

# Saltaire Festival Poetry Competition 2020

## Session 1 – Children & Young People

This session looks at three different types and styles of poetry you may want to try if you're entering the competition. So let's recap the theme.

The 2020 theme is Green Aire and links to the Airedale Valley and Saltaire. So poems could be about:

- Reflections and/or concerns about the environment, positive or negative; comparisons about the floods/the sunny days/the pandemic and its impact on nature
- Reflections on your time in lockdown – perhaps you've been out more in nature than normal, or not as much; perhaps you've begun to identify birds or marvelled at the bluebells. Maybe you've brought nature indoors because you haven't been able to get out
- Thoughts about mental health and well-being; the silence, the lack of cars, the time spent with family, crafts, arts, walking, writing
- All details about the competition can be found at [www.saltairefestival.co.uk](http://www.saltairefestival.co.uk).

### ABC poem type or style

An **ABC** poem is one where each line starts with a letter of the alphabet in sequence. These lines don't have to rhyme, but you can if you want to.

For the competition, you have up to 42 lines in a poem. So, if you did an ABC one, you would use 26 lines, which is fine. Judges will be looking at the quality of a poem, not how many lines it has.

The theme is Green Aire – so what could an **ABC** poem look like? Here's an example, that I wrote earlier:

**A**ll around me the scent of wild garlic,  
**B**luebells shyly nod at Milner Field  
**C**arpeting the woods as I walk through.  
**D**own in the valley I  
**E**spy the Aire glistening in the morning sun,  
**F**rolicking lambs chasing their tails.  
**G**reen buds fatten on the tree I pass,



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**H**overing above, a kite, wings outspread...

... and so on till the end of the alphabet.

As you can see, I've mentioned Milner Field, and the Aire – linking to Airedale and Saltaire.

Bluebells, wild garlic, green buds link to the 'Green Aire' theme. I might go on to link these to how climate change is affecting the Valley.

Or I might write about birdsong, and how I can hear more of them now that traffic noise is a lot less than it was. The Green Theme can also link to your experiences during lockdown too.

- Why not spend ten minutes writing one?
- You could do the activity as a family, each writing one, and then comparing what you have.
- You could each write a line as a collaborative poem.
- This would give you practice at writing one for the competition.

### **ACROSTIC poem type or style.**

I'm definitely sure many of you will know this one. Similar in a way to ABC, but this time taking a name or word and using the letters to make a poem. For example, I've chosen the word LOCKDOWN, as you'll see in my effort from this morning:

**L**azing in bed like a holiday  
**O**utside off limits – Saltaire? No way.  
**C**hattering on Whatsapp, how's my mates?  
**K**icking off 'cos no footie, no sport, no dates.  
**D**oing online school stuff, getting frustrated,  
**O**MG, more walks, they're over-rated!  
**W**eeks go by, I see the Valley grow wild  
**N**ow see me, I'm an eco-child!

Here, there's a mention of Saltaire, lockdown and 'eco' but it needs work on it more to really link themes together. You'll notice that this, being a sort of 'Rap', uses rhyme, unlike the ABC poem. Poems don't need to rhyme, but a 'Rap' style usually does.



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For your acrostic, you can choose whatever word you want, or even a phrase, like Green Aire, Airedale Valley, mental health, climate change, whatever – as long as you have a maximum of 42 lines.

- Choose a word or phrase and spend a few minutes creating a sentence for each letter
- Read it out loud to see if there are any things you want to change
- Read it out loud again to someone and ask what worked and what didn't and why
- Rewrite it
- All of the above give practice in editing, which poets do over and over again

REPETITION poem type or style

These are poems where you could:

- Repeat a word at different places in a poem
- Repeat a phrase
- Repeat one line throughout the poem
- Repeat a whole verse

Repeating things brings a reader/listener's attention to certain ideas, emotions, or thoughts – but too much repetition can make the poem boring to read, so you have to be careful.

Examples of repetition poems:

*Robert Seater's* poem '**I Come From**' repeats that phrase as he tells you a story about his life.

<https://www.focus-education.co.uk/sample-pages/teaching-poetry-in-the-new-national-curriculum/files/basic-html/page115.html>

*Wendy Cope's* '**I Remember The First Time I Read A Book By Myself**' repeats 'I remember' to tell memories of herself and her Mum.



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- What word, phrase or line could you use for this type of poem? Write down as many as you can in two minutes.
- Choose three of them, then use them to write three poems, remembering to repeat the word, phrase or line
- Read them out loud and decide which you think sounds the best. Ask someone else to read/listen and choose their favourite
- If it's a different poem to yours, discuss why
- Decide which one you will rewrite, and do it

You might want to use other poetry as inspiration, such as:

Natural Anthem – Benjamin Zephania

[Green Poems for a Blue Earth](#) – Martin Kiszko, illustrated by Nick Parks

Poems from a Green & Blue Planet – Sabrina Mahfouz and Liz Brownlee

Session Two is about narrative poems and limericks – you'll find it on the website.

Remember, the closing date for the competition is 17 July and all details can be found at [www.saltairefestival.co.uk](http://www.saltairefestival.co.uk)

Happy writing!

Irene Lofthouse

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