



THE RED ROOM
COMPANY PRESENTS

THE POETRY OBJECT 2013

TEACHING AND
LEARNING RESOURCES

"I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHEN I GOT IT, OR WHERE;
BUT IT STILL SITS THERE ON THE SHELF.
DUST GATHERS BEHIND THE EARS OF THE MICE
AND ON BEAKS OF THE BIRDS."

- Phoebe, Stanmore Public School



IMAGINE MY BRACELET IS THE EARTH

- Laura, Forest Lodge Public School

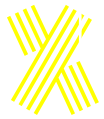
I SEE THE BODY OF THE HALF RAM HALF FISH,
IT IS THE ANIMAL OF ARIES.
RECTANGULAR SHINING GLASS BODY
SO BRIGHT AGAINST THE SUN.

- Phi Pham, Brighton-le-Sands Public School



IT'S HOLLOW, BUT FEELS COMPLETE
IT'S THE STAR IN THE DARKEST NIGHT TIME

- Georgie, St. George Girls' High School



"IT WAS ONLY BUTTON SIZED,
AND AS WEIGHTLESS AS A PENCIL SHAVING."

- Isaac, Forest Lodge Public School



"A TRUE TREASURE IN MY HEART
A PREHISTORIC TOOTH
A WONDER OF OUR UNIVERSE"

- Josh, Randwick Public School



DON'T GROW ATTACHED TO A BROWN SUIT
PRE-LOVED AND PRONE TO TEAR
STITCH BY STITCH, YOUR SHARED DISREPAIR
CONTAINED BETWEEN HAT AND BOOT.

- Nicholas Powell, Poetry Object commissioned poet

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WELCOME TO THE POETRY OBJECT

The Poetry Object celebrates the magical properties, secret lives and special connections we have with objects. From pencil sharpeners to Pokemon, our objects are sources of joy, curiosity, and inspiration.

As The Red Room Company's Education Manager, I'd like to warmly welcome you to *The Poetry Object* 2013 and thank you for sharing the story of your special object. *The Poetry Object* team and I look forward to publishing original poems that surprise, delight and make us wonder.

Keep reading for all *The Poetry Object* project information and free resources or contact me, Dr. Tamryn Bennett, with questions, suggestions and for project implementation assistance.

Sincerely,



Dr. Tamryn Bennett
Education Manager
The Red Room Company
education@redroomcompany.org
02 9319 5090

OVERVIEW TO THE POETRY OBJECT 2013

WHAT IS IT?

The Poetry Object is a free poetry writing project for students Years 3-10. Created by The Red Room Company, *The Poetry Object* competition invites young writers and their teachers to submit poems and photographs about objects that are special to them. Special objects that inspired poems in 2012 included a magic cat, dinosaur teeth, dream catchers, lucky beans, and even one student's brother!

WHO CAN TAKE PART?

The Poetry Object was first commissioned by NSW Public Schools (Sydney Region) in 2011. In 2013 we are delighted to announce that *The Poetry Object* will be **open to all Australian schools**.

ENTRY DATES

SUBMISSIONS OPEN

Monday 21st June, 2013

SUBMISSIONS CLOSE

Friday 20th September, 2013

RESOURCES

A range of free poetry resources are available from the [resource page](#) to support teachers as they implement *The Poetry Object* with their students.

HOW TO BE INVOLVED?

① REGISTER

Register your school at the [registration page](#)

② DOWNLOAD

Download free Poetry Object teaching and learning resources from the [resource page](#).

③ INVITE

Invite students to compose a poem of no more than 20 lines about an object that is special to them.

④ SUBMIT

Once you have registered your school, you'll be sent a link to the online submission form, where you can upload student poems along with a digital photograph of the special object that inspired it.

PUBLICATION

The purpose of *The Poetry Object* is to provide students with creative opportunities to compose and publish their own poetry for authentic audiences. All submitted poems and images will be published in a dedicated gallery on The Red Room Company's website.

EXHIBITION

An exhibition of selected poems and photographs will be curated by The Red Room Company and displayed at Customs House Library. Schools are also encouraged to organise their own display or installation of poems, objects and photographs.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Certificates of participation and achievement will be awarded to students, teachers and schools. *The Poetry Object* winner will receive judge's commendations and a poetry prize pack.

LINKS

PROJECT PAGE

www.redroomcompany.org/projects/poetry-object

REGISTRATION

www.redroomcompany.org/poetry-object/register

RESOURCES

www.redroomcompany.org/projects/poetry-object-resources/

CONTACT

To register or find more information visit *The Poetry Object* [webpage](#) or contact The Red Room Company's Education Manager Dr. Tamryn Bennett education@redroomcompany.org 02 9319 5090 or 0417 725821

WHAT IS THE RED ROOM COMPANY?

The Poetry Object is created by The Red Room Company, a not-for-profit arts organisation that creates, commissions, publishes and promotes poetry in unusual ways. Through interactive public projects and poetry education programs for schools, learning institutions, correctional centres and community groups, we work with contemporary Australian poets to transform people's perception of poetry.

Founded in 2003 by Artistic Director, Johanna Featherstone, The Red Room Company has since worked with more than 700 poets to produce 40 major public arts projects across Australia.

Explore and participate in our projects by visiting www.redroomcompany.org

WHAT IS RED ROOM POETRY EDUCATION?

Red Room Poetry Education is the only national poetry education program in Australia. The program transforms the way poetry is taught in schools and learning institutions by bringing emerging and established poets into classrooms across the country to run practical writing workshops.

Unique to Red Room Poetry Education, students are given authentic opportunities to compose and publish their own poetry within the context of a professional arts organisation. Our learning resources, including *The Poetry Object*, are based on previous Red Room Company projects and are developed by teachers, education professionals and poets.

To organise a poetry workshop or to find out more about Red Room Poetry Education, please contact Education Manager, Dr. Tamryn Bennett (education@redroomcompany.org) or visit www.redroomcompany.org

Red Room Poetry Education is proudly supported by the Graeme Wood Foundation.



A Forest Lodge student shows off her very own talismanic object, a string of charms



Poet Dr. Felicity Plunkett with students at Croydon Public School



The Poetry Object display at the State Library of New South Wales

THE POETRY OBJECT ACTIVITY

The focus of this project is giving students and school staff the opportunity to compose and publish their own poetry.

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ACTIVITY:

Each student participating in the project is asked to compose a poem inspired by an object that is special or meaningful to him or her. This object is known as a talismanic object.

The poem should have a title and be **no more than 20 lines in length**. Students may write in any form or genre.

Students are asked to take a digital photograph of the object that inspired their poem.

Photographs should be LANDSCAPE and NOT portrait. Photographs should be submitted as a jpeg, 300 dpi, and no bigger than 5 MB.

Both the poem and photograph will be submitted as part of the competition.

GROUP STUDENT ACTIVITY:

Within their school, year or class group teachers are encouraged to publish and display the poems and digital images produced by students in a group installation of their own interpretation.

Schools are asked to submit a digital photograph of this group installation and a written explanation of their approach to their cabinet.

The written explanation should be no more than 250 words in length.



INDIVIDUAL TEACHER OR SCHOOL STAFF MEMBER STAFF:

Teachers and staff at participating schools are also encouraged to submit their own poem about and a digital photograph of an object that is special to them.

SUBMISSION DATES

SUBMISSIONS OPEN

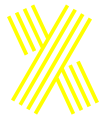
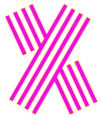
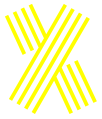
Monday 21st June, 2013

SUBMISSIONS CLOSE

Friday 20th September, 2013
(last week of Term 3, 2013)

Entries should be submitted electronically via the online entry form.

Visit The Poetry Object webpage for details
www.redroomcompany.org/projects/poetry-object/



HOW DO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS SUBMIT THEIR POEMS AND DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS?

① REGISTER

Resgister your school at the registration page. www.redroomcompany.org/poetry-object/register

② SUBMIT

Once you have registered your school, you'll be sent a link to the online submission form, where you can upload student poems along with a digital photograph of the special object that inspired it www.redroomcompany.org/projects/poetry-object

Using this simple online entry form students can upload their photograph and cut and paste their poem into the entry form.

Please make sure each entry includes the name of a contact teacher at the school.

All submissions will be made electronically. No paper or hard copy submissions will be accepted.

Please label the electronic file so that it contains the photograph of the special object and identifies the student by name and school e.g. [AliHasnanSydneyBoysHighSchool.jpeg](#) [RoseDaviesSummerHillPublicSchool.jpeg](#)

Last year many of the images were not labeled and it was sometimes extremely difficult to match the poem to the correct photograph.

We ask that the contact teacher at each school submit a summary of the entries submitted ie:

- name of contact teacher
- school name, address and contact details
- names of participating students
- total number of entries per school
- title of each poem.

Please compile this list in a Word document and email it to: education@redroomcompany.org

This helps us to check off each poem submitted via the online entry form and to ensure we include all the work of participants who have written poems.

STYLE GUIDE FOR PHOTOGRAPHS

All photographs should be submitted as LANDSCAPE and NOT portrait shots.

Photographs must not feature the student. We are unable to publish any photographs that feature the faces of students.

The Red Room Company is a registered employer with the NSW Commission for Children and Young People and we work consistently to ensure the safety and privacy of the young people who engage in our programs.

A number of photographs last year featured the student's face and could not be cropped. Sadly these photographs could not then be included in the online gallery.

We recommend photographing objects against a WHITE background. A simple white sheet or piece of cloth works well as a backdrop. Avoid photographing objects on backgrounds that have reflective surfaces, such as vinyl floors or against glass windows.

Using school carpet as a background was not always the most aesthetically pleasing look!

SEEKING PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR PUBLICATION

It is the responsibility of all participating schools to seek the permission of parents or guardians for their child's work to be published.

Student work will be published on The Red Room Company website and may potentially be exhibited at the concluding event.

Many schools send home a blanket permission slip at the start of the school year. Others seek permission on a case-by-case basis.

Student work will only be identified by first name and school. No surnames will be published.

All students and teachers retain copyright to their poems and photographs.

Contact teachers are asked to notify Dr. Tamryn Bennett at the following email address only if there are any parents or guardians who have refused participation for their child's work to be published.

Contact email: education@redroomcompany.org

FREE TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES

A range of free, downloadable, professionally developed teaching and learning resources are available from *The Poetry Object* webpage www.redroomcompany.org/projects/poetry-object/ to support teachers as they engage in composing poetry. Like all Red Room Poetry Education resources, these materials encourage creativity while enriching Australian curriculum outcomes.

The Red Room Company supports sharing of learning resources, that's why we make *The Poetry Object* free! We do ask, however, that teachers credit The Red Room Company as copyright holders and creators of *The Poetry Object* resources.

Resources include:

- warm-up and pre-writing activities
- poem writing templates and worksheets
- NAPLAN style questions
- Powerpoint presentations
- quality criteria

Also featured are examples of poems about special objects from past *Poetry Object* participants and poets commissioned by The Red Room Company. As the project is open to Years 3-10 across a diverse spectrum of schools, teachers are encouraged to select those resources that suit the needs and interests of their students.

Please feel free to contact Dr. Tamryn Bennett, The Red Room Company's Education Manager, if you would like assistance or advice about implementing *The Poetry Object* with your students.

TALISMANIC OBJECT POEM ACTIVITY AND PRE-WRITING ACTIVITIES

This section contains the talismanic object poem activity and some pre-writing activities.

A selection of pre-writing activities designed to warm-up students before they begin writing their talismanic object poem are available as a free download from www.redroomcompany.org/projects/poetry-object-resources/. Some tasks will obviously suit some year levels, classes or students better than others.

You know your students and their needs best. Choose pre-writing activities that suit your students' interests and needs, as well as your teaching style.

The pre-writing activities are designed to help students:

- overcome poetry anxiety by beginning with smaller, more achievable and scaffolded writing tasks
- appreciate the importance of original imagery in poetry
- identify and then avoid clichés in their writing
- understand the importance of word choice in poetry
- consider structure: the impact of lineation and stanza breaks
- practice describing and writing about an object
- recognise how their writing is a response to the writing of others
- understand the importance of drafting

THE ROLE OF THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

Teachers are encouraged to explore The Red Room Company website with their students and consider the work of students, schools and commissioned poets who have previously participated in *The Poetry Object* 2012 www.redroomcompany.org/projects/poetry-object-2012/

Teachers are asked to distribute and explain information about the competition (pages 10-17).

To introduce the project and poem activities we recommend teachers spend one or two lessons using the teaching and learning resources provided by The Red Room Company. These teaching and learning resources help to encourage and provide models for the drafting of student writing.

Participating schools or classes are encouraged to create their own school-based installation or display that showcases the work of all participants in the project. Possible approaches to such an installation are outlined in a free downloadable handout on The Red Room Company website.

Schools are also invited to submit photographs and a written explanation of their approach to a cabinet or installation of the class group's talismanic object poems.

Teachers and other school staff members are encouraged to compose their own talismanic object poem and submit this with an accompanying photograph. There will be a specific prize and awards category for poems by teachers and staff within the school community.



A student from Stanmore Public School shows off his Poetry Object



A Croydon Public School student and her Poetry Object

ALL ABOUT THE POETRY OBJECT



WHAT IS THE POETRY OBJECT?

The Poetry Object competition invites young writers and their teachers to submit poems and photographs about objects that are special to them. Talismanic objects that inspired poems in 2012 included a magic cat, dinosaur teeth, dream catchers, lucky beans, and even one student's brother!

All submitted poems and images will be published in a dedicated gallery on The Red Room Company's website. An exhibition of selected poems and photographs will be curated by The Red Room Company and displayed at Customs House Library, Sydney.

The Poetry Object winner will receive judge's commendations and a poetry prize pack.

WHAT IS A TALISMANIC OBJECT?

A talisman is often said to be any object that brings a person protection or good luck.

Some people carry a plant, coin, ring or a piece of jewellery to act as a good luck charm. The second type of talismanic object can also be seen as an object that is special to you. It may not be worth anything to anybody else. It could be something that is only precious and important to you.

You may own more than one talismanic object. The object may belong to someone else, but still be special to you.

It is this second type of talismanic object, the one that is an object that is special to you, that will be the subject matter of your poem.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A STUDENT?

In order to complete this project you will need to bring your talismanic object to class on a specified date. If you do not have your talismanic object in class for the required lesson it will be very hard to complete the activity. This will be frustrating for you- and your teacher!

If your talismanic object is too valuable or precious to risk bringing it to school then you might instead bring a photograph, photocopy or a drawing of it.

Talk to your parents about bringing your talismanic object to school. They may prefer you to bring a photograph of it to class. If the object belongs to someone else, or you share ownership, you must seek permission before bringing it to school.

In order to safeguard your talismanic object you will need to take responsibility for it in the school environment.

This may mean leaving your object with your teacher or the School Office once you arrive at school. It may mean securing your talismanic object in your locker until your lesson.

Follow your teachers' instructions on how to best look after your precious object.



THE RED ROOM
COMPANY PRESENTS

THE POETRY OBJECT 2013

HANDOUT

I WILL BRING MY TALISMANIC
OBJECT TO CLASS ON THE
FOLLOWING DAY AND DATE:

__/__/____

Talismanic Object Poem Activity:

- Your project is to compose a poem about a talismanic object.
- A talismanic object is an object that is special to you.
- The choice of genre or the form of poem is up to you.

Your poem should be no more than 20 lines in length.

Remember that your poem does not need to rhyme.
Your talismanic object poem has two purposes:

1. to describe your talismanic object for a reader who is unfamiliar with it and
2. to explain to the reader why your object is special to you

Before you begin to draft your poem you will complete a free writing exercise that will help you to develop ideas and material for your poem.

You will also need to submit a digital photograph of the object that inspires your poem.

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT TALISMANS



1. A pair of booties were this Stanmore student's Poetry Object
2. Winning teacher, Lana Howlett, with her Poetry Object
3. Sydney poet Kate Middleton's Poetry Object
4. A student from Croydon Public School displays her Poetry Object
5. The winner of The Poetry Object 2012
6. This Stanmore Public School student demonstrates her Poetry Obejct, a snow globe.

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT TALISMANIC POEMS

The Magic Cat

THE FELINE STANDS AS PROUD AS A LION.
IT IS AS BLUE AS THE EYES OF A DARK PANTHER.
ITS JOURNEY COMES ACROSS THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS.
ITS WHISKERS WHITE AS A DWARF STAR.
EVEN IF ITS HEAD IS LIKE THE DESERT,
ITS BODY BECOMES THE WAVES.
ITS GEMSTONE IS HARD AND HEAVY,
THOUGH CAN BE LIFTED WITH THE GREATEST OF EASE.
ITS SILENCE IS THE CALL OF THE WIND,
AND ITS PRESENCE IS THE BREEZE.

THE TALISMAN IS THE ONLY THING WE HAVE,
EVEN THOUGH WE HAVE A LOT.
IT DIDN'T COST MUCH,
BUT ITS VALUE TO US IS FAR MORE.
IT IS AN EGYPTIAN SYMBOL,
THE LAST SHE COULD FIND.
MY MOTHER TRAVELLED THE WORLD,
BEFORE SHE MET MY FATHER.
SHE GOT A MONK TO CARRY IT ACROSS THE EGYPTIAN DESERT.
AND NOW SHE HAS GIVEN IT TO ME

Andre, Year 6
Stanmore Public School
winner of The Poetry Object 2012

The Box

IT REMINDS YOU OF THE SKY WITH ALL CLOUDS CONCEALED
AS IF HIDING FROM ITS SMELL OF AGE
YET ITS UNMARKED SKIN PROVES DIFFERENT
IT STANDS THERE IN STILL SILENCE
PAPER

F
L
O
W
S

FROM IT LIKE THE NIAGARA FALLS
AS IT STRUGGLES TO NOT LET

GO

SOME ESCAPE ITS DELICATE GRASP THOUGH
BUT IT DOES NOT BEND NOR MOVE AT ALL
STILL IN SILENCE
BECAUSE ITS JUST A BOX, UNMOVING...SILENT

Aayushma, Year 8
St. George Girls' High School
Finalist The Poetry Object 2012



Dolphin Chains

FLYING, FLYING BACK FROM THE PLACE OF WONDER IT CAME.
FALLING, FALLING DOWN INTO MY SMALL SWEATY HANDS.

GOLDEN DOLPHINS
DANGLE FROM LONG GOLDEN CHAINS THAT LOCK AROUND MY NECK.
YOU FEEL HARD, SAD BUT PROTECTIVE

YOU FELL DOWN FROM THE COLD, DARK SKY. SILENTLY IS HOW
YOU FELL.
I COULD TASTE YOU COMING.
I COULD SMELL YOUR GOLDEN LOCKETS EVEN BEFORE YOU CAME
FROM WHEREVER YOU CAME FROM.
BUT I BET IT WAS A WONDERFUL PLACE

YOU SMELL LIKE FLOODS OF MELTED GOLD.
YOU LOOK LIKE A RAINY DAY.
YOU FEEL HARD AND COLD. YOUR COLOUR HELPS EXPRESS
FEELINGS; MINE AND OTHERS.

NOW AS YOU SIT ON MY COLD BROWN SHELF YOU LOOK SAD
AND LONELY.
BUT WHEN YOUR GOLDEN CHAINS LOCK AROUND MY COLD
NECK YOU SEEM TO BRIGHTEN UP.

I WILL KEEP YOU TILL I DIE.

Zac, Year 3, Croydon Public School
Finalist The Poetry Object 2012

Sonnet for Brown Suit

DON'T GROW ATTACHED TO A BROWN SUIT
PRE-LOVED AND PRONE TO TEAR
STITCH BY STITCH, YOUR SHARED DISREPAIR
CONTAINED BETWEEN HAT AND BOOT.
ITS GAIT AND GESTURES ARE YOUR OWN
THOUGH IT MOVES LIKE AN AUTOMATON
THROUGH CHURCH, GRAVEYARD AND GARDEN.
YAWNING, LONG HAVING FLOWN
IN SPIRIT WITH SPARROW AND SWIFT
IT FEELS FOR A SPEECH OR FOR KEYS
BUNCHED AT THE ELBOWS AND KNEES.
IT FORGOT THE PARTY, THE GIFT.
THE CUT IS BECOMING, BECOMING
YOUR VERY EDGE, MY MANNEQUIN
TURNED WINDYMAN, BROWN PIN-
STripES FOR A SKELETON. OPENING
UP, YOU LOSE IT, AND THE BROWN
LOOSED BALLOON PAINTS THE TOWN.

Nicholas Powell
Commissioned poet The Poetry Object 2012

HANDOUT

GUIDED QUESTIONS FOR FREE WRITING

For this activity you will need a pen and a piece of lined paper.

Clear off your desk so that you have nothing on it except for your pen, paper and your talismanic object.

During this task you are expected to reflect and write silently and individually.

There is no need to discuss your responses with anyone else in the room during this free writing activity.

Remember that the purpose of the poem that you will ultimately compose will be to describe your talismanic object and explain why it is special to you.

Don't try to write your poem during the free writing. Just focus on writing as much as you can.

Try to answer every question. If you can't answer a question then attempt the next one and come back to it later.



FREE WRITING PROMPTS

- Place your object in front of you on your desk.
- Imagine you have to describe this object to a person who is blind or to someone a long distance away to whom you are speaking by telephone. Describe the appearance of your object.
- Describe the colour or colours of your talismanic object in a sentence or two. List some other objects that are similarly coloured.
- Describe the size of your object. Compare it to at least two other objects that are about the same size.
- Describe the shape of your talismanic object. Compare it to other objects of a similar shape. Make a list of these similar objects.
- Hold your talismanic object in your hand. How much do you think it would weigh? Compare it to something that would be about the same weight. Write down a list of objects that weigh the same.
- Describe the texture of your object. Run your fingers over it. Compare it to other objects that have similar texture or feel. Is it smooth or rough?
- Don't put the object in your mouth, but describe what you think it would taste like. (Really, DON'T lick or put the object in your mouth!) Identify some other things you imagine would taste the same as your object.
- Has your object changed in appearance since you first owned it? Explain how it might have changed. Briefly explain why it has changed. If it hasn't changed, then offer an explanation why it remains the same.
- How is the object like someone you know? How might it be like your mother or father, or a friend or relative? Write a line or two in which you explain how the object is like a person that you know.
- Use a simile to describe your talismanic object (A simile is a comparison between two things using like, as or than).
- Use a metaphor to describe your object (A metaphor is a direct comparison where one thing is said to be another).
- Write a sentence in which you use onomatopoeia to describe your object. Your object may not make the sound described by your use of onomatopoeia.
- Explain why you decided to bring this object to school as your talismanic object.
- Explain how you, or another person, came to own the object.
- Explain how you felt when you first held, or came to own, the object.
- How long have you owned the object? How old were you when you came to own it or know of it?
- How have you changed since you first came to own or know your talismanic object?
- Where do you keep the object? Explain why you keep it there.
- Who else knows how much you value this object? Explain how and why they share this information with you.
- What is the secret of your talismanic object?
- Who else might want to own your talismanic object? Explain why.
- Who wouldn't want to own your object? Explain why not.
- Imagine you could ask this object one question. What would this question be?
- Imagine you had to give this object away. Who would you give it to? Why?
- Explain how you would feel if you lost the object or it was destroyed. Why do you think you would feel this way?

USING YOUR FREE WRITING

Once you have completed your free writing exercise you can use the material you have produced to help compose your poem.

- Read over your writing and circle or highlight any images or words that stand out or appeal to you.
- Circle or highlight any images or phrases that you feel are poetic or poem like.
- Circle or highlight any words, phrases or images that describe your talismanic object.
- Circle or highlight any phrases or words, which help, explain why your talismanic object is important to you.
- Circle any words or phrases that you feel might make a good title for your poem.

Once you have done this copy out everything that is circled or highlighted onto a new sheet of paper. Put a line through anything on this sheet that you feel is boring, doesn't fit in or you don't think will help you to compose your poem.

Use the material on your new sheet as the starting point or stimulus for your poem.



OTHER PRE-WRITING PROMPTS FOR THE TALISMANIC OBJECT POEM

There are a number of ways to complete this pre-writing activity. Teachers can select the writing prompts that they feel suit the needs and abilities of their students.

Students might work silent and individually through the prompts, completing them at their own pace. It is useful to read through the prompts with the class before they begin this task.

An alternate strategy is to read the prompts aloud to the task. Choose 10-15 prompts (or as many as you feel will suit your class) and read them aloud. The class completes the writing prompt silently, and then waits for the next prompt.

One advantage of reading the prompts aloud is that the students write quickly- and do not have a chance to think about the final form or content of their poem as they complete the pre-writing task. A gradual reveal of written text on an overhead projector or data projector can work well here.

You might ask students to complete this pre-writing task as homework. This can work well where teachers feel uncomfortable about students bringing objects to class.

Other free writing prompts that consider the literary terms and devices commonly used in the NSW School Certificate English-literacy test are available as a free download from The Red Room Company website.



This Forest Lodge student shows off her poetry object, her 'fairy dress'



Stanmore Public School student displays her talismanic object, a butterfly treasure chest



A student from Croydon Public School finds a novel use for her talismanic object

STUDENT RECOGNITION

HOW IS THE POETRY OBJECT 2013 JUDGED?

The entries for *The Poetry Object* 2013 will be judged by:

Rachael Briggs, winner of the 2011 Val Vallis Prize for a suite of unpublished poems, and the 2012 Thomas Shapcott Award

Dr. Tamryn Bennett, Education Manager for The Red Room Company

The judges will use criteria produced by The Red Room Company and NSW Public Schools.

The Red Room Company will compile a shortlist of finalists from the entry pool for consideration by all judges. The decision of the judges is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

A NOTE FROM THE JUDGES

'Objects have inner lives. People use objects to express love, to learn new things about the world, and to solve disagreements. In addition to describing the way an object looks, a really skilled poem will express part of the story behind its object'
- Rachael Briggs.

Judges will be looking for poems that show imagination. This often involves sensory imagery: picking out specific details that can be seen, heard, felt, tasted, or smelled. It can also involve creative similes and metaphors that draw surprising connections between different things. It might mean creating a poem that looks interesting on the page (consider visual poetry techniques), or writing from an unexpected point of view (the person who made the object, the relative who handed it down, or the object itself).

Another element judges will consider is the poet's ability to explore and have fun with the sounds of words. This doesn't just mean putting a rhyme at the end of every line. Poems can rhyme, but they don't have to. End rhyme is just one tool in a sprawling, magnificent, poetry toolkit. *The Poetry Object* encourages poets to experiment with other tools: internal rhyme, alliteration, assonance, and meter.



HOW WILL THE POETRY OBJECT RECOGNISE AND REWARD STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT?

The most important ways that the project recognises and rewards student achievement is through publication of their poem online and public display of a selection of poems and photographs in an exhibition at Customs House Library, Sydney.

Individual schools can also recognise student achievement by coordinating a school-based display or installation of student poems and photographs. Schools are also encouraged to recognise student achievement through authentic modes of publication within their community. This might include publication on blogs, websites or class notice boards, in newsletters and in readings of poems at assemblies or year meetings.

Other forms of recognition and reward include certificates of participation and achievement for all students, teachers and schools.

The student who composes the winning poem will receive:

- judge's commendations
- a poetry prize pack including a selection of stationary products from The Red Room Company partner Corban and Blair
- publication of their poem on The Red Room Company website
- public display of their poem in the exhibition at Customs House, Sydney

The Red Room Company will provide the teacher who composes the winning poem with:

- a selection of Red Room Company publications including the *Poems to Share* boxed poetry card teaching resource
- a selection of stationary products from The Red Room Company partner Corban and Blair
- publication of their poem on The Red Room Company website

The Red Room Company will provide the school that produces the winning photograph and written explanation of their school-based group installation with:

- a poetry prize pack including a selection of stationary products from The Red Room Company partner Corban and Blair
- publication of their poems on The Red Room Company website
- public display of their poems in the exhibition at Customs House, Sydney

QUALITY CRITERIA

The Poetry Object 'quality criteria' has been established by The Red Room Company and *The Poetry Object* judging panel in consultation with NSW Public Schools. The purpose of the 'quality criteria' is to encourage students and teachers to explore, and experiment with, a range of poetic techniques as well as to ensure poems meet exhibition standards.

The 'quality criteria' aims to enrich the creation of excellent poems and acts as an evaluative framework that enables judges to award poems based on artistic merit, not subjectivities.

QUALITY CRITERIA SHEET

QUALITY CRITERIA

BELOW STANDARD

BENCHMARK

OUTSTANDING

PERSPECTIVE (AKA POINT OF VIEW, WRITER'S VOICE)

The degree to which the poet establishes:

- a distinctive voice, persona, or speaker
- clear OR purposefully ambiguous tone
- extraordinary perception of the ordinary
- insight into the talismanic object or the student's experience or world.
- attitude towards their choice of subject matter

- The focus of the poem is difficult to identify. Student seems unsure of their attitude to their object.
- Limited personal voice or clichéd perspective.
- **Limited description makes it difficult to recognise or identify the talismanic object**
- **Does not explore the significance of their talismanic object**

- Intentional perspective (There is a focus on an idea, feeling or experience.)
- Evidence of the poet's individual voice.
- Provides insight into their world or experience, even if unsophisticated
- **Effective description or evocation of the object**
- **Intentional exploration of the significance of the talismanic object.**

- Controlled perspective.
- Distinctive voice.
- Perceptive insights about themselves or their world.
- **Sophisticated or highly effective description or evocation of the talismanic object**
- **Meaningful/affective insight into the significance of their talismanic object**

COMPLEXITY OF THE POEM

The degree to which the poet achieves:

a) Tension in words and ideas through:

- an engaging challenge, or paradox
- effective ambiguity, multiple meanings
- suggestion of connotations beyond the literal
- defiance of predictable syntax
- use of balance, parallelism, contrast

b) Compression to create an intense poetical experience through:

- avoiding unnecessary words
- economy of meaning
- distillation, condensation of ideas or feelings

c) Surprise through:

- challenging assumptions
- providing a new way of looking at the object

- Demonstrates little understanding of the compressed nature of poetical expression
- Unnecessary and/or unimaginative details OR vital detail is missing
- Poetical style is appropriate and effective

- Demonstrates understanding of the compressed nature of poetical expression.
- Some tension.
- A sense of discovery.
- Writes with honesty and authenticity

- Achieves complexity and textual integrity through the use of tension, compression and surprise which creates an intense and challenging poetically experience
- Demonstrates an exceptional poetical style

VOCABULARY, SOUND AND SYNTAX

The degree to which the poet effectively uses:

- fresh and effective vocabulary
- unconventional syntax
- syntax that generates the use of sound devices, which includes rhythm and may include alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, repetition, refrain and rhyme.
- awareness of the oral-aural connection

- Mundane, unimaginative, imprecise and/or ineffective use of vocabulary.
- No rhythm evident. Sounds like prose.
- Clichéd and ineffective use of sound devices.
- Constrained by rhyme scheme

- Imaginative, thoughtful, fresh use of vocabulary.
- Rhythm is mostly consistent with the sense of the poem.
- Syntax that generates sound qualities.

- Precise and/or evocative use of vocabulary.
- Rhythm complements and enhances the mood of the poem.
- Creative, evocative, musical syntax, which includes disharmony if appropriate.

IMAGERY AND FIGURATIVE DEVICES

The degree to which the poet effectively;

- includes similes, metaphor, personification and other figurative language
- selects and arranges concrete sensory detail
- employs images to represent abstract feelings, ideas
- suggests uncommon connections between images and figurative meaning
- demonstrates "metaphoric thought" through implied analogy

- Simplistic and/or unimaginative figurative structures.
- Lack of imagery OR a clichéd or confusing use of imagery.
- Abstract statements divorced from concrete imagery

- Figurative structures (which are mostly original) show the relationship of the concrete to the abstract.
- Clear images are used to portray ideas.

- Well crafted, effective and original figurative structures which may illustrate metaphoric or symbolic thought.
- Vivid, detailed images that create impact.
- May be experimental in use of imagery

SPACIAL DESIGN

The degree to which the poet demonstrates a visual concept through:

- the arrangement of words, phrases, lines and white space.
- choices of spacing, enjambment, punctuation, caesura
- indentation, upper/lower case letters, typography
- stanzaic pattern

- Unintentional or random design.
- Visual layout inconsistent with the content of the poem.
- Visual layout distracts the reader.

- Intentional design.
- Use of visual layout to assist the reader to access meaning in the poem.

- Careful and/or subtle design.
- Deliberate crafting of visual layout to enhance the reader's response to the poem.

CONTACT DETAILS

NOTES

If you would like to discuss any aspect of *The Poetry Object* please contact:

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You can also read more about The Poetry Object and The Red Room Company via the links below:

www.redroomcompany.org/projects/poetry-object
www.redroomcompany.org
www.redroomcompany.org/education

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