Earth Poem Structure



Animal Poem:

HOW TO BE AN ANIMAL FOR REAL, OR WRITING FROM AN ANIMAL'S POINT OF VIEW

Science Poetry Lesson link
Science Poetry Worksheet link

• Think of an animal you know well and are interested in or appreciate.
• Find facts about your chosen animal using the library or Google searches:
  ○ Rainforest Action Network
  ○ World Wildlife Federation
  ○ The Nature Conservancy
  ○ **Earth Trends**
  ○ Pics for learning choose your category
Consider using image searches of your animal on the Web and on Pinterest, to help you study details of your animal. If you can't observe your animal in person, watch videos of your animal in action. Describe their appearance & behavior: movement, eating, interactions, etc.
 	
What is its habitat?
Who are its predators?
What is its prey?
What does it eat?
Where does it sleep?
	Take those researched facts and use them to... BE your animal! Imagine what it would be like to live like that animal. How would you see the world differently? What you be aware of that you aren't now concerned with? What do you think?
	
	From your animal's Point of View (POV) describe:
	
	I smell…
	I see…
	I taste…
	I hear…
	I feel…
	I think about..
	I love…

Use these details to write your poem about your animal:

Student Examples:

I’m A Horse

I am a large
quarter horse.
I’m beige with
white socks.
I like to run fast
like the wind.
I run the barrels
super-duper fast.
like to feel
the person tugging
on my mouth
to turn.
I like to hear
my hooves
hitting the ground
very hard after my feet
are super sore.
I wish I won’t be killed
then I won’t be able to run
the barrels again
not ever again.

Katy Hubbell
5th grade

THE WOLF

The tall, long, slender animal
the wolf
intelligent, brave,
all strength at his sides.

The wolf,
always hungry,
looking for food,
wishing for forests
full of dead animals.

The wolf,
neat,
clean,
sloppy when he eats
but he washes afterwards.

The wolf,
mean,
nasty,
but completely sober to man,
his enemy is all around,
he know it.

The wolf,
fast,
quck
travels almost anywhere
The wolf.

David Burrows
4th grade

Other student examples: the blue whale, "The Forest of Owls" Anushka, Sixth grade.

Revision Work:

Now that you have the ideas down in writing, look again at your work. How might you:

- Tighten lines by getting rid of words you don't need?
- Play with word choice, choosing verbs and nouns to make the image more vivid and alive?
- Use line breaks to emphasize an idea?

Published Writer's Example:



Polar

GILLIAN CLARKE

Snowlight and sunlight, the lake glacial.
Too bright to open my eyes
in the dazzle and doze
of a distant January afternoon.

It's long ago and the house naps in the plush silence
of a house asleep, like absence,

I’m dreaming on the white bear’s shoulder,
paddling the slow hours, my fingers in his fur.

His eyes are glass, each hair a needle of light.
He’s pegged by his claws to the floor like a shirt on the line.
He is a soul. He is what death is. He is transparency.
a loosening floe on the sea.

But I want him alive.
I want him fierce
with belly and breath and growl and beating heart,
I want him dangerous,

I want to follow him over the snows
between the immaculate earth and now,
between the silence and the shot that rang
over the ice at the top of the globe,

when the map of the earth was something we knew by heart,
and they had not shot the bear,
had not loosed the ice,
had not, had not....

SKY POEMS

the sky was

Poem by E.E. Cummings

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sky

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spry

pinks shy

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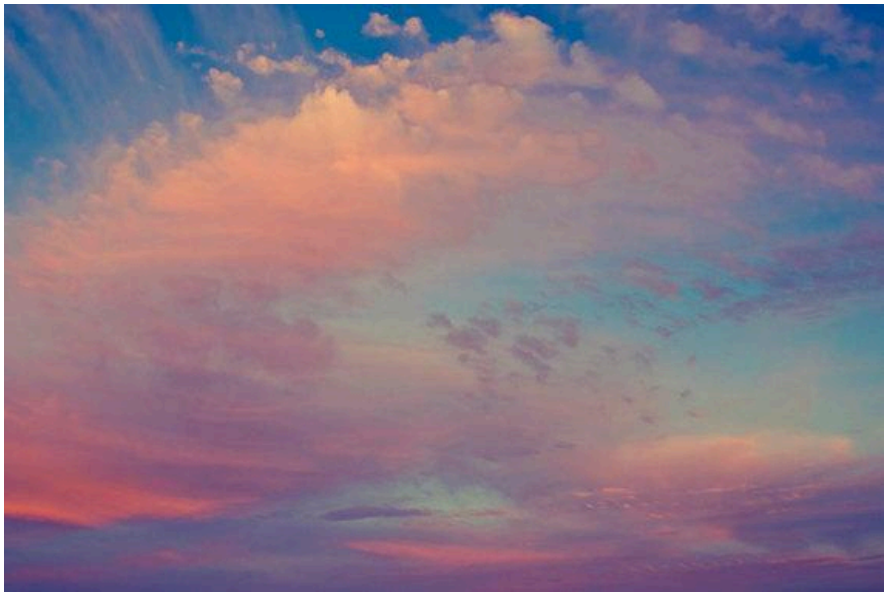
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Sky Poems

What do you call it when you compare two different things and you say one thing is another thing?



“What do you think the poet is feeling when he compares the sky to candy?”

When the writer says “the sky is blue,” it isn’t true at all. It depends on the weather and the time of day and the smog and the season.

“What color is the sky at sunset?”

What are your thoughts about the sky?
What is the sky like in different seasons, different times of day? Different places in the world? E. E. Cummings uses a striking metaphor to describe the sky: to him, the sky is candy! The color is so gorgeous, the air so sweet you could eat it.

How might you write about the sky that brings out your feeling about the sky in a vivid way using a metaphor? What object, sound, piece of music, or place is the sky?

Brainstorm some words and phrases that describe things the sky’s colors, textures, moods. List several possibilities that you could compare the sky to. **Use your imaginations—**to see something other than birds and clouds and airplanes.

Anything can happen in poetry! Follow E.E. Cummings’s example and play with the way the words dance across the page. Cummings wanted his poems to provide “excitement for the eye,” (to use John Dos Passos’ phrase.)

Look through your ideas, and create a line you want to begin with. Write a first draft of your poem. Use your words, phrases, and comparisons to bring out the attitude you have about the sky that you want the reader to experience.

Suggestion: Choose a dark blue colored font to write your poem with and a light-blue color for your document. You are creating your “slice of sky” with words as you write!

Student Example:

In the sky I see time
going fast and it's
pink red yellow blue
and it's out of control
the time in the sky is 10,015 miles away
the way to stop time
is to find the pink
button.

Bryana

One of the reasons why poetry is so important to writing: in playing with language, we learn to trust—and enjoy—the process. The magic happens in the act. The possibilities are limitless.



Source: Matthew Burgess, Teachers & Writers Collaborative.
Cloud Appreciation Society with daily cloud photos

Water Poems



Student Examples:

“The Stream,” by Avery, 13

Fish

Swimming in the river
Curving her small shiny body
Like shimmering stars swimming back
Into the deep sea
Being the fish of joy.

Ella Schofer-Wulf
nine years old

Guide:

Structure Suggestion #1

1. On the first line write a *noun* of your choice
2. On the second line write *two adjectives* joined by *and* to describe this noun
3. On the third line write a *verb* and an *adverb* to describe this noun in action
4. Start the fourth line with *like* or *as* followed by a comparison
Start the final line with *if only* followed by *a wish.*

Structure Suggestion #2

line 1 the topic for the poem
line 2, 3, 4 three places the topic occurs
line #5 the word *like, then three similes, one on each line*
line #9 an -ing word that goes with line 1
line #10 a few words that completes the idea



Wishes/ Lies/ Dream

THE DREAM KEEPER

Langston Hughes



Bring me all of your dreams,

You dreamer,

Bring me all your

Heart melodies

That I may wrap them

In a blue cloud-cloth

Away from the too-rough fingers

Of the world.

Daydreamers

Eloise Greenfield

Daydreamers…

holding their bodies still
for a time
letting the world turn around them

while their dreams hopscotch,
doubledutch, dance,

thoughts rollerskate,
crisscross,
bump into hope and wishes.

Dreamers
thinking up new ways,
looking toward new days,

planning new tries,
asking new whys.
Before long,
hands will start to move again,
eyes turn outward,
bodies shift for action,
but for this moment they are still,

they are
the daydreamers,
letting the world dizzy itself
without them.

Scenes passing through their minds
make no sound
glide from hiding places

promenade and return
silently

the children watch their memories
with spirit-eyes
seeing more than they saw before

feeling more
or maybe less
than they felt the time before
reaching with spirit-hands
to touch the dreams
drawn from their yesterdays.

They will not be the same
after this growing time,
this dreaming.
In their stillness they have moved
forward

toward womanhood
toward manhood.
This dreaming has made them
new.

Dream Dust

Gather out of stardust
Earth-dust,
Cloud-dust,
Storm-dust,
And splinters of hail,
One handful of dream-dust,
Not for sale.

Langston Hughes

Dream Poems-- the dreams of our lives



Guide: Assign yourself some directions:

Make each line a dream.

OR

Make each line a lie.

Options: Create rules for your poem such as:

- Each line MUST mention a color.
- Each line MUST mention a city.
- Each line MUST mention a word in another language you know (Spanish, Hindi, Korean, French, etc)

Guide:

- Focus your idea.
- Build your idea with clearly described images, vivid verbs, specific nouns, and figures of speech.
- Use effective line breaks and stanzas.

Poems About Dreams



A dream is a wish your heart makes

When you're fast asleep.

--Walt Disney tells us in Cinderella.

Dreams speak in images and tell a story in images. How many of you have dreams?

- **Share a dream.**
- **Jot down a dream. Draw your dream.**
- **Write out the dream so it is compelling.**
- **Select the key elements and turn the dream into a poem.**
- **Start the dream in the middle of the action. Avoid starting with phrases like, "Last night I had a dream, and in my dream" or "then in my dream."**
- **Keep lines short.**
- **Concentrate on bringing across the images that can be seen in the mind as the dream is remembered.**
    - **If people speak in the dream, let them speak. If dogs fly, let them fly! Get in the colors, sounds, and textures of the dream.**
    - **It's better to put in too much detail on the first draft; the excess can be cut back in subsequent drafts, if necessary.**
- **Avoid rhyme and meter.**
- **Keep the writing clear and simple.**
- **Write "as if" you remember. Make up what you don't recall.**
- **Stop the poem where the dream narrative ends, without forced conclusions, technicolor sunsets, or blazing violins!**

Example Published Poem:

The Room

Gregory Orr

With crayons and pieces of paper, I entered the empty room.
I sat on the floor and drew pictures all day.
One day I held a picture against the bare wall:
it was a window. Climbing through,

I stood in a sloping field
at dusk. As I began walking, night settled.
Far ahead in the valley, I saw the lights
of a village, and always at my back, I felt
the white room swallowing what was passed.

Student Example:

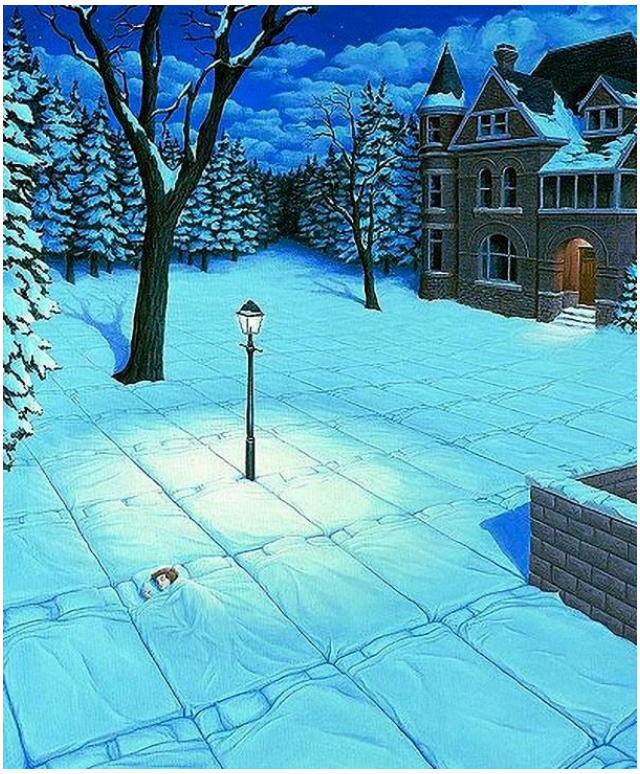
I didn't dream of blue
The blue of the fish of the sea
I didn't dream of ghosts
Ghosts in haunted houses
I also didn't dream of the desert
Hot desert, hot and evil
I also didn't dream of women
Women, red and beautiful

Salvador Perez, grade 3 Calaveras School, Hollister with poet Patrice Vecchione

Writing Guide:

- **Focus your idea.**

- **Build your idea with clearly described images, vivid verbs, specific nouns, and figures of speech.**
- **Use effective line breaks and stanzas.**





Sensory Exercise for a Scene with an Emotion

Think of a strong emotion for your scene, or the central emotion you want to show and remember a time when you felt it.

Write three to five lines communicating the experience of that emotion at that time.

You may use the formula, "Fear [or whatever] looks like, sounds like, etc. But you might want to experiment with other patterns, such as:

Example:

Fear:

Glances nervously over the travel posters on the wall;
Shifts around on the cracked vinyl seat;
Swallows the iron-tinged saliva that wells up under my tongue;
Smells the medicinal whiff of Novocain;
Hearing the dread sentence: "The dentist will see you now."