

Poetry Prompts: Week 18

Tongue twister

This sheet is to accompany Poetry Prompt 18 that features Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022–2024 Joseph Coelho. This week's Poetry Prompt did a great job of getting your tongue into a twist! Here's another tongue twister by Joseph Coelho. See if you can hear the alliteration in the poem. What sound is repeated throughout, which makes this poem tricky on the tongue?

Read the poem:

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

Red Robots

**Red robots are on the rise,
grasping their red, radiating bellies.
Red robots have red eyes
and red rust on their radio relays.**

**Red robots race on rails
re-purposed from railways.
Red robots are revolutionary
with their radioactive rays.**

From *Poems Aloud* by Joseph Coelho
(Wide Eyed Editions, 2020)

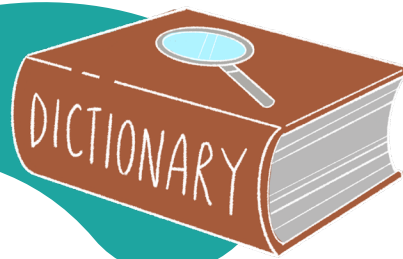


Think about the poem:

Listen to and read the poem for a second time. What do you think and feel about the robots? Why do you think this is? What atmosphere is created in the poem?



Think about the words you just heard. What sound did you hear repeated throughout the poem? What letter usually represents this sound when you see it written down? Can you think of any other letters that can also represent this sound? What about in words like write, wrist and wrong?

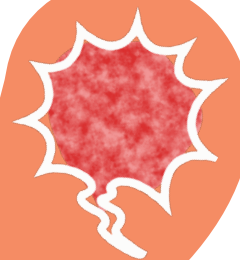


Look at the language:

- Read the poem again and **circle or underline** all the words which **start with the /r/ sound**. Do you know the meanings of all these words? If not, **what do you think they mean**, in the context of the poem? **Find a dictionary**, either a physical copy or an online dictionary, and check whether your predictions were correct.
- Now, in a different colour, **highlight the words or phrases you like best** or that you think **provide the best descriptions** of the robots or **create atmosphere** in the best way. Why did you choose these particular words or phrases? What effect did they have on you? How could you describe these words? **Are any of them nouns**, describing parts or elements of the robots; **adjectives describing elements** of the robots' appearance or **verbs to describe their actions**?
- Re-read the poem one more time. What do **you see in your mind's eye** as the poem is read? How do you picture the robots? What do they look like? What are they doing? How might you illustrate this verse? How can you capture the atmosphere created in 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.

Perform the poem:

- This poem creates a **mood and atmosphere**, linked to the descriptions of the robots and their actions. How do you think you might **bring this out in a performance** of the poem? Will you perform as a robot, or as someone observing the robots? **Try it out both ways** and consider which one helps create the right atmosphere most effectively.
- When you've decided, think about how you'll **use your voice to perform the words**. 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 atmosphere that has been created? 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**, and the **listener's understanding** of what is happening, rather than 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 effective about your performance? Is there anything they might suggest to improve it?



Write your own!

- Think about **different subjects you could write about** for your own tongue twister. You might pick an animal, a person, or a toy or fictional character.
- Write the name of the thing you want to write about in the **middle of a piece of paper** and then think of different **words or phrases that describe this thing or its actions**, which begin with the same sound as the object itself. You might start by thinking of **nouns to describe** parts or features of the thing you are writing about, **adjectives to describe** its appearance and **verbs to describe its actions**, as you saw in the original poem. You could put some of these words together to create expanded noun phrases, like **red, radiating bellies** or **red robots race on rails** in the original poem.
- When you have some words and phrases written down, use these to **compose your own verse or verses** about the subject you have chosen. Consider how your **words will be arranged on the page** and where **you might break lines or verses**.
- When you have something written down, **read it aloud** to hear how it flows off the page. Have you **repeated your sounds** enough throughout the poem to make it twist your tongue? Make any changes you need to then **write or type up** your finished poem. You might even want to **draw an illustration to accompany it**.
- **Give your finished poem to someone else** to read. How easy do they find it to read aloud with all the repeated sounds?



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

Find and explore more poems which contain alliteration 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.