Dear Children,

We are inviting you to spend some time in your summer holidays learning a poem ‘off by heart.’ This means you will be performing the poem out loud from memory.

In the Autumn Term we are having our first, ‘Learning Together Trust Poetry Festival,’ and part of the fun will be inviting children from all years and all of our schools to perform their chosen poem from memory in front of an audience. Learning a poem off by heart and performing it helps your memory to develop, teaches you new vocabulary and also develops your speaking and listening skills.

There are a variety of poems to choose from: traditional and modern; funny and sad; from different cultures; rhyming and rhythmic; linked to a topic you will be studying throughout the year.

Some top tips for learning a poem, ‘Off By Heart,’ are:

1. Break the poem into chunks and learn one line or verse at a time.
2. Say the words out loud to yourself in a mirror – don’t just say them in your head.
3. If there is a word you don’t understand, ask somebody or look it up. If you know what it means, you will remember it much easier.
4. Test yourself and get a member of your family or friend to test you.
5. Use picture prompts in your mind. For every line, try to imagine a picture in your head so you can ‘see’ the line.
6. Write the poem down. Present it in different ways (in the sand on the beach or type it up).
7. Use expression in your voice when saying the poem aloud to hook your audience in and keep them interested.
8. Practise! Practise! Practise!

You will all receive a copy of the poems. The poems are also available on each of your school’s websites and Twitter pages. All you have to do is choose 1 poem, learn it, ‘Off By Heart,’ and perform it – you may want to use props to bring your poem to life even more.

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| **EYFS (NURSERY AND RECEPTION)** | **KS1 (Y1 & Y2)** | **LOWER KS2 (Y3 & Y4)** | **UPPER KS2 (Y5 & Y6)** |
| Incy Wincy Spider | Now We Are Six – A.A. Milne | Ye Spotted Snakes – William Shakespeare | People Need People – Benjamin Zephaniah |
| Hickory Dickory Dock | Saw My Teacher On A Saturday – Dave Crawley | Life Doesn’t Frighten Me – Maya Angelou | In Flanders Field – John McCrae |
| Alligator – Grace Nichols | Granny is – Valerie Bloom | Walking With My Iguana – Brian Moses | WipWapWop – Jennifer Watson |
| Eletelephony – Laura Richards | On the Ning Nang Nong – Spike Milligan | Flame – Rachel Rooney | The Tyger – William Blake |
| Sing a Song of Sixpence | Stars – Gareth Lancaster | Rain Dance – Hilda Offen | The Women’s Land Army – Rose Perritt |

Good luck and we look forward to hearing your performances in the Autumn Term. Let us know how you are getting on by posting pictures or videos of you learning your poem on Twitter, tagging in your school and @LT\_Trust.

Yours sincerely,

L. J. Morgan-Hillam – Head of School Improvement at Learning Together Trust