

Choose Love by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Petr Horáček

Graffeg 9781802583779

Choose Love is a cycle of poems that highlights the experience of those forced to become refugees. The core of the collection was written in 2018 as part of a project with the charity Refugee Trauma Initiative. With the permission of both individual refugees and aid workers, RTI shared with Nicola a number of true and poignant stories which were then used as the basis for short-form poems. Over the following years, Nicola has added to this core of poems to create this collection on the theme of forced migration, its wider causes and consequences.

This collection was shortlisted for the 2023 CLPE Poetry Award.

Overall aims of this teaching sequence.

- To explore and understand the importance of poetry as a genre
- To listen and respond to a wide range of poems
- To interpret poems for performance
- To explore how poetry is presented on the page to enhance our understanding
- To explore how a poet selects, crafts and shapes language to convey meaning
- To draft, compose and write poems based on personal interests, experiences and emotions using language and form with intent for effect on the reader

This teaching sequence is designed for a Year 6, 7 or 8 class.

Please note that this collection naturally includes challenging themes and subject matter. Teachers are advised to read the entire collection and teaching sequence before introducing it to pupils so that, with consideration to the age and experiences of their students, they are able to consider how best to introduce and mediate the content with their own classes.

Overview of this teaching sequence.

This teaching sequence is designed to be delivered over 15 sessions, but teachers will want to use their own judgement about the length of time their class spends on each of the sessions.

The first few sessions in the sequence introduce the collection and establish children's existing knowledge of the subject matter. Many of the poems in the collection were initially written by Nicola Davies as part of a project in with the charity Refugee Trauma Initiative. With the permission of both individual refugees and aid workers, Nicola was able to draw on real-life stories as the basis for these poems. As such, engaging with the poetry in this collection can provide the reader with insights into

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the lives of people forced to leave their homes and seek asylum. At the same time, the greater the understanding the reader has around the reasons behind forced migration and the dangers and obstacles that often come when seeking asylum, the more deeply they will be able to engage with the poems in the collection. Teachers may choose to allow additional time for engaging in further reading, discussion and learning around forced migration and displacement, including significant examples from human history as well as many current crises. Teachers will naturally need to be particularly aware of students who may have been through similar experiences and make accommodations where they feel necessary.

As the sequence progresses, there is a focus on getting to the heart of a poem, understanding the events described and themes raised including exploration of how the poet has used language for effect and how the form of the poems also contribute to meaning. Individual reader response and group discussion form an integral part of a number of the sessions detailed in this sequence.

Throughout the sequence, pupils will have the opportunity to read poetry, listen to poems being read, prepare poetry for performance and to write their own. The sequence builds towards the chance for the class to write their own poems centred on subject matters which they feel strongly about and to which they can apply their substantial knowledge or experience.

The pupils will have the opportunity to use the knowledge they have gained about poetic form, devices and structure throughout the sequence to decide how to present their poem on the page as well as consider how these could be performed to an audience. The poems will be published in a variety of ways to be shared with the school community and beyond.

Teaching Approaches	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Watching a poet perform ▪ Reading aloud ▪ Responding to Illustration ▪ Looking at Language ▪ Re-reading ▪ Book talk ▪ Visualisation ▪ Learning about writing from published poets ▪ Free writing of poetry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Text Analysis ▪ Identification of poetic language and devices ▪ Performances of the poetry in this collection, and inspired by the themes of this collection ▪ Poetry Journal with ideas and inspirations for writing ▪ Own poems related to themes introduced in the collection
<p>Exploring poetic forms and devices:</p>	

This collection gives an opportunity to explore the following poetic devices:

- Rhythm
- Rhyme
- Assonance
- Alliteration
- Personification
- Simile
- Repetition

Cross Curricular Links:

History

- Children could connect their enquiry and research findings with the broader history of forced displacement and migration during the periods of history that children have studied in school, noting where these intersect with their wider understanding of world and British chronology, causation and change. For example, children may already have studied the rise of fascism in Germany prior to the second world war and have some awareness of the large groups of people who were forced to flee persecution, incarceration and execution in Germany and other occupied countries during that time. The transatlantic slave trade took place over an extensive period of time in which millions were kidnapped, forcibly displaced and enslaved. There are also multiple examples throughout history of countries being colonized and the native citizens being forced to evacuate their homes to accommodate the colonising country's pursuit of land or resources.

Geography

- As part of the curriculum requirement to '*describe and understand key aspects of human geography, including: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water*', pupils could be given the opportunity to conduct a research project into journeys undertaken to flee places in which persecution is experienced. Children could work in groups, pairs and be given the choice as to how to present their research. Examples could be an oral presentation, a PowerPoint presentation, a booklet, a poster or leaflet, a filmed news item, or a scripted documentary.

Art

- Petr Horáček's series of paintings produced for this book and in response to Nicola Davies' poems can be used to introduce children to the genre of 'abstract art'. Share examples of abstract artworks by artists such as Wassily Kandinsky, Jackson Pollock, Yayoi Kusama, Barbara

Hepworth, Jack Whitten and Norman Lewis (amongst others). Discuss what children notice in these paintings, how they make them feel, what they make them think about and what objects or figures they can discern if any. Draw together a definition of abstract art as a concept. Provide time and art materials that allow children to practice similar techniques and approaches – splattering and dripping paint, mixing colours, layering paint or pastel or chalk and scratching into surfaces to reveal layers beneath. Children could finally draw on these techniques to work towards a final piece of their own – perhaps inspired by a poem that they have written or a poem that they have read during this unit that speaks to them.

PSHE

- Some of the themes and events explored may emotionally affect the children and they will need time to discuss and make sense not only of these events but on themes of forced displacement or forced migration more broadly. Planning for additional PSHE sessions outside of the sequence would support this.
- Through exploration of this book, children will be helped to develop their sense of social justice and moral responsibility and begin to understand that their own choices and behaviour can affect local, national or global issues.
- Using the Unicef Toolkit (<https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/resources/teaching-resources/refugee-crisis-europe/>) as a starting point, you might choose to initiate working towards becoming a 'Rights Respecting' School.

Computing

- If children choose to create recordings of the poems that they write at the end of the sequence, they might need access to video editing software to add effects, voiceover, to layer in additional imagery or text or to add music.
- Word-processing software might be used by students to publish their finished poems.

Links to other texts and resources:

Selected further titles by Nicola Davies:

- *Lots. The Diversity of Life on Earth*, Nicola Davies and Emily Sutton (Walker)
- *Hummingbird*, Nicola Davies and Jane Ray (Walker Books)
- *The Promise*, Nicola Davies and Laura Carlin (Walker Books)
- *King of the Sky*, Nicola Davies and Laura Carlin (Walker Books)
- *Last: The Story of a White Rhino*, Nicola Davies (Tiny Owl Publishing)
- *A First Book of Animals*, Nicola Davies and Petr Horáček (Walker Books)
- *The Variety of Life* by Nicola Davies and Lorna Scobie (Walker Books)
- *The Wonder of Trees* by Nicola Davies and Lorna Scobie (Walker Books)
- *Ride the Wind* by Nicola Davies and Salvatore Rubbino (Walker Books)
- *The Day War Came* by Nicola Davies and Rebecca Cobb (Walker Books)

- *One World: 24 Hours on Planet Earth*, Nicola Davies and Jenni Desmond (Walker Books)
- *Perfect*, Nicola Davies and Cathy Fisher (Graffeg)
- *Flying Free*, Nicola Davies and Cathy Fisher (Graffeg)
- *The Song That Sings Us*, Nicola Davies and Jackie Morris (Firefly Press) **KS3**
- You can also download a Nicola Davies booklist from CLPE:
<https://clpe.org.uk/system/files/Nicola%20Davies%20Booklist%202021.pdf>

Linked poetry collections for Key Stage 2 and 3:

- *Slam! You're Gonna Wanna Hear This*, edited by Nikita Gill (Macmillan Children's Books) **KS3**
- *Be the Change: Poems to Help You Save the World*, Liz Brownlee, Matt Goodfellow and Roger Stevens (Macmillan Children's Books)
- *On the Move: Poems About Migration*, Michael Rosen and Quentin Blake (Walker Books)
- *Courage in a Poem*, various poets and illustrators (Caterpillar Books)
- *This is How the Change Begins*, Nicola Davies (Graffeg)
- *Our Rights: Stories and Poems about Children's Rights*, edited by Jake Hope (Otter-Barry Books) **forthcoming 6th July 2023**

Linked novels and picturebooks:

- *The Journey*, Francesca Sanna (Flying Eye Books)
- *The Suitcase*, Chris Naylor-Ballesteros (Nosy Crow)
- *The Day War Began*, Nicola Davies and Rebecca Cobb (Walker Books)
- *Saving the Butterfly*, Helen Cooper and Gill Smith (Walker Books)
- *My Name is not Refugee*, Kate Milner (The Bucket List)
- *Dreams of Freedom* (Amnesty International)
- *Azzi in Between*, Sarah Garland (Frances Lincoln)
- *When Stars are Scattered*, Victoria Jamieson, Omar Mohamed and Iman Geddy (Faber & Faber)
- *The Boy at the Back of the Class*, Onjali Q Raúf (Orion Children's Books)
- *Boy, Everywhere*, A.M. Dassu (Old Barn Books)
- *The Crossing*, Manjeet Mann (Penguin) **KS3** – A verse novel shortlisted for CLiPPA in 2022:
<https://clpe.org.uk/books/book/crossing>
- *Illegal*, Eoin Colfer, Andrew Donkin, Giovanni Rigano (Hodder Children's Books) **KS3**
- *Alpha*, Bessora and Barroux, translated by Sarah Ardizzone (The Bucket List) **KS3**
- *Refugee Boy*, Benjamin Zephaniah (Bloomsbury Children's Books) **KS3**
- *Welcome to Nowhere*, Elizabeth Laird (Macmillan Children's Books) **KS3**
- *The Bone Sparrow*, Zana Fraillon (Orion Children's Books) **KS3**
- *Sea Prayer*, Khaled Hosseini and Dan Williams (Bloomsbury)

Linked non-fiction:

- *Who are refugees and migrants? And other big questions*, Michael Rosen and Annemarie Young (Wayland)

- *Juliane's Story*, Andy Glynne and Karl Hammond (Wayland)
- *The Power of Welcome: Real-Life Refugee and Migrant Journeys, A Graphic Novel*, Ada Jusic and various authors (Scholastic)
- *Forced to Flee: Refugee Children drawing on their Experiences*, UNHCR (Franklin Watts)
- *Drawn Across Borders: True Stories of Migration*, George Butler (Walker Studios)
- *Rise Up! The Art of Protest*, Jo Rippon (Palazzo Editions)
- *Protest!* Alice and Emily Haworth-Booth (Pavilion)

Weblinks:

- Access performances by a wide variety of poets on the CLPE website: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/videos>
- Find out more about Nicola Davies and her work, here: <https://nicola-davies.com/>
- Discover more about the charity, Choose Love: <https://chooselove.org/>
- Petr Horáček's website: <http://petrhoracek.co.uk/>
- Various school resource sites to support teaching and learning:
 - **UNHCR**: The UN Refugee Agency - <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/teaching-materials-ages-9-12.html>
 - **Save The Children**: What is a Refugee? <https://www.savethechildren.org/us/what-we-do/emergency-response/refugee-children-crisis/what-is-refugee>
 - **Amnesty** Education Pack: Seeking Safety: https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2017-06/Activity%20-%20Seeking%20safety.pdf?VersionId=QEgP75_LXPGt0d91YCDXgx0efPQ4SI3u

Before beginning the sequence:

- Before this session, ensure that individual Poetry Journals (small notebooks, which could be handmade) are available for each child to use throughout the unit to note ideas and inspirations. Set the context for how these will be used; they will be for the children's own thoughts, ideas, inspirations and drafts of poems. They will not have to share these with anyone else, unless they specifically want to, but they can use these all the time to collect and craft ideas for poems that could be worked up to finished pieces at the end of the unit.
- Create a focus display or poetry corner, where you can display a copy of the front cover of the book, a copy of the text as well as other poetry collections and carefully selected linked texts that the children could be inspired by (see links to other texts above).

Session 1: Introducing the Collection

The experience of being read to is likely to be the real foundation of children's knowledge of poetry, and is also going to be a major influence on how they write themselves. So it is important that it should be as rich, interesting and 'ear-catching' as it can be. It is important that voices other than the teacher's should be heard interpreting a poem. In this way, a range of accents, dialects and voices can be introduced into the reading. It can be particularly valuable for children to hear the poets themselves reading their own poems. This allows authentic voices to be heard.

- Share the front cover and the title of the collection with the class. Read the name of the poet, Nicola Davies, and the illustrator, Petr Horáček. *Have the children heard of either of these people before?* Invite students to share any titles that they may be familiar with. *How does this knowledge affect your expectations for this collection of poetry?* Provide a picture of both of them for the class to see, and add these to the display alongside the front cover of the text.
- Gather their initial responses to the title and the illustration. *How does the combination of title and image make them feel? How do they work together? What sense do they give you about the kinds of poems you might find in this collection?* Jot the students' ideas around a copy of the front cover of the text to add to the poetry display and come back to at the end of the sequence.
- Take the time to unpick their response to and the meaning behind the two word title. *What is their initial response to hearing the title? What does it remind them of? Have they heard this phrase before?* Consider the impact of framing the title as an instruction, a suggestion or a recommendation. *What might it mean to 'choose' love? What does the idea of having 'choice' suggest about the recipient of this advice?*
- Some students may immediately note the connection to the 'Choose Love' charity. A key fundraising source for the charity was the 'Choose Love' branded t-shirts, etc. which were designed by Katharine Hamnett in 2015 for the charity (which was then named Help Refugees) and were photographed worn by a number of celebrities around that time. *How does this connection inform your expectations for the collection?*
- If children aren't familiar with the charity, you might choose at this stage to read and share the information about the charity included on page 42/43 of the book. You could also share their website (<https://chooselove.org/who-we-are/>) and read some of the introductory information together. Invite them to summarise what they have discovered. *What do we know about the charity? What questions do we have? How could we find the answers to those questions?*
- The class should also discuss their response to the painting used for the cover – the colour choices, the materials and techniques used, the feelings evoked, etc. They might also suggest potential intent by the painter in the arrangement and placing of those shapes within the layers of background paint. *What do the layers of grey and white suggest to you? What might they represent? Where is colour used? What is suggested by the green lines and the streaks of orange, blue and yellow?* Consider how this image might connect with and respond to the title

of the collection. *Why might the illustrator and the book's designers have crafted this cover instead of using existing font, typeface and images from the Choose Love charity?* At this stage, you may also begin to introduce the term 'abstract art' and suggest some strategies for responding to paintings in this style. If possible, you might extend their knowledge, understanding and use of abstract techniques in cross-curricular sessions. Encourage the class to take their time to take in the image and consider what they see in it, what they engage with, what it reminds them of and how it makes them feel. You can find one definition and some examples here: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/a/abstract-art>

- Draw together all of the reflections and observations shared so far, and invite the students to summarise their expectations for this collection of poetry. *What type of poems do you think you will read in this collection? What subject matter might they explore? How do you think they will make you feel? What might they invite a reader to consider or reflect on?*
- Explain that you are now going to have an opportunity to listen to Nicola Davies reading the title poem from the collection. You can find videos of Nicola performing a selection of poems from this book on CLPE's website, here: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/nicola-davies>.
- Afterwards, give time for the children to share their initial responses to the text. *What do you like about the poem? How does the poem make you feel? What makes you feel like this? What questions does it prompt? What would you like to know? What further ideas might it give us about the collection?*
- Explore how this poem fits with the children's initial perceptions of poetry. *What do they think of when the word poetry is mentioned? How do they feel about poetry? Which poets or poems do they know and like? Do they like reading poetry? Do any of the students write their own poetry?* Take note of the children's responses and perceptions to come back to throughout the sequence. You may want to begin to explore how various poets feeling about poetry and look at the similarities and differences with the feelings of the children, using the videos on CLPE's website: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/videos?f%5B0%5D=tags%3A10755>
- Now, hand out copies of 'Choose Love' for children to re-read and explore on the page. *What do they notice as they re-read? Encourage them to read the poem aloud as they explore it so that they can hear the sounds of the words as well as their meaning and how they appear on the page. They might tap their fingers as they read to explore any rhythmic patterns within the lines as well. Are there any patterns that they can see or hear? What words or phrases stand out to them? Do they have a favourite line or section? Is there anything that surprised you? What does it make you think about? How did it make you feel? What choices has the poet made to make you feel that way?*
- Amongst their observations, children might note and discuss the alliteration; the repeated internal sounds of words and the rhymes or half-rhymes, such as the repeated /a/ sound in *traveller, distant, land, unfamiliar, language, understand* and how these add to the gentle pulse of the poem. They might draw out the similarity in sound between the last word of the fifth line and the last word of the tenth and final line – 'kin' and 'can', as well as the connection between 'can' and 'land'. They may note the choice to write the poem in the

second person, *Who is the voice of the poem addressing? How is the 'you' of the poem similar to or different from 'the traveller'?* They might also consider the choice to switch the gender of the traveller and the choice of determiner and pronoun. *Why might Nicola Davies have chosen to say 'the' traveller and not 'a' or 'this'? Why might she have chosen 'the' distant land and not 'a'? What difference does it make in our impressions of the traveller and the land being described? How does the focus of the poem shift at the halfway point? What is the impact of these sorts of pattern on the reader? Does it change the way you read the poem? How would you summarise the message or intent of this poem?*

- Return to the illustration which accompanies the poem in the book. Note that this is the same as the painting selected for the cover. *Can they see any connections between the poem and the painting, or between our initial response to the painting and our response to the poem? What might Petr Horáček have been responding to in the poem as he created that painting?*
- Finish the session by returning to the class's expectations for the collection. *Do they feel like they have an increased understanding behind the emotions, purpose or message within this book? What do you think it means to 'choose love'? Who might be being addressed within this poem – and potentially the collection more widely?*
- As their knowledge of this collection develops, begin to encourage the students to think about possible subjects or issues that they are passionate about, what they have to say about them and what they want people reading their work to think about. *Are there subjects that they have direct experience of or considerable knowledge of that could form the basis or inspiration for their own writing? Could they use a similar 'direct address' approach as Nicola has in this poem? If children are using poetry writing journals, allow some time for them to start jotting down any ideas, words, phrases or themes that they might return to later.*

Session 2: Harnessing Existing Knowledge and Developing Enquiry

- Revisit the class's expectations for the collection and then introduce them to the headings for the three sections into which the book is divided: 'Departure', 'Arrival' and 'Healing'. Invite them to discuss in groups, their expectations and predictions for each of these sections, jotting down their initial ideas under these titles. *What voices might be introduced in each of these sections? Whose stories will be conveyed? Are there certain words, phrases or ideas that you might expect to encounter? What experiences do you think these three words encompass?*
- Ask each group to feed back and discuss any ideas and questions that might be raised by the class at this stage.
- Then, read aloud Onjali Raúf's foreword for the collection.
- After reading the section aloud, give the class time to discuss what they have heard. *Has this confirmed or altered their expectations for the poetry in this collection? How would you summarise the key message or idea in this foreword? How do you think it connects with the first poem that we heard? How did you feel hearing this section read aloud?*

- Give each pair of students a copy of the introduction for them to re-read and text mark. *Which words or phrases best emphasise the point that Onjali Raúf is making? Are there words and/or phrases which you feel are particularly impactful in communicating the urgent need for action to the reader?* Encourage children to draw out any words or phrases with which they are less familiar or would like to have support in defining more fully.
- At this stage, you might also discuss the students' existing knowledge of Onjali Raúf and consider why she might have been chosen to write this foreword. Onjali, whose debut children's book *The Boy at the Back of the Class* won several awards on release, founded a charity which raises funds and offers support to those held in refugee camps – amongst other aims. You can find out more them here: <https://www.osrefugeeaidteam.org/>
- After sufficient time, ask each group to share words or phrases that they would like to discuss further or that they felt were impactful and why. Some phrases that you might explore together include: *'acts of inhumanity', 'racisms so visceral', 'tiny emblem of privilege'*. Elsewhere in the text of the foreword, is it clear what some of those *'acts of inhumanity'* might be. Consider why it is that the passport becomes a *'tiny emblem of privilege'* and what that might mean for those without this sort of paperwork, or whose country of origin is not safe from war. *What is the impact of the adverb 'currently' at the bottom of page 6, and why might she have placed it in brackets? What does it imply about that layer of privilege? How does it connect with some of the ideas from the poem discussed in the previous session?*
- In the fifth paragraph, consider the use of inverted commas around the word 'crisis'. *Have the students heard the phrase 'refugee crisis' before? Why might Onjali Raúf wish to reframe that label or that portrayal of the issue being faced across Europe and around the world at the moment? What does 'refugee crisis' imply needs to be addressed? How does that compare with 'crisis of man-made borders and decisions... which will have repercussions'? What concerns are in most urgent need of addressing when framed like this? Why is the choice of language important?*
- As children draw out some of the language choices that have been made in this introduction, they might note the recurrence of a similar root, which sits within many words in the text. For example: *inhumane, human, humanising, humane, rehumanise, dehumanised*. Use this as an opportunity to explore the word family more fully. *What other verbs, adjectives or nouns include 'human' or 'humane'? How is the meaning of the word altered as different suffixes and prefixes are attached? How would you define what it is to be 'humane'? Is that the same/similar to what it means to be 'human'? What are the origins of the word? Has the meaning changed over time?*
- Having explored the definition and derivations of the term, set the class a free writing exercise: *What does 'humanity' mean to me?* Ask them to spend a minute or two simply reflecting on their answer to that question, or simply what the questions make them think about. It may be that they think of how they would define it or explain it to someone else, or how they would explore the similarities and differences between the two principal definitions

for that noun. Alternatively, the question may make them think of a story they heard – real or fictional, or a story they can imagine, or something that happened to them.

- After time to think and imagine, ask them to start writing. Explain that once they start writing, they should try not to stop for 5 minutes (adjust the length of time according to your knowledge of the class). If they run out of ideas, they can simply repeat the same sentence, phrase or word until they think of something new to say. It doesn't matter if their writing goes off on tangents. You might need to be explicit in saying that at this stage, you are also not concerned about accuracy of punctuation. They should simply write continuously for the full period of time.
- Once they have had 5 minutes, ask them to read back what they have written. Invite them to circle or underline any ideas, words or phrases that they would like to explore further – either in prose or poetry. Give them time to jot down any ideas they have had into their journals.

Session 3: Developing knowledge and looking at language

- Following the previous sessions' discussion around the first poem and the foreword, continue to gather and record information about the children's existing knowledge and understanding of refugeeism, and how it relates to what they have seen and heard so far in being introduced to the book. Provide small groups with a visual organiser so that they can record their ideas and develop a line of enquiry through discussion, such as:

What do I know about refugees and forced displacement?	What would I like to know?	What have I found out?

- It's important to note that learning about the current and ongoing international crisis affecting those who need to leave their homes to seek asylum can be emotionally affecting. As an enabling adult, you will need to be prepared to carefully facilitate and mediate these discussions. Make sure you are aware of any children who have experienced similar situations themselves or have relatives that forced displacement or traumatic refugee experience. Be aware that children may need guidance in understanding and reframing stereotypical views or prejudices. It is important to be aware of and sensitive to the needs of the children. If they need breaks or to talk it through, allow flexible time and space for this.
- To support the class in engaging in this initial discussion, activating vocabulary and current knowledge and awareness around the issue, as well as prompting questions, it might be useful to share a recent news article or report. For example, this 8-minute Newsround video from May 2022 explaining a few of the challenges facing people fleeing the war in Ukraine: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/48660079> (video at the top of the page). The film includes

young child refugees describing their experiences, as well as describing some of the difficulties in applying for visas to cross borders and reach safety.

- Using the grid as a starting point, work with the class to establish the key questions that they are interested in exploring. For instance, *why do people sometimes need to leave their homes? What are the key distinctions between emigration and forced migration? What is a refugee? What support and resources might a refugee need? What are the most significant human rights which might apply to someone seeking refuge or asylum? How are these rights currently being met?*
- Once the key questions have been established, re-read Nicola's poem and Onjali's foreword in this book. *How do these two pieces of text address some of the questions that we have raised?*
- In the foreword (final paragraph, page 6), Onjali Rauf implied that 'sensational headlines' obscure rather than convey truth. *How are people who have become refugees characterised in the press, on social media and by government officials and political agendas? How would you characterise the idea of the "boogey monster of 'The Refugee'"?* What is suggested by Onjali's use of inverted commas and capital letters here? *Have children seen any examples of headlines, or messaging on social media that attempts to portray 'The Refugee' as a boogey monster, as something to be feared?* Invite them to share their own experiences, and then prepare examples of headlines and, where appropriate, social media posts to explore.
- As they look at a range of examples, return to the language explored yesterday – *can they see examples of 'humanising' and 'dehumanising' language in effect?* Give them time to draw out some specific examples of words or phrases that might apply to each heading. As children discuss, they might use a simple Venn diagram or mind map as a visual organiser to keep a record of their discussion.
- Some potential primary sources to investigate:
 - Headline: *The 'Swarm' on our Streets*, Daily Mail, 31st July 2015 (additional headlines from this day included on this Tumblr feed: <https://www.tumblr.com/suttonnick/125458710941/hendopolis-daily-mail-the-swarm-on-our>)
 - This article explores how The Guardian and The Daily Mail reported the same event on 28th January 2016: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/28/a-tale-of-two-press-releases-whats-behind-the-guardian-and-mails-contrasting-refugee-stories>
 - Tweet by Mark Jenkinson MP, March 7th 23: *"I welcome the Home Secretary's statement today on the Illegal Migration Bill. For too long, illegal immigrants have entered this country and taken advantage of our services. For too long, innocent people have perished crossing the Channel. Enough is enough."* <https://twitter.com/markjenkinsonmp/status/1633109251542470659>
 - Tweet by Rishi Sunak, Prime Minister, March 7th 23: *"If you come to the UK illegally: You can't claim asylum, You can't benefit from our modern slavery protections, You can't make spurious human rights claims, You can't stay"* <https://twitter.com/RishiSunak/status/1633158789103747072>

- Tweet by Save the Children UK, March 14th 23: ‘Migrant, Refugee, Child’
<https://twitter.com/savechildrenuk/status/1635657597771546624>
 - Brexit UKIP Campaign Poster: ‘Breaking Point’
<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/16/nigel-farage-defends-ukip-breaking-point-poster-queue-of-migrants>
 - Protest Banners: ‘Refugees Welcome Here’ and ‘Stand up to Racism’ at protest in Newcastle: <https://www.thecourieronline.co.uk/pro-immigration-rally-takes-monument/>
 - Help Refugees / Choose Love charity video released Dec 2016 and focused on seeking support, refuge and asylum for those fleeing the civil war in Syria:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuRN_AfpSH0
- Draw the class together and discuss what children have noticed and any patterns they have seen in the choice of language and the implied message across different platforms, continuing to link this back to work undertaken across the three sessions so far. *What have they noticed about the different ways in which these events are reported or described? What language has been chosen? What do they do to either humanise or dehumanise those affected? Do you feel that any of the messaging intends to provoke empathy? If so, how?*
 - Finish the session, by drawing the class together to read and discuss the statement on Human Rights on the United Nations website: *“Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination.”*
 - Allow time for small groups to draw on everything that has been read and discussed so far and collaborate to think of how they think someone should be treated if they found themselves in the position of having to flee from threat of persecution or danger or escape poverty or lack of choice and opportunity. *What do you think is most important when writing about or telling stories about people who have been through these kinds of experiences? Do you think it is important that in writing these poems, the poet was informed by real people’s stories and told with their permission? Why do you think that?*
 - Return to the notes they made under each section heading: Departure, Arrival and Healing. *What do you think is significant about each of these sections? Why do you think Nicola chose to organise the poems under these headings? What are your expectations for the poems in each of these sections? Have these changed since you started researching this issue?*
 - As children read and respond to the poems and linked texts throughout the rest of the sequence, give them time to return to the enquiry grid, their key questions and their predictions to reflect on what they have found out, how they feel and what more they would like to know.

- Please note that in the weblink section on page 5 & 6, you will find a number of hyperlinks to online resources that can be used in PSHE sessions alongside this unit to further and deepen children's thinking on this subject matter.

Session 4: Responding to and performing poetry

If poetry is not given a voice, if it just stays on the page as a printed object, then it is not going to come alive for most children. Giving voice and sound to poetry is an important key to unlocking the meanings and music contained in each poem. It is through performing poetry that the quality of rhyme and verse form, and the power of language can be explored and realised. Presenting poetry to an audience in this way might also lead children to recognise more clearly the humour in a poem or reflect more thoughtfully on its meaning.

- Explain that we're going to read and respond to each section of the collection in turn, starting today with the section entitled 'Departure'. Invite the class to look back at their expectations for this section of the book.
- Return to the importance, raised in previous sessions, giving people who have lived through these experiences the platform and space to tell their own stories, for their voice to come to the fore. With that in mind, explain that we are going to start by listening to and responding to an example of a real story of departure. You can find many examples online and in publications in which people who have been refugees are able to tell their story. Some suggestions are listed below, but as with all texts, read these thoroughly before deciding which you might choose to share with your students.
 - Nazifa Ali shares her journey from Afghanistan to Australia:
<https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/nazifa-ali-story/>
 - Nur Ayna shares her journey from Myanmar to Bangladesh:
<https://www.unhcr.org/asia/news/stories/2020/8/5f3d24cf4/miss-home-fear.html>
 - Meltem Avcil shares her journey from Turkey to England in the book *Who are refugees and migrants? And other big questions*, by Michael Rosen and Annemarie Young (Wayland)
- After reading the first-hand account, invite the class to reflect on what they have learnt about the experience of 'departure'. *Why might someone need to leave their home? What concerns could they have? What words might you use to attempt to summarise or describe their feelings? How might their priorities vary from person to person, and across different situations? What change have they experienced? How would you describe their main hopes or needs?* Continue to add children's responses and reflections to the knowledge organisers and grids begun in earlier sessions.

- Divide the class into four groups and provide each group with a copy of one of Petr Horáček's paintings from the 'Departure' section of the book. It would be helpful to place the image in the centre of a large sheet of paper (perhaps A2 sugar paper or flip chart paper) to allow the group to annotate their responses around the edge.
- Give each group time to respond to the painting. *What do you see? What stands out to you? How does the painting make you feel? What is suggested to you by the lines, the colours, the composition, the brush strokes, etc.? How do you feel this might connect with the title of this section of the book? What connections do you make to the reading and discussions we have had as a class over the last few sessions?* Encourage them to jot down any and all responses they have to the painting around the edges of the paper.
- After each group has had time to discuss and note down their responses to the first painting, rotate the paintings to the next group so that, over time, each group has had the opportunity to explore and respond to all four of the paintings from this section.
- Read aloud the four poems from this first section: 'This Moment', 'Before We Left', 'Five Minutes' and 'Mathematics'. **Please note** that you may decide that some poems are more suitable for the secondary classroom. Primary teachers should draw on their knowledge of the class to support any decisions they make on which poems in the collection they choose to focus. 'Mathematics' (p17) has an explicit reference to child suicide.
- After reading the poems for the first time, give time for the class to share their initial response to what they heard. *Were there any words, phrases, images or ideas that stood out? What was most impactful and why? Was there a poem that you preferred for any reason? Why might that be? What aspects of the poems, or particular details from them, connected with your response to the paintings? Did you make any other connections with the first-hand accounts or news articles you have read? What questions do you have?*
- Give each group one poem to read more closely. You might assign a different poem to each group, or you might allow the group to decide which of the poems they would like to focus on.
- Ask them to reread the poem that they have selected/had assigned. Explain that, as they did with 'Choose Love' in Session 1, you would like them to think about how the poem made them feel, what questions it might prompt for the reader, what images it made in their mind and how it affected them. Then, for them to look closely at the language choices that Nicola Davies has made, which could have influenced that response. *How has she used and shaped language for effect?* If appropriate, you can introduce, or review, the names of specific forms or devices with the children, considering what makes their focus poem 'poetic'. You might introduce this by way of what Michael Rosen calls 'secret strings' (*What is Poetry?* Walker). He talks about the importance of discovering how the poet might have used assonance, alliteration, imagery, rhythm and sound. *Can you identify any of these features in the poem? If so, what impact does it have on the finished poem — on its sound, its look, its meaning, on how it makes you feel?* Give each group the copy of the painting that Petr created in response to their poem, so that they can look at the annotations made earlier and make links back to the text.

- After sufficient time for each group to discuss and annotate their poem, give them time to summarise their discussions and observations to the rest of the class. *What did the poem make you think about? What language features did you draw out – and how did they affect your response to the poem or the connections you made?* Children might focus on the rhyme, rhythm and repetition in both ‘Mathematics’ and ‘Five Minutes’ and the impact this patterned language has in capturing and communicating the experience. The regular rhythm echoing that of the beating of a drum or a march; *does that add urgency or evoke military comparisons?* They might note the choice of ‘voice’ in the poem – with two poems shaped around 2nd person, as with the introductory poem, while ‘Before We Left’ opts for a first person account and ‘Mathematics’ is a more external third person account until the final line. *How do these choices affect our response to the poem?* Children working with ‘This Moment’ might respond to the use of figurative language and imagery in the description of an abstract noun into something more concrete that can be positioned ‘behind’ or ‘between’, or can be hidden, folded, stirred and slid underneath. *What do those prepositions and verb choices suggest about the ‘moment’ being evoked in this poem? What is the impact of the personification and the repetition in the final verse?* In ‘Before We Left’, the class may draw out the connections and patterns across the poem – the repetition of ‘We listened, huddled in the dark’; the echo between ‘to Mother’s words’ and ‘to Father’s silence’; the list structure of ‘It is too...’. *What is evoked by the imagery choices, comparing the words to first ‘hail’ and then ‘sand’?* In ‘Five Minutes’, the children might draw out the choice of present tense, second person, repetition, rhythm and rhyme throughout this poem and how that affects the urgency as the poem builds towards its final verse. They might discuss the ideas evoked by specific noun and noun phrase choices – *what is suggested by ‘hat’ or ‘coat’ or ‘wedding ring’? What do the similes and personification in the poem make the reader think about? Why might Nicola have chosen to frame the choices being made as questions directed at the reader?*
- Finally, invite each group to work up a performance of their chosen poem. As they prepare to do so, encourage them make decisions with sensitivity to the subject matter, to reflect on what the poem means, how it made them feel and how best they can communicate that feeling and that meaning in an authentic and appropriate manner. Emphasise that it is not necessary to enact and impersonate the actions which are described in the poem but rather to evoke the feeling that they had when first reading it, and considering the language choices, shapes, structures and forms which they have drawn out in their discussion.
- You might share and reflect on this video of Steven Camden talking about his advice for performing poetry: <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/steven-camden-what-advice-would-you-give-performing-poetry>
- Give time for the students to work up their performance, annotating it with performance notes and ideas, memorising sections if it enhances the performance, and practising until they are ready to share.

- After the children have had time to work up and rehearse their performances, allow space for them to perform their poems for the rest of the class. Before 15th June 2023, this could be filmed and submitted for the [CLIPPA shadowing scheme](#) competition to win poetry prizes.
- After the performances, ask the class to discuss their intention as performers, and, as an audience, what they found most effective, most meaningful and why.

Session 5: Drawing connections between poetry, memoir and reportage

In this session, give the children time to draw direct comparisons between the stories, emotions and details evoked by the four poems in 'Departure' to other forms of writing, including first-hand accounts which describe the events which might force a family or an individual to make the difficult decision to leave. Use texts that you can access easily as a class. If the publications suggested in this session are difficult to acquire, then you might draw on online resources from [Amnesty](#), [UNHCR](#) and [Save the Children](#).

- Start the session by returning to the poem 'This Moment'. You can watch Nicola Davies perform the poem herself in this video: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/nicola-davies>
- Reflect briefly on the students' response to the poems in the first section of this collection and summarise any observations they made during the previous session.
- Explain that they are going to work across a number of texts today and compare the effect of each of these in evoking empathy and understanding of those caught up in these crises. Children might work in pairs or small groups to read, discuss and annotate each of the texts with which they are provided. If sufficient examples of text are available, children might independently select from a range of choices which texts they work with across the session. Vary the number and length of the texts being compared according to the age and experience of the children in the class.
- You might create a simple grid or template for children to record their observations and reflections. Alternatively, children might generate their own knowledge organisers to capture their discussions.
- Suggested texts to compare in this session include the following. Try to ensure that at least some of the texts are written from first-hand experience of the events being described:
 - Extract from a diary: *You Don't Know What War Is: The Diary of a Young Girl from Ukraine* by Yeva Skalietska (Bloomsbury) – 24th February 2022, p33-37
 - Extract from a picturebook: *The Day War Came* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Rebecca Cobb (Walker Books) – the first five spreads depicting the arrival of war in the life of the young protagonist
 - Extract from a picturebook: *The Journey* by Francesca Sanna (Flying Eye Books) – the first spreads depicting the arrival of war in the lives of the family in this story.
 - News Report: BBC News on 24th February 2022 as Russia invaded Ukraine: <https://www.tvnewsroom.co.uk/news-coverage/ukraine-crisis-266903/> (4th hyperlink on this website)

- News Article: 24th February 2022, The Guardian: ‘Russia has invaded Ukraine: what we know so far’: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/feb/24/russia-has-invaded-ukraine-what-we-know-so-far>
 - Poetry: ‘Cousin Michael’ by Michael Rosen, from *On The Move: Poems About Migration*, illustrated by Quentin Blake (Walker Books) – p90-95
 - Extract from a Graphic Novel: *Illegal* by Eoin Colfer, Andrew Donkin and Giovanni Rigano (Hodder Children’s Books) – p7-14
 - First-Hand Account: Mohammed Anwar’s account of fleeing Myanmar, age 12: <https://www.unhcr.org/asia/news/stories/2020/10/5f9000c74/with-education-i-have-learned-to-speak-up-for-myself.html>
- Work with the children to decide how they will record their findings and the key aspects of the text that it would be helpful to compare. A possible grid to scaffold children’s discussion and recording is included below:

	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3
Title	You Don’t Know What War Is – p33-37	The Day War Came – p1-10	BBC News Report 24 th February 2022
Summarise the event(s) described the text			
Who wrote the text? Do you know?			
How is the author connected with the events being described?			
How did the text (including illustrations/images) make you feel?			
What particularly informed that emotional response?			
Why do you think the text was created?			
What did the text make you think about? What questions did it make you ask?			
What words or phrases did you find most impactful and why?			

- After sufficient time to read and explore the range of texts, draw the class back together and invite them to share their observations and note any consistent threads across the different groups.
- Consider together some of the themes that have arisen throughout our exploration of the subject matter so far. Note and reflect on key words such as ‘authentic’, ‘empathy’ and ‘humanising’ when exploring the different texts. Consider together some key questions that might arise from this discussion and consider the range of responses across the class. For

example, *how important is it to have first-hand experience of what you are writing about? If you don't have first-hand experience of something, but want to write about it, what is the best way to go about that?*

- Bring children back to their exploration of voice within *Choose Love*. As Nicola Davies hasn't had the direct experience of being a refugee herself, how has she tried to ensure that her writing is authentic, empathetic and humanising? The publisher's [website](#) states that the basis for the poems was a number of true stories shared with "the permission of both individual refugees and aid workers". Why is this important? *How else do you think she may have prepared for writing these poems? Do you think some of the 'individual refugees and aid workers' might have wanted Nicola to share these stories and experiences? Why might that be?*
- Listen to Nicola talking about how she prepared for this book: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/nicola-davies>. *What does this add to your understanding?*
- Drawing on what children know of Nicola Davies' life and expertise, from their reading and from exploring her website, look more broadly at what is suggested about the author's interests (Note that Nicola's website is mainly a blog; for a complete list of her published work, you may need to visit [her Wikipedia entry](#)). *What do you think she is most passionate about or interested in? Which organisations has she worked with and supported? What values does her work encompass?* From her work, students might note interest in environmentalism, protecting endangered animals and green spaces, conversation and rewilding, climate change, the impact of war, and an empathy for young voices.
- With this connection between an author and what they write about in mind, finish the session by inviting the class to spend some time contemplating and reflecting on the things that they are themselves passionate about – and which of these they have a personal connection to or experience of. There are a range of issues that the class might feel are worth writing about. These could include: the cost of living crisis, funding for schools, pollution, protecting green spaces, the environment and climate change, recycling, single use plastic, conserving water and energy, protecting local wildlife or endangered species around the world, human rights, civil rights, Black Lives Matter, gender equality, mental health and well-being, and many more.
- For each issue that the students feel strongly about, invite them to consider some of the connections between their own lived experience and the subject matter – *how well qualified do they feel that they are to write about that subject or that experience?* Children might create an identity map in their journals exploring the connection between their identity, their home and community, and a wide range of potential interests and concerns.

Session 6: Response to Poetry: Visualisation

- Use the whiteboard or a visualiser to revisit the five poems that have already been shared during this sequence alongside their accompanying paintings. Discuss how Petr Horáček's artwork reflects his response to these poems. *What do you think he is responding to in the*

poem? What do you like about the paintings? Why do you think the artist didn't choose a more literal approach to the interpretation of the events described in the poems? What do they add to the experience of reading the collection? Do you think this is a good match between poet and illustrator? Why?

- Explain that you are going to listen now to a poem from the next section of the collection – ‘The Trials’ (p23) from the ‘Arrival’ section. You can access a video of Nicola Davies reading this poem here: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/nicola-davies>
- Tell the class that, as you read, you would like them to close their eyes and try to create an image in their mind’s eye. It might not be literally what is described, but it might be an image that comes to mind because of an emotion or an association or a memory – a personal response that you have. It might be a colour, a shape, or a line. It might be something literal or it could, like Petr’s work, be more abstract. It also might be an image which encompasses or responds to the poem as a whole, or it may have been triggered by a particular word or a single phrase. There is no right or wrong answer – it will vary based on their response to the poem.
- After they have heard the poem once, hand out art materials – you may wish to give them some element of choice in what they use so that they can select materials according to what they hear in the poem (e.g. watercolours, pastels, coloured pencils, ink, cartridge paper) Explain that you are going to listen to the poem 2 or 3 more times and when they have a clear mental picture, maybe after another reading, you would like them to draw what they picture in their mind as you are reading. Give sufficient time for children to complete their drawings, perhaps reading aloud the poem again, if necessary, while they are working.
- Once children have completed their art work, ask them to annotate around the edges any words or phrases that they might use to describe what they visualised – these might be words or phrases that they remember from the poem, or their own words inspired by their visualisation.
- Then, ask them to share their drawing with the person next to them, explaining what they were feeling or the imagery they were trying to capture in their art work. *What was it in the poem that helped you visualise it?*
- You may wish to conduct a gallery walk; allowing children time to walk around the room looking at all of the art work created by their peers and considering the similarities and differences amongst the range of work and why these might be.
- After discussing children’s initial response and visualisation in relation to the poem, handout copies of the poem for children to re-read for themselves and allow time, either as a whole class or in small groups for children to explore the language and some of the poetic devices used. After children’s initial response to how the poem made them feel, anything it reminded them of and any questions they might have, give them the opportunity to seek clarification of any unfamiliar vocabulary. Allow time for children to offer explanations themselves if they are familiar with some of the terms. For example, *what does the word ‘trial’ mean to them, where*

have they heard this word before, does it carry a particular weight or meaning, does it evoke negative or positive emotions?

- Now share with the children, Petr Horáček’s painted response. Emphasise that just as we have produced an image in response to what we have read and heard, Petr has done the same. *Do you think he has responded to similar aspects of the poem or in a similar way? What are the similarities and differences between everyone’s responses? What do the shapes and colours in this painting mean to you? What stands out to you? What is your eye drawn to? How does the image make you feel? Why do you think that is?*
- Having considered some of the illustrator’s choices, look back at the text of the poem. As in previous sessions, look at the choices that Nicola Davies has made (the words and phrases as well as the poetic devices) and invite the class to consider how they respond to those choices as a reader. *What choices in language and layout has the poet made and what might they tell us? How did they inform your painting?*
- As in other poems discussed so far, the children might note the choice of a second person voice. *Why might that choice have been made?* As well as language choices related to sound, such as the use of alliteration, and imagery, such as the use of personification and metaphor, children might look at some of the structural choices that Nicola Davies has made. *How has she structured the three verses? What is the impact on the reader of the poem by placing those line breaks and verse breaks where she has? The last line is not structured as a question, but what questions might it prompt in the reader – who is the ‘someone’ who decides? Why do they get to decide?* Children might also note the pattern in which the second and third lines of each verse start with a verb ending in –ing. *To what extent do these verbs encapsulate the three ‘trials’ around which the poem is structured? Why do you think ‘waiting’ might be the ‘worst trial’?*
- At the end of the session, invite children to return to their own poetry journal where they are gathering ideas, themes, words and phrases that could be used in their own poetry writing. Encourage them to consider whether there are any techniques, or poetic devices that they have seen in these poems that they might like to use in their own writing.

Session 7: Exploring Voice in Poetry

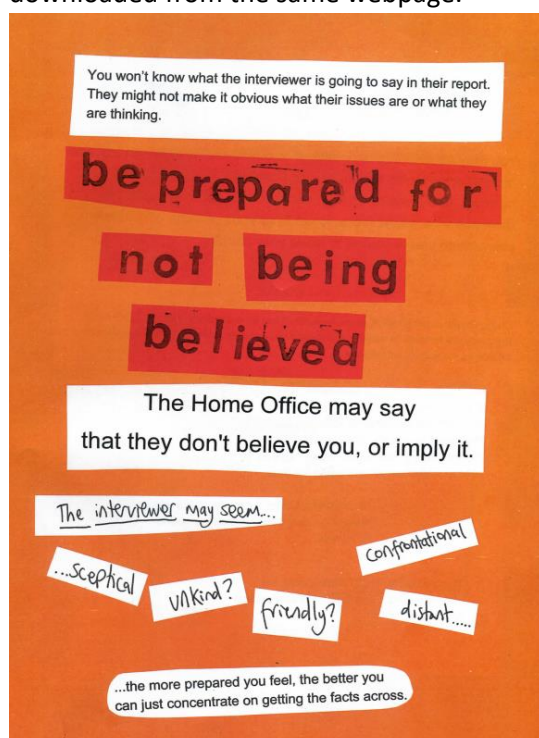
Please note: *be aware that the featured poem for this session – ‘The Interview’ - includes the phrase ‘buggered off’. If you are, for any reason, uncomfortable or unable to include discussion of this phrase in the classroom then you may choose to read aloud the poem yourself rather than using the video recording, and replacing the phrase with a suitable synonym. However, if you are exploring the poem as written, the class may wish to consider Nicola Davies’ choice in including it. How does it inform our understanding of character, emotion and circumstance?*

- Start by listening to Nicola Davies perform a further poem from the ‘Arrival’ section of the book: ‘The Interview’ (page 25-26): <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/nicola-davies>

- After a first listen, as in previous sessions, invite the children to share their initial response to the poem. *What does the poem make you think about? How does it make you feel? What makes you feel that way? What questions does it prompt? Do you think the poem has a message or theme? How does this poem connect with the other poems we have read and responded to? What is similar or different?*
- Re-read the poem and provide the children with a copy of the text for them to read for themselves and explore more closely. Ask the children to work in pairs or small groups to explore examples of the choices that have been made in terms of vocabulary, language structures, poetic devices and layout. *What other choices could have been made? Did the poet have other choices? Why might these choices have been made? What is the impact on you as a reader?*
- Start by clarifying children's understanding of the three people in the poem – the voice of the poem itself; the 'you' that the poem is ostensibly addressing, and the 'she/her' figure. *What do we know about the 'you' person addressed by the poem? What do we learn from the poem? What do we know about them and their life? What might we infer about their thoughts and feelings? How might our response to the poem differ if it had been written in first person or third person? What is the impact of Nicola Davies making this choice?*
- As children re-read the poem and draw out aspects of the poem that describe or imply something about this figure, you might use a Role on the Wall as a visual organiser to record their observations and insights. To undertake a Role on the Wall activity, on a large sheet of paper, draw a simple outline of the character. In the space outside of the outline, capture words or phrases to describe the outer characteristics (words and phrases which relate to the things that have happened to the character, their actions or behaviours, and – where relevant – their appearance). Inside the outline, note any words and phrases to describe their inner characteristics, e.g. words that describe character, personality, opinion and feeling. Encourage children to make links between the external and the internal – *how does a character's actions or speech suggest to us their thoughts or feelings and vice versa?* The class may also wish to add any questions that they have about the character around the edge of the poster to return to as they read more of the novel.
- Next, move on to consider the 'she/her' figure in the poem – *What do we know about her? What do we think we know? What is suggested or implied? What would we like to know?* Create another Role on the Wall poster for this person to capture children's responses.
- Children can go on to respond to some of the other language choices made by Nicola Davies in crafting this text.
- Having considered some of the language choices that contributed towards meaning in the poem, step back to reflect again on children's response to the poem overall. *Do you think that this poem has a message? How would you summarise this poem and what it is about? What have you learnt about 'The Interview'? Do you think the poem is more about the interview, the interviewer or the interviewee? What makes you think that? Using the Role on the Wall for guidance, reflect on what is implied about the interviewer's beliefs about and attitudes*

towards the person they are interviewing. Why might someone have these opinions? What might they be responding to in mainstream and social media? Refer back to work that the children have already undertaken exploring news articles, headlines, images and online references.

- Invite children to reflect on Petr Horáček's accompanying painting for this poem. *How does the painting make you feel? Is your response to the painting similar to your response to the poem? Why/why not? What shapes, details, lines, textures stand out in this painting? What might those shapes represent to you? Why might he have chosen to paint them in this way?*
- Draw children's attention to the footnote at the bottom of page 26 which provides some further information about the interview process which is partially described in this poem. *Why do you think Nicola Davies chose to include this footnote? What does it add to your understanding of the poem?*
- Through both the poem and the footnote, *what do we know about the substantive interview? What do you think the role of the interview is? What does the poem suggest about the interview process? What would you like to know?*
- Explain that there is a lot of guidance online designed to support and prepare anyone who is going to attend a substantive interview (also called an asylum interview). The 'Right to Remain' website has extensive guidance and suggestions (see link below). The guidance warns the interviewee that they should *"Be prepared for not being believed: sometimes the Home Office interviewer will say they do not believe you, or make comments hinting as this."* Share and discuss this quote with the class – or share this page from the 'zine' that can be downloaded from the same webpage.



- As children respond, invite them to reflect on their own experiences, at any time in feeling as though they weren't believed: perhaps they were caught telling a lie, or perhaps someone in a position of authority – a teacher, a parent – or a peer simply thought that they were lying. *How does it feel not to be believed? How have you responded when someone doesn't appear to believe you? Do you think that can affect your behaviour, your feelings, your tone or your choices?*
- Compare children's personal reflections with the notes they have made about the two main figures in the poem – the interviewer and the interviewee. *How do you think the person in this poem might feel? What are the stakes for a person in this interview, what is at risk? Why do you think Nicola Davies chose to write the poem mostly from the point of view of the interviewer rather than the interviewee? Do you think that would alter your response as a reader? If they could say one thing to either of these people, what would it be? What advice could you offer to both?* Invite children to jot down ideas in their journals. Keep terms like humanity and humanising in mind when thinking about what could be said, as well as how you might say it.

Further information about the Substantive Interview or Asylum Interview

- If the children wish to investigate the role of the substantive interview further and the process involved, then both the Citizens Advice website and the Right to Remain website have further information about the substantive interview aimed at those seeking asylum. You can find the pages here:
 - <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/immigration/prepare-for-asylum-interview/>
 - <https://righttoremain.org.uk/toolkit/asylumiv/>
- There is also a less formal 'zine' that explains the process (from which the image shared above has been taken):
 - <https://righttoremain.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/preparing-for-asylum-interview-zine.pdf>
- During 2012 Amnesty International and the Still Human Still Here coalition carried out research to examine why many decisions to refuse asylum were overturned on appeal. The 'A Question of Credibility' report can be downloaded [here](#). You may wish to share with children the feedback from two judges on appeals from Iran to compare with their response to 'The Interview' poem and to reflect on the effectiveness and humanity of the current process:
 - Iran 3 Immigration Judge: *"I feel compelled to observe that the interview record does not make happy reading, on the face of it, from the point of view of reasonable conduct of the interview and the experience to which the appellant was subjected. ...The interview contains no less than 436 questions and took place during the course of two separate days. The total length of the interview was in excess of twelve hours. There are instances during the course of the interview of*

the appellant feeling unwell and feeling in need of medical assistance. To the appellant's credit, I find that he gave a consistent, detailed and honest account of his asylum claim during the course of the interview, despite what appears to have been an uncomfortably difficult interview for him."

- Iran 8 Immigration Judge: *"It does appear to me that many of the answers given by the appellant at her substantive asylum interview have not been recorded correctly. I also note from the final page of the AIR that the words 'not yet read back' appear, suggesting to me that the contents of the copy of the AIR were not read back to the appellant at that time... Many and varied examples of words being misconstrued are given in the appellant's comments (extending to 2.5 pages) but the point which I wish to make is that it is clear that many of the appellant's answers at her Asylum Interview have not been correctly recorded."*

Session 8: Poems Inspired by Real Life Events

Note that the poem used in this session 'Artin's Voyage' may be emotionally affecting for both children and adults. It will be important to be aware of and sensitive to the needs of the class. If children need breaks or to talk through the events depicted, allow flexible time and space for this. Use your knowledge of the class to decide whether it will be appropriate to introduce and discuss this poem and the news reports written about the tragedy.

- Introduce the poem that the class are going to read and respond to during this session. Remind the class that – as we have already discussed – the poems in this collection were inspired by real stories shared by individual refugees and support workers. Most of the poems are lent validity by that basis on truth, research and authentic voice, however, within the poems themselves, the language has tended to be anonymised. The reader can't necessarily connect the content of the poem with one specific person, one specific conflict or reason to flee, or any specific event. However, one poem – the poem we're going to read today - does specifically name the child involved in a specific tragedy.
- Share with the class some of the events which led to this poem. You might choose to summarise this for the class, or you could read together one of the many online publications of newspaper articles from the time. Some links are provided below (as always do check the links and read the articles in full before deciding whether or not to share them with the class):
 - Guardian Newspaper Article, 7th June 2021 – reporting the identification of Artin's body in Norway: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jun/07/body-found-in-norway-of-15-month-old-boy-who-died-crossing-channel>
 - Daily Mail Article, 7th June 2021 – reporting the identification of Artin's body and children arriving on boats in Dover: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9660229/One-year-old-died-alongside-family-trying-cross-English-Channel-dead-Norway.html>

- Guardian Newspaper Article, 28th October 2020 – reporting the sinking of the boat on which Artin’s family were attempting the crossing:
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/28/four-migrants-died-channel-part-same-iranian-family>
- BBC News Website Article, 7th June 2021: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-57384925>
- Share the title of the poem: ‘Artin’s Voyage’ (page 28). *Why do you think Nicola Davies might have made the decision to include the name of this particular child in the title of the poem?* Tragically, there have been many drownings in the English Channel and the Mediterranean Sea as those seeking asylum have attempted to reach their intended destinations. *Can a poem about an individual have greater impact than a poem about many? What do you think the difficulties are in writing a poem about this subject matter? How do you feel before reading the poem?*
- Display the poem alongside Petr Horáček’s painting. Either share the poem by reading it aloud, or allow time for children to read it for themselves. Afterwards, give time for some quiet reflection before inviting children to share their initial response to reading the poem. *Was the poem similar to or different from your expectations? What words or phrases stand out to you? How would you describe your emotional response to the poem and the painting which accompanies it? What questions do you have?*
- Discuss some of the decisions and ethics involved when writing about real people and/or specific events, such as in this poem. *Is it important that the poet has included the child’s name in the title of the poem? Why/why not? Would the poem be as impactful if the situation had been generalised or depicted in a less specific manner? What role does consent play when writing a poem such as this? Why do you think the footnote was included on this page? Had you heard about this specific story before reading the poem? What did it make you think about the people crossing the channel to reach the UK? When writing about real world events and real people in literature, some critics and readers might argue that this witnessing of the moment is necessary as it helps to make readers aware of the atrocities or avoidable tragedies taking place, to learn from the past. In her essay, [Poetry & Ethics: Writing about Others](#), Natasha Sajé writes that “Ethical difficulty arises when poets write about subjects superficially.” How does that apply to the poems we have read? How would you characterise ‘superficial’ writing?*
- Think together about the choices made by Nicola Davies to avoid exploiting the situation or the real people involved in the specific crossing that preceded the events in this poem. As before, invite the students to draw out examples of language choices, words and phrases that affect their response to the poem, that provoke questions or emotions in the reader. *What is the tone of the poem and how is that achieved? Is that different or similar to other poems from the collection?* Students might note that, in this instance, the voice in the poem tells the story from their own point of view shifting into first person reflection (“We can’t be sure...” and “I think of him...” starting both the first and second verses) instead of addressing the reader as

'you' as she has in other poems in the collection. Aside from the child's clothing, she focuses on visualising the environment and the journey rather than describing the child himself. In addition to including Artin's name, she also specifically names a number of geographical locations. *What is the impact of including those geographical facts to describe tides, weather and places? How does it affect the authenticity and the specificity of the poem?* They might also consider the choices she makes in what not to do when writing about this event. For example, she doesn't choose to imagine or dramatise the sinking of the boat itself. Reflect on the title of the poem – *What does 'voyage' suggest? Have we heard that before? What connections does it invite?* The concept of 'voyage' – usually defined as a long journey over water – is common in many myths and legends. *What does it evoke in the title of this poem?*

- Consider, as we have with other poems, the extent to which a poem like this humanises rather than objectifies the subject of the poem.
- Read aloud the footnote at the bottom of the page. *Why might Nicola Davies have chosen to include this information? Does it provide the same purpose as the footnote to 'The Interview' or are there differences? What are the key pieces of information that she has chosen to include in this footnote? What might be significant about them? What information isn't included? What questions might it prompt?*
- The footnote indicates that this poem was written 'In memory of Artin Irannezhad'. Poems written in memory of someone are sometime referred to as remembrance or memorial poems. Sometimes poems of that type might be read aloud at funerals or special events. Consider some of the real people and events that poems have been written about. For example, poetry was written extensively following the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and of civil rights activist Martin Luther King. More recently, many poems were written following and about the attacks in New York on September 11th 2001. In 1999, Benjamin Zephaniah decided to write the poem '[What Stephen Lawrence Has Taught Us](#)' 6 years after the racist murder of the teenager in London in 1993. In each of these instances, and any others that the class may suggest, invite consideration around the role of poetry which purports to tell the story of real people and real events, from the recent or distant past. *What is the motivation for the writing? Does it feel fair and just? Does it feel necessary? Does it extend our knowledge and vision of the world? Does it shed new light on people or events for the reader? Does it prompt questions?*

Session 9: Responding to Poetry through Performance

If poetry is not given a voice, if it just stays on the page as a printed object, then it is not going to come alive for most children. Giving voice and sound to poetry is an important key to unlocking the meanings and music contained in each poem. It is through performing poetry that the quality of rhyme and verse form, and the power of language can be explored and realised. Presenting poetry to an audience in this way might also lead children to recognise more clearly the humour in a poem or reflect more thoughtfully on its meaning.

- Explain that in this session, we're going to explore the four poems which make up the third and final section of the book, entitled 'Healing'. Revisit the students' original predictions and expectations for this section, asking them to additionally consider and share any new thoughts they have about what these poems might entail, drawing on their experience of reading and performing the poems from the first two sections, as well as their wider research.
- Next, listen to Nicola Davies' performance of the poem 'Hope' (page 32). You can find a video of this performance here: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poets/nicola-davies>
- Display a copy of the poem for all of the children to see, and then, as with previous poems in the collection, invite children to start by sharing their initial response. *What do they like about the poem? How does it make them feel? What connections can they see between the poem and Petr Horáček's painting? Is there anything that puzzles them? What would they like to know?*
- Then, invite them to re-read the text and draw out any of the choices that Nicola Davies has made in selecting and shaping the poem that may have influenced those initial responses.
- As with previous poems, the children may start by focusing on the subject of the poem and the narrator of the poem. It isn't until the second verse that it becomes clear that this poem is written in the first person. *Who do we think the 'I' of the poem might be? What do we know about them? What do we know about the 'he' of the poem? What is suggested/implied about him? How do you know? Why do you think Nicola made the choice to write this poem in the first person? What is the impact of delaying that reveal?*
- Amongst the language choices in the text, the children might draw out the repeated use of the verb 'took' - a forceful but obscuring verb: *what does it tell us?* They might note the informal language in the second verse - 'jeez' and reflect on what that suggests about the narrator. They could draw out the noun phrases and consider how they add to both our visualisation and our response to the tiny seedling - "minute, fragile finger" and "skinny, stripy little seed". *What might we compare this fragile but tenacious plant to?* In the last line, they could note the use of figurative language to physicalise the concept of hope, connecting it to the tiny plant. They might explore and discuss some of the mysteries in the poem: *who do you think the narrator of the poem is speaking to - who is the 'you'?* Unlike some of the poems from the first section, this poem doesn't have a regular rhythm or rhyme structure: *why might that choice have been made? What does the free verse structure add to the poem? How might a more structured approach to form have affected how you read and respond to the text?* Finally, in patterns they might explore the poems beginning and ending - starting with 'A bomb' and a 'bullet' ending with 'a tiny shoot of hope' moving from the machinery of war to the sunflower - often a symbol of summer and sunshine and hope. It also starts with 'him' looking away and ends with the poem's narrator having to look away. *How are their responses similar and different? Do you think the poem has a message? What is at the heart of this poem?*
- Model annotating the poem with the class response, highlighting language that is referenced in the discussion, and noting down any questions, comments and connections.

- Next, divide the class into small groups of 3-4 and allocate them one of the other three poems in this section 'Not Lost', 'Spiderman' and 'Unbroken'. Ask each group to work together to replicate the discussion and exploration process that we have just followed for 'Hope' – reading the poem, sharing their initial response, then re-reading before starting to look more closely at the choices in language and form that may have influenced that response. As you did with 'Hope', encourage children to consider their response to the words and phrases selected by the poet, to look at the use of poetic devices such as rhyme, rhythm, assonance, alliteration and figurative language or imagery. They might also look at patterns within the poem – connections, repetition and opposites.
- After they have had time to discuss their poem, annotating it with their responses, ask for some groups – ideally at least one group for each of the three poems – to share a little of their discussion with the rest of the class. If other groups have read and responded to the same poem, they may wish to join in and share their own observations.
- Finally, ask children to work up a performance of the poem that they have been working with. As in previous session, encourage them make decisions with sensitivity to the subject matter, to reflect on what the poem means, how it made them feel and how best they can communicate that feeling and that meaning in an authentic and appropriate manner.
- Give time for the students to work up their performance, annotating the text with performance notes and ideas, memorising sections where that will enhance the performance, and practising until they are ready to share.
- After the children have had time to work up and rehearse their performances, allow space for them to perform their poems for the rest of the class. Before 15th June 2023, this could be filmed and submitted for the [CLiPPA shadowing scheme](#) competition to win poetry prizes.
- Finish the session by watching and responding to Nicola Davies' performance of the final poem in the collection: 'Unbroken'.

Session 10: Responding to the collection as a whole

- Start by drawing together children's response to the collection as a whole and how that compared with their original expectations.
- Share and read aloud the notes at the back of the book from both Nicola Davies and Petr Horáček (pages 40-41). *After reading each of these notes, what do you learn about the process of writing and illustrating this book? What do you learn about the purpose, intention and hope behind this publication? How would you summarise the message of this book? Are there any words or phrases in Nicola or Petr's notes, or Onjali's foreword that best capture those ideas? How does reading these impact your response to the whole collection? Why do you think the publisher has put the notes at the back of the book, rather than at the front – do you think that makes a difference?*
- Revisit the full list of poems that have been explored throughout the sequence. There may be annotated copies of some of these poems on the working wall that could be referred to. Hold

a discussion about the collection as a whole – either as a class or in smaller groups. *How did you engage with this style of writing? What did you like about this collection of poetry? How did you feel about how the poems were presented on the page? What are your most memorable poems? Which spoke to you the most? Why? What have you learnt about poetry that you didn't know before? Would you be encouraged to read more poetry after studying this collection? Why? Why not?*

- Compare their current thoughts around the book with their first impressions. *What were you expecting? Was the poetry included in the collection what you expected it to be? Why/why not? Was there anything in the collection that surprised you? Who do you think should read this collection and why?*
- Provide children with squares of card or sticky notes and ask them to summarise their response to the book overall. *What would you like to say to someone else about this book? How would you capture how the book made you feel and what it made you think about? Add these to the class display. If possible, ensure that there are copies of this book available in the classroom or school library for children to revisit and re-read.*

Session 11: Poetry Papering

Discussion forms the foundations for working with books. The same is true of working with poems. Children need frequent, regular and sustained opportunities to talk together about the books and poems that they are reading as a whole class. The more experience they have of talking together like this the better they get at making explicit the meaning that a text holds for them.

- Explain that today they are going to read and discuss a wide selection of poems by different poets and from different poetry collections and then work up one of these to perform themselves.
- In preparation for this session, produce copies of a large selection of poems appropriate to the age group and that might be considered to be a piece of activism, a protest poem, or perhaps a poem that was inspired by the possibility of change, by hope. For example, these could include poems related to issues surrounding climate change, environmentalism, civil rights, Black Lives Matter, gender equality, bullying, body shaming, among many other potential areas. You will find below a list of suggested poems – the second half of the list include poets and poems that may be considered more appropriate for a Key Stage 3 class, but all teachers should read the poems they select carefully with their own class in mind before deciding what to use in the session. Please note that the list below is simply an example of the type of poems you *could* use in this session, but you'll want to draw upon your own school/class library poetry stock when selecting poems from a rich and diverse range of poets to display and discuss.
 - 'Gingerbread Man' by Joseph Coelho
 - 'Sally Size Zero' by Grace Nichols
 - 'In Defence of Trees' by A.F. Harrold

- 'Trees are Great' by Roger McGough
 - 'Give and Take' by Roger McGough
 - 'Never Again' by Michael Rosen
 - 'Today' by Michael Rosen
 - 'Line' by John Agard
 - 'I Asked the River' by Valerie Bloom
 - 'I Did It' by Valerie Bloom
 - 'Promise' by Roger Stevens
 - 'Greta Thunberg' by Liz Brownlee
 - 'Conservation Conversation' by Matt Goodfellow
 - 'Rosa Parks...' by Joseph Coelho
 - 'Man the Mad Magician' by Andrew Fusek Peters
 - 'Unfurling People' by Elizabeth Acevedo
 - 'Dislexic Poim' by Joe Cook
 - 'Checking Out Me History' by John Agard
 - 'Don't Feed the Trolls' by Karl Nova
 - 'My World' by Annaliese Paskins (age 13, Betejeman Poetry Prize Finalist)
- https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/1a4e8f_2bb08d379b10493b9f53f1894f67badc.pdf

Further Suggested Poems for Key Stage 3

- 'Foreign' by Hollie McNish
 - 'Home Was Your Refuge, Now They Call You Refugee' by Nikita Gill
 - 'Dear Hearing World' by Raymond Antrabus
 - 'History Remembers' by Ishika Jha
 - 'Poppy Fields and Cedar Trees' by Shagufta Iqbal
 - 'Bitter State' by Duranka Perena
 - 'When to Write' by Sophia Thakur
 - 'Cutbacks' by Sarah Crossan
 - 'I Look at the World' by Langston Hughes
 - 'Mimesis' by Fady Joudah
 - 'No Holds Barred' by Salena Godden
 - 'The Six' by Caleb Femi
 - 'Hollow' by Vanessa Kisuule
- Pin or stick the poems that have been selected and copied on all of the walls or vertical surfaces around the classroom space before the children arrive.
 - As the students enter the space, explain that they are going to have time to explore the poems on display at their leisure. They can read the whole poem, pass over a poem if it doesn't appeal to them, start reading and move on if it doesn't hold their attention, until they find one that captures their attention. Support any children whose reading fluency might not allow

them to fully engage by giving them a guided walk, reading the poems aloud to them. This encourages the children to enjoy the experience of simply reading a poem, to relish the uncertainties of meanings and the nature of the knowledge and emotional responses that poems invoke in them as readers.

- When they have had time to explore, ask them to stand by the poem that most captured their attention. Explain that they are now going to take this poem, re-read it and think about it more deeply. If there are poems that more than one child has chosen, allow them to take this and work in a group. If this is a large group, you may wish to provide them with additional copies of the poem so that all children can read and discuss it.
- Allow time and space for the children to re-read and think about their selected poems. Encourage them to explore what they like about the poem, ask questions about it, look for connections within the poem or between this poem and others they know, including the poems from the focus collection, commenting on the themes and use of language. You may find the following question prompts useful for stimulating ideas and discussion:
 - *What was it that drew you to this particular poem?*
 - *How would you describe the poem you read?*
 - *What did the poem make you think about?*
 - *How did the poem make you feel? What made you feel this way?*
- As the children explore their chosen poem, encourage them to make their thinking visible by text marking and annotating their poem with their observations, thoughts, ideas and questions, as they have previously done for poems from *Choose Love*.
- Allow time for the children to come back together to read their chosen poems aloud to the group and share their thoughts around the poems they chose. *Were there similarities or differences in the types of poems chosen and the reasons for choices? What was it that drew people to their chosen poem?*
- When you have heard and discussed all the poems that have been selected, talk about the range and breadth of poems they heard and read. *What similarities can they see across the range of poems shared in this session? What insights do these give us about this set of poems more broadly? What might they suggest about the role of poetry? What can poetry be? What can poetry do? What power might poetry have to be an agent of change? How might protest poetry provide a voice to the young or to less represented members of the community?*
- Invite children to return to their poetry notebooks and think about what issues they feel passionately about. *What might they like to protest against – or what idea might they like to promote? Do they have a message or idea that they want to share with others? Are these similar concerns, worries or injustices as those shared in some of these poems, or is it something different? When you think about those issues, how does that make you feel? What words or phrases could you use to communicate your feeling and your point of view in a poem? How can you ensure that your poem feels authentic and valid? Can you write from within the experience or from outside it?* Invite them to spend some time jotting down ideas in their notebooks that they could return to later.

Session 12: Writing own poems in response to the collection: Ideation

Following an authentic model for writing in the classroom allows students to feel what it is like to be a writer. It is so much more than simply ‘doing’ writing tasks. Following an authentic process results in well-developed pieces of writing; pupils follow a truly creative process and have the impetus to write for themselves. The core focus of an authentic writing process is on giving pupils a credible opportunity to develop their own voice, have a choice about what they want to say and how they say it and the chance to write with freedom.

Ideation is the creative process of generating, developing, and communicating new ideas. Activities and demonstrations should focus on exploring where and how we get ideas from in the real world of writing and giving pupils time, space and stimulus to begin to form and shape ideas for their own writing for real life purposes and audiences.

- Reflect on all the poems that have been read and discussed during these sessions, both from this book by Nicola Davies as well as poems from other collections and anthologies. *How would you describe the different poems? Can you categorise them under different headings? What would these be? Is there a type or form of poetry that you prefer? What were different poems about? Could you categorise these into different topics or themes? What ideas do these give you about what poetry is and what it could be?*
- Explain that to end this sequence of work, they are going to have the chance to begin working up some of the ideas for poems of their own that they have been thinking about and capturing in their journals.
- Often, when people talk to writers about their work, one of the most commonly asked questions is where they get their ideas from. As a class, listen to some of poets on the CLPE website talk about where they gain inspiration for their poetry:
 - <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/amina-jama-what-inspires-you-poet>
 - <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/ruth-awolola-what-inspires-you-poet>
 - <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/rachel-piercey-what-inspires-you-poet>
- Ask children to reflect on what the poets have shared and talk in pairs or small groups to discuss the sort of things that might inspire their writing. They might echo ideas shared in the videos: the world around them, what they read, feelings that they want to work through, conversations, the culture and community surrounding them, their identity. Remind them of the inspirations we have discussed in previous sessions too. For example, we know that Nicola Davies started working on the poems that became both *The Day War Came* and *Choose Love* because of her strength of feeling around the injustice that she saw, feelings of “utter fury and shame”. Have they ever felt the need to write something or say something because of their emotional response to a provocation – be it positive or negative. After a couple of minutes, get children to report back and create a class list - *Where can we get ideas from? What inspires us? What helps you to start writing?*

- Come back to the Poetry Journals where children have been jotting down ideas, inspirations, sketches and drafts of poems. Remind the children that these books are only for them – there’s not a particular amount of writing you expect them to do, they can write in any way they wish, and they can also sketch and draw. It’s also important to make clear that you won’t be marking them.
- Now give time for the children to reflect back on the ideas they’ve collected and think about which they feel might be most successful to take forward to a draft piece of writing in the next session.
- It is important for you as a teacher of writing to reflect on your own feelings about writing alongside the children and review ideas you have collected in your own journal. Our recent research highlights the importance of teachers as writers of poetry. Share some of the ideas you would consider working up and why, and how you might start to think about doing this, then give the children some time to begin to work up their own ideas or to sit and think about how to do this.
- Some children may choose to start by drawing, doodling or sketching ideas initially. You might even refer back to some of the illustrations in the text.
- They could also draw on the ideas of practising poets. Here are links to three poets talking about how they go about writing their poetry:
 - <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/matt-goodfellow-how-do-you-go-about-writing-your-poetry>
 - <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/kate-wakeling-how-do-you-go-about-writing-your-poetry>
 - <https://clpe.org.uk/videos/video/ruth-awolola-how-do-you-go-about-writing-your-poetry>
- Inspired by these poets, they might keep a note of favourite or overheard words, phrases and conversations. They might start by splurging all their ideas onto the page to refine later like Kate Wakeling, they might make a mind map around the theme or title, like Ruth Awolola, or return to the initial ideas in their journal so that they can start chipping away at the ones that really speak to them, like Matt Goodfellow.
- Remind them that they don’t have to start writing a poem straight away, they might just begin by collecting words, phrases, ideas and images that can be used later. However, if they have an idea that they want to start exploring immediately in a poetic form that is also fine.

Sessions 13 and 14: Writing Own Poems, Gaining a Response

Creation is the act of writing down and shaping ideas with a purpose, audience and form in mind. Activities and demonstrations should focus on exploring different ways to capture, work up and develop ideas in the journey to publication. Sharing the processes of real writers, for example their thoughts and advice and images of their journals, notebooks and sketchbooks can be a valuable part of this process, sharing how the work will often begin rough, in note form and tentative before being worked up more fully for an audience.

It is important to develop children as reflective writers by giving ample opportunity throughout the writing process to talk about themselves as writers, enable them to voice their views, listen to others and develop new knowledge and understanding.

Children's writing can be improved if they, a partner or their teacher reads it aloud at an early stage, giving it life and breath and helping the young poet see the patterns and tunes they have created. Just as an author would work with an editor, children should be given opportunities to help each other by reading their writing aloud and responding as readers. This allows them to support each other as they compose and structure their ideas. Writers can tell response partners what they are pleased with in their writing, particular devices or parts of the poem they may be struggling with and gaining a picture from the reader of how their writing impacts on them. Response partners should be encouraged to reflect on the impact of the poem on them as a reader. Children can then re-draft parts of their work, based on these conversations.

- Reflect on the ideas that the children have been noting in their poetry journals throughout the unit. *Which ones do they feel strongly enough about to take through to writing? How can you take your initial notes forward into crafting a poem?*
- Take a theme or topic from your own journal that you could begin working up into a poem. Model how you might begin crafting a poem based on one of the topics discussed during one of the sessions, talking through the choices that you are making as a writer to communicate the right feelings and images for your reader.
- Think about the form the poem will take and if they will use any of the poetic devices you have explored in Nicola Davies' poetry, such as rhythm, rhyme, repetition, simile, personification, as well as deciding what 'voice' they might use to best capture and communicate their idea. You may have children in the class who are very adept at using rhythm and rhyme in their writing, some may be more comfortable to write in free verse and find it easier to express their thoughts and feelings in this way. Encourage them to select the form and devices that allow them to best express their themes and feelings in the best way, as they have seen and responded to in Nicola's writing.
- Allow time for children to draft their own poems around the themes and subjects of their choice, then allow them to read these aloud to themselves, perhaps while walking around or moving so they can feel the rhythms of their writing before sharing with a response partner to lift the words off the page, hearing how they sound when performed.
- Give time for response partners to ask the writers questions, discuss parts they aren't sure are working, adjust rhythms or make suggestions to improve the writing. If they are writing poetry to share an injustice, to protest or to communicate information about something they are passionate about, then their partner might share how the poem makes them feel, what ideas seem to be prevalent in order to see how that compares to the writer's intention.
- Start to think together about how the poem could be presented on the page to enhance the meaning and the reader's understanding. Draw the children's thoughts back to what they saw

in this collection and the impact this had on them as readers and use this knowledge to make notes about this on their draft.

- You might also think about whether the poem will have an accompanying illustration, and if so, what this might be. Again, look back at the poems studied. *What is the impact of having the illustrations there? What style of illustration do you think might best fit the theme and emotions captured in your writing?* If children have been exploring abstract art techniques and approaches in their Art sessions, they could apply this practice to composing an illustration to accompany their own poem.

Session 15: Editing and Publishing Own Poems

Publication is the means to present writing in a way that is most appropriate for the purpose, audience and form. This may be through the spoken as well as the written form and may also involve visual communication, if appropriate.

Prior to publication, writers should work with a supportive partner to polish the work ready for publication, proof reading work and checking for spelling and punctuation accuracy. Materials that facilitate the most appropriate forms of publication, reflecting those used by a practising writer working in this way should be provided to give writers the full sense of the satisfaction publishing and presenting writing can bring.

- Give further time for children to redraft any parts of their poems that they discussed with their response partner in the previous session, or to work on their poems further if they need time to do this.
- When they have a poem that they have read aloud to a partner, discussed and explored changes and that they are happy to present to a wider audience, start to think about how that poem could be best presented. *How will it look on the page? What form will it take? How will you use line breaks, spacing on the page to enhance the meaning or emotions behind your poem? Will you hand write it? Will you publish using a word processor? What script or font will you choose? Will you make any specific decisions about the way certain words look or are placed on the page? Will you illustrate the poem? If so, how will the words and illustration sit and work together?*
- Allow plenty of time and space for the children to make a final draft and then publish their work accordingly.
- When they are happy with the way their poems look on the page, think about how this could be lifted off the page and be performed to an audience. Give each child a photocopy of their finished poem and allow them to mark this up with performance ideas. *Will you perform on your own? Do you need others to support you? How will you use voice, body movements and facial expression to enhance the listener's engagement and understanding?*
- Ensure time is given to try out ideas and rehearse performances of children's own poems before presenting to an audience and consider ways to allow published poems to be shared with an audience – as part of a display in a prominent area in the school, printed in an

anthology to share in a public reading space or school library, on a class blog or the school website, or published on a school social media account – you could even tag in the poet.

- Allow the children time to reflect on the writing process. *How did it feel to write their own poems? What was successful? What was challenging? Have they been inspired to write more poetry? Why or why not? If so, what else might they want to write about?*
- Following this, you might hold a poetry festival for children to do readings from their collections to parents or other classes in the school or display their work as part of an exhibition, including the published poems and accompanying illustrations. For the children performing at the event, ask them to consider what they learnt from listening to the poems being read aloud and performed by other poets as well as trying out ideas in their performances of poems from this collection that they will need to remember when reading their own poems.
- Display the children's own poems and artwork prominently in the library or other shared area or on a blog, website or school social media account so they can be read by a wider audience.
- You could even send Nicola Davies copies of the children's poems with a covering note or letter thanking her for inspiring their work, by email via the details on her website (<https://nicola-davies.com/contact/>) or by tagging them into a school Tweet – Nicola's twitter handle is @nicolakidsbooks
- Ensure you obtain each child's consent before publishing their work. This might lead on to wider explorations around the concept of copyright. You may wish to draw on the resources CLPE produced in partnership with the ALCS to explore this in more depth: <https://clpe.org.uk/teaching-resources/ALCS-resources-on-copyright>.