

Poetry in the classroom

Presentation Content

1. 'Things I Miss' & 'Homesick'
Students write their own poem

2. 'Life Doesn't Frighten Me'
Students perform the poem and give a talk

What is poetry?

“

*Poetry is when an emotion
has found its thought and
the thought has found
words.*

ROBERT FROST

Why teach poetry?

Teaching poetry to non-native learners can be a most rewarding experience for both students and teachers, as it offers a refreshing approach to language learning through its appeal to our feelings and emotions.

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages:

Reading skills : Poems, blogs, articles, interviews, web pages, surveys, biographies, literature extracts

'Things I miss' & 'Homesick'

A
Things I miss
by Nadia Fayidh Mohammed

When I wake up to the cloudy sky
Of London,
I feel overwhelmed:
A fit of yearning.
5 It is not that I want to go back,
but simply miss the way it was:
The sunny mornings,
The fresh smell of cardamom
My mother used to make with tea
10 Or the smell of fresh bread,
When my father is back from the bakery ...
Maybe I miss those Fridays,
When all the sisters gather around;
Voices of playing kids
15 Filling the air with delicious noise,
"the house can't take us all,"
I would say.
My mother would stop me ...
She likes it when we're all there.
20 Maybe I miss Dad's big smile;
when his granddaughters
Greet him with a kiss.
I miss watching all the girls
Working in the kitchen.
25 Or sit to the table laughing loud ...
Dad would come in, take a picture,
To remember those moments I miss!
© Nadia Fayidh Mohammed

Can you explain what "yearning" means?

What effect does this direct quote have?

What effect does the repetition of "miss" have?

B
Homesick
by Shukria Rezaei

Today, I thought of my mud house:
The rough walls standing tall;
The fresh smell of clay on the floor;
The scraping of dirt from my shoes.
5 Today, I remembered my school:
The straight marching lane up and down;
The fresh milk in my back pack
Churning to butter as I marched.
Today, I missed the jagged roads.
10 The horizons of mountains looming
with calming familiarity.
The way the sky flowered
The way I used to live.

Does the poet feel threatened or reassured by the "looming" mountains? Why?

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Analysing poetry:

T reads the poem to the class

Ss read them on their own, then in pairs

T initiates analysis/discussion through questions on content, themes, perspective etc

Ss do the activities p60 in order to look closely at tone, structure, rhyme, rhythm & descriptive language.

Creating poetry 1:

- Ss brainstorm what makes home special
- Ss imagine they have moved away and what they miss about home
- In groups, Ss will agree on the content and structure of their poems

Creating poetry 2:

- T facilitates the process by advising them on their chosen structure, devices, content
- Differentiation: might choose to give some groups a structure to follow
- Ss read their poems to the class. Their peers are asked to review; say which features they enjoyed
- Final stage: Ss type and decorate creatively for the class bulletin board and school magazine

[A basic Structure for weaker students]

Today, I thought of my.....

The

The.....

The

Today, I remembered my

The.....

The.....

.....ing

Today, I missed the

The

With

The

The



Things I miss...

Today, I thought of my lovely household,
the smell of fresh biscuits,
the days when we were all together,
the good old days.

Today, I remembered my senior years,
the crazy memories with my friends,
the jokes we told at breaks.

Today, I missed the lovely summer times,
the sticky sand on our feet
with the smell of fresh lemonade.

The way we used to live.
The way I used to live...

By: Christina Christofi,
Vaia Kousiappa,
Despina Efthimiakou,
Katerina Soteriou. C 33

Homesick

Today, I thought of my old home,
The place I felt safe,
The best louvi I've ever eaten,
The best moments I've ever lived.
Today, I remembered my old friends,
The ones that were always beside me,
The long summer days spent on the
beach,
The deep conversations on warm summer
nights.

Today, I missed my lovely family,
The moments around the foukou,
With pitta souvlaki and tashi.
The way we created memories,
The way I used to live.

By Natalia Neofytou, Angeliki Charalambous, Alexandros Miltiadous, Ilias Orthodoxou, Nikolas Anastasiou C33



I Miss

One day,
I left my country and
Came to another.
Today,
I miss my calm village and the fresh smell of the soil.
I miss the traditional games we played
With my family and friends.
Today,
I remembered yet again my bird with his sweet singing.
The way the sun rose
The way the sun set...

Hiwa Ali C51

English Corner

Model European Parliament

The Model European Parliament is a programme which offers tremendous opportunities to the young people of Europe. I was lucky enough to be part of the Cyprus MEP conference this year. This 3-day conference in Nicosia required a considerable amount of effort and hard work but was tremendously rewarding. Engaging in constructive debates refined my critical thinking abilities and negotiation skills as well as my linguistic competence.



I am extremely thankful to my school, Makario Lykeio, for the recognition of my work and the chance to present this experience to my peers with my fellow student Maria Damianou. Finally, I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to represent my country abroad since I have been selected as one of the five Delegates of Cyprus at the next International MEP Session. I thoroughly encourage all my fellow students to participate in this programme since the benefits are truly life changing.

Emilia Chimona B11

Halloween

One of the most memorable days of Senior Year was by far Halloween! The first thing we did, to get into the mood, was decorate our class with spooky pumpkins, unsettling ghouls and creepy skeletons. We played Halloween spelling games and tasted scrumptious delicacies prepared by our classmates. Some groups narrated spine-chilling tales, which unnerved us, whereas others played Halloween music, and shared with us the background to this celebration. Lastly, we had such fun carving our bumpy pumpkins and finding out about the Trick or Treat tradition. October 31st was, without a doubt, an exceptionally entertaining day!



Maria Damianou Γ31

Things that I miss

Today, I thought of my lovely household,
the smell of fresh biscuits,
the days when we were all together,
the good old days.

Today, I remembered my senior years,
the crazy memories with my friends,
the jokes we told at breaks.

Today, I missed the lovely summer times,
the sticky sand on our feet
with the fresh smell of lemonade.

The way we used to live.
The way I used to live...

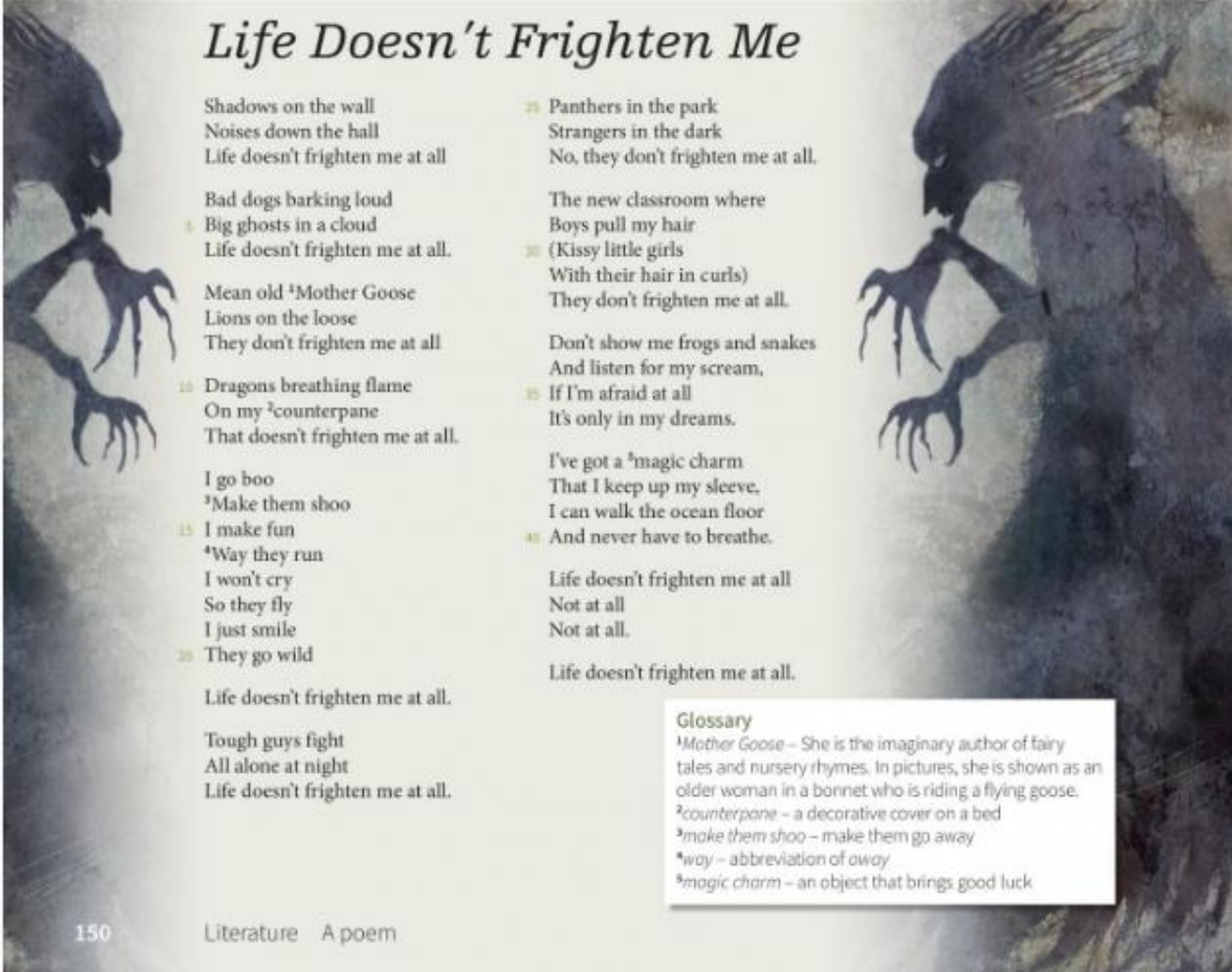


By Γ33

Benefits

- By working in groups to prepare their own poems Ss identify and put into practice poetic techniques such as rhythm, rhyme, enjambement, alliteration, metaphor etc.
- They become poets, creators, critics, resulting in a unique and memorable sense of achievement.

“Life Doesn’t Frighten me”



Life Doesn't Frighten Me

Shadows on the wall
Noises down the hall
Life doesn't frighten me at all

Bad dogs barking loud
5 Big ghosts in a cloud
Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Mean old ¹Mother Goose
Lions on the loose
They don't frighten me at all

10 Dragons breathing flame
On my ²counterpane
That doesn't frighten me at all.

I go boo
³Make them shoo
15 I make fun
⁴Way they run
I won't cry
So they fly
I just smile
20 They go wild

Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Tough guys fight
All alone at night
Life doesn't frighten me at all.

25 Panthers in the park
Strangers in the dark
No, they don't frighten me at all.

The new classroom where
Boys pull my hair
30 (Kissy little girls
With their hair in curls)
They don't frighten me at all.

Don't show me frogs and snakes
And listen for my scream,
35 If I'm afraid at all
It's only in my dreams.

I've got a ⁵magic charm
That I keep up my sleeve.
I can walk the ocean floor
40 And never have to breathe.

Life doesn't frighten me at all
Not at all
Not at all.

Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Glossary
¹*Mother Goose* – She is the imaginary author of fairy tales and nursery rhymes. In pictures, she is shown as an older woman in a bonnet who is riding a flying goose.
²*counterpane* – a decorative cover on a bed
³*make them shoo* – make them go away
⁴*way* – abbreviation of away
⁵*magic charm* – an object that brings good luck

150 Literature A poem

Poetry Project

In groups, prepare a **school assembly presentation** celebrating bravery and courage to be delivered to junior school children. You will perform the poem 'Life Doesn't Frighten me', by Maya Angelou and then you will give a talk encouraging children to be brave and courageous.

You should do the following:

- In your groups consider what makes the poem effective: repetition, mood, pronouns, couplets, rhyme, rhythm.
- Decide how you are going to perform the poem and who is doing what. Everyone must perform. Use props and incorporate actions. You will be graded individually.
- Decide on the content of the talk and mode of delivery. Write it up with your group. Everyone must perform. You will be graded individually.

Remember, your aim is to inspire and hold the audience's attention so your assembly presentation needs to be striking and enthusiastic!

Assessment:

Content: /5 ideas and how material is managed

Organisation: /5 how material structured, ordered

Language and style: /5 level and accuracy

Performance: /5 techniques, dramatic skills, execution

Maya Angelou (April 4, 1928 – May 28, 2014) was an American poet, singer, autobiographer and civil rights activist. She published seven autobiographies, three books of essays, several books of poetry, plays, movies, and television shows spanning over 50 years. She received dozens of awards and more than 50 honorary degrees. Her best-known work focus on her **childhood** and early adult experiences.

Angelou reminds us that we always have the power to choose how we treat others and ourselves. In her writings, she encourages us to speak with confidence and power, not to be afraid to be vulnerable, to share our story, to see hard times as opportunities for growth, to develop our courage and have hope for the future.



Analysing the poem

T reads the poem to the class to set the tone

T Initiates discussion through questions on content, perspective, mood. Special attention is paid to repetition.

Ss do SB activities p150 in order to analyse the poem and understand its mechanics esp. structure, rhythm and rhyme.

Performing the poem

T outlines the objective: Imagine you are performing the poem to younger students.

Ss brainstorm how a performance for children would differ from one for teens [delivery].

In groups, Ss decide who says what, how, single voice/chorus or several narrators, pace, in order to achieve maximum effect.

T facilitates, suggests and illustrates sound effects, instruments, movement. Stops them at different intervals asking them to demonstrate so far.

Preparing a talk on bravery and courage [3 mins max]

- Ss brainstorm the purpose and content of the talk:
- what frightens us?
- Is it ok to be frightened?
- Is it necessary to be brave?
- Why give this presentation to children? How?

What is the message of the poem?

A little girl says she's not afraid of all those frightening things.

Is this true?

Might she be frightened?

Is it ok to be afraid?

Is it right or wrong to pretend you're not afraid?

- **Benefits from performing the poem:**
 - exposure to poetry and literary techniques
 - experimentation with gesture, movement, music, sound, repetition in the attempt to present the poem creatively
 - Improves confidence
- **Benefits from giving an imaginary talk to younger children:**
 - improves language and delivery skills
 - springboard for meaningful discussions on profound issues eg bravery, courage and admitting one's fears.
 - Receptors and propagators of valuable life lessons
 - Allows for a flipped classroom approach- as Ss pretend to teach younger children the importance of bravery and accepting one's fear.



Why teach poetry to youngsters?

improves literacy skills

taps into creativity

expresses emotions helping
young readers feel connected

promotes empathy

promotes values and universal
truths

“

*Poetry is when an emotion
has found its thought and
the thought has found
words.*

ROBERT FROST