

Splashing Out With Poetry

A reading and performance activity for Early Years
National Poetry Day 2013 by Mandy Coe

Based on a poem by James Carter



The title of James Carter's poem, **Splish Splash Splosh!** is the same as his refrain (the line repeated at the end of each verse). A refrain like this makes it very easy for children to take part when someone is reading the poem aloud.



(i) Reading:

- Read poem ([here](#) or on page 3) out loud and ask the children to join in with the refrain. You can conduct them (finger to lips, or hand behind an ear) to vary how loud or quiet the refrain can be (repeat the refrain as often as you want).
- Invite one of the children up to be your 'conductor' for the refrain.



(ii) Writing:

Now you are familiar with the bones of this poem, try creating a new group poem using the same structure. Start by making up just one verse – that's just THREE lines. Use a whiteboard or flip-chart to scribe up the words.

- You can use James's refrain, *Splish Splash Splosh!* Or try a new one, for example: **Drip Drop Drip!**
- If you use *Drip Drop Drip!*, ask the children what things they know that drip...

So... by adding '*do it*' to the end of each line, *leaky taps*, *gutters* and *laundry* will become a poem like this...

Drip Drop Drip!

1. Leaky garden taps do it
2. Drainpipes and drains do it
3. Trousers on the line do it
Drip Drop Drip!

Ideas flow faster when you're not worried about being right or wrong! But if you do get a bit stuck, try asking what might drip in places such as

- *the kitchen,*
- *in a forest,*
- *in the snow,*
- *in a cave,*
- *in a storm*
- *... or when you've got a running cold!*

If you can come up with three more ideas, you can create another verse!

Here are a few more watery refrains allowing you to explore other subjects:

Sail Across the Sea!

Dive in the Deeps!

Circle Round the Lake!

Splash in the Sink!

Slip Across the Ice!

Bubble in the Pot!

Swish Across the Sky!

These titles/refrains will encourage children to consider who and what exists in/under the sea, the sky, the Antarctic as well as exploring domestic scenes about the use of water in cooking and washing.

Splish Splash Splosh!

by James Carter

Babies in the bath do it
Puddles on the path do it
Grannies for a laugh do it
Splish Splash Splosh!

Dirty welly boots do it
dainty little shoes do it
drippy doggies too do it
Splish Splash Splosh!

Waterfalls and waves do it
giant killer whales do it
little fishes' tails do it
Splish Splash Splosh!

Buses rushing past do it
rivers flowing fast do it
raindrops fall at last do it
Splish Splash Splosh!

Swimmers in the pool do it
penguins in the zoo do it
dolphins in the blue do it
Splish Splash Splosh!

In the summer sun do it
do it as it's fun do it
come on everyone do it
Splish Splash Splosh!



From ***Hey Little Bug: poems for little creatures***
Frances Lincoln Children's Books



(iii) Follow-up and resources:

Colour and cut out

Key Stage 2 activities include cut-outs, which Early Years could use to colour in and feature in their poems. Jellyfish cut-out available on the [lesson plans page](#) of the National Poetry Day website.

Film clip online

A (two-minute) film-clip for children, on the magic of jellyfish, can be seen by clicking the link [here](#).

Live coral reef web-cam online

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 suitable for Early Years to read at www.nationalpoetryday.co.uk

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

[Peepshow](#) Roger McGough, *Lucky*, (Frances Lincoln Children's Books)

[Handfish](#) Roger McGough, *Lucky*, (Frances Lincoln Children's Books)

[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>