

# What to do today

*IMPORTANT Parent or Carer – Read this page with your child and check that you are happy with what they have to do and any weblinks or use of internet.*

## 1. Read and listen to two poems

- Read *The Language of Cat* and *Russian Doll*. Read each poem twice – once in your head and once out loud.
- How are these poems similar? How are they different? Do you prefer one? Why?
- Listen to Rachel Rooney (the poet) read the poems. Did they sound as you expected? Did you notice anything new when you heard them? <https://vimeo.com/162519257>  
<https://vimeo.com/162519272>

## 2. Annotate the poems

- Read *Useful Poetry Terms*.
- Annotate the poems to show which of these features you find.

## 3. Write a paragraph about one of the poems

- Read *Example and Guide*.
- Plan a paragraph about some of the features that you found in either of the poems. Now write this beautifully.

Well done. Show your paragraph and the poem to a grown-up. Show them how your paragraph is like the Example one.

## Try these Fun-Time Extras

- Explore some more of Rachel Rooney's poems on her website. Which do you like most? Why?  
<https://www.rachelrooneypoet.com/about4>
- Try writing a new poem, 'Language of Dog' (You could write about the language of any animal.)

# The language of cat

*Rachel Rooney*

Teach me the language of Cat;  
the slow-motion blink, that crystal stare,  
a tight-lipped purr and a wide-mouthed hiss.  
Let me walk with a saunter, nose in the air.

Teach my ears the way to ignore  
names that I'm called. May they only twitch  
to the distant shake of a boxful of biscuits,  
the clink of a fork on a china dish.

Teach me that vanishing trick  
where dents in cushions appear, and I'm missed.  
Show me the high-wire trip along fences  
To hideaway places, that no-one but me know exist.

Don't teach me Dog.  
All eager to please; that slobbers, yaps and begs for a pat,  
that sits when told by its owner, that's led on a lead.  
No, not that. Teach me the language of Cat.



*p.10, The Language of Cat and other poems*

## Russian doll

*Rachel Rooney*

All you see is outside me: my painted smile,  
the rosy-posy shell, the fluttery eyes.  
A butter-won't-melt-in-my-mouth-type me.

But inside there's another me, bored till playtime.  
The wasting paper, daytime dreamer.  
A can't- be-bothered-sort-of me.

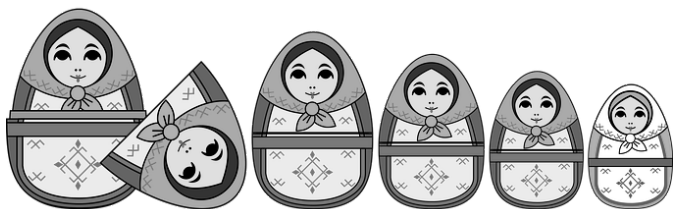
And inside there's another me, full of cheek.  
The quick, slick joker with a poking tongue.  
A class-clown-funny-one-of me

And inside there's another me who's smaller, scared.  
The scurrying, worrying, yes miss whisperer.  
A wouldn't-say-boo-to-a-goosey me

And inside there's another me, all cross and bothered.  
The scowling hot-head, stamping feet.  
A didn't-do-it-blameless me

And inside there's another me, forever jealous  
who never gets enough, compared.  
A grass-is-always-greener me

And deepest down, kept secretly  
a tiny, solid skittle doll.  
The girl that hides inside of me.



*p.22, The Language of Cat and other poems*

# Useful Poetry Terms

**Stanzas** - groups of lines – a little like paragraphs

**Rhythm** - the beat of a poem – can be regular or irregular

**Rhyme** - using words having the same end sound, can be the whole word or the last syllable (*cheese/please*)

**Alliteration** - using words which begin with the same sound

**Onomatopoeia** - words which make the sound they represent

**Repetition** – repeating words or phrases for effect in a **refrain**

**Simile** - describing something, using 'as' or 'like'

**Metaphor** - describing something as *being* something else

**Narrative** – telling a story

**Choral** – designed to be performed by more than one voice

## Example and Guide

In the poem, 'The language of cat' by Rachel Rooney, onomatopoeia is used to show the sound that the cat makes. A good example is, 'a tight-lipped purr and a wide-mouthed hiss'. I think the poet chose these words because when you say them you make the actual sounds that a cat makes so the listeners can imagine the cat. This makes it good for performance as you can say 'hiss' in an aggressive way and 'purr' softly like a cat would.

Say which poem you are writing about.

*I am writing about...  
In the poem...*

Explain which technique you are describing.

*She uses onomatopoeia/alliteration to...*

Give a good example inside quotation marks.

*For example,...  
A good example of this is...*

Explain why you think the poet chose these words.

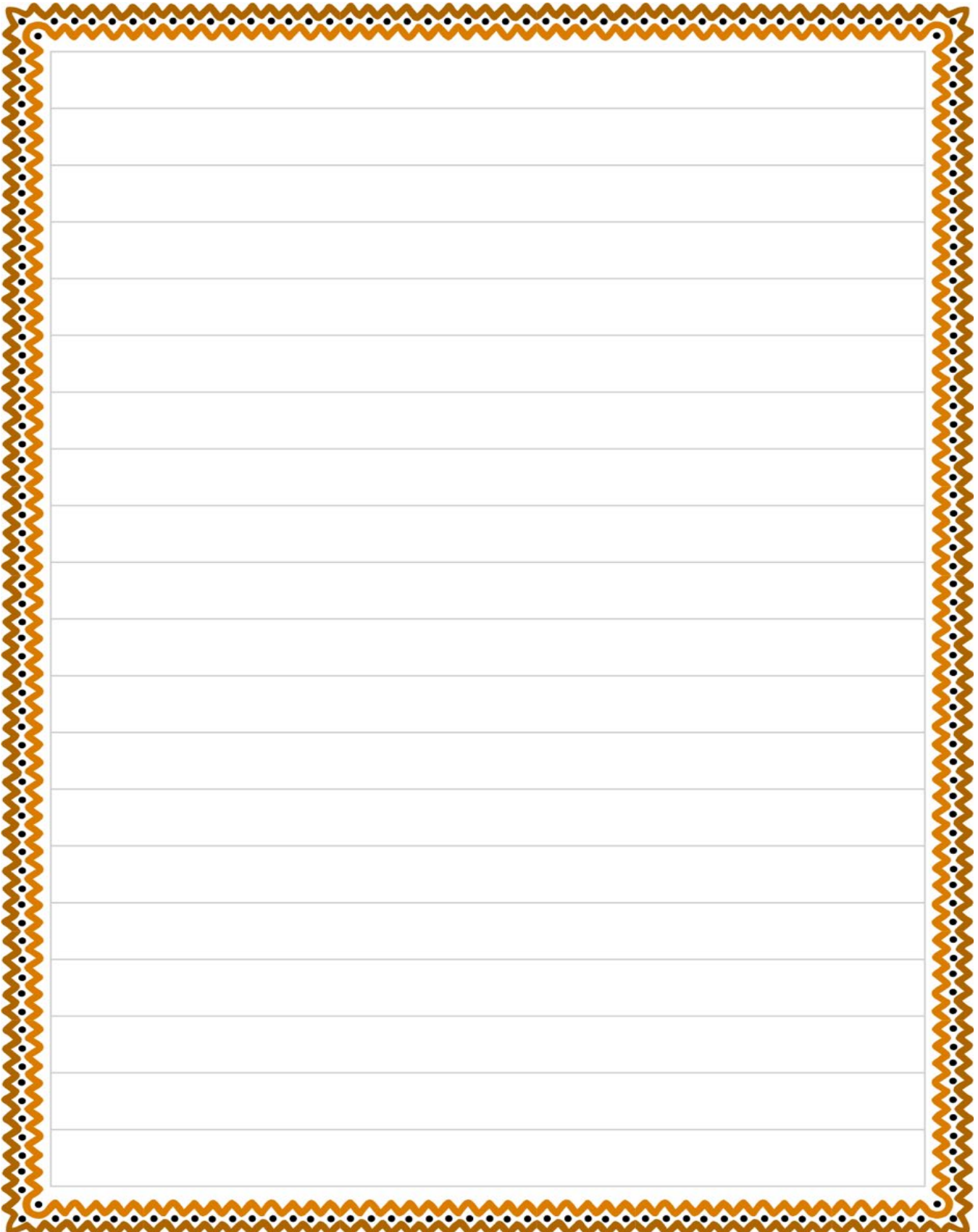
*I think she chose these words because...  
I think these words are used to...*

Explain why this makes this poem good for performance.

*This makes the poem good to perform because...*

## Poetry Writing

*Write a paragraph about one of the features that you found. Use **Model/Example** to help you plan your paragraph.*



A large rectangular writing area with a decorative orange and black zigzag border. The interior is ruled with horizontal lines for writing.