Prompt 14 that features Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022–2024 Joseph Coelho. This week's Poetry Prompt was all about New Year. This is often a time to look ahead to what might happen in the next year, our hopes, dreams and the adventures that might lie ahead. Here's another poem, written by Joseph Coelho, which looks forward to tomorrow and all it brings.



Read the poem:

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

Bedtime

Sleep upon the hours
that the darkness keeps.
Roll up in the minutes
that the moon slowly sighs.
Sink into the seconds
that the stars twinkle by.

Dream of the face
that makes you smile when you wake.
Snuffle in the song of chimes
from yawning hills when morning breaks.

Snuggle into tomorrow
with the sun's brightening dawn.
A world of wonder awaits you
what adventures will you go on?

From *Smile Out Loud* by Joseph Coelho
(Wide Eyed Editions, 2022)

Think about the poem:

Think about the words you just heard. What did these make you think about? How do they make you feel? What made you feel this way?

Consider your own reflections on the last year and the New Year to come. What things were most memorable to you? What are you most looking forward to?



Look at the language:

- **Listen to the poem** being read again. You might want to close your eyes to really focus on the words. What do you see in your mind's eye as the poem is read? Do any particular images come to you? What colours might you use? How can you capture the feelings evoked by the poem? Gather together some paper, pencils and colouring pencils, crayons or pens and have a go at **creating an illustration** to accompany this verse.
- Now, look at the words again and **circle or underline** any that stayed in your mind. Why do you think this was? What words and phrases **evoke feelings of hope** at the end of the poem?

Perform the poem:

- The poem shares the journey from night time to the dawn of a new day. How could you **perform this poem** in a way that brings it to life for an audience, but values the calm atmosphere of the poem? How can you **take your audience on the journey** towards the hope and excitement of what the new day brings?
- 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?

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

Write your own!

- Come back to your own hopes for the New Year. What kinds of things might you **want to aspire to, achieve or accomplish** in the New Year? **What adventures** might you want to go on? Are there any **special events** that will occur in the next year for you, your friends or your family?
- On a blank piece of paper, start to **write all the things you hope, dream and aspire** to in the next year. These may be **small goals** you've set yourself, **days out** you have planned, and **people you might see** or **places you might go**.
- Use your thoughts to try and **draft a poem of your own**, which shares your **hopes and dreams** for the New Year. Think about how to **use your own words** to share the hope and excitement for what might happen, as Joseph Coelho did in the original verse with lines like **a world of wonder awaits you**. You could even use this line as the title for your poem.
- When you've finished, **try reading your poem aloud** to explore how to use your voice to bring out the sense of wonder and excitement.
- You might also want to **type it out and illustrate it**. You could put it in a safe place to get out and **read on the last night of the year**, to see if any of your aspirations were realised or if you achieved what you hoped you might or if life took a different turn to that which you were expecting.

Find and explore more seasonal poems 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 clpe.org.uk.