

Paired Poetry Making

Class Introduction

Pictures of trees and samples of twigs, leaves and old bark would be useful to introduce this subject.



Discuss with the children any trees that they have seen. Ask them how old they think a tree might get.

Encourage vocabulary that describes the tree in terms of look, touch, smell, sound etc.

Collections of words such as gnarled, brittle, sapling, supple, etc. might be useful.

Talk about all the things that a really old tree might have seen over a life of 1000 years.

What differences would there be in life now and life then?

Ask Authors and scribes to follow the poem pattern of

- three sentences starting with "I remember when ...",
- three sentences starting with "Once I was ..."
- Three sentences starting with "I wish ..."

The poems that are created often have a wistful feeling.

The topic can be connected with history or when thinking about families and older people.

The Ancient Oak

I am Oak, ancient one.
My thoughts are the circling seasons,
My moss-green memories, long as the
lonely hills.

Shall I speak to you children, you swift
brief sparks of life



Oak trees can live a very long time. Some have been known to survive more than a thousand years. A very old tree looks like an old grandfather. It is wrinkly with gnarled bumpy brittle branches.

It must have seen a lot of changes in its long life. When it was a young supple sapling the world would have been very different. There would have been no hard roads or smelly noisy cars when the tree was young. Maybe the tree once stood in a forest but now it stands alone.

If it could speak to us it would have amazing stories to tell. What sort of voice might the ancient tree have?

Let's go on with the poem and tell the tree's story.....

**I remember when there
were no**

Tell your scribe three things
the tree might tell you
starting with "I remember" ...

Once I was ..., now I am ...

Tell your scribe three things
the tree might tell you that start
with "once I was"

I wish

Tell your scribe three things
that the tree might tell you
starting with "I wish" ...

Now read the whole poem together.

You could make a paper tree and put each sentence on a cut out oak leaf shape.

What about an old castle or an old road. Lots of all things might have a story to tell.