

## Feeling and reflecting: Memory poetry engine

### Aim of the exercise\*: Finding the right words

Select another object. This time, pick one that reminds you in some way of a particular person.



Take a piece of paper and divide it into two columns. At the top of one column, write the name of the object. At the top of the other, write the name of the person.

In each column, quickly write a list of words that you associate with the subject.

### Example

Tea caddy	Mother
black	warm
rusty	pinny
smelling of tea-leaves	pouring
gilt	hands
caddy spoon, etc	rustling, etc

Carry on with this until you have about 25 words in each column.

Choose the best twelve words from each list.

Write a poem about the person whose name headed the second list, making sure that you use the twenty-four words you have chosen.

## **Poetry engine**

The 'poetry engine' approach to starting off a poem can be adapted in many ways. For example, you can choose a smaller selection of words, perhaps five or six, and write a poem in which those words are frequently repeated for effect. Or you can use the words from your lists as the link words in a hypertext poem.

You can choose to be strict with yourself about sticking to the words that you select from your lists. Alternatively, you can use the exercise as a way of starting the words flowing, and allow yourself some freedoms when you come to work on your poem.

**\*This exercise is a variant of an exercise described by the poet Mark Goodwin in 'Poetry, Prose, and Playfulness for Teachers and Learners', edited by Mark Goodwin and Deborah Tyler-Bennett, Leicester County Council Press, 2004, pp 66-67**