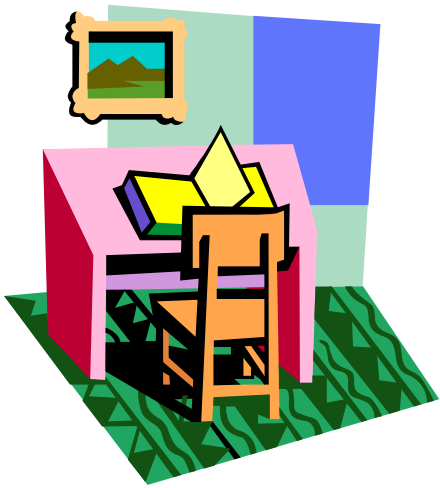


INSPIRATION

Stuck for a poetry idea? The newspaper can provide lots of inspiration; in fact, one famous poem begins, “One morning the world woke up and there was no news!”

This work sheet provides you with a number of suggestions for newspaper-inspired poems.

Remember that even the best poets won't always get it right first time, and have “works in progress” which evolve over a period of time. Sometimes it's helpful to set a draft aside and return to it several days later – but not, of course, if it means your homework will be late!



1. Ransom note: Cut out 50 separate words from the newspaper. Don't think about it too much. Just choose words that appeal to you. Then spread the words out on your desk and form them into a poem. You don't have to use all the words. Once you have something that's starting to shape up, you can switch tenses and add other words to the poem as necessary.
2. Zone in on your horoscope: Read your horoscope. Then write a poem about what your day – or life – might be like if the horoscope were actually true. Horoscopes are usually vague, so use your imagination to make the poem more concrete.
3. List: Sometimes poets write “list” poems. Look through a newspaper article and write down the names of some objects mentioned in it. Then arrange the objects in an order that makes sense. Finally, give the poem an interesting title. A travel article might inspire a list poem of objects in a cruise ship cabin.
4. Look for an interesting headline in the lifestyle or sports section of the newspaper (e.g. “Planting your feet in the digital landscape” or “Cowgirls get the blues”). Cut out the headline without reading the story. What does the headline bring to mind? Write a poem with the headline as the title or even the first line.
5. Pick two unrelated headlines from the newspaper. Make one your poem's first line. Make the other the last line. Write a poem that gets you – logically or emotionally – from one to the other.
6. Look for an interesting photo in any section of the newspaper, but don't read the accompanying story. What do the people seem to be doing? What do you think they're like? What are they feeling? Write a poem about the photo.

Jennifer Hind, “Inspiration,” *The Royal Gazette*, Bermuda, 2003.