

Countdown Introduction



Do you all know how to use a phone box? Mostly everyone has mobiles but sometimes phone boxes are useful.

Maybe you are playing with a friend and you realise that it is time to go home. You want to tell mam that you will be a bit late. It is always important to let mam and dad know where you are. Maybe the phone isn't working and you use the phone box at the corner.

Ask the children how to use a phone box. What do you have to do?

Well. This is where the poem begins.

**Dial, said the poster, 6,5,4,3,2,1
For an unforgettable experience.
I lifted the receiver, put the money in the box,
And dialled the number.
Thundering flames shot me upwards into the sapphire sky,
Above clouds,
Above birds,
Above houses,
Into the clear blue stratosphere
Without a ticket.
And I'm still here.
Leaving earth at the speed of light.
Sending this message by satellite.
By Irene Rawnsley**

What do you think of that? I always wanted to go into space, but not in a phone box. It can't be a real phone box. It must be some kind of rocket.

I wonder how it got there.

Was it a scientist put it there?

Perhaps, going around our misty blue green planet was an alien spaceship full of very, very, very, FRIENDLY aliens. They just wanted to meet humans. The trouble is that they were also very, very, very, UGLY, at least to us.

Ask the children what they look like?

Every time they try to say hello, humans scream or run away, or both.

Then one of these friendly aliens noticed that humans often spoke into talking machines, sometimes in special boxes. (Phone boxes). The humans laughed and chatted without seeing the person they were talking to.

"What if we build a spaceship to look like one of these talking boxes", suggested one of the aliens. "Then when they get up in space, near our ship, we can describe what we look like to the human, and invite the human to visit us on our ship.

"Yes", said all the other aliens. "What a good idea".

So that is what they did. And what a good idea for a story. This week, you could try a take off poem as well. Ask your scribe to help you count syllables. How many syllables can you clap in your name for a start?

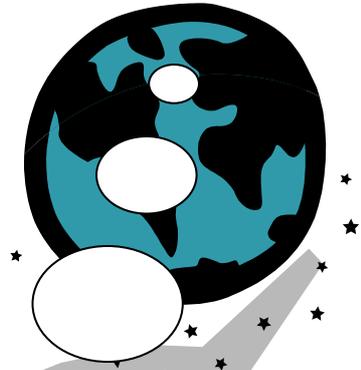
Sample Countdown poem



1. Space
2. Planets
3. They see stars
4. Astronauts float
5. Leaving Earth behind
6. Out of the atmosphere
7. Up into the clear blue sky
8. Like lava from a volcano
9. Red orange, yellow flames burst out
10. The rocket engines begin to vibrate

Have fun with countdown poems of your own

Countdown Poem or story?



1. Space

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

You could write a story instead.

What if you were in that phone box when it took off?

Why did you dial the number?

What was it like when the phone box took off?

How did you feel?

What did you see?

Did you try to phone home?

Did you meet the friendly aliens?

What happened?

How did you get home?

A Countdown Poem

Usually, when you write, you start at the top and go down.

In a countdown poem, you start at the bottom and go upwards so the poem takes off.

What is a syllable?

A syllable is a part of a word.

Space has 1 part.

Astronaut has 3.

Try to clap each syllable in these words

Your first line goes next to the number 10.

It must have 10 syllables.

Your next line goes next to the number 9.

It must have 9 syllables.

Your third line goes next to the number 8.

It must have 8 syllables, and so on until your poem TAKES OFF.

1. Space

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.



Author _____

Scribe _____