

## Poetry Prompts: Week 30

# Performing poetry

This sheet is to accompany Poetry Prompt 30 that features Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022–2024 Joseph Coelho. This week's Poetry Prompt focussed on performing poetry. In the video, Joseph introduced you to diminuendo. This is when you start performing a poem with a loud voice and then get quieter and quieter. Here's another poem by Joseph Coelho that would be great to read in this way. See if you can see why...



### Read the poem:

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

### Counting to Ten

Feeling angry.

Just count to ten.

Feeling mad.

Just count to ten.

Feeling annoyed.

Just count to ten...

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

Feeling calm,

I just counted to ten.

Feeling kind,

I just counted to ten.

Feeling happy,

I just counted to ten.

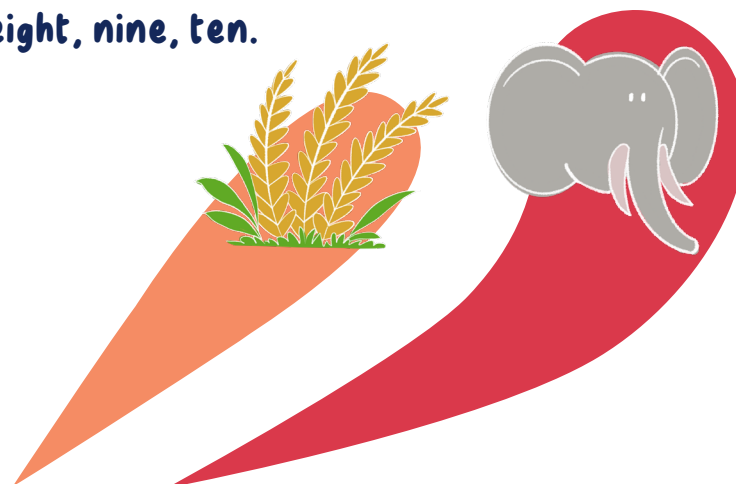
From *Blow a Kiss, Catch a Kiss* by Joseph Coelho  
(Andersen Press, 2022)

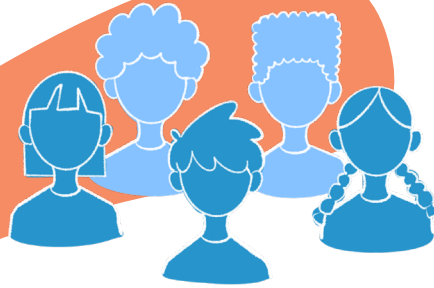
### Think about the poem:

Can you relate to the poem? Have you ever felt angry, mad or annoyed before? What made you feel this way? What did it feel like? How did you overcome these feelings?



What does the poem make you think about? How does it make you feel? What makes you feel this way? Do you feel the same way throughout the poem or do your feelings change throughout? Why do you think this might be?



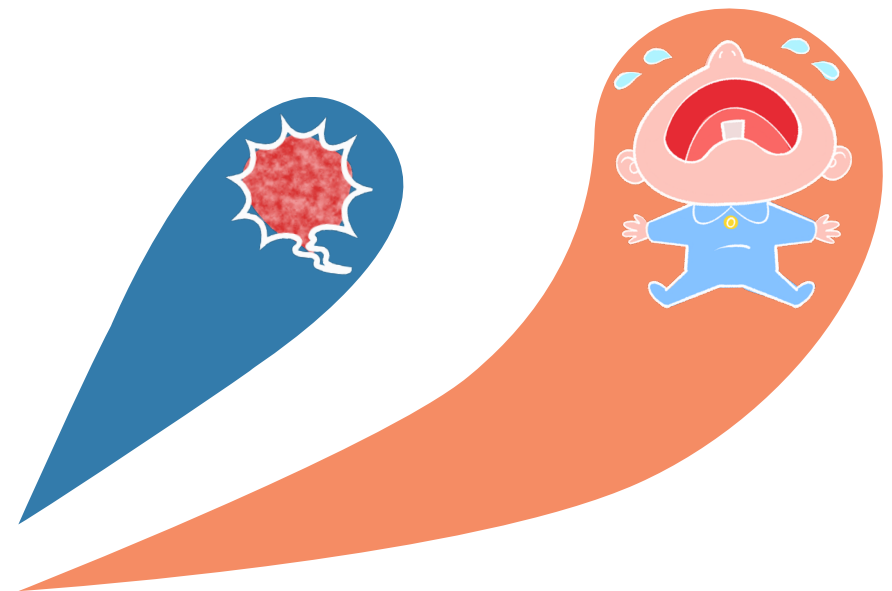


## Look at the language:

- Read the poem again and **circle or highlight any words and phrases** that directly **describe the emotions** the narrator is feeling.
- Look back at the words you have identified. In each verse, all the words mean a similar thing but are slightly different. What are **the differences between these words**? Can you **think of any other words** that could go with each verse to **describe being angry or being calm**?
- Look at the **repetition in the poem**. What lines are repeated in the verses? Why do you think **Joseph Coelho has chosen to repeat** these lines? **What effect** does it have?
- Consider how the emotion shifts across the two verses. Why do you think this poem might be **good to perform diminuendo**?

## Perform the poem:

- The poem tells the story of someone moving from being angry to being calm, supported by them counting to ten. How might **you convey these feelings** in a performance of the poem? How can you **use your voice in different ways** to bring out the meaning of the words? Can you **use facial expression or actions** to emphasise this? Will some parts be louder or quieter, faster or slower, higher or lower? How might you **incorporate diminuendo** into your performance? How will you make sure any actions you choose to do **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. Ask them **how the performance made them feel**. Could they **experience the mood** of the narrator in each verse? What **enabled them to experience** the feelings?



## Write your own!

- Think about a time you have felt **angry, mad or annoyed**. What was it that made **you feel this way**? What did you do to **overcome your feelings**? Was it something **specific**, like counting to ten, as in Joseph Coelho's poem, or **did the feelings subside** on their own?
- In a few bullet points, **sketch out the story** of this moment, exploring **the build up** to becoming angry, being angry, then calming down.
- Use these to **draft a poem of your own** about this moment. Think about how you can **share the emotional journey** you go on throughout the poem. Think about **what you can draw from the original poem** to inspire your own writing. What words will you use to describe your feelings? Will you **repeat any lines** for effect on your reader? What might these be?
- When you have a finished draft, **have a go at reading it aloud**. Does your poem make sense? Can you **feel the emotional journey** in your words? Can you **add anything** to make it better?
- Make any edits you need to then either **write it out in your best handwriting or type it up** and print it out.
- In the same way as you did with the original poem, **think about how you might perform** your own poem to an audience. Where can you **change the volume of your voice** to enhance the mood you are expressing in your poem? What else could you do to **bring out the story** of the moment? How can you **use your voice in different ways** to bring out the meaning of the words? Can you **use facial expression or actions** to emphasise this? Will some parts be **faster or slower, higher or lower**? How will you make sure any actions you choose to do **add to the performance**, not detract from it?
- When you have practised, **find an audience to perform to**. How do **they respond** to your poem? How did performing it **make you feel**?

Find all Poetry Prompts as well as more information about Joseph Coelho at [booktrust.org.uk/childrens-laureate](https://booktrust.org.uk/childrens-laureate)

### Find and explore more poems about feelings 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](https://clpe.org.uk).

