Introduction to Poetry – Billy Collins

I ask them to take a poem
and hold it up to the light
like a colour slide

or press an ear against its hive.

I say drop a mouse into a poem
and watch him probe his way out,

or walk inside the poem’s room
and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want them to waterski
across the surface of a poem
waving at the author’s name on the shore.

But all they want to do
is tie the poem to a chair with rope
and torture a confession out of it.

They begin beating it with a hose
to find out what it really means.
A. Readers’ Theatre

Mornings – Alan Maley

Rustling sheet, Start by whispering
Shuffling feet,
Creaking bones,
Stifled groans,
Chirping, crowing
Noses blowing,
Toilets flushing,
Bath taps gushing,
Coffee cups clatter,
Breakfast chatter,
Neighbours singing,
Telephones ringing,
Radios tuning,
Traffic booming,
Motorbikes thrumming,
Power drills drumming,
Jet planes thunder –
I just wonder
At the NOISE!

Gradually speak louder

B. Sound Effects

In the Kitchen – John Cotton

In the kitchen
After the aimless
Chatter of the plates,
The murmurings of the gas,
The chuckle of the water pipes
And the sharp exchanges
Of knives, forks and spoons,
Comes the serious quiet,
When the sink slowly clears its throat
And you can hear the occasional rumble
Of the refrigerator’s tummy
As it digests the cold.
## C. Speech Gym in Role

### Be Glad Your Nose Is On Your Face – Jack Prelutsky

| A. Calm | Be glad your nose is on your face, not pasted on some other place, for if it were where it is not you might dislike your nose a lot. |
| B. Angry | |
| C. Excited | |
| D. Disappointed | |

| A. Sick | Imagine if your precious nose were sandwiched in between your toes, that clearly would not be a treat, for you’d be forced to smell your feet. |
| B. Energetic | |
| C. Nervous | |
| D. Determined | |

| A. Interested | Your nose would be a source of dread were it attached atop your head, it soon would drive you to despair, forever tickled by your hair. |
| B. Bored | |
| C. Sad | |
| D. Happy | |

| A. Thoughtful | Within your ear, your nose would be an absolute catastrophe, for when you were obliged to sneeze, your brain would rattle from the breeze. |
| B. Dramatic | |
| C. Informative | |
| D. Preacherly | |

| A. Snobbish | Be glad your nose is on your face, not pasted on some other place, for if it were where it is not you might dislike your nose a lot. |
| B. Disgusted | |
| C. Scared | |
| D. | |
D. Illustrating a Theme

Commuter – Alan Maley

He lives in a house in the suburbs
He rises each morning at six.
He runs for the bus to the station,
Buys his paper and looks at the pics.

He always gets in the same carriage,
Puts his briefcase up on the rack.
Thinks miserably of his office,
And knows he can never turn back.

He gets to his desk by nine thirty,
Wondering what he should do.
When the coffee break comes at eleven,
He knows he still hasn’t a clue.

His lunch break is quite uninspiring,
He sits it out in the canteen.
It’s fish and chips, mince or potatoes,
A choice that’s quite literally obscene.

At five he runs back to the station,
Gets in the same carriage again,
Unfolds his evening paper,
Pulls a veil down over his brain.

E. Prose & Poetry

A Sad Song about Greenwich Village – Frances Park

She lives in a garret
Up a haunted stair,
And even when she’s frightened
There’s nobody to care.

She cooks so small a dinner
She dines on the smell,
And even if she’s hungry
There’s nobody to tell.

She sweeps her musty lodging
As the dawn steals near,
And even when she’s crying
There’s nobody to hear.
I haven’t seen my neighbour
Since a long time ago,
And even if she’s dead
There’s nobody to know.

**Woman may have lain dead for five years – Andy Philip, Press Association**

The body of a pensioner may have lain undiscovered for five years in a city centre flat, it was revealed today. Tests are being carried out to identify the body of the woman, named locally as Isabella Purvis, who would have been 90 this year. Officers forced their way into the flat in the Canonmills area of Edinburgh after a neighbour reported water dripping through the ceiling.

The owners of a nearby florist told the Edinburgh Evening News they had not seen the elderly woman since 2004. Giovanni Cilia, who owns the Fioritalia florist below Ms Purvis’s flat, said he was shocked at how long it took to find her. He said, “How did no one notice the smell, or wonder where she was? I heard there was a big pile of letters and bills behind the door. I used to see her walk past the shop maybe four times a week.”

Douglas McLellan, of Help the Aged in Scotland, said, “This is a tragic case but perhaps not as surprising as people think. If she was not receiving care treatment from anyone and not receiving social care, then the likelihood of her being found quickly is minimal.” Mr McLellan urged people to take more notice of their neighbours and “knock on doors” if there is any concern. He added, “Society has fractured. We’re not in the same units as we used to be. People might not phone their own grandma more than once a month.”
F. Animated Poems

Cinders – Roger McGough

After the pantomime, carrying you back to the car
On the coldest night of the year
My coat, black leather, cracking in the wind.

Through the darkness we are guided by a star
It is the one the Good Fairy gave you
You clutch it tightly, your magic wand.

And I clutch you tightly for fear you blow away
For fear you grow up too soon and - suddenly,
I almost slip, so take it steady down the hill.

Hunched against the wind and hobbling
I could be mistaken for your grandfather
And sensing this, I hold you tighter still.

Knowing that I will never see you dressed for the Ball
Be on hand to warn you against Prince Charmings
And the happy ever afters of pantomime.

On reaching the car I put you into the baby seat
And fumble with straps I have yet to master
Thinking, if only there were more time. More time.

You are crying now. Where is your wand?
Oh no. I can’t face going back for it
Let some kid find it in tomorrow’s snow.

Waiting in the wings, the witching hour.
Already the car is changing. Smells sweet
Of ripening seed. We must go. Must go.

Opening shot: man holding young daughter in his arms. She is holding a wand in her hand. Close-up of him shielding her from the cold.

Close-up of girl’s face as she looks at her wand.

G. List-type poems

A is for apples that I crunch in my mouth

B is for ...................................................................................................................................................

C is for ....................................................................................................................................................

etc.
Red is the sun sinking,
Blue .................................................................
Green .................................................................
Purple .................................................................

**H. Stem/frame poems**

I like ....................... because .......................  
I like ....................... because .......................  
I like ....................... because .......................  
But I hate ....................... because .......................  

**I. Missing Vocabulary**

**Listen - Pie Corbett**

Listen,  
can you hear the bus grumbling by?  
Listen,  
can you hear the glass bottles _________?  
Listen,  
can you hear the jet _________ overhead?  
Listen,  
can you hear the police car’s siren _________?  
Listen,  
can you hear the shopper’s feet clacking?  
Listen,  
can you hear the cars’ engines grinding?  
Listen,  
can you hear the distant train _________?  
Listen,  
can you hear yourself _________?
Words – Alan Maley

Some words are happy and others are sad.
Some words are perfumed and others smell ______________.
Some words are ______________ and some words are sly.
Some words are slimy and others are ______________.
Some words are cold and some words are ______________.
Some words are ______________ and some words are not.
Some words are ______________ but other words cheat.
Some words are bitter, while others are ______________.
Some words move quickly; some words move ______________.
Some words are ______________, while some others grow.
Some words we use ______________ and some quite a lot.
Some words are remembered, and others ______________.

J. Similes

Coat – Vicki Feaver

Sometimes I have wanted
to throw you off
like a heavy coat.

Sometimes I have said
you would not let me
breathe or move.

But now that I am free
to choose light clothes
or none at all

I feel the cold
and all the time I think
how warm it used to be.
K. Jumbled Poems

a. Put the following lines in order by numbering them from 1 to 8. You should be able to form a poem made up of two stanzas.

That cannot fly.  
Life is a broken-winged bird  
For if dreams die  
Hold fast to dreams  

For when dreams go  
Hold fast to dreams  
Frozen with snow.  
Life is a barren field

Langston Hughes

b. Now write your own four-line stanza. Make sure to use the following words:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dreams</th>
<th>life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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Q. Sounds, Sights, Actions

In Our School – Pie Corbett

In our school we heard –
children chattering while they worked,
pots and pans clattering in the canteen,
the school clock tick tock.

In our school we saw –
a photo of a blue whale deep beneath the sea,
a painting of yellow flowers,
a velvet curtain.

In our school we saw –
crows pecking in the playground,
Mrs Bancroft listening to children read,
the little one dancing to music.

R. Upside Down Poem

I am Standing on my Head – Pie Corbett

I am standing on my head
so that I can see the world from an ant’s point of view.

I am standing on my head
so I can hold up the world.

I am standing on my head

I am standing on my head

I am standing on my head
S. Model Poems

In two minds – Roger McGough

What I love about night
   is the silent certainty of its stars
What I hate about stars
   is the overwhelming swank of their names
What I love about names
   is that every complete stranger has one
What I hate about one
   is the numerical power it holds over its followers
What I love about followers
   is the unseemly jostle to fill the footsteps
What I hate about footsteps
   is the way they gang up in the darkness
What I love about darkness
   is the soft sighing of its secrets
What I hate about secrets
   is the excitement they pack into their short lives
What I love about lives
   is the variety cut from the same pattern
What I hate about pattern
   is its dull insistence on conformity
What I love about conformity
   is the seed of rebelliousness within
What I hate about within
   is the absence of landscape, the feel of the weather
What I love about the weather
   is its refusal to stay in at night
What I hate about night
   is the silver certainty of its stars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor Child</th>
<th>Always ... ing ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always playing in muddy puddles</td>
<td>Always ... ing ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always getting in scrapes and muddles</td>
<td>Poor ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor child</td>
<td>Adj + noun, Adj + noun</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dirty clothes, dirty hair</td>
<td>Almost always ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost always on welfare care</td>
<td>Poor ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor child</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Living in the dirty slums of a town</td>
<td>Poor ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>When will they ever pull them down?</td>
<td>... ing in ...</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>When will they ever ...</td>
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