

### Background notes

This activity is best used once the pupils are familiar with the anthology, **A Time to Speak and a Time to Listen**. They should have had the opportunity to study individual poems in depth and to read them in their own time.

Create opportunities for the pupils to have access to the anthology, such as first thing in the afternoon, or at the end of the day. Make copies available for wet playtimes and lunchtimes.

Encourage the pupils to familiarise themselves with the poems, reading and rereading favourites, sharing and discussing them with friends.

### Activity

- Sort the pupils into groups of six, if possible supplying each member with a copy of **A Time to Speak and a Time to Listen**.
- Ask the pupils to spend time perusing the poems and choosing one that they particularly like – perhaps, their absolute favourite. In order to avoid length or difficulty influencing their choices, explain that you will not be asking them to learn the poem by heart.
- Clarify that, when choosing and presenting a poem they like, they do not necessarily have to understand every word or phrase. Sometimes, a poem can touch us, and the sounds and images please us, even if we do not fully understand it.
- Ensure that each pupil chooses a different poem. In the case that two pupils choose the same poem, allow them to work as a pair.
- Give the group members a copy of the photocopy master ‘My favourite poem’ to fill in, to help them understand their reasons for liking a particular poem.
- Explain that you would like the pupils, in turn, to introduce their poem to the rest of the group, firstly by reading it aloud, and then by explaining their choice, using the photocopy master as a prompt for their presentation.
- When each pupil has had a turn, ask each group to vote on the presentation that they most enjoyed within the group. Invite group members to explain their reason, for example: ‘Molly read it very clearly and when she talked about it, I understood the poem better’ or ‘Raj stressed all the right words and explained well why the words made him feel happy’.
- Ask each chosen group member to introduce his or her poem and presentation to the whole class. Older pupils might choose a second group member to introduce their speaker, explaining why they chose him or her, for example: ‘We have asked Evie to present her favourite poem as the way she talked about it, so enthusiastically, has made us all love it, too’.
- Finally, ask if anyone would like to hear any of the poems for a second time. Invite them to share their feelings about the poems they have heard. Ask, ‘Does the poem appeal to you more when someone explains why they like it?’ and ‘Did you understand the poem better on a second reading?’