

POETRY
NATIONAL
DAY



Thursday October 9th
www.nationalpoetryday.co.uk

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

National Poetry Day 2008 is on **Thursday October 9th**. Our theme this year is **Work**. Whether yours is homework or housework, office work or building work, join us in celebrating poetry. Rediscover old favourites or discover new ones, and help us to put poetry at the heart of the nation, today and always.

This poster gives you tips on how to make poetry work for you – at school, in your workplace, at home or in the library. The links and information here will help you to plan an event, share a love of poetry or just enjoy some great poems all by yourself – wherever you are in the UK.

Schools

- Find detailed **lesson plans** by our expert Andrew Fusek Peters on our education pages. These will help you get the very best out of our Work theme, for children from 5 to 11. In Scotland, visit the Scottish Poetry Library's website for lesson plans based on their National Poetry Day postcards.
- **Book a poet** to bring the subject alive on National Poetry Day. Contact the Poetry Society or Apples and Snakes – both are expert in delivering poetry to schools. This is a busy time for poets so book early if you can.
- **Use this poster** to brighten the classroom. It's in July's *Junior Education* magazine or contact info@nationalpoetryday.co.uk for more copies.
- **Use this year's theme of work** to get children involved. What do your parents or grandparents do at work? How was the same job done a hundred years ago, or in a different country? What job would you like when you grow up? Use these ideas as a starting point and encourage children to write a poem – then enter it in the Old Possum's Children's Poetry Competition, run by the Children's Poetry Bookshelf.
- **Read poetry aloud** or hear it read by the poets on the Children's Poetry Archive. Don't be ashamed to read it just for fun. Poetry is a lifelong pleasure, as well as a subject for study.

Individuals

- Send an **e-poem** to everyone at work. From September there will be several attractive e-poems to choose from on our website www.nationalpoetryday.co.uk. We want them to circulate in every office, school and social group: enjoy them and pass them on.
- Set up a **Book Crossing** event in your workplace, using guidelines from our website. Swap poetry books and post anonymous reviews on a noticeboard or your intranet; then meet over coffee to discuss them. You'll learn things about your colleagues you never knew...
- Suggest a **poetry book** for your book group. Try the *Forward Book of Poetry 2009* – published in October 2008. It brings the best of new British poetry into one collection. There are many other anthologies on themes like love, parenthood or landscape.
- **Listen to a poem**. Poetry comes alive when read aloud. Visit our website to hear a selection of work on our theme; go to the Poetry Archive to hear a stunning selection of great poets; attend a *Pass on a Poem* event; or just read a poem aloud to yourself.
- **Challenge yourself**. Read work by a living poet you've never heard of; sign up for a poetry evening class or workshop; enter a poetry competition; go to a live poetry event such as a reading, a competitive 'slam' or an open mike event. Find one near you in the 'What's On' section of our website – and keep an eye on the local press for more.

Working to make the best of National Poetry Day?

It all starts with our website at www.nationalpoetryday.co.uk where you can:

- Find **events** in your part of the UK – or tell us about your own
- Read **poems** from our poet in residence, and others
- Hear **sound poems** and vote on which is the best
- Find help and **information** from other organisations
- Print a **lesson plan** to help make the most of our theme
- Immerse yourself** in great poetry on National Poetry Day 2008

Libraries

- Contact your council's **Literature Development Officer** or National Year of Reading co-ordinator to see what they have planned for National Poetry Day. They may know poets who could give a reading or lead a poetry writing workshop for you.
- Have a **poetry open day** – invite local poetry writing groups. Have a list of local groups, forthcoming events and websites for your readers to take away. Display poetry journals or flyers for competitions; encourage local audio magazines to include poems in their content for October. Have a simple poetry quiz for children...etc!
- **Get readers involved**. Invite library users to name a favourite poem on a card, and display their comments on a notice board, or have a reading of the top ten. Librarians can identify a favourite poem and pin it up with their picture, or find a poem on the theme of work and hand it out with every book loan (look on our website for copyright-free poems).
- **Update your titles** – prepare for National Poetry Day by taking stock. Do you need to bring in new titles to represent your community? Does your poetry collection include contemporary anthologies as well as the old favourites – and CDs from the Poetry Archive so that people can hear as well as read poetry?
- **Celebrate in style** – use this poster and work-related items to make the library look special on National Poetry Day. Make a display and show off your poetry books with pride!

Event Planners

- **Add your event to our listings**. Whether it's a coffee morning with poetry-loving friends, or a spectacular marathon of dub poets, visit our Your Events page to get it listed. It gets the biggest possible audience for you, and shows the massive variety of National Poetry Day activities.
- **Tell people about it**. Remind the local paper that it's National Poetry Day and explain your activity, using the template press release from our website (in 'Your Event'). See if the local radio station is interested in a reading, or will run a poetry competition. Design lively posters and put them in the library, the corner shop, the supermarket.
- **Make the event appetising**. Can you include a glass of wine, a piece of cake, or have your event over a 'working lunch' to link with this year's theme? Even a small gathering can be more fun with a little refreshment.
- **Dress the space** for your event and get people involved. Use our theme of work – road signs, office furniture or POET AT WORK signs will make it memorable; ask audience members to bring in something from their working life; use background music with a work theme.
- **Use everyday events** to showcase National Poetry Day. Approach the local supermarket, bus station or shopping mall to see if they will host a poet for the day. Offer to run a poetry pub quiz, or ask the local park to tie poems to trees. National events take place on a local level.

However you celebrate National Poetry Day, please tell us about it – send us a picture or a summary of what you did, and let us know your thoughts about how we can make National Poetry Day better each year. Mail us at info@nationalpoetryday.co.uk

Useful Contacts

Academi – comprehensive information on literature in Wales, including Welsh poetry and details of the National Poet of Wales, at www.academi.org, 0292 0472266 or post@academi.org

Apples and Snakes – www.applesandsnakes.org gives information on poets in schools, and live literature across England.

Book Crossing – www.bookcrossing.com explains the idea and will get you started. Release a book into the community and see what happens!

Children's Poetry Archive – www.poetryarchive.org/childrensarchive. Sound recordings of poets reading their own work – showing the importance of reading poetry aloud.

Children's Poetry Bookshelf – a work-themed competition and plentiful resources at www.childrenspoetrybookshelf.co.uk.

Forward Book of Poetry – available from www.amazon.co.uk or order from your bookshop.

Junior Education magazine – www.magazines.scholastic.co.uk or 0845 8504411. Online resources and magazine subscriptions for teachers.

Nawe – National Association of Writers in Education. Find a poet to visit your school or work on educational projects, at www.nawe.co.uk

National Year of Reading – www.yearofreading.org.uk includes further resources, links and contacts for regional co-ordinators who can help in your area.

Pass on a Poem – www.passonapoem.com explains the idea and lists groups around the UK.

Poetry Society – www.poetrysociety.org.uk Educational resources, events and competitions plus a long-established journal.

Poetry Archive – www.poetryarchive.org lets you hear contemporary poetry read by the poet, online or on CD.

Poetry Book Society – resources for adults and children, a helpful beginner's guide and the Children's Poetry Bookshelf online at www.poetrybooks.co.uk

Scottish Poetry Library – contemporary poetry in English, Scots and Gaelic, listings and resources including lesson plans, e-cards and Best Scottish Poems online. Find them at www.spl.org.uk or call 0131 5572876.

Seamus Heaney Centre – Northern Ireland's prime centre for the teaching and promotion of poetry is at www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SeamusHeaneyCentreforPoetry

For more copies of this poster contact info@nationalpoetryday.co.uk

