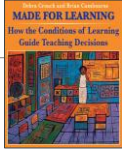


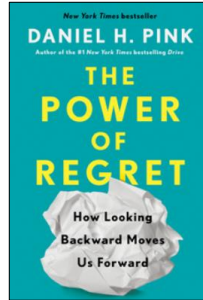
Engaging Learners Through Poetry



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LITCON 2026



Daniel Pink
The Power of Regret: How Looking Back Moves Us Forward

Why Poetry?

Lee Bennett Hopkins

Why poetry?
Why?
Why sunsets?
Why trees?
Why birds?
Why seas?
Why you?
Why me?
Why friends?
Why families?
Why laugh?
Why cry?
Why hello?
Why goodbye?
Why poetry?
That's why!



Why poetry?

Poetry awakens the heart.
-Emotion
-Language
-Comfort with ambiguity
-Togetherness

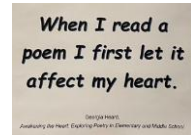
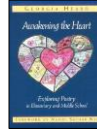
Poetry awakens the mind.
-Language crafting
-Reading behaviors
-Writing behaviors

Poetry awakens the heart.

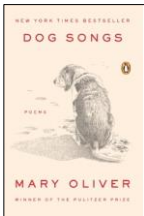
- Emotion
- Language
- Comfort with ambiguity
- Togetherness

Georgia Heard

When I read a poem I first let it affect my heart.



Little Dog's Rhapsody in the Night



He puts his cheek against mine
and makes small, expressive sounds.
And when I'm awake, or awake enough
he turns upside down, his four paws
in the air
and his eyes dark and fervent.

"Tell me you love me," he says.

"Tell me again."

Could there be a sweeter arrangement? Over and over
he gets to ask.
I get to tell.



Matthew
My Mom

My mom is
so special
because
when I'm sick
she takes a lot of care of me
and she always
buys me some stuff
that will make me happy.
And she always feeds me
yummy stuff
She has a good heart and
it touches my heart, too.

<https://madeforlearning.substack.com/p/thinking-alongside-a-budding-writer?r=19inyw>


TEST DAY

BY KATHI APPELT

It's never about the things I know:

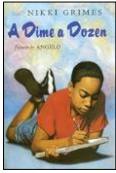
Where the old turtle hid her eggs
 How many homeruns my brother hit last season
 My mom's favorite colors—violet and pink
 That chocolate chip cookies need vanilla
 The year my grandfather fought in the war
 The year he didn't come back
 That my great-great-aunt learned to drive when she was 68
 What time the moon rose last night
 And what time it set this morning
 How the thunder scares my ginger-striped cat
 Why the neighbor's hound howls at stars
 Where the grackle built her nest
 What to put in my dad's cup of coffee . . .

It's never about the things I know.



Test Day
by Dayanna

It's never about the things I know:
 I am good at Spanish
 I am good at running
 I am good at monkey
 Bars
 I am good at doing
 braids
 It's never about the things I know.



Hair Prayer

I used to braid
 her long black waves
 each day until they'd show.

And ask the Lord
 for hair like Mom's
 instead of hair like mine.

"I wish I had
 your short tight curls,"
 Mom said to me one day.
 "They frame your face
 so perfectly.
 I can't get mine that way."

I guess I'll keep
 the hair I have.
 To change it would be wrong.
 To wear my father's hair, OJ would
 know that all along.

Poetry awakens the mind.

- Language crafting
- Reading behaviors
- Writing behaviors

Mia




Far, far out to sea,
 land is only a memory...

<https://madeforlearning.substack.com/p/making-space-for-brilliance7r-19inyw>

What do you dislike about writing poetry?

- coming up with a topic
- beginnings & endings
- where to stop
- my hand hurts
- running out of time
- what to say or do

What do you like about writing poetry?

- can be about anything
- sometimes it helps
- can pick details you want to pick
- they're about feelings
- poems are calming sometimes
- fun to do - can write about what happens
- can write real things that happen in life
- can write 2-3 different poems!
- can write about a day that is good or bad
- can be fake
- can be a message to a friend
- you keep writing on one poem before you switch to another idea in another poem.

WINTER PLAN

Did you know April is National Poetry month? These third-grade students have been reading and writing poetry. We hope you enjoy our poems! Which is your favorite?

*In English, we say,
"Can I be a child again?"
But in poetry, we say,
"take me back to when laughter was endless,
and my dreams were bigger than my fears."*

S&LIFE

Professional Resources

- Ralph Fletcher *Poetry Matters*
- Georgia Heard *Awakening the Heart (1st & 2nd edition) For the Good of the Earth and Sun*
- Regie Routman *Kids' Poems*
- madeforlearning.substack.com
 - Making space for brilliance
 - Immersion in writing
 - Thinking alongside a budding writer
 - What we value