

# Rhythm and Poetry

Year 7

HIAS English Team  
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Final version

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# Using the home learning materials

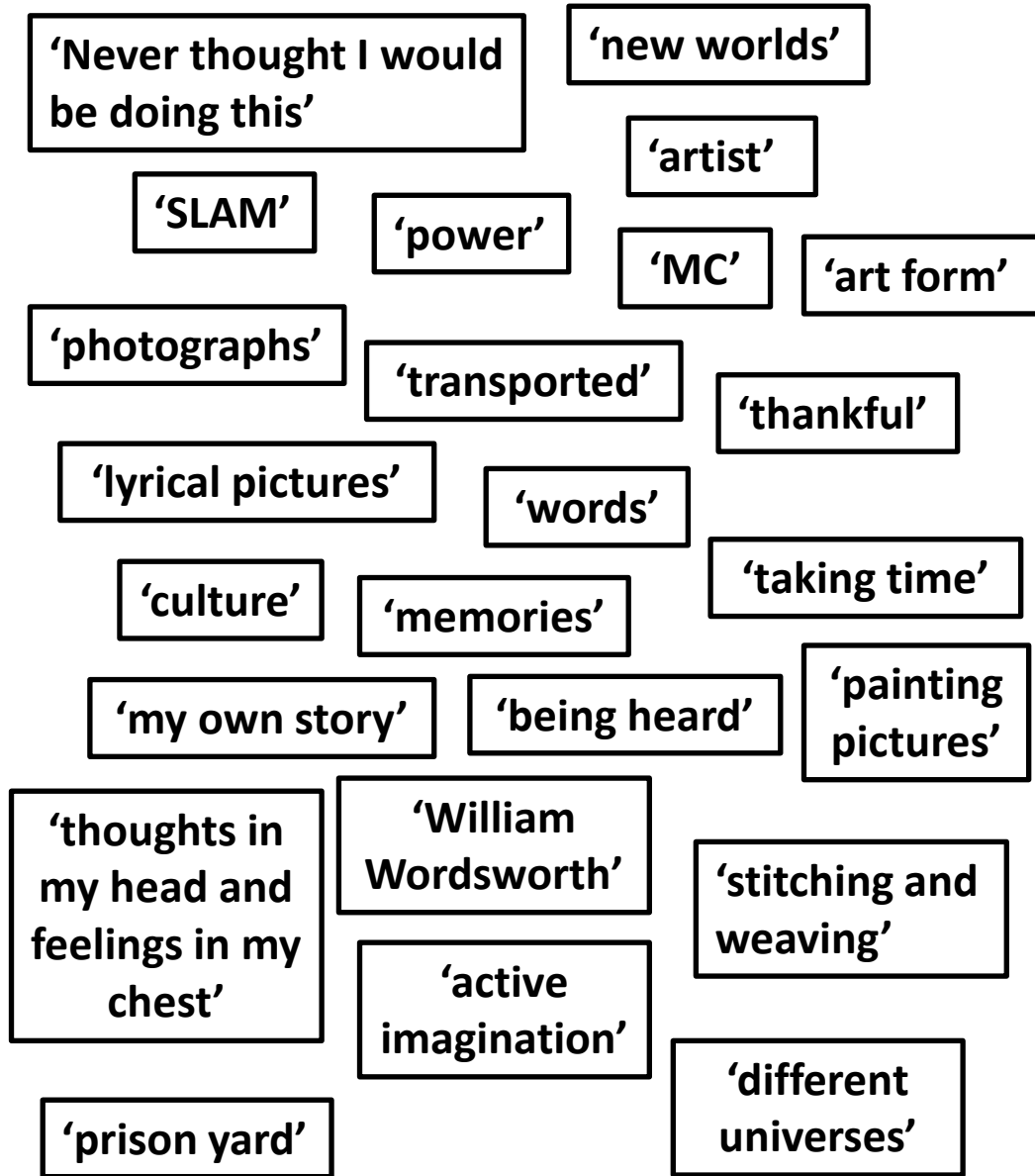
## How to use the materials

- This resource bank includes materials for several stages of learning – you can use these as individual lessons or work through them as a journey.
- You should complete all of the stages in order and aim to apply the learning from each stage to the final piece of writing.
- It is up to you how you use your time. This unit should take roughly 2 and a half hours, but you might want to spend longer on the final writing outcome to make sure that it is the best you can do. You might decide to spend half an hour a day on each learning stage, or you might decide to work through more than one stage in a block.
- You may find it useful to discuss some of the stages with other students. However, if you prefer to work completely independently, that's fine.
- Where some stages suggest that you think about or make notes on a resource, you can use any format you like. If you would like more guidance on how to do this, examples and printable resources are attached at the end of this pack.
- Your teacher may ask you to send in your work at the end of each stage, or they may ask you to manage your own study and send in the finished piece of writing. Check that you know what your teacher expects you to do before you start.

## Learning stages

This home learning journey leads towards a choice of writing outcomes – you could write a poem or a story inspired by the poetry and the ideas of the poet.

1. Poet study – explore the poet’s life story, ideas and feelings
2. Explore ‘lyrical pictures’ – the poet’s use of extended metaphor
3. Explore the use of rhythm and rhyme in hip-hop poetry
4. Explore how the poet expresses his ideas in *The Misinformation Age*
5. Writing Challenges



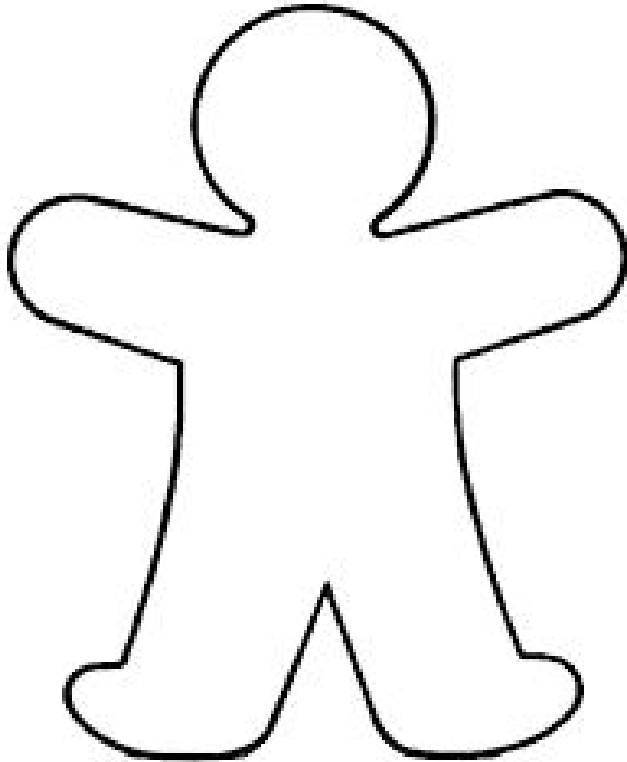
Explore the words and phrases here and look for patterns – how would you group them if you could move them around?

1. What do you think the text will be about?
2. How do you imagine the writer?
3. What makes you think these things?

*Tip: discussion can be useful for this task*



# Exploring Karl Nova's ideas and feelings – 'role on the wall'



[Read 'I write these poems'](#)  
[Read 'For You'](#)  
[Read 'Poetry?'](#)  
[Read 'The City of My Birth'](#)

**You might already be familiar with the 'role on the wall' task, which is used to develop your inferences about a character or writer. It was first used by actors rehearsing a play who needed to work out what the characters they were playing were motivated by – some feelings and thoughts are more obvious than others.**

- Draw out the shape of a person on a large sheet of paper – you will need plenty of space both inside and outside the shape so that you can fill the paper with notes.
- Outside the figure, note down all the facts you can find out about the poet from his poems – back these up with quotations from the poems.
- Inside the figure, note down all the emotions and ideas that you think the poet has revealed in his poems. Be as sensitive as you can and look closely for the subtle clues in the poems about his feelings and attitudes.

# Fill in the blanks

██████████

The fear of being ██████ is what it's all about  
 No one wants to ██████ or ██████  
 No one likes to feel ██████ and ██████  
 we all love to feel accepted, we're all affected  
 but you just have to learn to ██████  
 just be ██████ and aim to be ██████  
 You're not a ██████ programmed to follow without thinking  
 just acting brainless with ██████ blinking  
 I understand the pressure it doesn't stop as you ██████  
 It's natural to follow where everybody goes  
 and sometimes it's okay to go with the flow  
 but other times you have to swim ██████ the ██████ and so  
 you'll have to say ██████, when everybody say ██████  
 and be firm with your choice deep in your ██████  
 and overcome that fear of being ██████  
 because that's what peer pressure is really all about

Using what you know about Karl Nova's style, thoughts and ideas from reading a selection of his poems, which words do you think would complete the poem?

Write out a version with the gaps filled and explain your choices.

[When you are finished, look here for the original version of the poem](#)

## Exploring 'lyrical pictures'

Look at the poem ['Boys in the Woods'](#). In this poem, Nova has used an extended metaphor to get across his ideas.

1. What ideas about life and growing up (for young men) has Nova expressed through the image of the woods?
2. How has Nova used the image of a tree to explore ideas about how to be a better person and a better friend?

**Draw the images suggested by the poem and annotate the picture you have drawn in detail with your ideas about the layers of meaning in each part of the image.**

## Explore rhythm and rhyme

- Look at the way that hip-hop artists have used rhyme and rhythm in their songwriting over the last 40 years and consider how these artists have influenced Karl Nova's poetry
- Explore the examples in the next few pages and notice:
  - Where the beats are in the bar/line
  - How rhymes are built inside the lines as well as at the ends of lines
  - How 'daisy chain' rhymes are used across a number of lines
  - How multi-syllable rhymes are used
  - How rhymes focus on the vowel sounds of words
-



# *The Breaks* by Kurtis Blow (1980)

●            ●            ●            ●  
Breaks on a bus brakes on a car  
●            ●            ●            ●  
Breaks to make you a superstar  
●            ●            ●            ●  
Breaks to win and breaks to lose  
●            ●            ●            ●  
But these here breaks will rock your shoes

- One of the first rap hits
- Straightforward 4 beat lines (bars)
- Simple end rhymes of one syllable
- Rhyming couplets

# *Eric B is President* by Eric B and Rakim (1987)

But can you **detect** what's coming **next** from the **flex** of the **wrist**  
Say **indeed** and I'll **proceed** 'cause my man **made a mix**  
If he **bleed** he won't **need** no **band-aid to fix**

- Hip-hop pioneers
- Internal rhymes on the beat (4 beat lines/bars with shifting rhythm)
- Multi-syllable rhymes at the ends of lines

# *Re:Definition* by Mos Def (1997)

Born inside the **winter wind**, day after **December 10**  
These **simpletons** they **mentionin'** the **synonym** for **feminine**  
Sweeter than some **cinnamon** from **Danish rings** by **Entenmann's**  
Rush up on **adrenaline** they gets they assets **sent to them**  
(**Gentlemen**) you got a **tenement**, well then **assemble it!**  
Leave your units **trembling** like herds of moving **elephant**

- Multi-syllable rhymes and half-rhymes repeated within and across lines
- 4 beat lines/bars
- Very fast to showcase verbal dexterity and mastery of hip-hop form

# *Lose Yourself* by Eminem (2004)

Yo

His palms are sweaty, knees weak, arms are heavy  
There's vomit on his sweater already, mom's spaghetti  
He's nervous, but on the surface he looks calm and ready  
To drop bombs, but he keeps on forgetting  
What he wrote down, the whole crowd goes so loud  
He opens his mouth, but the words won't come out  
He's choking, how, everybody's joking now  
The clocks run out, times up, over, blaow!

'Daisy chain'  
rhymes –  
repeated and  
interleaved  
rhymes  
driving on  
the beats

# *My Shot* from the musical *Hamilton* (2015)

I'm 'a get a scholarship to King's College  
I prob'ly shouldn't brag, but dag, I amaze and astonish  
The problem is I got a lot of brains but no polish  
I gotta holler just to be heard  
With every word, I drop knowledge

Hip-hop style rhythm and rhyme:

Internal rhymes

Daisy-chain rhymes

Shifting beat

# *The Misinformation Age* by Karl Nova

We're in a time when everyone thinks their opinion is truth  
 They think every thought they spew is absolute  
 everyone seems to be an expert and a critic  
 that seeks to speak for everyone  
 I don't get it  
 Conspiracy theories are making souls grow weary  
 The fear of the unknown has got people feeling eerie  
 We have a lot of information but very little truth  
 A lot of speculation but hardly any proof  
 Some think everything is true on YouTube  
 That's why perceptions are skewed on cue  
 Some think everything has a message subliminal  
 but if you say truth is in you,  
 how can you continue  
 to live in fear  
 and remain paranoid  
 Tossed to and fro by deceptions and decoys  
 Lack of knowledge of the truth it destroys  
 Sadly empty vessels still make the loudest noise  
 We have a lot of information  
 but little revelation  
 that's why there's hardly transformation of situations  
 What are you buying into?  
 What holds your attention?  
 'cause what holds your attention  
 holds you like detention

Annotate the poem, picking out the way that the poet uses rhyme to draw your attention to particular words and phrases – if you have coloured pens, you could highlight words and phrases that rhyme in different colours to show the patterns.

**Sum up the poet's key messages in your own words.**

Watch the poet reading the poem [here](#)

# Writing Challenges

1. Karl Nova said in an interview ‘I use poetry to say [...] I am taking pictures from my phone and showing them to you. So let’s have a look at some lyrical pictures’. Choose random pictures from your phone and use one of them to give you the image for a poem that uses an extended metaphor to get across your ideas about one aspect of life.
2. Write a poem with a message inspired by ‘The Misinformation Age’ – tell your own truth about an issue that concerns you.
3. Write a story using Karl Nova as the main character – you can either write in the first person or the third person. Use what you know about Nova’s life, thoughts and feelings from his poems to write a story about him growing up and becoming a poet. Try to use images from the poems in your writing.
4. Write a diary entry as if you are Karl Nova’s English teacher at school – imagine what his teacher might have thought and felt about him when they discovered how much he loved to write poetry.

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## HIAS English team

The HIAS English team offer a wide range of high-quality services to support schools in improving outcomes for learners, including courses, bespoke consultancy and in-house training.

**During the current school closures, we are still offering school support in a variety of ways such as video conferencing, phone calls and bespoke creation of resources remotely. Coming soon will be teacher training via virtual classrooms. We would be happy to discuss your needs.**

For further details referring to English, please contact:  
Emma Tarrant : [emma.tarrant@hants.gov.uk](mailto:emma.tarrant@hants.gov.uk)

For further details on the full range of services available please contact us using the following details:

Tel: 01962 874820 or email: [hias.enquiries@hants.gov.uk](mailto:hias.enquiries@hants.gov.uk)

