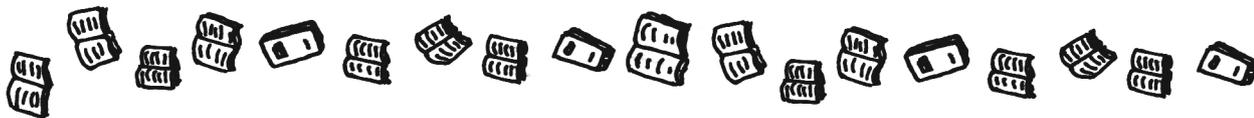


# Anyone Seen My Dragon?

- rhyme
- writing a chorus
- reading together
- animal poems

## A KS1 Activity by Roger Stevens



## Missing: DAISY

*Anyone seen my DRAGON?  
Scary, Scaly  
Tall 'n Taily  
Daisy the Dreadful Dragon.*

She's got bad breath.  
A temper true.  
Eats old ladies. (Children too.)

She breathes out fire.  
She puffs out smoke.  
She'll singe your hair. She'll make you choke.

*Anyone seen my DRAGON?...*

She soars about.  
She seeks out food.  
Makes loud noises. (Mainly rude.)

Yes, she's grumpy.  
Yes, she's smelly.  
Big Butt always blocks the telly.

*Anyone seen my DRAGON?...*

*And she's beastly.  
And a pest.  
But I love her. (She's the best.)*

Please send Daisy  
Back to me.  
Treat her well. Or you'll be tea...

*Anyone seen my DRAGON?...*

**James Carter**



First published in *Hey, Little Bug! Poems for Little Creatures* by James Carter (Frances Lincoln, 2011).  
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This activity is ideal for Years One and Two – but can be adapted easily for Reception children too. It involves lots of joining in and should be great fun. Who doesn't like scary dragons?

### Getting started

Gather the children around you, as you would for story time, and read them the Daisy poem. Once you've read it through, encourage them to join in the chorus.

*Anyone seen my DRAGON?  
Scary, Scaly  
Tall 'n Taily  
Daisy the Dreadful Dragon.*

Repeat the whole poem several times, stressing the rhymes, until most of the children have picked up the chorus and are hearing the rhymes clearly.

Read out the whole poem again, this time pausing before the rhyming words – encouraging the children to add them in without too much prompting from you.

*She's got bad breath.  
A temper true.  
Eats old ladies. Children... (pause here)*



### POET'S TIP

As you will know, it is always great fun for children and teachers to read poems together out loud. To make this more interesting you can think of different ways of joining in. When you read the chorus of 'Missing: DAISY', for example, you might try increasing the volume – beginning by reading the first line very quietly, then gradually getting louder line by line until you all shout 'Dreadful Dragon' at the end.



The children will join in with 'too' and so on, throughout the poem.

Read the poem out loud once more, this time with the children providing the chorus and the rhymes. Reading aloud helps the children pick up the rhythm, as well as making the exercise more fun.

### Writing the poem

The first stage is to create a class poem. On a flip chart or whiteboard write down the children's ideas and the poem itself.

Explain that you are all going to write a poem. It's going to be about a pet. This poem doesn't have to rhyme. It can do if suitable rhyming words are suggested, but the most important thing is to accurately describe the animal. Never sacrifice a good poem for the sake of a torturous rhyme (and children do come up with some, believe me!).

Begin by discussing what pet the poem is going to be about. Do any of the children have pets? Talk for a bit about the names of their pets and how they behave. Finally decide on a pet to write about. In this example I'll use a cat. Explain that we are 'making up' the poem – so it doesn't have to be anyone's actual pet. And we can choose a name too. Let's use Kali.

Next we have to write a chorus. Start the children off by writing down the first line:

*Anyone seen my cat?*

Now ask the class to suggest what he or she looks like.

You might have suggestions such as big, small, hairy, black, white, fluffy... The children may also come up with ideas for the type of cat, such as Tabby, Persian, Rag Doll, Tortoiseshell, Siamese...

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At this point you can change the first line:

*Anyone seen my big, black cat?*

With the class's help, fashion the chorus. Then all say it together:

*Anyone seen my big, black cat?  
Fat and fluffy  
Cute and cuddly  
Kali my beautiful cat.*

Now move on to the first verse. Again, don't worry about making the verses rhyme. Finding good, descriptive words, and repeating sounds, is more important. The idea is for you to combine your skill with words with the children's ideas. Your input will obviously be greater with Reception or less able children while it will probably be minimal with more able or Year Two children.

Now we need suggestions for the cat's behaviour. She sits and purrs. She sleeps all day. She teases the dog. She stalks birds. She climbs trees. She brings dead mice into the house.

Verse one might become...

*She walks on the fence  
She climbs the tree  
She teases the dog  
She stalks the birds*

Depending on the age and ability of your children you can make the poem short or long. As you complete a verse, read the poem through again with everyone joining in.



### **Developing the activity**

For more able or older children, for example if you are working with a Year Two class, once you've finished the class poem, you can ask the children to write their own versions of the poem. They can do this individually or in groups. If they work in groups explain that they need to work together and make decisions together about the best words for their poem.

Begin by writing on the whiteboard or flip chart:

*Anyone seen my...*

Tell them they must first decide on the pet they're going to write about, one that's not a dragon (that's been done) and not the pet that was chosen for the class poem (that's been done, too).

Ask for suggestions. This time, encourage them to think of more adventurous pets, such as spiders, snakes, monkeys and so on. Write the names of lots of possible pets on the board for the class to refer to.

Remind them that they have to write the chorus first.

Explain again that the poem doesn't have to rhyme and that you are looking for words that bring the pet to life, imaginative adjectives and descriptions of the pet's behaviour which don't always have to be serious or accurate. However the poems turn out, be very positive, and DO make it fun.

When they have finished, ask some of the children to read out their poems.

### **Further activities**

Our cat went missing once. We found him a couple of weeks later living in a house up the road where the quality of food was better. Maybe the pet in the class poem could write a letter to his owner about his new home?

Or maybe the pet has gone on holiday and might send a postcard?

If you want to include art activities then the class could create posters for their missing pet, asking if anyone has seen them, and incorporate their poems.

### **Now try this**

James Carter's poem can also be found in *Grrr! Dinos, Dragons and Other Beastie Poems* by James Carter and Graham Denton (Macmillan Children's Books, 2013) which includes lots more dragons, and dinosaurs too.

Other poems that can work for this age group and with similar activities include 'On a Wild, Wild Walk' by James Carter, 'Sounds of School' by Michaela Morgan and 'My Cat Doesn't Love' by Danielle Sensier; all found in *A First Poetry Book*, Ed. Pie Corbett and Gaby Morgan (Macmillan Children's Books, 2012).

