

National Poetry Day 2018 – *Change*

Teachers Notes

1a. *I Will Change*

This is a list poem, a form and model that provides a straightforward creative writing idea which can have effect and impact through its repetitions, and because of this is *relatively* easy to write [as opposed to guideless encouragement for students to ‘write a poem’!].

1b. *I Will Change - Student Sheet*

This should be self-explanatory. The introduction is useful as further explanation for teachers too. Whether it is used as teacher-led or in small group discussion is a personal choice.

The *Your Writing* element is again hopefully self-sufficient, but it does introduce a key aspect of all these writing ideas: students should first research and build up notes/ideas/practice attempts before attempting a final piece – that ‘final piece’ the result of drafting and editing having had an abundance of initial material [that abundance perhaps a collaborative accumulation].

2. *The Change in My Pocket* [Ideas and Prompts]

This can be an extension/support activity linked to *I Will Change* as it provides further examples of list poem approaches to writing about ‘Change’.

It will be worth discussing how the ‘punning’ of ‘Change’ as money in a pocket is a specific idea and the other brief examples revert back to a broader notion of ‘Change’.

3a. *Change*

As a ‘search engine’ idea/approach this will be more problematic for the classroom situation. Recognising the obvious: there is firstly the pragmatics of having access to PCs/tablets for a class, individually or shared, and secondly there is the control of access to sites that will come up when typing in ‘Change’ on its own or in the forms suggested on the *Search Engine Change Titles* sheet. School filters should make this latter straightforward, but... It may be this is more of an individual task as extension/homework for those who wish to pursue; perhaps for older students it would be less of a potential issue.

3b. *Change - Student Sheet*

Once more, this is hopefully self-explanatory as advice and guidance, but the main aspect to stress is how the **Process** is about

1. collecting and building up a bank of detail and ideas

and the **Writing** presupposes

2. drafting and editing – getting rid of what doesn't work and so on – and crafting of a final, finished piece

4. *Search Engine Change Titles*

This is quite simply a hand-out of possible titles for the above task

5. and 6. *Change Quotes*

The first sheet provides famous quotes about change with the names of those who wrote/delivered them. This may be a useful resource at any point in the process of writing any of the possible poems for this theme [and as discussion points].

The second sheet presents the quotes alone, and this is perhaps the more complex of all the creative writing ideas on offer, both in terms of what is needed to produce and how much guidance would have to be provided – at any level, but probably more so for younger students:

- the *Mixed* element is an example of all those quotes entered into a random word/text generator [there are many examples online]
- for students to complete this task individually or in small groups, they would again need access to PCs/tablets and this has pragmatic implications
- alternatives to the immediate above: the teacher has a random word generator open on her/his computer and students – individually or in other groupings – bring their quotes, however selected, for the teacher to randomise [and I quite like the process of this, though it is time-consuming!];
- or the teacher has already prepared a collection of randomised words/texts from the same inputted quotes – this providing a further element of interest as randomisers will churn out these differences [with, naturally, many repetitions/mirrors]
- The *To Change* poem that is shaped from the mixed text would need reading and discussion, but this crafting from randomised detail rather than the collected detail of an organised 'process' can present ideas one wouldn't normally think of.

7a. *Bowie's Changes*

One could hope that the extract from Bowie's song would act as an apt epigraph for students wanting to speak out about the changes they want for themselves, rather than that imposed or expected [though this idea runs throughout most of these writing ideas, especially *I Will Change*]. So this is for private reflection or discussion however organised.

7b. *Bowie's Changes Student Sheet*

With that continuing hope of being self-explanatory, this follows the pattern of suggesting a process of collecting ideas before crafting, and the *Remember* is the reminder to edit and craft into a piece as presented in the first sheet as a model.

8a. *Blue Mood Poet*

It must be stressed that this poem itself is not about the theme of 'Change', though it could be discussed how all of our moods can change, often in an instant!

8b. *Blue Mood Poet - Ideas and Options*

This is the most adventurous of these creative writing ideas for National Poetry Day and attempts to get into the essence of *change* by taking an existing piece of writing and changing it through a variety of possible ways. These differencing ways become increasingly more challenging, and lead to further possible/needed alterations to make.

This is for those writers who want to tackle such a challenge – like the teacher, obviously – and to be quite independent in their approach, which includes interpreting the sheets for themselves!