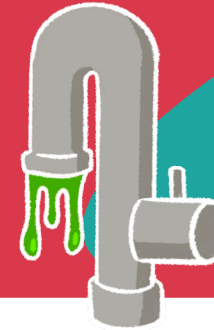
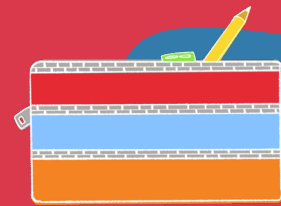


Poetry Prompts: Week 60

Textures

This sheet is to accompany Poetry Prompt 60 that features Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022–2024 Joseph Coelho. In this week's Poetry Prompt, Joseph Coelho was investigating different textures. Textures describe what something feels like. Here is a poem, written by Joseph, about a popular object that you might be familiar with that has a slimy texture...



Look at the poem:

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

The Slime Takeover

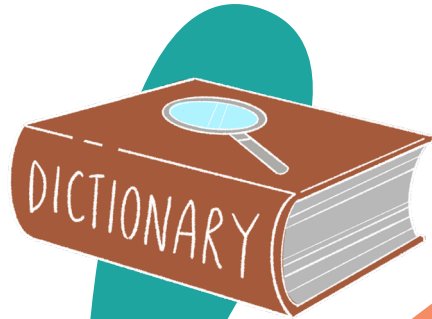
**Slipping, shimmering, stinking slime,
sloppy cerise or shades of scarlet sublime.
It sticks and sucks and spits and spools,
snaking slime slumping several school walls.
The slime swells, and stretches, and starts to sprout,
sliming many school halls as students scream and shout.
"Scary Slime Subsumes Schools"
say a slew of scandal sheets.
Their swan song headline
as the slime swallows scores of the city's streets.**

From *Poems Aloud* by Joseph Coelho
(Wide Eyed Editions, 2020)

Think about the poem:

Consider the poem you just heard or read. What is it about? What is happening in the poem? What does it make you think about? How does it make you feel? What makes you feel this way?

Re-read the poem again. Which words, phrases or ideas stay in your mind after reading? Why do you think this is? If you were going to create an illustration for this poem, what might you draw and why? Take a piece of paper and some drawing equipment and have a go at illustrating it. What words or ideas in the poem do you think influenced your illustration?

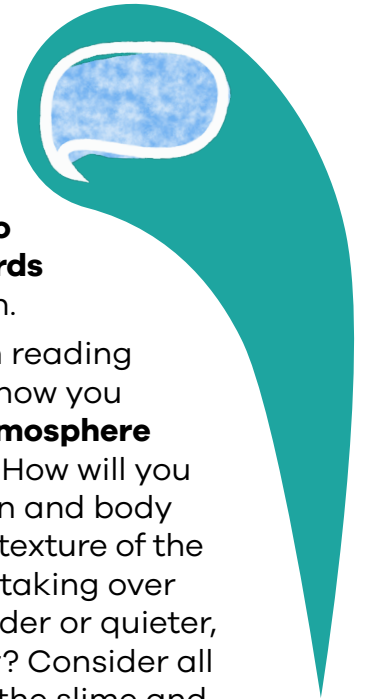


Look at the language:

- Read the poem again and **circle or underline all the different words that Joseph Coelho uses to describe the slime**, what it looks like, how it moves, how it behaves. What do you notice about the words chosen? **Joseph Coelho uses alliteration** in this poem. This is when words used prominently have the same first consonant sound. What sound do a lot of the words chosen begin with? When you say this sound, what sense does it give you, or what atmosphere does it create?
- Think about your own connections with the poem. **Have you ever touched or played with slime before?** What did it feel like? What words might you use to describe it? Make a note of these on a piece of paper.

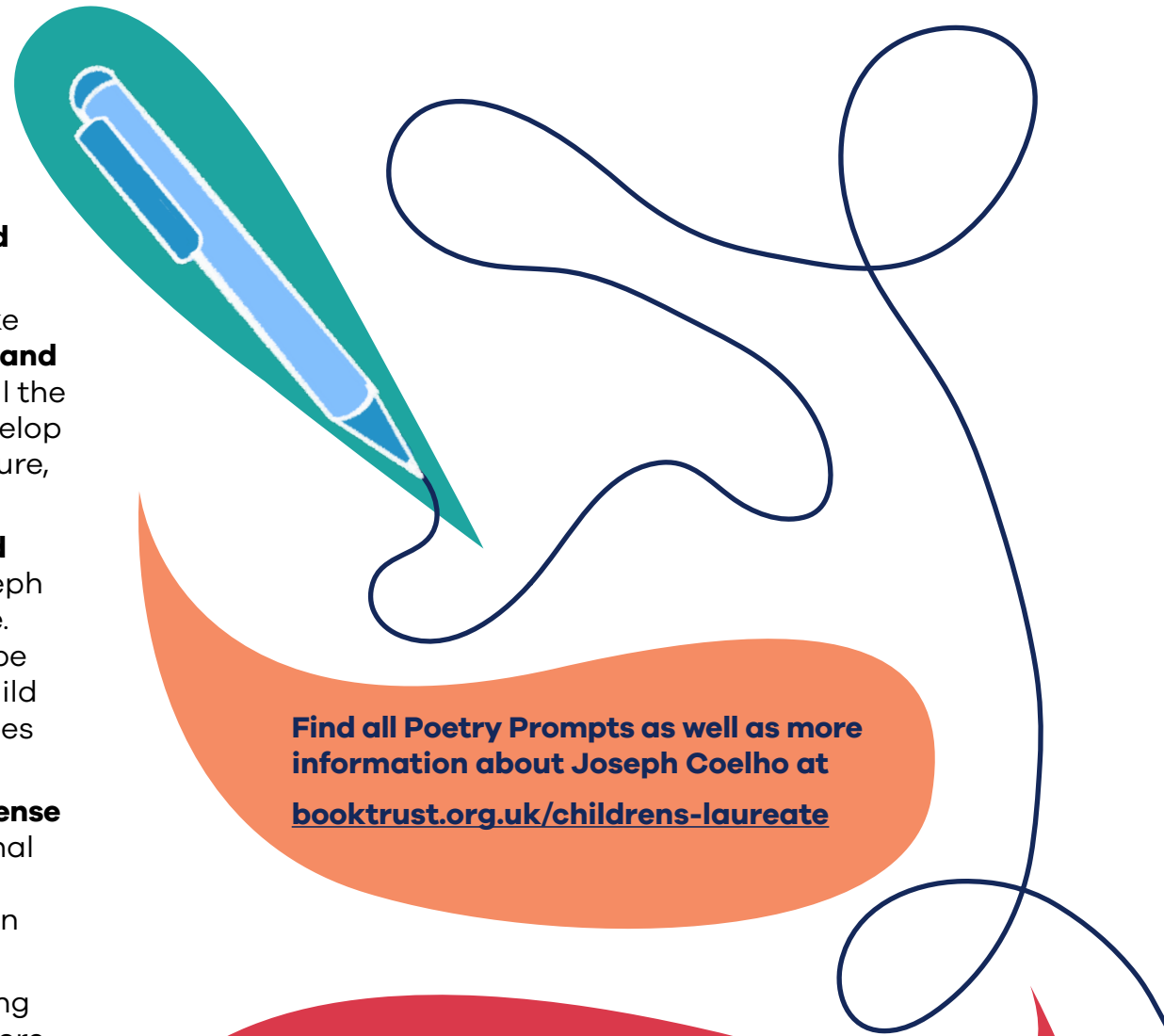
Perform the poem:

- The alliteration Joseph Coelho uses in the poem makes it quite tricky to perform – it's quite a tongue twister! **Read it through a few times, trying to get used to saying all the 's' words** in the poem in quick succession.
- When you are comfortable with reading the words, start to think about how you might **convey the mood and atmosphere of this poem in a performance**. How will you use your voice, facial expression and body language to give a sense of the texture of the slime and the anticipation of it taking over the city? Will some parts be louder or quieter, higher or lower, faster or slower? Consider all the language used to describe the slime and its behaviour, which Joseph Coelho used in the poem. These might direct you in how you choose to use your voice or in considering actions to include. How will you make sure any actions you choose to incorporate add to the performance, rather than detract from it?
- Rehearse your performance a few times until you are happy with it, **then perform it to someone else**. What sense did your audience get about this moment from the way you performed the poem? What did they think you did that was most effective?



Write your own!

- Think about other words to describe different textures, such as: smooth, prickly, hard, wrinkly, soft, squishy, fluffy, silky, rough, velvety, sticky, bristly, bumpy, feathery, slippery, coarse and fuzzy. **Pick one that you think would be interesting to explore in a poem of your own.**
- Write the word in the middle of a piece of paper and take some time to **fill the page with as many words, phrases and ideas that you associate with the word.** Look through all the ideas and think about which ones might be good to develop into a poem. You might pick an object that has this texture, as Joseph did in the slime poem.
- Start to **think about the language you could choose and use** in your poem, remembering some of the things Joseph Coelho did in the original poem that you found effective. You might choose to use adjectives and verbs to describe the appearance and behaviours of things. You might build up a story moment, as Joseph did in the way he describes the slime taking over the city.
- Consider whether **alliteration might also help to give a sense of the texture**, as the repeated 's' sound did in the original poem by Joseph Coelho. You don't have to use this as a device, but you could, if it helps to intensify the sensation of the texture for your reader.
- When you have drafted your poem, read it again, thinking about whether you need to add or change anything before **writing it out in your best handwriting or typing it up** for someone else to read. Did the language you chose give them the sense of the texture? What did they think was most effective about your writing? Could they suggest anything that would improve it?



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

Find and explore more poems about textures 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.