



TEACHER RESOURCE

IDEAS FOR DEVELOPING STINKY POEMS

Want some ideas on how pupils could theme their smell-inspired poems for The Mighty Nose Awards?

Here's a plan for activities in-class which help develop vocabulary and imaginative writing for your English lessons, including suggestions on how pupils can approach their poems.

Don't forget to ask us if you'd like a volunteer from Team Marty to come to your school and run these activities as an hour long, free Mighty Nose Workshop. Email hello@martythemightynose.org to arrange this.

STAGE 1: WARM UP ACTIVITIES

Taken together these activities comprise one lesson. Spend longer on step four for an hour-long workshop, and really get those smelly objects circulating!

1. FILM

Take a look at [this 2 minute film](#) about the awards, which features the actor and Mighty Nose Awards judge, Steven Mangan, reading the winning poems from last year. We've enclosed the poems which were awarded prizes, too, in your info pack.

2. TASTE TEST

To get your class thinking about their sense of smell, a great activity is to give everyone a sweet like a jelly baby. Tell the pupils to hold their nose when they put it in their mouths and start chewing, and to let go after a few seconds. What happened to the taste? What do our noses do when we eat? What does our tongue do (sweet, salt, sour, bitter)?

3. WHAT'S SMELL FOR?

After the sweetie tasting, get your class discussing in pairs all the different uses we might have for our sense of smell - and what about animals? For example you could think about smelling danger like gas or smoke, avoiding off-milk and food, steering clear of rubbish, noticing the seasons, the role of rescue and police dogs, and how predators use their sense of smell to hunt.

4. DEVELOPING LANGUAGE

Give every table a copy of [this A4 poster](#), which features lots of different words they might use to describe a smell.

Pass round different smelly objects to the tables, for example, an onion, a bar of soap, a lemon, garlic, fresh herbs, grass, cinnamon sticks.

In their tables they can then take turns to sniff, and choose three words from the poster which they think best describe the smell - even coming up with their own if they'd like to. Ask pupils to compare their ideas.

You can start to discuss the different sorts of adjectives they have used (for example, opinions like 'disgusting' or 'delightful'; those that suggest strength like 'pungent'; comparative words like 'fishy' and 'fruity', and personifications like 'biting' or 'attacking').

5. BLUE CHEESE CHALLENGE

Get pupils into a conga line and pass round a wedge of blue cheese. If pupils are now looking at metaphor and simile, this is a good opportunity for them to practice.

Ask the pupils to sniff the cheese as it comes by and to say out loud a word or phrase to describe the smell. They can refer back to the poster if unsure, or say something new. Even better if they can come up with a simile, for example:

As rotten as old fish

As strong as a champion wrestler

As nasty as an old witch

As delicious as Christmas

If they say one word like 'it's horrible', encourage them to form a simile by asking them what else they find horrible, connecting up the two concepts.

Point out that with smells there are no right or wrong answers - and that some people LOVE blue cheese while others HATE it.

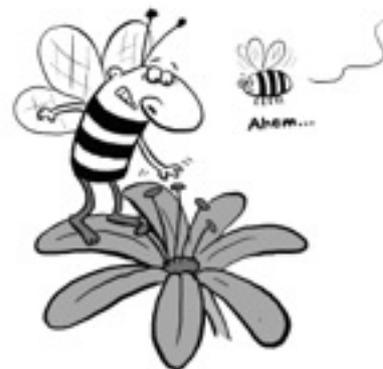
STAGE 2: WRITING POEMS

Pupils should now be pretty warmed-up and thinking about how they describe a smell. When it comes to writing their poems, here are a few routes from which to choose. In the entry pack is a template they can write on for their final work.

IDEA 1. STINKY PLANT TAKES OVER TOWN!

If you have been teaching plant reproduction to your pupils, they will know that flowers are often scented to attract pollinators.

However, not all plants create a nice smell. The 'Titan Arum', which hails from the rainforest, boasts not only one of the biggest flowers in the world, rising some three metres high. It also stinks of rotting meat, which is irresistible to its pollinators of beetles and flesh flies. Also from the tropics is the Durian fruit, which smells like cheesy feet and vomit. Mmmm!



Imagine that an intrepid explorer has brought the Titan Arum out of the rainforest and placed it right in the middle of your school's nearest town or village. What kind of effect would the smell have? How would people - and animals - react? What might they do to cope with the smell? This might be a theme for a story-based poem.

To bring the Titan Arum story to life in the classroom, we recommend this short film produced by the Eden Project in Cornwall, which you can find on [youtube via this link](#).

IDEA 2. SUPER-HUMAN SMELL



Dogs have a sense of smell that is 10,000 to 100,000 times stronger than a human's. They can sniff out a huge array of aromas that we would never be able to detect - even the scent of fear! To bring this idea to life, take a look at [this short film](#) hosted by a dog trainer based in the US.

With your class, you could host a discussion to help pupils imagine what it would be like if one day they woke up and had a canine sense of smell. What would be fun about this? What are all the things they might be able to detect, good and bad? And could they possibly use their enhanced sense to help prevent accidents and even dangerous situations?

IDEA 3. MAGIC SMELL POTIONS

This idea is especially fun if brought together with a reading or classwork on Roald Dahl's story, George's Marvellous Medicine.

For this route, invite your class to imagine what they might put in their own magic potion. What are the stinkiest items they can think of to go in, and how would they describe the smell of each?



IDEA 4. THE SMELLS OF AUTUMN

Autumn, the period for which entries are open for the competition, is one of the most interesting times of year for smells: bonfire night, fireworks, compost, decaying leaves, mulch, and crisp cold air. Even the smell of rain can be interesting! You could take your class out on a smell-gathering hunt round the school field, or even to the local park, asking them to find and record different smells as they go, writing down what they think of them.

If it's just too wet outside, you could host a discussion on the smells of their favourite foods in the cold weather, or the scents associated with the activities they like to do.

IDEA 5. IMAGINARY SMELL WORLDS

Invite pupils to choose one of the following, perhaps linked to their learning subjects such as history or geography:



A medieval castle; an Ancient Egyptian tomb; inside a volcano; a dragon's cave; a spaceship; the bottom of the ocean; deep in the rainforest.

Get pupils brainstorming three to five 'things' they might find in this place if you snuck in and had a rummage.

Then ask them to write a smell description of each item, using as many similes as possible (if applicable). These descriptions can then be put together to create a poem - remember that pupils can keep referring back to their smell description posters.

- A group of rats that smell as dirty as an unwashed pile of clothes
- Stone walls that smell cold, like snowflakes
- Meat roasting over a fireplace, as delicious as Christmas