

English – Week Beginning 6th July 2020

I thought that we'd have a go at some poetry this week. I found this amazing poetry task on this website <https://www.writesparks.co.uk/creative-writing-projects-for-home-learning/>. Remember it's okay to Magpie ideas but we have to give credit to the people who came up with them so thank you Write Sparks! There are some other fab writing tasks on there too if you're bored over the summer holidays!

HOME IS WHERE THE ART IS – POETRY

As we have been stuck at home for so long, this week let's look for inspiration right here around us.

Task 1: I'd like you to make a mind map of as many memories as you can think of from the time you've lived in your home (or a home you used to live in, if there are more memories there)- your selection could include happy memories of Christmas trees, parties, practical jokes or games you played with friends or siblings, as well as memories of arguments, or flooding, or staying home when you felt unwell. Think about the people who spent time in your home- the family members, friends, neighbours, visitors and perhaps even pets.

Task 2:

Read the wonderful poem, No. 115 Dreams by Jackie Kay

The living room remembers Gran dancing to Count Basie.
The kitchen can still hear my aunts fighting on Christmas day.
The hall is worried about the loose banister.
The small room is troubled by the missing hamster.
The toilet particularly dislikes my Grandfather.
The wallpaper covers up for the whole family.

And No. 115 dreams of lovely houses by the sea.
And No. 115 dreams of one night in the country.

The stairs are keeping schtum about the broken window.
The toilet's sick of the trapped pipes squealing so.
The walls aren't thick enough for all the screaming.
My parent's bedroom has a bed in a choppy sea.
My own bedroom loves the bones of me.
My brother's bedroom needs a different boy.

And No. 115 dreams of yellow light, an attic room.
And No. 115 dreams of a chimney, a new red roof.

And the red roof dreams of robin redbreasts
tap dancing on the red dance floor in the open air.

I LOVE this poem- the way that Jackie Kay has turned her childhood house into a character is such a powerful technique for helping her readers to imagine exactly what it was like. We get a very personal glimpse of what her home was like and we feel that we're an old friend of hers, sharing her memories.

Task 3: We're going to have a go at writing our own poems, inspired by our childhood homes and Jackie Kay's brilliant work. We're going to be using some personification in our own poems too; to give your home some human qualities and feelings.

I'd like you to imagine that your home is a character- what would it dream of? Does it want to move somewhere quieter? Or see the sea? Does it want more space to stretch out? Or have closer neighbours to chat to? Try writing four lines beginning, "No. 115 dreams of..." (but change 115 for the number of your home, eg. No. 16 dreams of...).

Task 4: Next, write a list of the rooms in your home.

Now we're going to personify each room like Jackie Kay has done; what does each room hear, or want, or miss, or remember? Feel free to experiment with different verbs- perhaps it hates something, or still dances to a tune or worries about something. For example, 'The kitchen remembers Nana's Christmas pudding.'

Task 5: You've got all the lines for your poem now, so it's time to experiment with their order to build your poem. You might want to follow the pattern of Jackie Kay's poem, with a stanza of lines about how the different rooms feel, followed by two lines about the house's dreams, then another stanza of rooms ending with a final two lines of the house's dreams. However, it's your poem and there's no right or wrong here! Move the lines around and play with the order until you're happy with how it sounds when you read it aloud. There's no need to make it rhyme and no rules here- we're playing with poetry!

Finally, give your poem a title. You might want to follow Jackie Kay's lead and use 'No. 16 Dreams' (using your own door number) or might opt for a totally different title- you're the poet so it's your choice!

Try using one of these templates to make a 3D model of your home and write your poem on it. It would make a brilliant gift for a family member, or use it to display your wonderful writing in your bedroom!

<https://cdn.babbledabbledo.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Paper-Houses-Template-BABBLE-DABBLE-DO.pdf>

