

Red
Room
Poetry

Poetry in
Meaningful Ways



POETRY
2018
OBJECT

Red Room Poetry

Red Room Poetry's vision is to make poetry a meaningful part of everyday life. We create poetic projects and learning programs in collaboration with a spectrum of poets, schools, communities and partners for positive social impact. Our mission is to make poetry accessible to all, especially those who face the greatest barriers to creative opportunities.

Find out more at redroomcompany.org



Poetry Object

Poetry Object invites students (years 3–10) and their teachers to write poems inspired by their own special and curious objects. Poetry Object is the largest free poetry-writing competition in Australasia.

Find out more: <https://redroomcompany.org/projects/poetry-object/>



What Makes a Special Object?

A special or 'talismanic' object may be curious because of its appearance, shape, markings or special personal history.

Is it a 'talisman' that guides and protects you? A reminder of an adventure or the keeper of a secret? What makes this object special or unusual? What memories does it hold? What is its history, and what does it remind you of?



Guide to Curious Objects

NATIONAL MUSEUM

OF AUSTRALIA:

Joan Richmond's Driving Goggles

Discussion Questions

- What might Joan Richmond have seen when she was wearing these goggles?
- Joan Richmond's goggles are cracked. How do you think she cracked her goggles?
- Why do you think Joan kept them for many years even though they were broken?



Poetry Writing Prompt

Imagine what these goggles have seen through their journeys. Has your special object seen some interesting sights? Write about what your object has witnessed in its time with you.

Guide to Curious Objects

MUSEUM of APPLIED ARTS and SCIENCES:

David Hain's Portable Radio



Discussion Questions

- Why do you think David surrounded himself with radios?
- Have you ever tried to repair something to keep it alive?
- What special object would you take with you on holidays?

Poetry Writing Prompt

Imagine you are creating instructions for someone to make your curious object themselves, from scratch. Write an instructional poem for your imagined object maker! Be as fantastical as you like.

Guide to Curious Objects

ART GALLERY of NSW:

Just like drops in time,
nothing by Ernesto Neto



Discussion Questions

- What does the title reveal about this artwork?
- Imagine walking through this artwork. What is the impact? How does it smell or feel?
- Imagine you are the artist. Write to a friend telling them about this artwork and how you approached making and installing the work.

Poetry Writing Prompt

Imagine your object in silhouette or shadow. How would it look as words on a page? Create a 'concrete poem' that mimics the shape of your object.

COMMISSIONED POEMS

Shastra Deo



[About Shastra](#)

[Activities inspired by this poem](#)

शिवलिङ्ग (Shivling)

Rumour claims it should not be kept
within a home, but it sits now in our spare

room, brass-wrought cobra braced
at its back. I see it, often enough, during prayer,

spent my youth waiting for fissures to cleave
all stirps: a beak to breach soot-soft shell

when my mother doused it in milk. An offering,
perhaps, for feather-pitch creature – happy

to live lineage unknown, settle
in palm for hymns repeated. I have not yet

held it but know it won't yet yield.
Could I crush with it my migratory history

– pluck dirt-dark plumage from my breast –
my dun body would, incarnated, re

-main, aniconism marked for gods
alone. I know not what comes after

annihilation, only that my mother prays
we have strength enough for flight.



COMMISSIONED POEMS

Arjun von Caemmerer



[About Arjun](#)

[Activities inspired by
this poem](#)

Dolmetsch

For Hanna Neumann (von Caemmerer) (1914-1971)

Stolid. Brown. Plastic.
The Acme Of Uncool. And yet,
This instrument was once owned & blown
By one who, defiant and smoking,
Strolled right past the Nazis;

Who forsook her own country
To raise five children in exile;
Who foraged wildflowers and mushrooms
To fill her bicycle basket
While her husband went wandering.

Exploring pure mathematics,
She broke beyond brackets
Until a blood vessel burst,
Flood-drowned her brain.
A University building now carries her name.

Sometimes I blow her Bakelite blockflöte,
Digits & breath rerouting resistance
Rediscovering and rendering
Hanna's past loves — her Telemann & Co.,
Whose Art of Expiring transfigures time.



COMMISSIONED POEMS

Courtney Sina Meredith



[About Courtney](#)

[Activities inspired by this poem](#)

Rosary

I used to watch her pray
 green beads in soft palms
she worked herself to the bone at the denim factory
 but when she came home
her rosary was waiting.

I used to open her jewellery box
 and hold the rosary in my hands
breathing in her prayers for the aiga to prosper
 for the rose bush to flower
for life to be easier on her granddaughter.

We used to go along to midnight mass
 and watch the women show their children
angels painted in the windows
 while the congregation rose
to sing Christmas hymns.

We said goodbye too soon
 the house lost her scent
but the roses bloomed
 and I went out into the world
with her rosary.



COMMISSIONED POEMS

Yvette Holt



[About Yvette](#)

[Activities inspired by this poem](#)

yeperenye notes

last night, by the falling waistcoat
 of a half-caste desert moon
discreetly, deliberately
 i heel away from somnolent flutes
water-coloured caterpillars and testaments of olde
 \
into a floral jar of untitled clay-pans and annotated spinifex
 inhaling burgundy stained pages of handwritten riverbeds
silently, incessantly
 quilling louvered hours of jaundiced memories
 \
by ceremonial seas of ante meridiem
 echoing curlews ribbon my desiccated tongue
mirroring speech
 if only occasionally
quite lucidly, most insanely
i delight in the sweet palm of darkness



COMMISSIONED POEMS

Quinn Eades



[About Quinn](#)

[Activities inspired by
this poem](#)

Inheritance

Crystal hung window,
the way you throw
rainbow shards at the walls
when the earth tilts towards the sun.

My sister and I begged you
to tell us what it was like
out there after you were gone.
I'll send you a message, you said,
your violet eyes full of intent.

You left from a Sydney hospice bed,
the covers barely raised.
Too thin for your body
to make an impression,
your head cradled above
the broken stalk of your neck.

Months later I was given my inheritance.
A crystal swinging
from a turquoise beaded fishing line.
I hung it in my window,
where it would catch light best.

I waited for the sun,
for your redblueyelloworange yell,
for a message made of light and cut glass.
A message that sends as the earth turns.
All colour, the brightest hello.



COMMISSIONED POEMS

Scotty Wings



[About Scotty](#)

[Activities inspired by this poem](#)

Post-Extinction Banquet

You know the star on my wrist?
Gutted.

The infinity symbol on the back of my neck?
Chewed.

The quill on my forearm?
Snapped and shattered.

The guy with a flower sprouting from his head?
Gouged out,
Eyeball hanging.

A lone petal floats into a pond of blood.
Bloop bloop.

The bowl of noodles – the one above my elbow?
Slurped.
Empty.

The dot-work on my hip?
A giant's footprint smeared the spots together.

Every panel of ink on my body?
Teeth marks.

Every tattoo I have?
Yeah.

Every single tattoo.
Has been eaten.

Ever since I got that one?
You know?
Of
the T-Rex?



PRE-WRITING PROMPTS

Metaphors

A metaphor is a poetic device that makes a direct comparison between two things, without the use of the words as or like. Share ideas to create some metaphors.

Ways of Seeing

Draw your object in as many different ways as you can:

- eyes closed
- unstopping line
- left-handed

Drawing Inner Worlds

Imagine the inner world of your special object. Do lorikeets live inside your pocketwatch? Is there a planet hiding within your smallest babushka doll? Draw what your eyes cannot see.



PRE-WRITING PROMPTS

Guiding Questions

- Write an imagined history for your special object. Where was it 'born'? Which land did it come from? How did it find you?
- What is the secret of your special object? Does it have a secret mission?
- Write about the adventures that your object embarks upon while you sleep.
- Describe your most memorable moment with your special object.
- Imagine your object can speak. What does it say?
- Imagine you are describing your object to someone without sight or over the phone. Describe your object with a list of vivid images.



PRE-WRITING PROMPTS

Additional Activities

- Create a list of sensory similes that imagine what your object smells, feels, tastes, sounds and looks like?
 - How is the object like an animal you know? Write a line or two in which you explain how the object is like an animal.
 - 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.
- Use alliteration to describe your object.
 - Research the origins of your special object. Create a myth about its creation. You may use real facts or weave a fictional tale. You can use these ideas to write an ode inspired by your object.



PRE-WRITING PROMPTS

Additional Activities

- What does your object represent? Write three symbols to express what your object means to you.
- Use different styles of voice to evoke particular emotional responses in your reader. Experiment with writing from the voice of someone who is: angry, excited and/or amazed.
- Use personification to write three first-person 'I' sentences from the perspective of your curious object.
- List five facts about your object. Use hyperbole to exaggerate.
- Think of the name and the features of your object. Create three puns based on your wordplay. Include the puns in your poem.
- Explain how you would feel if your object was lost or destroyed.



Overcoming Cliché

Starter Clichés

E.g: As fast as a cheetah

As silent as...

As tender as...

As crunchy as...

As ancient as...

As strange as...



Original and Unusual Imagery

E.g: As fast as a comet tail whispering
into the cobalt sky

As silent as...

As tender as...

As crunchy as...

As ancient as...

As strange as...

Block-out Poetry

Write a micro-story about your object. When you finish, choose words and phrases that you want to stand out from the rest of the text. With a marker, circle the words you want to keep and cross out everything else. Write out the remaining words to capture your new poem.

Poem Lineation

When drafting your poem, write out three versions with different lineation and line break choices in each. Decide on which version best expresses your poetic voice and message.



Using Your Pre-writing

- Read over your writing and circle or highlight any images or words that stand out or appeal to you.
- Circle any images or phrases that you feel are poetic.
- Circle or highlight any words, phrases or images that describe your special talismanic object.



- Circle any phrases or words that explain why your object is important to you.
- Circle any words or phrases that you feel might go into a good title for your poem.
- Put a line through anything on the previous pages that you feel is boring, unfitting or unhelpful to you in composing your poem.
- Copy out everything that is circled or highlighted onto a new sheet of paper. Use this material as the starting point or stimulus for your poem.

Editing Your Poem

- Read your poem aloud. Do some words or phrases sound like they don't belong? Remove these and find other ways to express your ideas.
- Find the most important line or idea. Do the surrounding lines support this? If not, cut or rewrite them.
- Review your adverbs. Instead of adverbs, opt for an evocative verb (e.g. use 'sprint' or 'dash' instead of 'run quickly').
- The opening lines set the tone of the poem. The tone is the emotion or attitude of the speaker or narrator. Make sure the tone of your stanzas remains consistent.
- Peer review. Ask for another opinion. Other readers will have fresh eyes. Listen to their suggestions and revise your work. Use [this peer reviewing guide](#) for the best results!

FINAL POEM

- Compose an original poem inspired by your special object.
- Your poem should be no more than 20 lines in length and should show that you've explored poetic techniques (e.g. simile, metaphor, imagery, alliteration...).
- After drafting your poem, remember to edit it individually or in pairs, checking spelling and removing clichés.

Enter the Competition

Submit your poem [here](#) (make sure your school is registered for Poetry Object 2018 first!)

Deadline: Friday 28 Sept 2018, 5pm AEST.

All submitted poems will be published in our [digital library](#).

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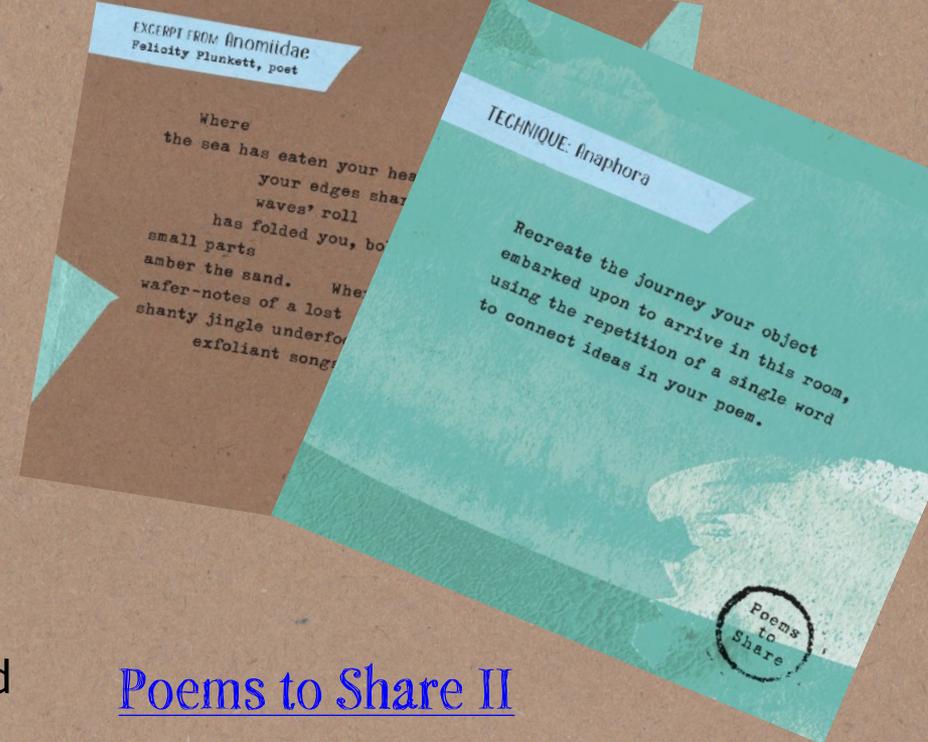
THANK YOU!

Thank you for participating in [Red Room Poetry Object](#). We look forward to reading and publishing your poems! If you have any questions, contact our Poetry Object Coordinator, Emma Rose Smith.

t: (02) 9319 5090

e: emma@redroomcompany.org

w: redroomcompany.org/projects/poetry-object



Poems to Share II

Announcing our new print and digital resource that features 40 x poetic activity cards with poems by students, teachers and commissioned poets. To win your copy, email us with your name, school and phone by July 30, 2018.