

Making connections

Many of the poems in the collection have certain aspects in common. In groups make lists of poems that you think you could compare and contrast; consider what connections can be made between the poems you choose. What, if anything, do the poems have in common? Where are there striking contrasts? Use the following questions to help you. Make sure you are annotating the poems or make details notes on paper.

- You might like to start with: 'The Prize-winning Poem' by Fleur Adcock, 'The Literature Act' and 'Poet for Our Times' by Carol Ann Duffy

What is each poem about?

Who is the speaker?

What is the language like and what does it suggest?

What is the tone of the poem?

How does the structure of the poem reflect the message?

Is there a rhyme scheme or a rhythm to the poem? What is the effect of it?

What sort of images appear in the poem and what do they suggest?

What themes are addressed in the poems?

Do you like the poem? Why or why not?

How could you compare these poems?

What contrasts are there between the poems?

- Next look at 'Bogyman' by Fleur Adcock, 'Welltread' and 'We Remember Your Childhood Well' by Carol Ann Duffy and consider similarities in the poems. What connections can you make? What can you say about the speaker, tone, structure, language and imagery? Be prepared to discuss your ideas.
- Read 'Favourite Shade (Rap)' by Liz Lochhead, annotate it and decide how you could use it along with 'For Heidi with Blue Hair' by Fleur Adcock to answer a question such as this: 'A number of the poems in the anthology consider the subject of growing up. Compare two or three poems which do this, looking in particular at language, structure, tone and imagery.'
- Now, look at 'We Remember Your Childhood Well' by Carol Ann Duffy and 'Earlswood' by Fleur Adcock and compare and contrast the way in which each poet recalls childhood in these poems. Remember to look at language, structure, tone and imagery when answering the question.