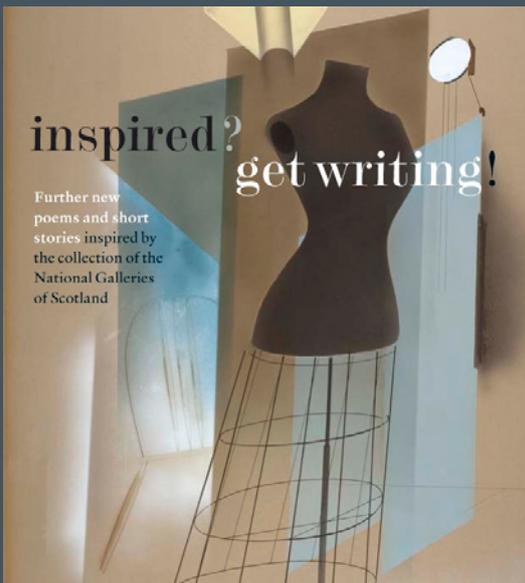


inspired! get writing!



resource
notes

Get Inspired! Get Writing!

Welcome to the new *Inspired? Get writing!* online resource.

These notes were developed and written by the *Inspired? Get writing!* team to offer some inspiration, guidance and support to entrants to *Inspired? Get Writing!*

Whether you're entering the competition for the first time, or are an experienced writer looking for fresh impetus; whether you're a teacher looking for some creative lesson ideas, or a young person looking for some tips on how to get started - these notes are for you.

Whoever you are, you may be asking yourself, *How do I get inspired? How am I supposed to really 'look at' an artwork? Where do I start? What kind of poem or story could I write?* We hope that our notes will answer some of these questions, that a great idea grabs you, and you can't wait to get started.

Teachers may find this resource particularly useful in developing a creative cross-curricular programme to incorporate into their teaching syllabus; some of our 'regular' schools engage in our competition as an annual classroom project. We've tried to make our notes suitable for direct use by teenagers and adults, and appropriate in content for all 7-14 year olds when selected and adapted for use by their teachers.

The notes are divided into clear sections (see our contents page) so that you can read through them all in order or simply dip in for specific advice, ideas or information. Make sure to check out our competition rules.

We're very grateful to the following education and literary colleagues and friends who reviewed and assisted with these notes. Grateful thanks to:

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We hope you find this resource useful, that you enjoy writing this year, and we look forward to reading your entries.

Best wishes

Lorna, Linda, Suzy
The *Inspired? Get writing!* team

SCOTTISH POETRY LIBRARY
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GALLERIES
SCOTLAND

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1. Looking at Art

(i) How do we look at art?

Many of us, when we go to an art gallery, walk past artworks and cast our eye over each one for a maximum of 30 seconds.

We look at the label.

The artwork is expected to 'mean' something, and we look at the label hoping to find some kind of answer.

If there is too much information on the label, unless we're *really* interested, we won't read to the end but move along to the next artwork.

What we often fail to appreciate is that many of the 'answers' can be found in the artworks themselves, if we look hard and long enough.

You'll get a lot more out of seeing an *original* artwork than seeing it in reproduction, or online, although we understand that the vast majority of our entrants will be restricted to observing the National Galleries' Collection at a remove. But even when we look at artworks 'in the flesh', where we can appreciate scale, size, texture and true colour, we sometimes don't look quite closely enough, or look in the most beneficial way for writing. So whether you can visit the National Galleries of Scotland or you're exploring the collection on the web, get in gear...

(ii) What influences how we see things?

Many factors contribute to the way we *see* art, the way we 'read' it and the way it inspires us. Because art can remind us of people, places, experiences and times in our lives, it can trigger strong feelings, reactions and ideas – and *these* are the stuff, the beginnings, of poems and stories.

HOW WE VISIT GALLERIES

Alone or in a group? Being with friends or family may radically change, influence or subvert how we see things.

TIME OF DAY

Do we visit early, when we're fresh and alert - or late, when tired, jaded or hungry?

DISPLAY ISSUES

Aspects of the ways in which art is displayed and our ease of access to it can greatly affect our level of comfort and way of seeing: gallery space and arrangement, mobility issues, overcrowding, poor labelling and information can all affect access and enjoyment.

AGE

Children often see things very differently from adults, as do teenagers.

GENDER

Men and women are drawn to and respond differently to different subject matter.

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

What we already know about the subject, medium, artist or artwork, together with our own art-education experience, our expectations, and our reading of criticism or reviews will affect our responses.



Portrait Detectives, photo ©Alicia Bruce

MOOD

How we feel at a particular moment can affect our view and level of receptiveness. We may be unhappy and in need of solace or comfort. Or positive and joyful. In turn, our susceptibility means that art can transform our mood.

LIFE EXPERIENCE

Our life experiences may help us to identify or empathise with (or dislike or be repelled by) the subject matter

Personal attitudes, values, prejudices

We may have strong religious or moral beliefs that colour our attitude and point of view.

We may be anxious about looking at artworks for fear that we're unable to 'appreciate' them properly, or 'teach' others to do so.

DO IT YOUR OWN WAY -

For the purposes of *Inspired? Get writing!* we want only that people of all ages, and especially teachers and their pupils, engage with and respond to artworks in a personal, confident and un-self-censored way. Respond in whatever way you choose, enjoy or feel natural doing. You don't have to have any background knowledge or experience. Art critics *may* well say there are right and wrong answers when it comes to art. *We* don't!

(iii) *Ways of seeing: getting started*

LOOK AT THE ARTWORK ANY WHICH WAY YOU CAN...

Look at the work as a whole, and then as a sum of many parts...

Let your eyes scan it from left to right and top to bottom, and vice versa. Screw up your eyes as you look at it; what shapes and elements can you pick out? What do they look *like*? If you're in the gallery, lie down and look up at it. Approach it from different angles. Do you like or dislike it immediately? Does it grow on you, or are you indifferent?

Does the work have a title? Does the title clarify, confuse or intrigue you? Why do you think it has that title? What title would you give it, and why?

LIVE WITH IT...

Print out a copy of the artwork or obtain a postcard and pin it up in the classroom or on your kitchen noticeboard. Live with it for a while. Re-visit it time and again. Glance at it in passing; stop and study it closely.

LET YOUR EYES ZOOM IN ON SMALL DETAILS...

What can you see in the piece? Identify or list everything from the most obvious to the tiny details.

Ask questions of each other about what you see.

Pick out a small part that most might not see on first glance/viewing.

MAKE CONNECTIONS

Look for connections between the artwork and your own life, experience and point of view. What do you feel when you look at the work? Does it remind you of anything? Anyone? Any place or time? Make connections between the world or the period in which the artwork was created, and your own world. Talk to the artwork – and let it talk back!

WHAT QUESTIONS WOULD YOU ASK ABOUT THE WORK OF ART?

Of a gallery guide? Of the artist? Of a character depicted?

Which part of the artwork do you think caused the artist most difficulty or effort? Which part did he/she like doing best?

If the figure(s) invited you into the world of the artwork, would you go?

Why not just read an inspiring poem for starters? This is a good one for secondary pupils and adults: See Fleur Adcock's *Leaving the Tate*.

WEB LINK

(iv) *The more you look the more you see*

Talk with friends or in groups in class to explore some of the following topics and questions. Teachers of younger pupils can work with a limited number of selected criteria from the list below; perhaps let children *choose* which aspects of a painting they'd like to study more closely (Colour? Atmosphere? Composition?), either by asking them directly, or by picking up and building on the most enthusiastic of their responses to a work.

Content

LOOK CLOSELY; SAY ALOUD OR WRITE DOWN EVERYTHING YOU CAN SEE IN THE ARTWORK

Although, for the purposes of the competition, we're not looking for straightforward descriptions of artworks, description is nonetheless the most important first task in exploring the life of the artwork and the first step in the personal creative process.

NOTHING IN A PAINTING IS RANDOMLY OR ACCIDENTALLY PLACED

Look at the fine detail: a stray curl, a pouting lip, a rucked carpet. What the hands are holding, or reaching for, or dropping. Look at dress, posture, gesture, an expression, a distant view from a window. What's on the floor or half-hidden in a corner?

Composition

WHERE AND HOW ARE ELEMENTS PLACED?

What draws your eye? What element or elements have high status? Is everything centred, or with an imbalance to the right, left, top or bottom; in the foreground or background, filling a lot or a little of the space?

Turn away, then look back: what is the first thing that immediately arrests your attention?

Can you see any angles, colours, shapes, lines or details that are echoed or repeated to help 'bring the artwork together' or give it a sense of movement?

Does the relationship of the elements of the artwork suggest harmony or conflict, or some other mood? Are there ambiguities? Ambivalence? Look for connections and disconnectedness between all the elements.

Colour

HOW HAS THE ARTIST USED COLOUR?

Which colours? Dull or bright; pale or strong; opaque, transparent or translucent?

Are there few or many colours? Are the colours balanced – do they appear in lots of places or just one or two spots?

Are they harmonious or contrasting or juxtaposed and clashing?

Try to describe the colours in the art work as precisely as you can. Not just red - but 'pillarbox', 'oxblood', 'crushed strawberry', 'hollyberry', 'blush'...

Style

HOW AND OF WHAT HAS THE ARTWORK BEEN MADE?

Has it been painted, printed, carved, hewn, welded, moulded, arranged or otherwise assembled?

Can you see brushstrokes, palette-knife marks, smudging? Do the brush strokes or markings go in the same direction or in many?

Is the surface smooth or rough? Is paint loose and watery or thick impasto (meaning the thick paint surface is raised up, sometimes with a palette knife).

Do you think it was made quickly, with a sense of immediacy? Or perhaps painstakingly slowly?

Atmosphere

WHAT KIND OF ATMOSPHERE IS CONVEYED IN THE ARTWORK?

What kind of emotions seem to be conveyed? - Calm and tranquil or alarming and disturbing? Bold or intimate? Dull and boring or exciting and lively? Tragic or comic? Straightforward or ambiguous? Try to find your own words to describe the atmosphere.

How do you think the artist has created the atmosphere?

How would you feel if you were part of the world of the artwork?

Story/Narrative

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE WORLD OF THE ARTWORK? LOOK FOR ALL THE CLUES.

Ask yourself:

Why the artist created it and who might commission/pay for such an artwork

What myths, stories and legends did people at the time the art work was made know or tell - what did they read and believe?

How did these people live their lives and how important were various aspects of life to them; aspects such as family, religion, politics, machines/ technology, fashion, money, food, art.

IMAGINE THE ARTWORK IS A STILL FROM A FILM.

What might happen just before or just after this moment? Who is the leading character? What is his/her back-story? Is the scene the beginning of the story? What happens next? Is it the end of the story? What has happened to get to this point? What is he/she thinking or feeling at this moment?

Sounds and voices

If you could put yourself in the artwork what soundtrack do you think you might hear (even if you've selected an abstract work). Are there voices, music, vibrations?

If there are people, what might they be saying to each other? Would they whisper or shout or speak another language?

Imagine the voice, the attitudes and point of view of different characters (or objects or shapes) in the artwork.

Sensory stories

INVENT!

Try not to think too long before responding to these questions. First impressions and feelings are often the most valuable.

What do the different colours in the artwork remind you of?

Who do the people, or what do the shapes remind you of?

If the colours in the painting were sounds, what would they be?

If the curves or shapes of the sculpture were music or sound, what kind?

If the colours were flavours, what would they be?

If the artwork could speak, what would it say to you? Or to the world?

What kind of movement or rhythm does the piece suggest or remind you of?

What is the predominant texture in the work?

Are there smells wafting through the scene or composition?

Imagine the artwork springing to animated life. What, or who, moves – where to, how and why?



Augustin Edouart, *Anne MacVicar, Mrs James Grant of Laggan*, Scottish National Portrait Gallery

2. A Warm-up for Writing

Sometimes we experience a bit of creakiness in our creative muscles. Sometimes it's really hard even to make the first mark on a blank page. Sometimes we think we'll *never* have an idea.

Doing some warm-ups can liberate the hand *and* the imagination, and allow us to enjoy writing fluently, without struggling with ideas, vocabulary and all kinds of self-censorship.

So here's an idea for a fun and gentle warm-up that can open up a wealth of possibilities and reveal ideas with potential.

Free Writing

We're going to write – without stopping!

Try timed free writing for one minute to start with. If you're a teacher, set as much as you think your class can manage and then extend. Make sure everyone has a blank sheet of paper. Work in silence.

STEP 1

Read these notes to be sure you understand how to proceed, or explain the exercise to your class:

You're going to write. Relax. Go with your first impulse or thought. You are free to write the worst rubbish ever written. (You have absolute permission to make all kinds of mistakes!) Keep your hand moving, and write down *everything!* Don't worry about spelling, punctuation or grammar. (You can go back to this after the exercise, if you wish.) Above all, keep going!

Introduce a short starter-phrase, e.g.

I know...
I want...
I love...
I (don't) remember...
S/he said...
I would paint...

When you get stuck and feel you've nothing, or nothing more, to say, just keep your engine ticking over by writing 'I'm stuck, I'm stuck, I'm stuck' until you find a gear to slip into! Or you could write the stimulus phrase again (Teachers, make sure it's up on the board), and keep going. Once you get started, just follow your mind wherever it takes you.

However, as you write, try to be specific on the detail - not bird but blackbird; not tree but horse chestnut; not biscuit but Hobnob.

STEP 2

After the time allotted, stop. Rest and review the experience briefly. Try again if you like, for a longer period.

STEP 3 (optional)

Read aloud or look at the material you've written and refine it into a more structured piece, for example, by breaking the passage down into 10 syllables per line; by deleting or replacing words, or cutting and pasting. Which suits your material best - prose or poetry? Alternatively, you could simply sift the material, looking for the germs of good ideas for more considered development, or pupils read their work in pairs and say what they like about their partner's writing, and perhaps one thing to work on.

3. Getting Started with Poetry

(i) *Different kinds of poems*

Poems come in all shapes and sizes, flavours and colours and packages. The very best way to familiarise children with what poetry is, and to give them confidence that they can make their own, is to read them all sorts of poems aloud on a regular basis. See our Reading List at the end of this resource.

Here are some ideas for reading and writing different kinds of poems:

LIST POEM

A list poem might itemise or gather together, in an imaginative way, several or many elements in the artwork or in the world of its subject matter. Here are three ideas:

WEB LINK

Read Kit Wright's poem '*The Magic Box*'. Try the same approach for an artwork. Imagine yourself the artist, and start, "On this canvas, I will make, or conjure..."

WEB LINK

Read Ian McMillan's '*Ten Things Found in a Shipwrecked Sailor's Pocket*' by logging in at the TES: Can you use the same idea for a painting or other artwork?

WEB LINK

See Joshua Reynolds' '*The Ladies Waldegrave*'. What do you think might be on the Ladies' 'To Do' lists? Or in their '10 Top Tips for Young Ladies'? Your list could achieve all sorts of things: tell a story, reveal personalities, or examine attitudes, conflicts, politics or values of the time.

SEQUENCE OR SERIES POEM

A sequential structure (e.g. days of the week) or instructional series ('How to...') can offer a strong dramatic form for focusing poetry ideas. Because the structure is plain, children can focus on the originality of their ideas. Perhaps make a recipe of your favourite artwork. Or a set of instructions on 'How to Paint...' a work.

WEB LINK

Read George McKay Brown's '*Beachcomber*'. Try starting your lines like this: On Monday... On Tuesday... On Wednesday... or 'In January... In February...' or 'In Spring... In summer...' or 'The first time... the second time...'

WEB LINK

Read Henry Reed's '*Naming of Parts*'. It's a good example of step-by-step instructions, a form which can resonate powerfully in poetry.

WEB LINK

Read Elaine Magliaro's '*How to make a Morning*' and write a 'recipe for an artwork'.

SHORT FORM POEM

Try haiku, tanka or quatrain. With haiku and tanka, there is no need to adhere strictly to the rules, and these are good forms to encourage children to focus then expand on individual elements of an artwork; for example, they may write five linked haiku in order to explore the artwork from different angles or points of view.

Haiku: three unrhymed lines with 5,7,5 syllables. Traditionally Japanese nature poems, haiku can be written about anything (including artworks) that you want to express thoughts and feelings about. Find out more at

WEB LINK

[BBC Haiku](#)

WEB LINK

[Mr Donn's Haiku](#)

WEB LINK

[Tanka](#): five unrhymed lines with 31 syllables

Quatrain: a four-verse rhymed poem.

Try linking a series of short-form poems:

See Joan Eardley's Catterline in Winter

Try writing four linked haiku: one describing Winter, the others, the three other seasons at Catterline.

Read Wallace Stevens' Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird

Write linked short-form poems that offer *different* views or interpretations of a chosen artwork.

RIDDLE OR 'KENNING'

Try writing using a riddle form to explore a riddle presented by an artwork!

A 'kenning' is an old Norse word for a riddle-poem in which the writer employs figurative compound terms in place of the key concrete noun.

Here's a kenning -

Eye-poppin
Space-starin
Nose-twitchin
Woolly-jumpin
Waim-wobblin
Flock followin
Field-trottin
Rock-stottin
Cud-chompin
Lamb-dichtin
Dye-dippit
Lug-clippit
Dug-frichtit
Hill rovin
Ram-lovin
All-round baa-ad girl...

Whae am I? (A sheep, of course)

Why not try a kenning for a human or animal portrait, or a sculpture?

CONCRETE OR SHAPE OR VISUAL POEM

A concrete poem is one which forms a picture of the subject of the poem or follows the contours of a shape that is suggested by the subject. Concrete poems can be made up of words, phrases or a continuous line.

Look here for examples of concrete or visual poems

Read more about visual poems

Look for artworks with strong lines and perhaps reflect the shapes they create in lines of poetry.

FOUND POEM

A 'found' poem is made up entirely or in part of words and phrases culled from the world around us; words already written down, whether that be in a poem, a road sign, a cinema poster, graffiti, a book on art criticism or an art gallery label. Or even words overheard, spoken by others, about your chosen artwork. So, the *words* in the poem are not original, but the context, purpose, and arrangement of them are.

WEB LINK

WEB LINK

WEB LINK

WEB LINK

WEB LINK

Find an example of a found poem, *An Unemployed Machinist* probably crafted from a newspaper report, by poet and performance artist John Giorno, from *Balling Buddha* (Kulchur Foundation) where you'll also find some tips on working with found text in the classroom.

SYLLABLE POEM

Have fun working with abstract artworks, expressing thoughts about them in a strict syllabic or metric pattern. Perhaps iambic pentameter? Or haiku? Sometimes, imposing a discipline in this way helps young people to select, economise and be highly creative with words.

Try starting very simply with one syllable in line 1, two in line 2, three in line 3 and so on. Perhaps one of Joan Eardley's Catterline works might start:

low
winter
sun against
a steel grey sky...

...and listen for the rhythms building.

LETTER POEM

Write in blank or free verse, a letter from one depicted character to another, present or absent? From a painter to sitter? From one featured figure to another? From one painting to another? Start writing in prose firstly, if you like. Letter poems are a great way to explore with pupils one of the defining characteristics of poetry — line breaks. As pupils work to transform prose into poetic form, they're forced to think very carefully about where to end each line.

WEB LINK

Read together one of the finest letter poems, William Carlos Williams' This is Just to Say

Perhaps present it to pupils in letter form, asking *them* to turn it into a poem. How do their efforts chime with the original when you show them it?

Pupils could then practice with other kinds of letter (an official school letter to parents? A personal letter they've received?) before exploring artworks with their new-found skills.

QUESTION POEM

A 'question poem' may only start with a question, or may consist solely or almost solely of questions, but so devised and arranged to create a narrative, picture or strong impression in the reader's mind.

Your questions might be addressed to a character depicted, or to an artwork as a whole, to the artist, or to another imaginary character.

To assist younger children, perhaps use the five 'W' questions: who, where, why, when, what. Question poems may contain answers if you wish.

INSTAMATIC POEM

This form was created by Edwin Morgan. Instamatic poems are short descriptive poems about events that might have appeared in newspapers or on TV. "An instamatic poem," Morgan said, "should give a visual picture of the event as if somebody had been there with an instamatic camera and had just very quickly snapped it..."

Perhaps you could write an instamatic poem based on an event that immediately preceded or followed the moment captured in an artwork?

WEB LINK

See an example of an instamatic poem, Edwin Morgan's Glasgow 5 March 1971

MONOLOGUE POEM

Written in the first person, this kind of poem allows you to explore the inner thoughts or voice of a figure.

Have a look at

Iain Stewart's photograph, of *Alasdair Gray*.

WEB LINK

or Sir James Guthrie's painting, '*A Hind's Daughter*'

WEB LINK

Imagine one of them speaking. What's their story? What's on their minds? Can you find a voice for them? Reveal their innermost thoughts? Are they speaking to themselves, or to you? Or to some other unidentified person?

DIALOGUE POEM

Choose two or three characters from a work and explore their thoughts or relationships in a poem that captures their speech rhythms, personalities and stories.

Here's a fun one to read: Edwin Morgan's *The First Men on Mercury*

WEB LINK

Or work with one character and set three verses as follows: all lines in verse 1 begin with 'I' – all lines in verse 2 with 'you', and all lines in verse 3 with 'He', 'She' or 'It'

What might Antonio Canova's '*The Three Graces*' be thinking, or saying about, or directly to, each other?

WEB LINK

PERSONIFICATION POEM

Let an animal or inanimate object from an artwork speak to its audience! What's its story, its beef, its take on the world, its heart's desire?

AND THERE'S MORE!

You could also try ballads, blessings, prayers; songs, charms or spells; epitaphs, odes, chants, raps!

And don't forget to think about **style** and **voice**. Will you write in contemporary or archaic language? In your local dialect of Scots? Informally or formally? Or in a style suggested by the occupation or status of a figure in an artwork?

(ii) Warm-ups for poetry

(a) A Poem... from Prose?

Anyone can try this exercise, especially if you're not used to writing poetry or are unsure what that involves.

Teachers, show pupils how they can transform prose into poetry by modeling the following process up on the board with the whole class, before setting it as an individual exercise.

Select an artwork and write a paragraph about it. Select vocabulary carefully: precise verbs, interesting adjectives etc. Write 100-200 words.

Read it out loud. What is it that makes it *sound* like *prose*, not poetry? How does poetry sound? So how can we make this into a poem?

Now go to work... break the paragraph down and tighten it up into a poem.

Experiment with how you can arrange and rearrange the material into shorter lines. Can we split

lines in two and achieve an interesting effect? Or mix short and long? Is it better to stick to one idea per line or can we make them longer?

Can you rearrange the *order* of the lines for a better, powerful effect? Read the lines aloud and listen carefully – how does the piece *sound*?

Could some words be cut or changed to tell the poem's story better? Could some powerful words or phrases be repeated? Can you make a simile instead of a straight description (or vice versa)? Can you place words together that share the same sounds (alliteration, assonance, rhyme) to make rhythms?

Careful – have we over-egged it?

Or do you want to *add* more lines now, to develop a good idea or image?

Keep revising the piece until it looks, feels, and sounds just right to you all.

EXAMPLE OF PROSE-TO-POETRY

The sample passage and poem below are mock-ups and attempt to reflect the participation of P4-5 pupils in response to set of questions prepared in advance by the teacher. Is the poem finished, or a work-in-progress? How might it be improved?

Away from the Flock by Damian Hirst

PROSE

I know the sheep is dead because it's in a case of liquid. But if you half shut your eyes it looks alive. It's floating in blue stuff the colour of a swimming pool or the sky. Its wool looks soft and new. It's sad because it's not a grown-up sheep, it's just a bit bigger than a lamb. It looks healthy and I don't think it would have died. Its nose is pointing up and its legs are bent like it's feeding from its mother. It must have been taken away from her. I think it is really cruel. I think it is a boy and it had a twin brother. They should be in a field jumping and playing on the grass. I don't think children will like it because lambs are cuddly and cute and you see them in things to do with babies and story books and nursery rhymes. At Christmas we see lambs sitting beside the baby Jesus in the stable. It makes me sad he's alone and it makes me feel lonely and sad.

Poem

*I know this sheep
is dead, though if I blink fast
looks alive.
He floats in liquid blue
as a swimming pool or
the sky in spring
when he was new.
He's young. Not quite a lamb,
fleece plump and soft,
not quite a grown-up sheep,
nose lifted up to find his mother's milk,
but she is gone.
He should be on the hill with his twin brother,
skipping on a page of a storybook,
stepping with wobbly legs across a nursery wall,
curled up in the stable with the baby,
sung in a lullaby.
Not here, alone.
He makes me sad and lonely.*

(b) Find your poem!

Get started writing by making a 'found' poem – nab someone else's words! (For a fuller definition of a 'Found' poem and links, see page 12)

Anyone can play this game. Teachers should prepare by collating some material, and perhaps work as a class to start with.

Look for and copy a range of material drawn from descriptions or commentaries of paintings. (See the NGS online collection, guides and publications.)

Select a passage and start to break it down and work it into a poem by arranging it into lines and experimenting with punctuation.

Read the 'new poem' aloud. Sometimes the poem will seem quite good, whilst others will, quite naturally, prove 'duds'. (This is all in the spirit of experimentation, so discuss why some of these 'found' poems work better than others.)

EXAMPLE

Here's an almost word-for-word treatment of the National Galleries of Scotland online caption accompanying Antonio Canova's *The Three Graces*. Is it a finished poem? Or just a starting-point? Is there more to the 'story'? Do the Graces speak? *How* do they speak? And what further role might the 6th Duke play?

the three graces
three daughters of Zeus
and friend of Aphrodite
transformed
cold hard marble
into soft lustrous skin

beautiful sisters
in a loose semi-circle
complement one another
in pose and gaze
entwined in
swathes of drapery

on a pedestal
in a temple
rotated
for the 6th Duke

(iii) A caution about rhyme

For teachers (but anyone can read on...)

Many children and young people enjoy writing rhyming poetry, and many feel they're not writing 'real' poetry unless it rhymes. Of course poetry may rhyme, but it doesn't have to. Rather, we should encourage young people to use words with a heightened awareness of their sounds and tones, rhythms and tempo.

It's far better to encourage children to focus first and foremost on their *ideas*, and on the best, most effective way of expressing and communicating them, rather than on straining to make rhyme at the expense of those ideas. Often when rhyme wins out, the quality, originality and authenticity of the idea go to the wall.

and the joy of free verse

Writing in 'free verse' allows you free licence to say exactly what you want to say, *how* you want to say it, without having to obey any rules regarding regular metre or rhyme. In fact, you can make your *own* poetic rules; you can write in the rhythms of natural speech in all its many variations, or use a more fragmented kind of language. Free verse sometimes has very irregular and unique shapes. You can still use techniques like repetition, alliteration or punctuation to create rhythms of your own making.

Free verse can help young people explore their own poetic voices more spontaneously; they can invent and play with language more freely, without falling prey to the dangers of 'artificial additives' such as cutesy/clumsy rhyme. Of course, it's not to say free verse is necessarily an easy form; words and lines must still be carefully and precisely made and set down. A free verse poem will still *look* like a poem, because of the way the lines look on the page, even although they may be unpunctuated or irregularly or unusually arranged.



Attributed to Francois Boucher, *Madame de Pompadour* (Jeanne-Antoinette Poisson), National Gallery of Scotland

4. Getting Started with Prose

(i) Thinking about prose

Almost everything we read on a daily basis is some kind of prose. 'Actively' reading a wide range of prose helps to develop writing skills, as well as providing plenty of ideas and inspiration. When you read different types of prose, think about the style and the language used. Does it sound 'official' or informal? Is the writer trying to persuade, to inform, to sell, to explain, to instruct, to describe...?

If the writer is describing a scene or event, can you imagine yourself there?

How does the writer use language to create rhythm? Read the text aloud and listen. Are the sentences long or short? Does the writer use repetition, and what effect does this have? What about the *sounds* of the individual words? Does the writer use alliteration or onomatopoeia? Is the language used modern or old-fashioned; does the writer use slang, dialect or jargon? Does this make it easier or more difficult to understand? What does this tell us about the writer, the subject, or the characters?

Does the writer use simile or metaphor to create images? Is this effective, does it add to the writing?

Think about point of view. Does the writer use the first person or third person? Is the writer giving their opinion? Even in a newspaper there is a difference between factual reporting and editorial. In fiction, is the narrator involved in the story, can you hear their voice clearly? Is the story from the point of view of more than one character? How do you know who is telling each part of the story? If you read a piece of prose which sounds terrible to you, can you work out why? Is the writing repetitive? Is the word choice dull or vague? If there are characters, are they stereotypical or unconvincing? Is it predictable or full of clichés?

Read a piece of prose that touches you in some way. Try to find what it is that makes it sparkle. Is it fresh and original? Does it make something clearer or help you to see something in a completely new way? How is it similar or different to your own writing? Can you write something in the same style, just for practice?

Read, write, read, write, and you will find your own voice.

(ii) Different types of prose

The artwork you have looked at will have given you plenty of ideas for your writing. You may choose to write a short story, but many kinds of non-fiction prose can also be adapted for creative writing. Lists, recipes and instructions are discussed in the Poetry section. Here are a few other ideas.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

You could write in the form of a newspaper article. If you are looking at a painting with a dramatic scene then the artwork could even be the picture that goes with the story. You'll need to devise a good headline and tell the story in an exciting way to make the reader want to know more. Remember that often in newspaper articles the story starts with a key event or the action, and the background is explained later. You should start at the most exciting point and you could also include quotes and interviews with the main characters.

Alternatively, you could write an article based on a traditional story, fairy tale or poem you know well. Here are some examples of news articles about Shakespeare plays: [*60 Second Shakespeare*](#)

WEB LINK



Quentin Massys, *Portrait of a Man*, Scottish National Portrait Gallery

You can also use other ideas from newspapers or magazines for your writing

Problem pages
Small ads
Letters to the editor
Reviews

DIARIES AND JOURNALS

Personal diaries and journals are usually very private modes of writing, which makes a story written as a 'diary revealed' a powerful and exciting way to write. Your story can take the form of entries in a personal diary, in which we find secrets, fears, dreams, plans, questions and truths that might not otherwise be expressed. Diaries can be records of extraordinary or dramatic events, but they can also record what happens to people in their daily life and how they feel about it. If one of the figures in the artwork was keeping a diary, how would they write? Think about how the style of writing and choice of language and vocabulary can reveal things about your character's personality.

Remember that because you can write about a character's view of external events as they are happening, you can create suspense as only you (and not your character) knows what happens next.

LETTERS

Story-telling in the form of letters can also be a very direct way of writing, and as in a diary or journal you will need to think about the 'voice' of the writer. Writing your story in the form of letters can provide more variation than a diary, as you can write from the point of view of two or more different characters. What is the relationship between the characters writing the letters? Why are they writing to each other? Do they feel differently about a situation they are both experiencing? As in a diary or journal, only you, the writer, will know how things turn out for your characters.

INTERVIEWS

Imagine you are interviewing a figure in the artwork (remember, it doesn't have to be a person, it could be an object!) What would you ask them, and how would they reply? What if figures in the artwork were interviewing or talking to each other? What are their experiences, what do they want, what have they done?

PLAYS

Could the artwork be a scene from a play? Is the image at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of the story? How have you got to this point? What happened before? What will happen next?

In a play the action is moved forward through dialogue but also through the physical movement of the characters. Your characters will need to sound 'real' (convincing and consistent) so think about dialogue and voices, accent, the words they choose. Remember that your characters will also be showing what they are doing. You will need to include stage directions to tell your actors how and where they should be moving and responding. You can also use stage directions to describe the setting where the scene is taking place.

GUIDEBOOK OR GUIDED TOUR

You could write a guidebook entry about one of the places in the artwork. If there is a figure in the artwork then they could be included or even giving the reader a guided tour. What is the most special, interesting or exciting thing about this place? Don't just write about what you can see - use your imagination to describe what is just outside the edge of the picture, round the corner...

Again, think about the voice of the guide or guidebook writer. What do they think is important?

What do they want to show the reader? What would they leave out?
You could also think of other kinds of 'guides' to write, if appropriate to your choice of artwork.

Tips for Writing Love Letters
Guide to Manners for Young Ladies or Gentlemen
18th century Guide to bringing up children, or Rules of the Schoolroom
A 'travel guide' describing a landscape or city scene

SPEECHES

If the artwork or a character in the artwork were delivering a speech, what would he/she say? Who is the audience: the other figures in the artwork, the people in the gallery? Why is the character giving the speech and what effect do they want to achieve: to inform, amuse, impress, persuade? Does the character talk about personal experiences or tell stories? Is he/she formal, informal, repetitive or given to exaggeration? How does the character grab and hold the audience's attention? Think about his/her personality and how that reflects in voice, language and style of delivery.

A speech needs a beginning, middle and end, with an introduction to catch the audience's attention, and a conclusion to leave them with something to think about.

And remember, your character doesn't have to be a person, it could be an animal, an object or a shape in an abstract artwork.

(iii) Activities for developing stories and ideas

Here are some ideas for activities that can help to develop stories or ideas for your writing. Teachers - work with pupils as a class, in groups or individually, to think about and discuss the following elements. If you do the activities you can test all the work written by reading it aloud in class, groups and pairs, discussing and asking lots of questions.

CHARACTERS

Story characters need to feel 'real' and convincing to the reader. Think about what makes people (you!) special and different from (or the same as) everyone else. What are they interested in, what's important to them, and why? You will need to think about their daily lives and their relationships with other people. Think about people you know, and how the different parts of their personality fit together to make sure that the various aspects of your character 'agree' with each other. So it's unlikely that if your character is very shy, that they would also be a mad risk-taker. However, avoid making them agree too much unless you want to end up with a stereotype!

Story characters also need to *look* 'real' to the reader, so you need to describe them well.

Activities

(a) CHARACTER

Choose a figure in one of the artworks. Write a character profile for him/her. Note all sorts of information, including name, age, favourite colour, favourite food, preferred clothes, favourite possession, family, friends, job, habits, hobbies, interests, pets. What is his or her greatest wish? Greatest (but secret) fear? What are the contents of her handbag or his pockets? And so on. Use the artwork for clues.

You don't need to include all these details in your story, but if you create them and *know* them yourself, you'll understand your character better, and that'll make them more 'rounded', more believable for your readers.

Think what makes your character tick. What do they want? Think about what their daily life is like. Now write a description of your character doing an everyday activity. Washing dishes? Getting dressed? How does their character affect the way they do ordinary everyday things?

(B) PLACE AND SETTING

Descriptions of places need to feel vivid and convincing enough for the reader to picture it in their mind or imagine they are there, so start by imagining *you* are there. How can you describe what you see and feel to make it real or authentic for your readers? Think about the sights and smells and sounds, use all the senses. How can you convey the *atmosphere* of this place? Does it feel welcoming, friendly, threatening, oppressive, frightening...?

If you are looking at a painting, there will probably already be a scene there. If you are looking at a sculpture you might want to use the scene around or imagine it in completely different surroundings. You could take a figure out of one artwork and place it in another.

The time and place where your writing is set is up to you and you will need to decide whether it is based in reality e.g. a Scottish shooting lodge in Victorian times or in a place and time for which you must invent detail, e.g. on a far planet in the year 3000AD? What facts do you already know about this place or time? Is there anything you'll need to go and read up on or find out, or just invent? Sometimes it can be helpful to do some research on the artist, the time the artwork was made, or the place depicted in the artwork to get an idea of the background.

For teachers, if you have been studying a particular place (such as 'Old Edinburgh') with your class this is an opportunity to explore what pupils have been learning in a more creative way.

ACTIVITIES

Think about a place you know well: a town, building, room or outdoor place. Can you think of any others? Remember or imagine seeing it for the first time. Describe it in as much detail as you can. Perhaps start by imagining a place and choose the most important 10 words to give an impression of that place.

Write in detail about a room in your house or another family member's house. Don't use the name of the room. Describe the walls, floor, furniture and objects as vividly as you can. Think carefully about the details. What clues would your readers be able to pick up about the person or people who use this room from your description of it?

(c) PLOT

Plot is what happens (and when, why, how and to whom) in a story. Perhaps there is a problem that the characters need to solve. Is there something that they want or need to achieve or find? What might be stopping them, and how can they overcome this barrier or difficulty? Is there a turning point? Remember, the story and the events can start at any point you think interesting, intriguing or entertaining for your reader. The scene or events in the artwork might be the beginning, middle or final scene of your story.

ACTIVITIES

Write about something you did today, do most days, like getting the bus or walking to school. Now twist the plot! What if something strange or completely different (or even something very small and seemingly insignificant) happened to you? How might your day have turned out?

Now think about a character you created previously. Work in groups. Explain what your character wants to do and ask others to suggest ways they might achieve their goal. You will probably get lots of different ideas!

Alternatively, work with a partner and each of your characters. Make notes for a story in which they meet. Where and why do they meet? How do they get on? What happens to them? Do they each have something they want to do or achieve? What problems do they encounter? How do they resolve problems?

(d) DIALOGUE

Dialogue is speech. Invariably, a character needs to speak to others (although your story might consist just of a character's voice in his or her head!) Even so, they need to sound convincing.

How does your character sound? What makes their 'voice' unique, interesting, different or special? Always read dialogue aloud to get a feel for whether it sounds natural or believable.

Think about your character from the first exercise. What adjectives would you use to describe his/her voice and manner of speech? What kind of voice and vocabulary best suits your character? Does he/she speak in a soft Highland lilt or a brusque managerial style with lots of harrumphing and throat-clearing? Is he shy and hesitant? Is she a teenager with a liking for slang and swagger? It's difficult for us to tell exactly how people spoke in the past, except for reading books that were written at that time, and even then it's hard to be certain, so if you write a story set in the past you may choose to use up to date language for your characters.

Try to show how the characters speak from the actual words they use, rather than using adverbs e.g. 'he said sadly', 'she shouted angrily'.

ACTIVITIES

Work in groups of three. Two people talk about a topic for one minute, say, the weather, a school event, a shared hobby or liking, or local/news event. The third person writes down as much as they can catch. It doesn't matter if chunks of the conversation are missing. Afterwards, read the dialogue over in your group. How does it sound? Which bits of the conversation are important? Which can be left out? Or need to be put back in? What kinds of words, rhythms, pauses, silences and sounds were you able to record?

In pairs, write a short dialogue for when your characters meet in the 'plot' exercise.

(e) LANGUAGE

The language you use will need to be appropriate to the genre you choose, the time, and the characters (if there are any). The ideas in this prose section should help you to think about the language you use, but the best thing you can do is test your writing by reading it aloud.

Here are two last class activities to help you look at language.

ACTIVITY

Gather some examples of different types of prose, such as guidebook entry, advertisement, newspaper article, encyclopedia, novel. Remove any titles or headings and ask pupils to identify what kind of publication each extract is from. How did they guess?

Using these examples or others, try to rewrite one extract in the style of another. E.g. a newspaper article in the style of a novel, play or dialogue; an encyclopedia entry about a place in the style of a holiday brochure.

(iv) A final word about prose...

Of course, these are just a few ideas and there are many ways in which you can tell your story. The real clues lie in the artwork itself and the best thing you can do is look closely, look again even more closely, and ask yourself:

Who?

Where?

Why?

When?

What?

Then it's up to you to decide what happens next...!

5. Six Examples to get you started

Now you have some ideas on how to start, here are six examples on which to practice. Although they are not all paintings, the same guidelines and exercises for writing can apply to all.

If you're a teacher, we recommend that firstly, you ask pupils to look closely and respond freely and spontaneously, before focusing on the questions below. Develop discussion to incorporate pupils' own questions and to blend in some information from the 'Facts' section. Then use our ideas for writing – or your own.

Example 1.

The Three Oncologists, Ken Currie, 2002



© Ken Currie, Scottish National Portrait Gallery

Looking at the picture

ASK YOURSELF

How does the painting make you feel? At first glance? And after studying it more closely? Who are these people? What do they do? What clues help us to decide? Study their clothes and postures – what do they reveal or tell us?

Are these people 'good' or 'bad'? Well or ill-intentioned? How do they feel about what they do? How might they speak? What kind of language/vocabulary do they use professionally? What do you think they do when they're not at work?

Describe the setting. What is, or has been, or will be, happening here?

What were they about to do when they paused and turned to you?

What questions would you like to ask them?

FACTS

Ken Currie is a Scottish artist who studied at Glasgow School of Art. The three men in the painting are all prestigious surgeons, scientists and professors who work in the field of Oncology (cancers). The glowing quality of the paint makes them seem almost ghostly and unreal. The artist worked from specially made casts of their faces rather than life. Can you think why? What do you think the subjects thought of the finished work?

WRITING TASKS

Imagine you meet these three men in a corridor. In what circumstances? What dialogue takes place? Choose to write in prose or poetry.

Write a dramatic monologue or poem in the words spoken by someone who has a close relationship with one of these men – either professional or personal.

Example 2

Sill, László Moholy-Nagy, 1933



© Hattula Maholy-Nagy/DACS 2011
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

Looking at the picture

ASK YOURSELF

What colours and shapes are in the picture? What do they remind you of?

What atmosphere does the artist create? How does he do this? How does it make you feel?

How has he created a feeling of space and distance?

What kind of music or soundtrack would go with this painting?

FACTS

Lazlo Moholy-Nagy was born in Hungary and later taught at the Bauhaus in Germany, an art school famous for its innovative design ideas. This work has been painted onto a kind of aluminium called silberit and lines have been scratched into it. Moholy-Nagy liked experimenting with new industrial materials. The reflective surface made it seem as if he was 'painting with light' – with colours appearing to float over the surface.

WRITING TASKS

Imagine you are inside the world of the painting. What kind of world is it? Are you human? What are you doing there? What happens?

Write a conversation between the shapes in the painting.

Example 3

Back of Hand, James Nasmyth, 1874



Scottish National Portrait Gallery

Looking at the picture

ASK YOURSELF

Whose is this hand? What does the rest of this person look like? Describe the hand in as much detail as possible.

What does the hand tell us about the things it might have done in its lifetime?

Is it true that our hands tell the story of our lives? What might the lines on this hand represent?

What *other* things does the hand remind you of?

How does this person feel... what is he thinking, studying his hand?

What message does the hand seem to send, and why?

FACTS

James Naysmyth was a famous engineer and inventor but his father was a painter and taught him how to draw. He was very interested in astronomy and watched the moon carefully for thirty one years, making lots of drawings from it and eventually creating a model of its surface. He published a book called *'The Moon: Considered as a Planet, a World, and a Satellite'*.

This is the photographer's own hand. Here, he is comparing the surface of the wrinkled hand with the surface of the moon.

WRITING TASKS

The man addresses his thoughts about his life to his hand. You could write in prose, or try an ode, 'Oh, hand...'

Write as if you are a tiny creature lost in the landscape of this hand. Describe your journey and what happened to you in the end.

Example 4

Away from the flock, Damian Hirst, 1994



© Damian Hirst. All rights reserved, DACS, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

Looking at the picture

ASK YOURSELF

Why has the sheep been enclosed in this tank? What questions would you like to ask the artist about his work?

If the sheep could talk, what would it say about what it sees and hears in the gallery? And about its life before becoming an artwork?

How might you have felt if rather than this young sheep, the work featured a newborn lamb?

To see the work of art properly, is it important to be able to walk right around it?

Which is more important- the *idea* for the artwork or the fact and the way that it has been made? How does the title relate to the work?

FACTS

Much of Hirst's work is about mortality or death. He is famous for a series of works just like this, in which dead animals are preserved in tanks of formaldehyde, particularly one of a whole shark. In Victorian times, in the drawing rooms of the wealthy, preserved animals and birds displayed in cases were popular decorative items.

WRITING TASKS

Write a poem or prose in which the sheep speaks. Who to? When? Can it be heard?

Lambs are much loved by children. Write a new nursery rhyme inspired by this artwork.

Example 5

Reflections, Balloch, George Leslie Hunter c.1929-30



Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

Looking at the picture

ASK YOURSELF

Why do you think the artist decided to half-fill his canvas with water? What effect does this have on us as viewers.

What kind of place might this be to spend a holiday? What different things could you do?

Have you ever visited anywhere that looked like this?

Who lives in this house? Imagine that you live in this place. What sort of life would you lead?

Does this place remind you of somewhere you have been?

FACTS

George Leslie Hunter was born on the Isle of Bute. His family emigrated to California and much of his early work was destroyed in the San Francisco earthquake of 1906. He returned to Glasgow and became known as one of the famous 'Scottish Colourists'. He visited France a number of times and his work was influenced by the strong Mediterranean light.

WRITING TASKS

The distant perspective achieved in the painting suggests the past and memories. Write as someone remembering this place as important in their past.

Write about a meeting between a child who lives on the boat and a child living in the house. How do they meet, and what happens?

Example 6

The Lomellini Family, Sir Anthony Van Dyck, 1626-7



Scottish National Gallery

Looking at the picture

ASK YOURSELF

What kind of people are these and what kind of relationships do they have?

What are the clues?

How do you think each spends their day?

Describe what you can see of their home. What do these surroundings tell us about them? What might the rest of their home be like?

Study their gazes. What might they be thinking or feeling? What do you think they would rather be doing?

Look at the small details. Look at the rucked carpet and the little dog. What do you think might have been happening five minutes before this 'moment'?

FACTS

This is thought to be a painting of a very important Italian family. Brothers Nicolo and Giovanni Francesco are on the left, their step mother Barbara is in the middle and her children Vittoria and Agostino are on the right. But where is the father of the family? He is the Doge of Genoa (a kind of prince) and traditionally is not allowed to promote himself by appearing in a portrait. The family were defenders of the city of Genoa, one of the richest ports in Europe, and also the Catholic faith.

Sir Anthony van Dyck only lived to the age of 42. He trained in Antwerp, worked in Rubens' studio as an assistant and spent time in Italy. He made many grand and elegant portraits and was court painter to the British monarch, Charles I.

WRITING TASKS

Imagine you are writing an article about the family for Hello! or OK! magazine. What would they say? Think about all the different family members and their interests and make up some interview questions. Then write the article about them, not forgetting a title for your piece.

Write the story, or perhaps a ballad, the mother might tell/sing to the children to keep them quiet during the sitting.

6. Writing for Inspired? Get writing!

What are we looking for?

We're looking for really imaginative responses to works from the NGS collection. Pieces that breathe life into the imagined world of the artwork. Work that moves, surprises and delights.

Our judges work with the criteria below. We thought you'd like to know what they're looking for – ideally - in your writing!

The piece should be

- within the word-limit
- sufficiently well-written to stand alone, without reference to the artwork
- relevant to the selected work of art, although the connection may be lateral or distant or not discernible on first reading
- original in idea, development and execution
- evidence of thought and a degree of insight or awareness
- bold, clever, ambitious or risky in its spirit of exploration, experimentation and appropriate, fresh, lively, vivid, skilful in its use of language.
- enjoyable to read
- perhaps moving in some way
- successful in illuminating or extending an aspect of the artwork
- largely free of superficiality, cliché, strained or clumsy use of rhyme, obvious adoption of adults' ideas, advice and direction
- largely unaffected by faulty spelling, punctuation, layout, handwriting

The writing should ...

- make the reader want to see the artwork
- fire the reader's imagination
- surprise or delight
- stay in the memory
- make the reader want to read it again and again

7. Inspired? Get writing! & the Curriculum for Excellence

LINKS WITH A CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

How can entering this competition contribute towards the learning and teaching of a Curriculum for Excellence?

	EXPRESSIVE ARTS Art and Design	LITERACY AND ENGLISH Writing
FIRST LEVEL EXPERIENCE	I can respond to the work of artists and designers by discussing my thoughts and feelings. I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and other's work. EXA 1-07a	I enjoy creating texts of my choice and I regularly select subject, purpose, format and resources to suit the needs of my audience. LIT 1-20a I can describe and share my experiences and how they made me feel. ENG 1 30a Having explored the elements which writers use in different genres, I can use what I learn to create my own stories, poems and plays with interesting structures, characters and /or settings. ENG 1 31a
SECOND LEVEL EXPERIENCE	I can respond to the work of artists and designers by discussing my thoughts and feelings. I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and other's work. EXA 2-07a	I enjoy creating texts of my choice and I regularly select subject, purpose, format and resources to suit the needs of my audience. LIT 2-20a I am learning to use language and style in a way which engages and/or influences my reader. ENG 2-27a As I write for different purposes and readers, I can describe and share my experiences, expressing what they made me think about and how they made me feel. EHG 2-30a Having explored the elements which writers use in different genres, I can use what I learn to create my own stories, poems and plays with interesting structures, characters and /or settings which come to life. ENG 1 31a
THIRD LEVEL EXPERIENCE	I can respond to the work of artists and designers by discussing my thoughts and feelings. I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and other's work. EXA 3-07a	I enjoy creating texts of my choice and I am developing my own style. I can regularly select subject, purpose, format and resources to suit the needs of my audience. LIT 3-20a I can engage and/or influence readers through my use of language, style and tone as appropriate to genre. EHG 3-26a Having explored the elements which writers use, I can create texts in different genres by: creating interesting and convincing characters and/or building convincing settings which come to life. ENG 3-31a

8. Reading List

Primary Level

INSPIRED? GET WRITING! Vols 1-3

pub. National Galleries of Scotland 2007 Vol 1, ISBN 978 1906270 03 2 & 2009, Vol 2, ISBN 978 1 906270 24 7), Vol 3, ISBN 978 1 906270 42 1

HOW TO TALK TO CHILDREN ABOUT ART

Francoise Barbe-Gall
Frances Lincoln Ltd, 2005
Suitable P1-S2. See page 183 for further reading tips

PAINT ME A POEM – NEW POEMS INSPIRED BY ART IN THE TATE

Grace Nichols
A&C Black, London 2004
Poems in response to Tate Gallery works by Grace Nichols and young people. Suitable P5+.
Available to borrow from SPL. Ref: Junior.3.Nic

Secondary Level

INSPIRED? GET WRITING! Vols 1-3

pub. National Galleries of Scotland 2007 Vol 1, ISBN 978 1906270 03 2 & 2009, Vol 2, ISBN 978 1 906270 24 7) + insert new anthology ISBN

GIVE ME YOUR HAND POEMS INSPIRED BY PAINTINGS IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY LONDON

Paul Durcan
Macmillan 1994

WITH A POET'S EYE, A TATE GALLERY ANTHOLOGY

Ed Pat Adams
The Tate Gallery 1986

VOICES IN THE GALLERY, POEMS AND PICTURES CHOSEN BY DANNIE & JOAN ABSE

The Tate Gallery 1986

WAYS OF SEEING

John Berger
London, 1990
For senior pupils. Essays on art criticism which raise key questions about hidden ideologies in visual images. Originally written to serve as an accompaniment to a 1972 BBC series but still an important read for students of visual communication and art history.

