

World of music

This sheet is to accompany Poetry Prompt 64 that features Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022–2024 Joseph Coelho. In this week's poetry prompt video, Joseph Coelho was considering what it would be like to be in a world of music. In the poem below, he uses the same idea to imagine what it would be like in a world of paper. See if you can spot all the references to paper as you read...

Look at the poem:

Read the poem aloud. You might do this yourself, with a friend or someone else could read it to you:

If all the world were paper

If all the world were paper
I would fold up my gran
and take her everywhere I go.
I would laminate my baby sister in bubble wrap
and lay her to sleep in unbound fairy-tale book pages.
And should she get scared,
rip every fear,
shred every scream,
tear every tear.

If all the world were paper
I would re-bind my grandfather,
smooth out the dog-ears to all his stories,
place his younger days in a zoetrope
and flush the harrowing chapters
down an ink-gurgling well.

If all the world were paper
kind deeds would be post-it notes
that stick to the door in ever-growing trails,
so we would always remember,
friends would come with perforated lines
so you could keep their best bits with you
at all times.

If all the world were paper
Christmas wrapping foil and birthday cards
would follow you to school.

If all the world were paper
dreams would be braille
so we could read them whilst we slept,
nightmares would be shopping lists
because shopping lists are so easy to forget.

The poem continues on the next page



If all the world were paper
arguments would rustle before they started
and could be put right with a little tape.

If all the world were paper
we could paperclip families together,
draw smiles on all the sad faces,
rub out the tears,
cover our homes in Tippex and start all over again.

All the world is not paper,
but whilst we can imagine it were
we can recycle the rough times
knowing we will never ever fold.

From *Werewolf Club Rules* by Joseph Coelho
(Frances Lincoln, 2014)

Think about the poem:

Consider the poem you just heard or read. What do you find out about the narrator of the poem from what they say? What sense or feelings do you gain about them and their life?

Re-read the poem again. What images stay in your mind as you read it again? Why do you think this is? What emotions do these parts of the poem make you feel?



Look at the language:

- The poem contains many words that are specific to paper and other stationery, for example: '*laminated*', '*bubble-wrap*', '*perforated*', '*zoetrope*'. Read the poem again and **see how many you can find and circle or underline them with a pen or pencil**. Are there any words that you haven't heard before or that you are unsure of the meaning of? What do you think they might mean? What makes you think this? **Use a dictionary**, either a physical one if you have one to hand, or an online one like: <https://kids.britannica.com/kids/browse/dictionary>.
- Joseph Coelho chooses and uses these words and ideas very carefully throughout the poem **to give insights into how the narrator thinks and feels about the world and the people around them**. Who or what do you think is important to them? What language shows you this?

Perform the poem:

- Think about how **you might share the thoughts and feelings of the narrator in a performance of the poem**. How can you use your voice in different ways to convey the emotion of the narrator in the words? Will some parts be louder or quieter, faster or slower, higher or lower? How will you make sure any actions you may decide to include **add to the performance**, and the listener's understanding of the narrator's thoughts and emotions, rather than detract from it?
- Rehearse this a few times then **perform it for someone else to listen to**. What did they think was most effective about your performance? What impression of the narrator did they gain from your performance? What gave them this impression?

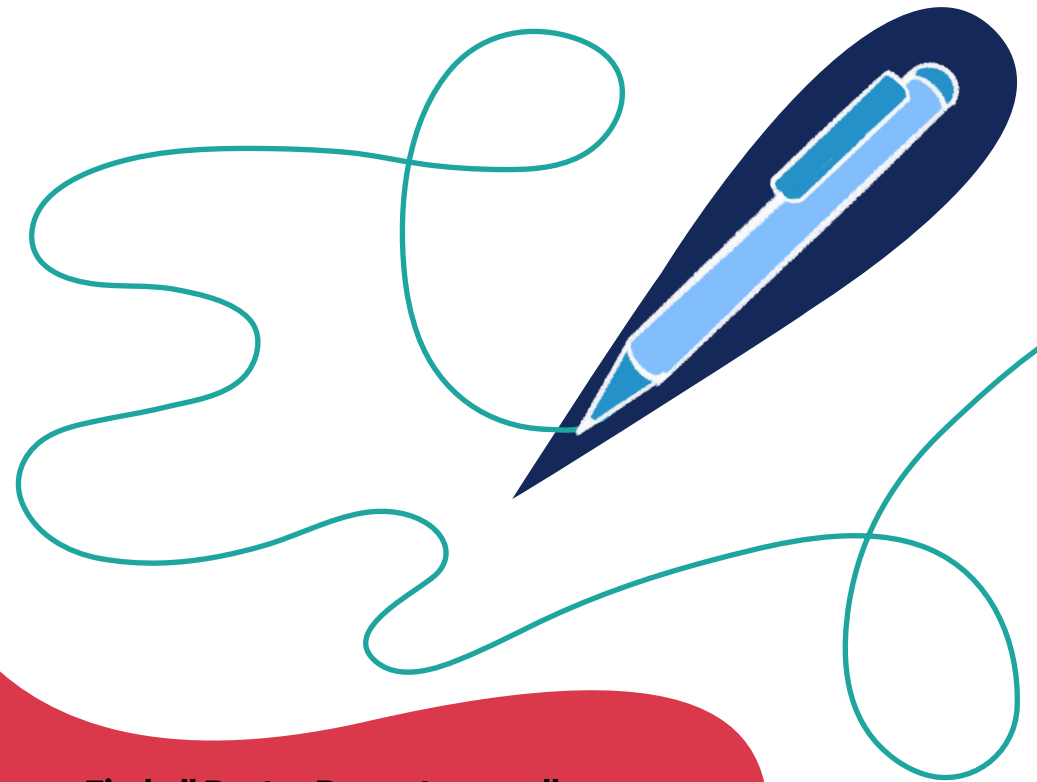
Write your own!

- Take some time to think about the people and things that are most important to you. **Who and what matters most to you?** Why is this?
- Now think about **something that your world could be made of**. Perhaps all the world might be food, clothes, furniture, art or film.
- Consider how Joseph Coelho **used aspects and actions related to paper to show how the narrator thought and felt** about the people and things that were important to them in lines like:

*I would laminate my baby sister in bubble wrap
and lay her to sleep in unbound fairy-tale book pages.
And should she get scared,
rip every fear,
shred every scream,
tear every tear.*

What aspects or actions related to the thing your world is made of could **show how you think or feel about one of the people or things that are important to you?** Have a go at writing a few lines to explore and play with this. When you are happy with what you have written, **try building up other verses to describe how you think and feel** about other people or things that are important to you as Joseph Coelho did in the original poem.

- When you're happy with what you have drafted, **write it out in your best handwriting or type it up to share with or perform** for someone else. You could illustrate it too.



Find all Poetry Prompts as well as more information about Joseph Coelho at booktrust.org.uk/childrens-laureate

Find and explore more poems about family on CLPE's website.

This sequence of activities was designed in partnership with CLPE. CLPE is a UK-based children's literacy charity working with primary schools to raise the achievement of children's reading and writing by helping schools to teach literacy creatively and effectively, putting quality children's books at the heart of all learning. Find out more about their work, and access further resources and training at: clpe.org.uk.