

National Poetry Day 2024 – Celebrating Poetry Through the Theme of “Counting”

Our whole school marked National Poetry Day 2024, a nationwide celebration dedicated to showcasing the richness, diversity and power of poetry. The event was established to promote poetry’s cultural importance and highlight the many ways in which people across the world use poems to express emotions, tell stories and capture experiences.

This year's official theme was “**Counting**”, a versatile idea explored in celebrations across the UK. National organisations encouraged poets and schools to reflect on counting in all its forms - from counting blessings and counting steps to counting days, memories and moments. The Poetry Archive also curated the national collection of poems around the theme of counting, further emphasising its creative potential.

Across our school, every class interpreted the theme in its own way and engaged in poetic exploration throughout the week. Children experimented with rhythm, pattern, imagery and voice - all inspired by the act of counting. From number-based poems to reflective pieces on what truly “counts” in life, pupils demonstrated curiosity, creativity and confidence in their writing.

Early Years

Five Little Ducks (Traditional)

A counting poem perfect for the youngest children as it encourages prediction and sequencing.

KS1

Ten Little Speckled Frogs (Traditional)

A classic counting rhyme - great for rhythm, number patterns and joining in.

Lower KS2

When I do count the clock that tells the time – William Shakespeare

A brilliant starting point for older children exploring counting, time, and prediction.

A Minute’s Silence – Paul Farley

Part of the National Poetry Day "Counting" poetry collection; explores counting time and moments.

Upper KS2

Count Your Life – Mark Bird

Written specifically for National Poetry Day 2024, this poem guides children to “count what matters” fingers, toes, blessings, courage and more. This was brilliant for performance, assembly and reflective writing.

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways... – list poem activity

Inspired by Browning’s poem, Owl Class created list-style “counting poems” about:

- things they love
- things that worry them
- things they are grateful for

During Collective Worship, each class shared their work, celebrating the diversity of poetic voices in our school and showcasing the broad range of interpretations the theme inspired. It was wonderful to see pupils speaking proudly about their ideas, listening respectfully to one another and celebrating poetry as a form of art accessible to everyone.

Through National Poetry Day, children strengthened their language skills, developed expressive vocabulary, and deepened their understanding of poetry as both a written and spoken form. The theme of *counting* encouraged reflection, gratitude, playfulness and connection - demonstrating again why poetry remains such an important part of our curriculum and cultural life.