

Name: _____ Date: _____



Poetry Writing Marathon Activity Centres

Note: The groom, above, is named “Thon.”

NOTES:

On each activity page, information marked with a “*” is adapted from:
Alberta Education (1999). English Language Arts Skills Handbook. Edmonton: Weigel
Education Publishers.

To start:

- 1) Each group will be assigned one type of poem to write, related to the numbers in this booklet.
- 2) **Ask for help** if you need it, from the students in your group, or from your teacher(s).
- 3) **This is a poetry “race,” so you will only be given a limited time to finish the first copy of your poem at each centre.** You will have more time later to finish the good copy of each poem.
- 4) **You can write the first copy of your poem on the back of each page.**

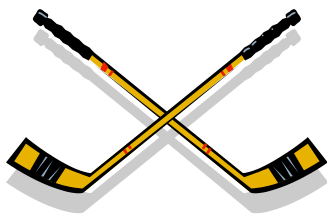
When you have finished each activity:

- 1) **The picture or title at the top of each activity centre contains a riddle.** If you are wondering what the picture above is doing there, it is a horrible pun on the word, “marathon” (“Marry Thon” = “marathon”). If you finish your poem early, can you figure out each riddle? **Fill in your answers on the last page of this booklet (NOTE to teachers:** the answer key is on the last page of the booklet. Please remove it before you copy it for the students, unless you want them to check their own answers.)
- 2) **Have your teacher approve your creation.** Then:
- 3) **Neatly write, or type up your poem, filling a full sheet of paper,**
- 4) **Add a picture** of your own creation to the poem, related to the science topic you have picked for your poem.
- 5) You can even add **an artistic border** to it, if you wish.
- 6) If you wish, you can **send your print creations, or scan your images** as jpeg files, and send them to:

Mr. Bill Glaister, B.Ed., M.L.S.
Curriculum Lab Coordinator
Faculty of Education
University of Lethbridge
4401 University Drive
Lethbridge, AB
T1K-3M4
E-mail: bill.glaister@uleth.ca

They could be posted on the web page.

Extra activities: Can you find poems in your library that fit the definitions given for each poetry type? If so, add them to each of the activity centres.



1) Poetry Writing Marathon Activity Centre: Acrostic Poetry

This picture is a good writing device, called a pun (Though it is a putrid pun). Do you get it?

Acrostic Poem: A poem that starts with a noun, where each letter of the noun is used to begin a line of the poem.

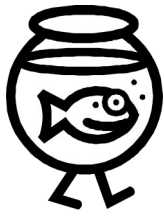
Example acrostic poems:

<u>Spring*</u>		
M essy O ptimistic O ver-sized S cruffy E aters -Naomi D., Grade 5 student-	Sunshine days get longer. Patient plants ready their roots. Rising sap will tell the leaves It's time to pop from twigs. New life begins again. Gosh, I'm glad it's spring! -W.B. Blocksidge-	Flying high in the sky Like a baby butterfly You are small but you can't see, you are really bugging me! -Caylen M., Grade 5 student-

- 1) Look at the example acrostic poem, above, or find the examples in the books and/or pages at your centre.
- 2) Pick a noun (a person, place, or thing) from your class topic.
- 3) Write the noun vertically on the left hand side of your blank page.
- 4) Each of the letters of the noun begins a line of you poem.
- 5) The poem should give the readers some information on your report topic. It should tell us something about the science noun you have selected.

Checklist for evaluating your acrostic poem (Does it meet each of these criteria?):

- ☐ An acrostic poem begins with a noun. It can be a person, a place, a thing, or a feeling.*
- ☐ Each of the letters in the noun is used to begin a line of the poem.*
- ☐ Each of the lines has a word or group of word that tell about the noun.*
- ☐ Are the words in your poem as descriptive, and "poetic" as possible? You can ask someone else in your group for creative ideas.



2) Poetry Writing Marathon

Activity Centre: Simile Poetry

If someone is “scombroid,” it means they have “a face like a _____.” This is a rude simile, but it is still a simile.

Simile Poetry: A simile poem starts with a simile that compares two unlike things using *like* or *as*.

Example simile poems:

Salamanders are as cool as a fish, Quick as an alligator, They dart back and forth, Some white like a cloud. -Richard B., Grade 5 student-	She is as thin as a toothpick As tall as a tree, But carries a heart as big as a mountain!	Birds are like a plane, High in the sky. They drift like clouds, Their nest is like an airport. -Jeff P., Grade 5 student-
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- 1) Look at the example similes, above, or find the examples in the books and/or pages at your centre.
- 2) Pick a word from your class topic.
- 3) Start your poem, by writing it in the first blank, and fill in the other blanks to make your comparison: “The _____ is as _____ as a _____.”
- 4) Write a few other lines in your poem, expanding creatively on your comparison.
- 5) The poem should give the readers some information on your report topic. It should tell us something about the science word you have selected.

Checklist for evaluating your acrostic poem (Does it meet each of these criteria?):

- ☐ Does your poem contain a comparison between two unlike things using *like* or *as*?*
- ☐ Are the two things you are comparing quite different, but similar in at least one way?*
- ☐ Is your simile unusual or ordinary? Authors try to think of unusual comparisons when they write so that their writing is fresh, original, and exciting!*
- ☐ Did your poem have extra lines, which creatively explained the comparison?
- ☐ Are the words in your poem as descriptive, and “poetic” as possible? You can ask someone else in your group for creative ideas.

This part of running I hate the most.

3) Poetry Writing Marathon Activity Centre: Concrete, Shape, or Picture Poetry

What is the answer to the concrete poem, above?

Concrete, Shape, or Picture Poems: The words in the poem are arranged in the shape of the poem's topic. The pictures these poems make are as much a part of the poem as the words.

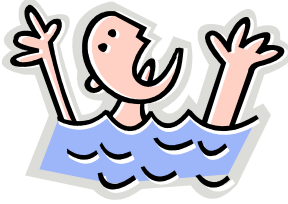
Example concrete poems:

-Tara, Grade 5 student-	
Rain	again.
Falling	over
down	starts
down	cycle
to the pond. . . Water	

- 1) Look at the example concrete poems, above, or find the examples in the books and/or pages at your centre.
- 2) The words in a concrete poem are arranged in the shape of the poem's topic. The picture they make is as much a part of the poem as the words.*
- 3) Write a normal poem on your one of your topics, and then form the words into the shape of the topic.
- 4) The poem should give the readers some information on your report topic.

Checklist for evaluating your acrostic poem (Does it meet each of these criteria?):

- ☐ Does the shape of your poem have as much impact, or more, than the words in the poem?
- ☐ Are the words in your poem as descriptive, and "poetic" as possible? Check your Poetry Expansion Chart for ideas. You can also ask someone else in your group for creative ideas.



4) Poetry Writing Marathon Activity Centre: Cinquain Poetry

I am afraid this picture is another
abysmal excuse for a pun. Do you get it?

Cinquain (“sin-cane”) Poem – A poem that is five lines long, which can follow this pattern:

- 1) One word: title or topic of poem*
- 2) Two words: describe the topic*
- 3) Three words: describe the action of the topic. Often, an “ing” word is used*
- 4) Four words: describe a feeling or thought about the topic*
- 5) One word: a synonym is given for the topic in the first line*

Example cinquain poems:

Marathon race research example:

Finish
Very near
Seconds on clock.
Can I go faster?
Terminate!

Cows*
Chocolate brown
Thoughtfully chewing cud
Feeling content, very drowsy
Bovines

Checklist for evaluating your acrostic poem (Does it meet each of these criteria?):

- ☐ Does your poem follow the 1,2,3,4,1 pattern of words, as described above?
- ☐ Is the last line a synonym for the word on the first line? Use a dictionary or thesaurus if you are stuck for ideas.
- ☐ Does the third line describe action?
- ☐ Does the fourth line describe a feeling or thought on your topic?
- ☐ Are the words in your poem as descriptive, and “poetic” as possible? You can ask someone else in your group for creative ideas.

Four feet,
Very fleet.
Circular shoes,
Petroleum pooh.

The puns are getting
tiring. Above is an
alliteration riddle.
What does it
describe?

5) Poetry Writing Marathon Activity Centre: Alliteration or Tongue Twister Poems



Alliteration, or tongue twister poems – These poems involve the repetition of the first sound in a group of words.* It often creates a musical effect.

Example alliteration poems:

Grade 5 student examples:

- Sneaky snakes slipping through the stagnant water. (Alex A.)
- Mr. Moose munches on many mountain maple leaves, making massive movements. (Taylor L.)
- Scaly, slimy snake, slithering through the stinky swamp. (Cody F.)
- Beaver biting bark,
Having a birthday party in the bog.
Back to biting:
Yum, yum, yum.
-Caroline S.-

Peter Piper
picked a peck of
pickled
peppers....*

- 1) Look at the example alliteration poems, above, or find the examples in the books and/or pages at your centre.
- 2) Pick a key concept from your topic. Write a few words, most of which start with the same letter. This is the first line of your poem.
- 3) Add a few more lines: Each line can use the same starting sounds as the first line, or you can pick new starting sounds.
- 4) Say the poem fast out loud. Is it hard to say quickly? Is it a terribly twisted tongue twister?
- 5) The poem should give the readers some information on your report topic.

Checklist for evaluating your acrostic poem (Does it meet each of these criteria?):

- ☐ Do the words in each line in your poem have the same first sounds?
- ☐ Are the words in your poem as descriptive, and “poetic” as possible? You ask someone else in your group for creative ideas.



6) Poetry Writing Marathon Activity Centre: Kennings Poems

Here is an easy one for you:

What is the answer to the Kennings riddle, “Clothes for tootsie?”

Kennings Poem: A poem in the form of a riddle that describes something.

Example Kennings poems:

<u>Word from Topic:</u>	<u>Kennings phrase or riddle:</u>	<u>Kennings phrase used in a poem:</u>
Runners (running shoes)	Clothes for tootsie	Clothes for tootsy, Protects my footsy. Stops an “owey.” But expensive, “Wowey!”

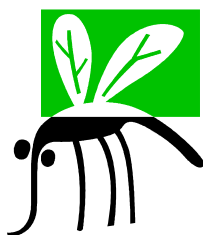
Mosquito	Buzzing bandit	I’m a buzzing bandit, Stealing food from giants. When the giants lose food, They get itchy and swat!
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Alligator	Green and bumpy	Green and bumpy, two meters long, I have a big snout. I’m fast when moving through the water, I’m even faster than a bird when it’s flying through the air. I make some little animals lunch. If I were you I wouldn’t go swimming in the swamp. If I were you I wouldn’t because you’d be my lunch!
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<u>Word from Topic:</u>	<u>Kennings phrase or riddle:</u>	<u>Kennings phrase used in a poem:</u>

Kennings poems were very popular when the English language just started. They are riddles that describe something.

- 1) Look at the example Kennings poems, above, or find the examples in the books and/or pages at your centre.
- 2) Pick one word from your topic.
- 3) You may want to use a thesaurus if you have trouble coming up with a good Kennings riddles. For example, “tootsy” is a British slang-word for “foot.”
- 4) The poem should give the readers some information on your report topic. It should tell us something about the word you started with.
- 5) Look for the Kennings poem on the top of Alliteration station activity sheet, on the page just before this one.



7) Poetry Writing Marathon Activity Centre: “If I were a . . .”

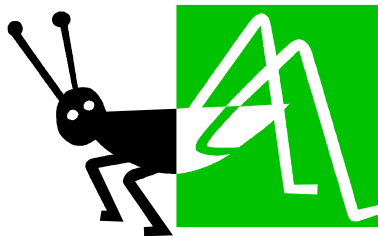
Sorry, no riddles or puns for this centre. I have run out of creative energy

This idea is taken from:

“Read a rhyme, write a rhyme” by Jack Preluisky ; illustrated by Meilo Sol: Alfred A. Knopf: 2005. P. 10-11.

“If I were” poem: A poem that starts with the words, “If I were,” and then continues the poem, explaining the strange and unusual characteristics of the object being talked about.

If I were a male grasshopper,
I would love to sing,
I wouldn’t use my voice,
But rub my leg against my wing.
Like a love song on a violin,
Or a loud guitar,
My mate would come a-hopping
And find me from afar.





- 1) Imagine what it would be like to be an insect or spider, or other creature.
- 2) Find out all you can about your specific “creature,” including any unusual habits or characteristics it might have.
- 3) Add these to your poem, starting with the line, “If I were....”
- 4) Your poem does not necessarily have to rhyme.



8) Poetry Writing Marathon Activity Centre: “5-Senses-Poem-Riddles”

Can you answer these 3 “poem-riddles?”

Example senses riddles:

	<p>The sound of insect violins The sight of shimmering reflections The smell of decay The taste of bugs in my mouth: Uggh! The feel of mud in my boots Where am I?</p>
<p>The sound of slap-slapping in the air The sight of water everywhere The smell of sawdust in my nose The taste of wood sweet as a rose The feel of mud beneath my feet My soggy world is a treat. What am I?</p>	

- 1) Look at the example senses poems, above, or find the examples in the books and/or pages at your centre, if applicable.
- 2) Pick a noun (a person, place, or thing) from your topic.
- 3) Use the chart, below to write a senses poem, in the form of a riddle. Put yourself in the action, and imagine what you would hear, see, smell, taste, feel, if you were that person, or animal, or in that place. You start each line of your poem with the words on the left (e.g. “The sound of ...”) and complete each sentence.

Senses Poem Worksheet:

The sound of ...	
The sight of ...	
The smell of ...	
The taste of ...	
The feel of ...	
Who am I? ... Or, What am I? ...	
(Put answer here, in parentheses) ...	()



9) Poetry Writing Marathon Activity Centre Bonus: “Easiest” Animal Adaptation Poem

Example animal adaptation poem:

Marathon race research example:

See Sarah Perry’s book, “If...” In her one line poem, “If Worms Had Wheels,” Sarah imagines this new, faster worm, and draws us a picture of such an animal adaptation.

1) Use this same format to create your own crazy animal adaptation, and draw a picture of your new animal:



9) Poetry Writing Marathon

Activity Centre Bonus:

“Easier” Animal Adaptation Poem

Example animal adaptation poem:

Marathon race research example:

Man + Jaguar = MANUAR

The mighty MANUAR

Is as swift as a cat:

Flies across the ground

And never gets fat.

He is great at winning races

And roars when he calls.

But he’s not very popular

When he coughs up big hairballs.

1
2
3
2
4
5
6
5

- 1) Look at the example Animal Adaptations poem, above, or find the examples in the book called, “Scranimals,” by Jack Prelutsky. It is full of weird, wonderful, and wonky animal adaptations, created by combining an animal and another animal, or plant, vegetable, or fruit.
- 2) Create your own weird animal by combining an animal with another animal, or a plant and an animal.
- 3) Write a poem about your “Scranimal” by writing a poem where every second line rhymes. For example, in the poem above, the underlined word in the lines marked “2” and “5” rhyme with each other.
- 4) In the poem, explain how the combined adaptations help the animal to survive.
- 5) Add a title by writing the mathematical equation that describes your new animal.
- 6) If you are really creative, you can draw a picture of your animal.



9) Poetry Writing Marathon Activity

Centre Bonus Activity: Much “Harder” Animal Adaptations Poem

Example Animal Adaptation poem:

Snail + Road Runner (A very fast bird) = Snailrunner
(Runners, Please beware!)

You'll never catch the snailrunner No matter how you try, though there is no animal funner, with whom you can race with 'till you die.	1	The road runner is as fast	1
	2	as the snail is slow	2
He looks as slow a toad With a shell and bulbous body but try to pass him on the road, And your efforts will seem shoddy.	1	But the snailrunner's shell hides a secret blast,	1
	2	A supercharged "blow!"	2
	1	If you try to lap him in a race	1
	2	or push him in a ditch,	2
	1	he'll laugh right in your face,	1
	2	And flick his "faster-fastest" switch.	2
	1	His hidden jet engine	1
	2	will burn away your hair	2
	1	It'll cook your fragile skin	1
	2	So, runners, please beware!	2

- 1) Look at the example Animal Adaptations poem, above, or find the examples in the book called, "Scranimals," by Jack Prelutsky. It is full of weird, wonderful, and wonky animal adaptations, created by combining an animal and another animal, or plant, vegetable, or fruit.
- 2) Write a poem about your "Scranimal" by writing a poem with this rhyme scheme, where all lines marked with the same number rhyme with each other:

1
2
1
2

The numbers are in the above example, to show you how it works.

- 3) In the poem, explain how the combined adaptations help the animal to survive.
- 4) Add a title by writing the mathematical equation that describes your new animal.
- 5) If you are really creative, you can draw a picture of your animal.



10) Poetry Writing Marathon Activity Centre Bonus: Haiku Poems

Example Haiku poem:

Marathon race research example:

Running fast feels great
Passing others makes me young
Smart, near rabid dogs!

Haiku is an ancient Japanese poetry format, which has 3 unrhymed lines. It often describes a scene from nature. The third line often has a surprising twist. The three lines have these many syllables in each line:

5

7

5

Syllables can be defined at the rhythm of the word, or word waves:

e.g. running



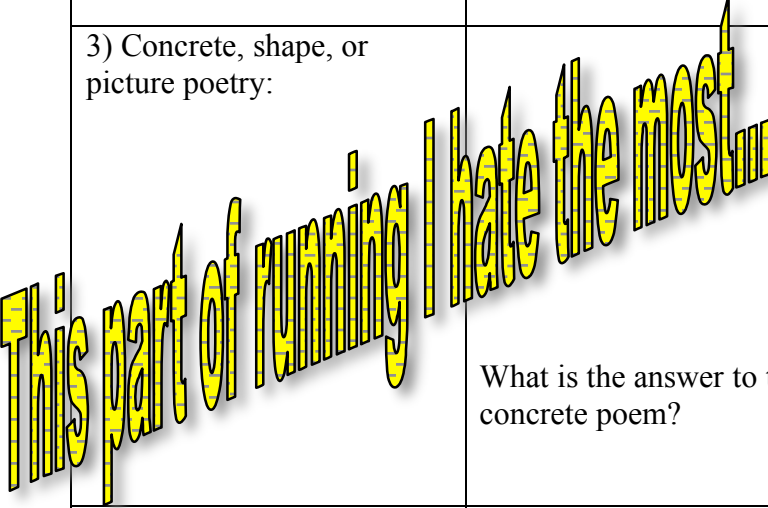

- 6) Look at the example Haiku poem, above, or find the examples in the books and/or pages at your centre, if applicable.
- 7) Pick a topic from your research paragraphs, and write a Haiku poem.

Checklist for evaluating your acrostic poem (Does it meet each of these criteria?):

- ☐ Does your poem have 3 lines, using a 5-7-5 syllable pattern?
- ☐ Does the last line have a surprising twist?

Poetry Writing Marathon Activity Centres
Riddle Question Sheet

If you finish each centre activity early, you can try to guess the answers to the riddles on each activity page.


Poetry type:	Riddle:	Answer:
1) Acrostic poetry: 	This picture is a good writing device, called a pun (Though it is a putrid pun). Do you get it?	
2) Simile poetry: 	If someone is “scombroid,” it means they “have a face like a _____.” It is a rude simile, but it is still a simile.	
3) Concrete, shape, or picture poetry: 	What is the answer to this concrete poem?	
4) Cinquain poetry: 	I am afraid this picture is another abysmal excuse for a pun. Do you get it?	
5) Alliteration or tongue twister poetry: Four feet, Very fleet. Circular shoes, Petroleum pooh.	The puns are getting tiring. What does this alliteration riddle describe?	
6) Kennings poems: Clothes for tootsy	What is the answer to this Kennings riddle?	
7) “If I were” poem	Sorry, no riddles for this centre. I have run out of creative energy.	

<p>8) 5-Senses-Riddle-Poems</p>	<p>The sound of many flapping feet The sight of numbers everywhere The smell of sweat, "Pee-yew!" The taste of fruit served with a smile The feel of pain and cramps. What am I?</p> <p>The sound of slap-slapping in the air The sight of water everywhere The smell of sawdust in my nose The taste of wood sweet as a rose The feel of mud beneath my feet My soggy world is a treat. What am I?</p> <p>The sound of insect violins The sight of shimmering reflections The smell of decay The taste of bugs in my mouth: Uggh! The feel of mud in my boots Where am I?</p>	
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Poetry Writing Marathon Activity Centres

Riddle Answer Sheet

If you finish each centre activity early, you can try to guess the answers to the riddles on each activity page.

3) Concrete, shape, or picture poetry:	
	<p>What is the answer to the concrete poem?</p>

8) 5-Senses-Riddle-Poems	<p>The sound of slap-slapping in the air The sight of water everywhere The smell of sawdust in my nose The taste of wood sweet as a rose The feel of mud beneath my feet My soggy world is a treat. What am I?</p> <p>The sound of insect violins The sight of shimmering reflections The smell of decay The taste of bugs in my mouth: Uggh! The feel of mud in my boots Where am I?</p>	<p>A beaver</p> <p>At a pond</p>
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