

Looking Intensely at an Object

Aim of the exercise:

To recreate the object as fully as possible in words

If you are in a Museum gallery, find a suitable object. If you are working from your computer, choose an image from the selection below.



Advice on choosing an object

There are some objects that inspire an immediate sense of connection. Others yield themselves up less easily. They have a secret identity which does not reveal itself at first. You have to think your way into them. Bear in mind that these less instantly appealing objects are often the ones that provoke the best writing.

Begin with a list writing down all the things you notice about the object.
For example:

- colours
- shape
- materials
- textures
- images
- decoration
- marks from when it was made
- signs of wear or damage

Sort out your list in order of importance.

What is at the top of your list? What is at the bottom?

If you could only show the reader **two** of the elements from your list, what would they be? These are going to be the central themes in the poem you will write.

Title this poem after the object itself. Write about what you see, and include as many details as possible, but always remember which are your two main elements and give these centrality.

Give the poem a repeated line at the beginning and the end.

This might be entirely factual: 'In a glass case at the V&A, stands a white vase.' Or it might be more to do with colour and image: 'A white vase, like an elegant swan.'