

Handfish and Jellyfish

Writing, games and paper cut-outs for
KS 1 National Poetry Day 2013 by Mandy Coe

Based on a poem by Roger McGough



This activity includes writing poems, performance, colouring in cut-outs and a film-clip – all exploring NPDs theme of 'water'. Depending on your Year Group, this activity can be broken into a series of short activities, or linked together and expanded to include an exploration of the water cycle and writing a short poem on the journey of one drop of water.

You will need:

- A copy of the poem, 'Handfish' by Roger McGough, found on the next page.
- Copies of the [jellyfish-poem template](#) (with example text), found on the lesson plans page of the National Poetry Day website.
- Felt-pens and scissors, (if you want to display the jellyfish you will also need string).
- Access to the internet to show the National Geographic clip on jelly-fish, and a BBC film-clip on the water-cycle.
- Origami boat, found [here](#).



(i) Reading Activity

Read the poem aloud. Can you see how hands might become fish? Drawing an eye on your hands (on the base of your thumb) will make them even fishier. Wiggle fingers and make them swim. Read the poem again, this time the handfish join in the poem by acting out the movements. People can't go underwater to tickle the sea's bare bottom... It's too deep and we couldn't hold our breath that long! But we can pretend, by tickling the carpet. What do hands do when there's a nip in the air? Some people run their hands together to keep them warm, or tuck them into their armpits.

Handfish

by Roger McGough

Handfish
are grand fish

they swim
about in pairs

hold each other
when they fall in love

and when
they say their prayers

* * *

They tickle
the sea's bare bottom

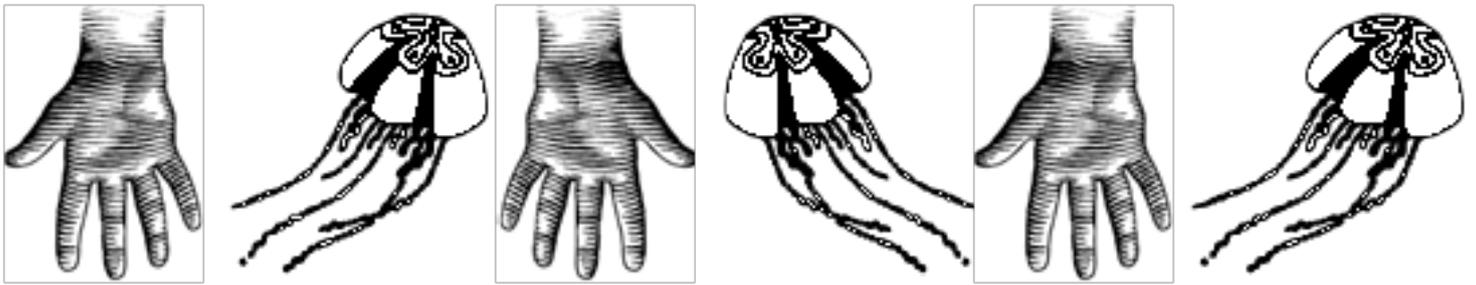
playful
as little kittens

and when
there is a nip in the ocean

wear brightly
coloured mittens.

From *Imaginary Menagerie*
Frances Lincoln Children's Books

(ii) Cut-Out Jellyfish



If we can make our hands into fish we certainly transform them into jellyfish. Do you know what jellyfish look like? They are astonishingly beautiful and mysterious creatures that live underwater.

1. National Geographic has an amazing (2 minute) film, especially made for children, showing thousands of jellyfish swimming. Click the link [here](#) (for the full address, see below).
2. Fish and jellyfish all dance in air and water; now you have seen the jellyfish film you will have an even better idea of their movements. Try turning your hands into jellyfish and make them dance around the room the way you saw the jellyfish move in the film.
3. Take your jellyfish cut-out from the National Poetry Day lesson plans page and fill it with a few words describing what you saw. See the cut-out example to get some ideas. Lay out your jelly-fish-words any way you want – fresh ideas are always welcome! Use crayons to make your words colourful and as big as you can.
4. After you have filled it with words, cut the jellyfish out; snip lines upwards to create the tentacles, then hang the jellyfish up and watch the cut-up words dance in the tides.

Here are some words to get you started filling your jelly-fish.

*up slow wave dance waggle swim swoop waving
close wriggling sway fly waft twist turn round spiral
curl weave down deep plunge reel whirl flick flurry
open hurry gather hold down rising pulse delicate
see-through flap quick flow rushing let go trail
wiggle move touch brush dangling swoosh swish
beckoning pointing diving*

(iii) Follow-up and resources:

Click [here](#) to see fish swimming, live, in the Cayman Islands (remember the time difference, 6 hours behind UK, or you will only see fish sleeping!).

UN Year of Water

To explore the UN Year of Water project click [here](#)

Other poems to read at www.nationalpoetryday.co.uk

Big Red Boots Tony Mitton, *Come Into This Poem*, (Francis Lincoln)

SPLISH SPLASH SPLOSH! James Carter, *Hey Little Bug: poems for little creatres*, (Francis Lincoln Children's Books)

Peepshow Roger McGough, *Lucky*, (Francis Lincoln Children's Books)

Three Ships Tony Mitton, *Come Into This Poem*, (Francis Lincoln)

The Salt Boy Tony Mitton, *Come Into This Poem*, (Francis Lincoln)

The Red Boat Wes Magee, *Here Come the Creatures!* (Francis Lincoln Children's Books)

Full internet addresses for links

National Geographic film-clip of jellyfish:

<http://video.nationalgeographic.co.uk/video/kids/animals-pets-kids/invertebrates-kids/jellyfish-kids/>

To explore the UN Year of Water project visit:

<http://www.unwater.org/water-cooperation-2013/youth-and-kids/en/>

To see fish swimming, live, in the Cayman Islands visit:

<http://www.oceanfrontiers.com/webcam.html>