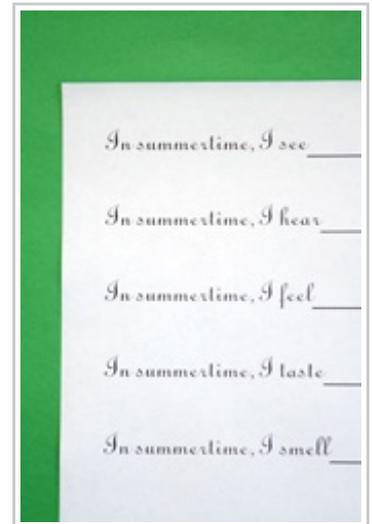


Instant Poetry! A Writing Exercise

Sometimes, the best way to soak up a lazy summer day is by lounging in a comfy outdoor spot with your child. Peaceful afternoons in the shade can be a great excuse for a picnic, but they can also be an inspiration for some descriptive poetry authored by one of the most original and brilliant people you know: your child.

This activity allows him to translate what he observes around him into a beautiful poem. Plus, the process will sharpen his awareness that words hold meaning and are a way of expressing himself. This activity is the perfect introduction to a core kindergarten science theme: the five senses. Whether or not your child can write or spell yet makes no difference with Instant Poetry!



What You Need:

- A pencil or other writing tool
- Paper
- Crayons
- A clipboard or book to write on

What You Do:

1. Find a comfortable spot to sit outside with your child. You'll be the "reporter" for this activity, so set up the materials so that you can write comfortably.
2. Make a list of the five senses, while chatting with your child about what each means. Specific examples help to support the acquisition of new vocabulary, so don't be afraid to talk about it! Rattle on about that delicious ice cream cone. Talk about the way a tuba sounds deeper than a flute. Want to get started but need a refresher first? The five senses are sight, sound, touch, taste and smell.
3. To begin your child's poem, write these five phrases, leaving space for him to complete the phrase:

In summertime, I see _____.

In summertime, I hear _____.

In summertime, I feel _____.

In summertime, I taste _____.

In summertime, I smell _____.

4. Ask your child to help you complete each sentence. If he is at a loss for descriptive words, help him by asking more specific questions. For example, if he can't think of a word to describe what summertime tastes like, ask him what was the last thing he ate at a barbecue or picnic, and go from there.
5. Once all the sentences are complete, brainstorm with your child to come up with a fitting title, and write it at the top of the page. Don't forget to add a "by" line, and have your poet write his name on it. Your child can add the final touches by drawing related illustrations around the beautiful poem that he wrote.

The most important part of creating this poem is the atmosphere in which it's written. Showing your child that writing can be creative and inspired by just about anything will increase his interest, and your

enthusiasm throughout the activity will boost his self-esteem, while reinforcing the value of creative expression.

Hang that lovely verse up, or send it to grandma. Every budding poet likes an appreciative audience!

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