

Poetry Checklist

Once you have discussed	Tick them off
Have you noticed any pattern in the way the verses are written?	
Is repetition used? How?	
The sound and rhythm - how does it make you feel? Is it regular?	
Are there any similes?	
Are there any metaphors?	
Does the poet use any good adjectives or descriptive phrases?	

Similes and Metaphors

Similes

A simile is when two things are directly compared.

The words *AS* and *LIKE* are used to compare the two things,

e.g.

- As cold as a dog's nose.
- The clouds were fluffy like cotton wool.
- As slippery as an eel.
- The wind is like a voice whispering.

Metaphors

A metaphor *also* compares two things **BUT** it does so more directly **WITHOUT** using *as* and *like*,

e.g.

- The clouds are a ball of cotton wool.
- Tony is a tower of strength.
- The striker was a goal machine.
- Gold coins winked from the treasure chest.

A Poem to be Spoken Silently...

It was so silent that I heard
my thoughts rustle
like leaves in a paper bag . . .

It was so peaceful that I heard
the trees ease off
their coats of bark . . .

It was so still that I heard
the paving stones groan
as they muscled for space . . .

It was so silent that I heard
a page of this book
whisper to its neighbour,
'Look he's peering at us again . . .'

It was so still that I felt
a raindrop grin
as it tickled the window's pane . . .

It was so calm that I sensed
a smile crack the face
of a stranger . . .

It was quiet that I heard
the morning earth roll over
in its sleep and doze
for five minutes more . . .

by Pie Corbett

The Kiss

We'd been flicking through
The Guinness Book of Records
when Joanna found that
the world's longest kiss
had been for seventeen days
in Chicago, U.S. of A.

That's what started the craze
for long-distance kissing.

I kept well away.

Till one day, I was cornered
by the school's professional,
out for a spot of practice -

She said -

'Come on, give us a kiss.'

I said -

'Yuck - NO WAY Hosé!'

She said

'Come on - give us a k i s s s s s s s s.'

I said -

'NO WAY - Shirley Whirley,
I'm off.'

So I legged it
to the end of the playground
where she pursued me,
whooping and yelling
like a siren

with lips like suction pads
and octopus arms that made a grab.

So I legged it
to the bicycle sheds
where she followed me

with lips like a frog

and said -

'Come on - give us a snog!'

So I said -

'NO WAY - Not Today,'

So I legged it
to the drinking fountain
where she tracked me down
with a frown
and lips puckered,
ready to kiss me to death.

She said -

'Come on - let's break the record.'

So I thought -

'Euch....mmmmmm.... well.... Why not!,
Come on girl - let's give it a whirl!'

Strange then -

that it was she

who scarpered,

quick as a knife, to the other end of
the playground where she told my
best friend, Petie Fisher, that I
loved her, and I wanted to marry her
and give her a k i s s s s s s s s .

I've decided that kissing is no good
for your health. I'm keeping my lips
for the nicest person I know.

ME!

by Pie Corbett

The Playground Monster

It grabbed me
with its tarmac jaws
and then it tried
to bite me.

It grasped me
with its gravely paws
and then it tried
to fight me.

I live in fear of walking
across its great black back.

I think it knows I'm talking.
It listens at a crack!

I fear its greedy darkness,
the way it seems to need

To reach out when I'm running
and grab me for a feed.

It grabbed me
with its tarmac jaws
and then it tried
to bite me.

It grasped me
with its gravely paws
and then it tried
to fight me.

by Pie Corbett

The Poem Imagines it is a Horror Film

He was so afraid that
He had his heart in his mouth.
(Bloodstains covered his tie).

It was so funny that
She laughed her head off.
(They couldn't stitch it back on).

"Don't look a gift horse in the mouth."
I was told at school.
(They bite).

I hit the nail on the head.
(It screamed with pain).

I was so angry
That it made my blood boil.
(My brains cooked nicely).

When she lied
I saw right through her.
(The hole in her head bled).

My heart sank into my boots.
(The blood warmed my feet).

It's not fair -
My teacher keeps
Jumping down my throat.
(It makes it hard to breeeeeeeeathe).

by Pie Corbett

Smelling Rats

My mother said she'd 'smelt a rat',
but none of us knew what she meant.
I wondered what a rat smelt like -
They lived in sewers, Sarah said,
where they grew big as tom cats,
if cornered would go for the throat.
They made brief film appearances,
dancing on Dracula's coffin,
gangsters muttered, 'you dirty rat',
scientists kept them in cages,
testing lipstick and disease.
They ran on to boats up anchor lines
and of course we all knew
that they carried the plague.
Bubonic plague.
'BEW BON NICK . . .'
We whispered the words
so Mum wouldn't hear,
and sniffed deep
but, smelt nothing.
So we left her to hunt for the rat
and ran down the garden calling,
'Bring out your dead!'
Later that night I lay in bed,
and heard the dread sound
of whatever it was that she sensed.
I lay in the dark and sniffed . . .

by Pie Corbett

When Granny

Song-bird shut dem mout' an lissen,
Church bell don' bother to ring,
All de little stream keep quiet
When mi Granny sing.

De sun up in de sky get jealous,
Him wish him got her style,
For de whole place full o' brightness
When mi Granny smile.

First a happy soun' jus' bubblin'
From her belly, low an' sof',
Den a thunderclap o' merriment
When mi Granny laugh.

De tree branch dem all start swingin',
Puss an' dawg begin to prance,
Everyt'ing ketch de happy fever
When mi Granny dance.

All o' we look out fe Granny
Mek sure dat she satisfy,
For de whole worl' full o' sadness
When mi Granny cry.

by Valerie Bloom

Fruits

Half a pawpaw in the basket -
Only one o' we can have it.
Wonder which one that will be?
I have a feeling that is me.

One guinep in the tree
Hanging down there tempting me.
It don' mek no sense to pick it,
One guinep can't feed a cricket.

Two ripe guava pon the shel,
I know I hid them there meself.
When night com an' it get dark
Me an' them will have a talk.

Three sweet-sop, well I jus' might
Give on o' them a nice big bite.
Cover up the bite jus' so, sis,
Then no-one will ever notice.

Four red apple near me chair -
Who so careless put them there?
Them don' know how me love apple?
Well, thank God fer silly people.

Five jew-plum, I can't believe it!
How they know jew-plum's me fav'rit?
But why they hide them in a cupboard?
Cho, people can be so awkward.

Six naseberry, you want a nibble?
Why baby must always dribble?
Come wipe you mout', it don't mek sense
To broadcast the evidence.

Seven mango! What a find!
The smaddy who lef them really kind.
One fe you an' six fe me,
If you want more, climb the tree.

Eight orange fe cousin Clem,
But I have just one problem -
How to get rid o' the eight skin
That the orange them come in.

Nine jackfruit! Not even me
Can finish nine, but let me see,
I don't suppose that they will miss one.
That was hard, but now me done.

Ten banana, mek them stay,
I feeling really full today.
Mek me lie down on me bed, quick.
Lawd, ah feeling really sick.

by Valerie Bloom

Mega Star Rap

I'm king of the keyboard, star of the screen,
They call me Gamesmaster, you know what I mean,
'Cause I am just ace on the Nintendo action,
When I get in my stride, you know, I don't give a fraction,
With Super Mario I'm a real daredevil,
I'm cool, I'm wicked, on a different level!
I'll take on anyone who wants to challenge me,
No matter what the problem is, I hold the key.
I can tell you every shortcut on the Mega drive,
I can put the Sonic Hedgehog into overdrive,
And I would, I really would like to accept your dare,
But I've just run out of batteries for my Sega Game Gear.

by Valerie Bloom

I'm Not a Kid

I'm not a kid, ok
I'm not a kid, I say
I'm not a kid.

Kids have horns,
Kids go ma-ay,
Kids live with goats,
And anyway

Kids don't wear trousers,
Don't wear shirts,
Kids don't eat lemon pies
For dessert.

So I'm not a kid, ok
I'm not a kid, I say
I'm not a kid.

Don't call me a kid
'Cause I don't like it,
Don't call me a kid, I'm a
Child, don't fight it.

Kids have hooves,
Kids chew the cud,
Kids nibble grass,
Kids eat rose buds.

So I'm not a kid, ok
I'm not a kid, I say
I'm not a kid.

Kids are animals
Like a gnu
A cow, a giraffe,
Or a kangaroo.

I don't have four feet,
Not covered with hair,
Can you see a tail on me?
Anywhere?

'Cause I'm not a kid, ok
I'm not a kid, I say
I'm not a kid.

Oh, look, Mum,
Look over there,
See, 'Flights to Eurodisney,
Extra low fare.'

Can we go, please, Mum?
No need to pay for me,
See, that sign there says
"Kids Go Free!"

by Valerie Bloom

Duppy Jamboree

'Back to back, belly to belly
Ah don't care at all
For me done dead a'ready.
Back to back, belly to belly
In de duppy jamboree.'

What dat noise me hearing
Coming from out o' doah?
Mi get out o' bed, pull back de curtain
An peep out tru de window.

Me rub me yeye an look again,
Can't believe wha me just see,
Twenty-seven duppy dere
Staring back at me!

One o' dem stand up dere
With him head under him arm,
One o' dem is a big ole bull
Like de one pon Granpa farm.

But this one yeye dem full o' fire,
And it have on one big ole chain,
Is a rollin-calf! Me shet me yeye,
Den open dem again

When me hear dem singing.
Me open me yeye wide
Ah think one have a horse head
Growing from him side!

De devil out deh with dem
With him cow-foot an him horn,
Him long tail wrap right roun him
wais'
Him pitchfork in him han.

Lawd, him looking up at me!
Him see me! Him a grin!
It look like aey him come
To punish me for all me sin.

Dem coming to de doorway,
Me noh ready yet fe dead!
Me fly into me mama room
An jump into her bed.

Yeye-water running dung me face
Till me can hardly see,
'De duppy dem out o' doah, Mama
Doan mek dem come ketch me!'

Mama hold me tight an laugh,
'Noh mek dem frighten you,
Is not a duppy jamboree,
Is just de Jonkunnu.'

'Duppy' is the West Indian name for ghost.

by Valerie Bloom

Animal Riddle

Like a small Bear
bundles over the dark road,
brushes pAst the front gate,
as if she owns the joint.
Rolls the Dustbin,
like an expert barrel-rider
tucks into yesterday's Garbage,
crunches worms for titbits,
wakEs us from deep sleep,
blinks back at torchlight.
Our midnight feasteR,
ghost-friend,
moon-lit,
zebra bear.

by Pie Corbett

Answer: badger

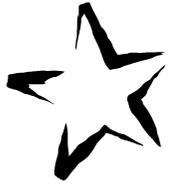
Proverb

Don't dance on the alligator back
Until yoh sure him dead,
If yuh sit down underneath bird nest
Then cover up yuh head.

by Valerie Bloom

Week 1

Three Stars and a Wish!



Put children into pairs



Each child reads out their poem to their partner in turn



The partner finds three good examples of the features - 3 STARS!!!



The partner then has 1 WISH for another feature to be used!

Wings

If I had wings

I would touch the fingertips of clouds
and glide on the wind's breath.

If I had wings

I would taste a chunk of the sun
as hot as peppered curry.

If I had wings

I would listen to the clouds of sheep bleat
that graze on the blue.

If I had wings

I would breathe deep and sniff
the scent of raindrops.

If I had wings

I would gaze at the people
who cling to the earth's crust.

If I had wings

I would dream of
swimming the deserts and
walking the seas.

by Pie Corbett

Refuelling

Brixton calls with the voice of the Islands,
and I must answer.
Every month must brave the jostling crowds
of Victoria station,
become a subterranean traveller,
for bunches of callaloo, fat yellow yams,
and sugar cane, sold here by the pound.
Yesterday I bought some locusts,
stinking-toe in their shells of flint,
paid two pounds for some childhood memories.

Travelling home on the train,
I imagined my children,
eyes wide with pleasure,
reliving out my past.

Sparks flew as the cutlass clinked
on the copper shells like chain-gang picks
on prison rocks.
The hard shell opened,
parted to display
the gold dust that I knew so well.
And then the smell!
At the garden centre once,
I came across a plant whose leaves
gave off this same odour.

I let the name cascade across my tongue.
Prostanthera. Prostanthera.
Every day, fingered the leaves to
liberate the aroma.
It died.
But now I had the source
of that smell in my hand.
I proffered the powdered seeds,
offered them in their shells
like oysters.
Expectant, searched the faces as I
recounted the legend of the locust.
It's said that John the Baptist lived on these.

Disbelief fought with disgust,
before both succumbed to absolute dismay.
That I, their mother, could ask them to eat that!

And through their eyes I watched the golden powder
dull to dry sawdust.

I dug an index finger into the shell,
determined to reincarnate the child
who once picked locusts from my uncle's tree.
My son was brave. The taste, he said was bearable,
but could not compensate.
The youngest ventured out her tongue,
now she could see her brother was not dead.

She choked, spluttered and pronounced it vile.
She must be mad, I thought.
The first taste was as I remembered,
honey dust.
I ignored the cries of horror,
but noticed as I ate, the flavour changing,
until it was wood-shavings in my mouth.
In spite of water, soap and brush,
it was some days before my hands
stopped reeking.
Long enough for me to realize,
Time is a bridge that leads in one direction.
We should not try to cross it twice.

by Valerie Bloom

Poetry Headings

SUBJECT MATTER

STYLE OF POEM

LANGUAGE

I'm Free

This is what is sometimes called free verse.
Free verse need not rhyme, although from time to time it may.
It's not the same as weary prose
Which flutters through your letter-box each day
In advert after advert or in the daily news.
You may catch a steady beat in every line,
Or you may not.
Some lines may, like the last, be short and to the point,
Others, like this, may wander on and on as the poet thinks most fit.
Free verse is not, as some might think,
A lazy way to write. To do it well takes care.
Words and thoughts must match,
Must be well carved.
But it seems to me sometimes
That, without the tidy shape of rhythms, line sand rhymes,
Free verse, though it may have wise things to say,
Is harder than other verse
To hold forever in the head.

Perhaps that's why some older folk
Prefer rhymed verse instead?

By John Kitching