

**The World in Verse: Multicultural Poetry for Young People**  
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In the United States today, more poetry is being published for young people by a larger variety of poets than at any time in the past. Not only is poetry experiencing a publishing renaissance, but also the field's openness to new voices has encouraged multicultural poetry to flourish. A quick survey of recent poetry titles will turn up at least fifty notable poets of color writing for children today, representing most of the main micro-cultures within the United States. And more and more international poetry is finding its way into libraries and classrooms in the United States as well.

The diverse viewpoints reflected in the poetry of parallel cultures enable us to show children firsthand both the sameness and the differences that make the human landscape so dynamic and fascinating. Poets of color are using the language, experiences, and images of their cultures in ways that are fresh and powerful. In addition, the special succinctness of poetry provides young people with an appealing introduction to other cultures. Powerful points about prejudice, identity, and cultural conflict can sometimes be made in a very few words. Consider Janet Wong's poem "Speak Up," from *Good Luck Gold*, whose language and structure suggest the playground taunting of a child who appears different. In addition, we can often rediscover our universality in the words and feelings of poems that cross cultural boundaries. Langston Hughes's poems in his classic work, *The Dream Keeper*, show human emotions and experiences that are real and vivid, no matter what color a person's skin is. I have found that young people of all colors enjoy the writing of poets from many parallel cultures. That is to say, poets do not speak only to readers from their own cultures. Asian American readers have understood "I, Too," by Langston Hughes, an African American poet, and Native American readers have related to "Speak Up," by Janet Wong, an Asian American poet. The fact that cultural heritage and the distinctiveness of language are addressed through poetry is interesting and important to all young people. Fortunately, more and more excellent examples of multicultural poetry are available for sharing.

**African American Poetry for Young People**

Although rarely anthologized in the past, African American poets like Langston Hughes, Lucille Clifton, Countee Cullen, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Nikki Giovanni, Gwendolyn Brooks, Marilyn Nelson, and others are regularly featured in collections of poetry in the U.S. for young people today. Poets also share powerful visions of African American history in *Roots and Blues, A Celebration* by Arnold Adoff, *Never Forgotten* by Patricia McKissack, *We are America: A Tribute from the Heart* by Walter Dean Myers, and *Remember the Bridge: Poems of a People* by Carole Boston Weatherford.

More and more African American poets are gaining widespread recognition and praise. Eloise Greenfield won the National Council of Teachers of English Poetry Award for her lifetime contribution to poetry for children,

including the popular collection *Honey, I Love*. Nikki Grimes, another NCTE Poetry Award recipient, creates an unforgettable modern heroine in the Danitra Brown poetry books. Charles R. Smith, Jr. showcases athletes and heroes from the African American community in his rap-like poem picture books and Hope Anita Smith tells raw family stories in her poetry. These poets speak of their lives, of their color, of their humanity, of their humor. Some write in dialect, some use rhyme, some focus on racial pride, some share emotional universals. Children of all cultural backgrounds deserve to know their names and hear their words.

### **Latino and Latina Poetry for Young People**

Poems, rhymes, songs, and chants are also an important part of Hispanic American or Latino (Latina) children's literature. There are also more and more published collections of Latino poetry for children from which to share. Gary Soto, for example, has several collections of poetry suitable for children and teens, such as *Neighborhood Odes*. His work may already be familiar to children who have read his picture books and novels. In addition, many Latino poets tackle powerful social themes about identity, language, and culture, as in the historical novels in verse by Margarita Engle such as *The Surrender Tree* or the poem biographies by Carmen T. Bernier-Grand. There are also several bilingual and interlingual (with Spanish words interspersed) collections of poetry available by poets such as Francisco Alarcón (e.g., *Animals Poems of the Iguazú / Animalario del Iguazú*), and Pat Mora (*Confetti; Yum! Mmmm! Que Rico!: America's Sproutings*) as well as *The Tree Is Older Than You Are*, compiled by Naomi Shihab Nye. If you are a Spanish speaker or work with Spanish-speaking children, reading poems aloud in both Spanish and English can be very inviting and empowering. Several collections of children's nursery rhymes and songs in English and Spanish are available for sharing with young children. They include multiple works by Alma Flor Ada and Isabel Campoy as well as by José-Luis Orozco. The verses in their books such as *Ten Little Puppies; Diez perritos* and *Diez Deditos: Ten Little Fingers* incorporate music and movement that invite children to participate.

### **Asian Pacific American Poetry for Young People**

When it comes to sharing poetry by Asian Pacific American writers, there are also several choices. Asian and Asian American poets express a deep appreciation for nature in much of their poetry for young people. Other poems explore the tensions between traditional and modern ways. Family traditions and beliefs are also the focus of many poems by contemporary Asian American writers. For example, Janet Wong's collection *Knock on Wood* looks at superstitions across cultures, including in her own Korean and Chinese heritage and Linda Sue Park explores the Korean poem form of the sijo in *Tap Dancing on the Roof; Sijo Poems*. Minfong Ho shares ancient Chinese poetry in the beautifully illustrated collection *Maples in the Mist: Poems for Children from the Tang Dynasty*, which is also available in a bilingual edition and Kam Mak offers a culturally rich poem memoir in *My Chinatown: One Year in Poems*. Recent novels in verse offer insight on growing up Asian in America in Joyce Lee Wong's

*Seeing Emily* and Thanhha Lai's *Inside Out and Back Again*, for example. Although most of these particular Asian and Asian American poems are not rhyming, young readers are drawn to their simplicity and clarity.

### **Native American Poetry for Young People**

In many Native American or American Indian cultures, the rituals and traditions, stories and songs of everyday life are often expressed poetically. Many contemporary Native American poets consider their poetry a continuation of the oral narrative tradition of their people and heritage. This can be seen in many Native American poems about the seasons, historical events, and the like. Joseph Bruchac, for example, published several poem collections that capture elements of land, animals, and nature, such as *The Earth under Sky Bear's Feet* and *Thirteen Moons on Turtle's Back*. Bruchac tries to incorporate Native words (from the poem's root culture) within the translated poems to provide some of the music and rhythm of the original language for the non-Native speaker. Bruchac often performs these poems aloud to the beat of a drum—a powerful auditory experience. Native poetry can include a variety of poetic forms, including rhymes, free verse, chants, charms, prayers, blessings, lullabies, warnings, eulogies, wishes, prophecies, healings, war chants, songs, night songs, medicine songs, mother/child poems, and more. John Bierhorst compiled several collections of Native poetry, including *On the Road of Stars: Native American Night Poems and Sleep Charms*. Other examples of authentic voices can be found in Hettie Jones's classic collection *The Tree Stands Shining: Poetry of the North American Indian* and Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve's seminal work, *Dancing Teepees: Poems of American Indian Youth*. Three resources of contemporary Native poetry include *Rising Voices: Writings of Young Native Americans*, *Walking on Earth and Touching the Sky; Poetry and Prose by Lakota Youth at Red Cloud Indian School*, and *Night Is Gone, Day Is Still Coming; Stories and Poems by American Indian Teens and Young Adults*. Just a reminder: some Native poetry may be presented in translations filtered through a non-Native perspective, so seek out works by Native poets whenever possible.

### **International Poetry for Young People**

Translation is also an issue in international poetry for young people. More and more international poets are now being published in the United States and translated into English. Remember, however, that poems that may have rhymed in German, for example, may no longer rhyme in their translated English versions. Or the translator may have opted to create rhyming patterns in English that affect the meaning in the original language. Thus, translated poems may not be as rhythmic and musical as the rhyming English poems children are used to. For more strongly rhythmic poetry, start with our neighbors to the north and south. There are several collections of poems from the Caribbean available by poets such as Monica Gunning, Lynn Joseph, John Agard, and Grace Nichols that are very appealing. The humorous work of Canadian poet Dennis Lee (e.g., *The Ice Cream Store*) is often compared to that of Shel Silverstein and other popular Canadian poets include JonArno Lawson and Pamela Porter. Looking

farther abroad, one finds that Michael Rosen has compiled many collections of British and other verse from a variety of countries (e.g., *The Kingfisher Book of Children's Poetry*) as has Graham Denton and Liz Brownlee. Australia gives us Steven Herrick and his many engaging novels in verse such as *Naked Bunyip Dancing*. And Danielle Wright from New Zealand compiled global nursery rhymes in *My Village; Rhymes from Around the World*. And Naomi Shihab Nye has gathered anthologies of international poetry with English translations, such as *This Same Sky: A Collection of Poems from Around the World* or *The Space between Our Footsteps: Poems and Paintings from the Middle East*. Jan Greenberg offers the ekphrastic international collection, *Side by Side: New Poems Inspired by Art from Around the World*. For bilingual Japanese / English poetry, look for the lovely collections by Michio Mado, *The Animals* and *The Magic Pocket*, both illustrated with traditional cut paper art. Sharing such rich and varied poems from around the world can help bring us all a little closer together.

Multicultural poetry, much like all forms of literature, is written as an individual response to personal, social, economic, or environmental conditions. It reflects a distinct point of view as well as a specific time and place. And, from a personal perspective, multicultural poetry offers each of us the opportunity to connect: to connect to the poem, to connect with the poet, and to connect with each other as readers. The best approach is to infuse all our poetry sharing with multicultural and international poets whenever and wherever the theme, subject, style, form, or topic suggests a connection. Multicultural poems are not just for cultural history months or special occasions but speak to every possible moment.

### **Sharing multicultural poetry**

When it comes to sharing poems with children there is no magic formula for success. Over the years, however, I have found a few key steps make it easy to engage students and integrate some basic language skill reinforcement. In our recent books, *The Poetry Friday Anthologies*, for grades K-5 and for grades 6-8, poet and collaborator Janet Wong and I borrowed the phrase "Take 5" from the great jazz musician Dave Brubeck to propose that teachers and librarians take 5 minutes every Friday to introduce and share a poem.

Why Fridays? In 2006 blogger Kelly Herold brought the concept of Poetry Friday to the "kidlitosphere" on the Internet. Much like "casual Friday" in the corporate world, there is a perception in the world of literature that on Fridays we can relax a bit and take a moment for something special. We can capitalize on the Poetry Friday concept in the library or classroom and take five minutes every Friday to share a poem and explore it a bit, connecting it with children's lives and capitalizing on a teachable moment to reinforce literacy learning. Yes, of course we can share poetry on other days of the week too. But for those who are not already teaching poetry regularly, planning for Poetry Friday makes poetry sharing intentional and not incidental. *The Poetry Friday Anthology* makes it easy to find and share a poem at each grade level, but certainly any book of poetry can jumpstart Poetry Friday poem sharing. So, what are the five components of the "Take 5" approach to poem sharing?

### **Take 5: Tips for Poetry Sharing**

1. Read the poem aloud (vary the approach in multiple readings).
2. Read the poem aloud again with student participation and involvement.
3. Take a moment to invite students to discuss the poem; have an open-ended question ready as a prompt.
4. Make a subtle skill connection with the poem—just one.
5. Connect with other poems and poetry books that are similar in some way.

These steps are quick and simple and begin with the adult leading the poem sharing, then involve children in active poem re-reading, followed by brief discussion and skill connections, and if time allows, another related poem—all in approximately five minutes. Let's consider each step in greater detail.

**Tip #1:** The first step in sharing a poem is to read it aloud to the students. Poems are meant to be heard, just as songs are meant to be sung. As poet Brod Bagert has said, exactly as songs are not just sheet music, poetry is not just text. The rhythm or rhyme of poetry can help children begin to get a sense of the sound of artful yet natural language. If possible, practice reading the poem aloud a few times to get comfortable with the words, lines, pauses, and rhythm. Poet and anthologist Lee Bennett Hopkins suggests the following, "Mark words and phrases you want to emphasize. Read to the group in a natural style. Follow the rhythm of the poem. Note how the physical appearance of the poem on the page dictates the rhythm and mood." If possible, display the words of the poem on a poster or chalkboard or with an overhead or digital projector. Seeing the words while hearing them provides additional reinforcement for children learning to read or learning English.

As we get more comfortable and experienced in reading poems aloud, we can experiment with different ways of making the poem come alive as we read it aloud by pairing the poem with a prop, adding gestures or movement, trying out specific dramatic reading techniques, singing the poem to a certain tune, etc. If the poem has active verbs in it, add motions or pantomime to your reading. If a physical object is referenced, plan ahead to have that object ready as a poem "prop." We can vary our voices with whispers, growls, or shouts, depending on the words or create vocal characters for different points of view in the poem. Some poems can be read aloud to a soundtrack of relevant music or sound effects evoked by the poem or with images projected (like nature photos); or add finger-snapping, clapping, singing, or sign language, if those fit the poem's meaning. Other poems may incorporate a few challenging vocabulary words that may need a bit of brief explanation before reading. Or we can invite students to close their eyes and visualize the scene or place depicted in the poem before reading it aloud to enhance the listening experience and build comprehension. For variety, consider inviting guest readers to read the poem aloud, particularly if relevant to the poem's content. Maybe a distant parent or relative can share the poem aloud via Skype or Facetime. Finally, consider slowing down or pausing for the last line (or stanza) for greater emphasis.

**Tip #2:** This tip suggests how to engage children in reading the poem aloud together as we lead the reading. When children participate in reading aloud, they have the opportunity to develop their own oral fluency. Poet Sara Holbrook reminds us to “show the world that poetry was never meant to simply lie quietly on the page, any more than kids were meant to sit quietly in their seats to read it.”

There are many ways to involve students in large groups, small groups, partner pairs, and as single volunteers. Experimenting with various approaches to reading and reciting poetry aloud can help students express themselves and build confidence and fluency. One example is echo reading, asking them to repeat certain words or lines. Note: when leading an echo reading, keep the pace moving so the echo reading won't interrupt a poem to the point of distraction.

Another favorite strategy is to look for any repeated words, phrases, lines or stanzas in the poem. Write these down or highlight them and display the words, inviting students to chime in on those words as we read the rest of the poem aloud. The same is true for key words like number words, days of the week, months of the year, etc. and for the very last line of the poem—often enhanced by being read in unison. Students can also provide sound effects for sound words (onomatopoeia) and question lines (ending in a question mark) can be spoken by the students (individually or in groups), too. Use words or lines in bold or italics as cues for student participation. Multiple stanzas can naturally suggest groupings for the read aloud (one group per stanza) and rhyming poems can lend themselves to a “guess the end” activity, as we pause before the rhyming word at the end of the couplet or stanza and students chime in with the final rhyming word. Poems written for two voices or with designated character parts can particularly lend themselves to student participation. Students who hear poems read aloud every day and jump in and participate in reading and reciting poetry orally will quite naturally engage in a great deal of verbal interaction, higher-level thinking, and critical analysis.

**Tip #3:** The third step in sharing a poem is to provide a moment for children to respond to the poem. Initially, it can be helpful to have a fun discussion prompt ready, tailored to fit the poem. Try an open-ended question with no single, correct answer and encourage diversity in responses. I like to ask a question suggested BY the poem, rather than a question ABOUT the poem. This helps “break the ice” and connect the poem with their own experiences which then can lead back to looking at specific words, lines, and stanzas in the poem.

Some poems are immediately accessible, but others need more time to grow on us. Don't be surprised if children refer to a poem days or weeks after the poem is shared. And not every child will respond verbally; some of the quietest children may experience the poem deeply but not ask or respond to questions in a group setting and that is OK. Discussion prompts should overwhelm the poem itself and be sure that the teacher is not doing most of the talking.

I find that this brief moment for discussion usually accomplishes two important things: it provides a window into children's understanding of the poem and paves the way for a gentle, inductive skill-focused mini-lesson. Kids often notice things

about the poem in this discussion time (like repetition, rhyme, and onomatopoeia, for example), particularly as this practice becomes familiar. We can piggy-back on their comments by explaining some poetry fundamentals AFTER they've already observed them (e.g., "click clack" is called "onomatopoeia" and poets use this device to suggest sounds, even coining new words in the process). When this discussion dynamic is in place time after time, children will often volunteer their own responses before we can ask our questions because they know we are already open to their opinions.

**Tip #4:** The next natural step is to focus on a specific language arts or poetry skill or concept that may be present in the poem—just one. This includes basics such as rhyme, repetition, rhythm, alliteration, and onomatopoeia, as well as poetry forms and types (cinquain, haiku, tanka, acrostic, diamante) and techniques such as personification and simile. Any given poem may demonstrate many of these poetic elements and devices, but focus on one key element that is particularly significant for one mini-lesson. Remember that we are building poetry understanding one poem at a time—while striving to maintain the joy of poetry, too.

Here we can incorporate the Common Core Standards in the U.S. (or whatever curricular standards are relevant) in a natural, incremental way. In sharing poetry with kindergartners, we capitalize on their developing knowledge of language, their joy in learning and playing with words, and their emerging understanding of how words should be spoken, spelled, read, and written. First we focus on enjoyment and understanding, then we guide students in recognizing and responding to poems. We can explore the rhythm of poetry as well as the power of rhyme and the sounds of words. With first graders, we shift slightly to guide students in understanding how poets express feelings in poetry and appeal to the senses through language. We can also help them understand and identify the words and phrases poets use to communicate emotions and convey sensory experiences through poetry. In second grade, we guide students in responding to the rhythm of poetry and recognizing how rhyme is used in poems. We can also explore how repetition and alliteration can help shape a poem and how meaning emerges.

By third grade we support students in responding to poetry in various forms, exploring narrative poems that tell stories, lyrical poems that explore questions and emotions, and humorous poems that make us groan or laugh. We help students understand how poets use lines and stanzas to build poems in distinctive ways. Then in fourth grade we also guide students in responding to poetry in various forms, articulating themes from key ideas and details in the poems. In sharing poetry aloud and in print, we can assist students in understanding how structural elements such as verse, rhythm, and meter help shape a poem. In fifth grade, the emphasis is to help students respond to poetry in various forms, articulate themes from key ideas and details in the poems, and explain how the poem's speaker reflects upon a topic and shapes it with a particular point of view. We can guide students in understanding word meanings and how figurative language such as metaphors and similes function in poetry.

We can also discuss how structural elements such as stanzas and line breaks help shape a poem and how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a poem.

By sixth grade the standards become more detailed and specific, including understanding figurative and connotative meanings of words; analyzing the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone, considering how a particular stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, and contrasting the reading and multi-media experience of a text and various forms or types of poetry in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

In grade seven we continue our focus on helping students understand the craft and structure of poetry with a specific focus on words and phrases as they are used in a poem, including figurative and connotative meanings. In addition, we guide students in analyzing the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on specific verses or stanzas of a poem. We also challenge students to consider how a poem's form or structure (e.g., sonnet) contributes to its meaning. Finally, we make connections with multi-media adaptations of poetry encouraging students to compare and contrast the written poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version.

Finally, in grade eight our ongoing focus on helping students understand the craft and structure of poetry continues with a focus on words and phrases as they are used in a poem, including figurative and connotative meanings. We guide students in analyzing the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. We lead students in considering how differences in points of view (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor. Finally, we provide opportunities for students to compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

All this may seem a bit overwhelming at first glance, but the idea is to develop this poetry appreciation incrementally, one poem at a time. With *The Poetry Friday Anthology*, students engage in reading, sharing, and discussing 36 poems across the school year, one poem per Poetry Friday. But we can share poems from a variety of wonderful poetry books, such as Marilyn Singer's newest work, *Follow, Follow*, the sequel to her popular fairy tale-themed verso poem collection, *Mirror, Mirror*, or Jack Prelutsky's new *Stardines Swim High Across the Sky and Other Poems*, a blending of the animate and inanimate, or Caroline Kennedy's comprehensive anthology, *Poems to Learn by Heart*. Using this five-step approach, we can take any poem we enjoy and share it with children in ways that are varied, engaging, participatory, and skill-rich.

**Tip #5:** Finally, in this last step we share other related poem titles and poetry books that connect well with the featured poem. Keep the poetry momentum going! Look for another poem by the same poet, another poem about the same subject, another poem in the same style, or a poem that contrasts with the focus poem in some distinctive way. Once the students have been immersed in a

dozen poems or more, THEY will be making those connections noting how this poem reminds them of another. Follow their lead and encourage them to find and share those connected poems. Keep poetry books handy for easy reference and revisit favorite poems as often as possible. A quick oral sharing of a popular poem can be a great way to start or end the day, a lesson, or a library program. We can use a poem to line students up, transition to the next activity, or while waiting for a few moments. Students who spend five minutes every Friday with a good poem will surely find at least one poem that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. Seeking out poetry by a range of voices and cultures offers young people a rich panoply of poetry to broaden their horizons.

## **A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MULTICULTURAL AND INTERNATIONAL POETRY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES**

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### **Asian American Poetry for Young People**

*Asian and Asian American poetry for young people is not just haiku; there are many lovely, ancient and contemporary works to share with children. Here is a sampling of poetry for young people by Asian and Asian American poets.*

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- Wong, Janet S. 1994. *Good Luck Gold and Other Poems*. New York: McElderry.
- Wong, Janet S. 1996/2008. *A Suitcase of Seaweed, and Other Poems*. New York: Booksurge.
- Wong, Janet S. 1999. *Behind the Wheel: Poems about Driving*. New York: McElderry.
- Wong, Janet S. 1999. *The Rainbow Hand: Poems about Mothers and Children*. New York: McElderry.
- Wong, Janet S. 2000. *Night Garden: Poems from the World of Dreams*. New York: McElderry.
- Wong, Janet S. 2003. *Knock on Wood: Poems about Superstitions*. New York: McElderry.
- Wong, Janet S. 2003. *Minn and Jake*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- Wong, Janet S. 2007. *Twist: Yoga Poems*. New York: McElderry.
- Wong, Janet. 2008. *Minn and Jake's Almost Terrible Summer*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- Wong, Janet. 2011. *Once Upon A Tiger, New Beginnings for Endangered Animals*. OnceUponATiger.com.
- Wong, Janet. 2012. *Declaration of Interdependence: Poems for an Election Year*. PoetrySuitcase.
- Wong, Joyce Lee. 2006. *Seeing Emily*. New York: Abrams.
- Yep, Laurence, ed. 1993. *American Dragons: Twenty-five Asian American Voices*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Yu, Chin. 2005. *Little Green; Growing Up During the Chinese Cultural Revolution*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

### **Hispanic/Latino/Latina Poetry for Young People**

*There are more and more poets of Hispanic/Latino background writing poetry for children. Some are of Hispanic heritage and others collect poetry from Latin American countries. Here's a list of some of my favorites for sharing with young people.*

- Ada, Alma Flor and Campoy, Isabel. 2010. *Muu, Moo! Rimas de animales/Animal Nursery Rhymes*. New York: Rayo/HarperCollins.
- Ada, Alma Flor and Campoy, F. Isabel. 2011. *Ten Little Puppies; Diez perritos*. New York: Rayo/HarperCollins.
- Ada, Alma Flor, and Isabel Campoy, comp. 2003. *Pio Peep! Traditional Spanish Nursery Rhymes*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Alarcón, Francisco X. 1997. *Laughing Tomatoes and Other Spring Poems/Jitomates Risuenos y Otros Poemas de Primavera*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Alarcón, Francisco X. 1998. *From the Bellybutton of the Moon and Other Summer Poems/Del Ombligo de la Luna y Otros Poemas de Verano*. San Francisco: Children's Book Press.
- Alarcón, Francisco X. 1999. *Angels Ride Bikes and Other Fall Poems*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Alarcón, Francisco X. 2001. *Iguanas in the Snow and Other Winter Poems/Iguanas en la Nieve y Otros Poemas de Invierno*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Alarcón, Francisco X. 2005. *Poems to Dream Together/ Poemas para Sonar Juntos*. New York: Lee & Low.
- Alarcón, Francisco X. 2008. *Animals Poems of the Iguazú / Animalario del Iguazú*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Argueta, Jorge. 2001. *A Movie in My Pillow/Una película en mi almohada*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Argueta, Jorge. 2009. *Sopa de frijoles/ Bean Soup*. Ill. by Rafael Yockteng. Toronto, ON: Groundwood.
- Argueta, Jorge. 2010. *Arroz con leche; Rice Pudding*. Ill. by Fernando Vilela. Toronto, ON: Groundwood.
- Argueta, Jorge. 2012. *Guacamole; Un poema para cocinar/ A Cooking Poem*. Ill. by Margarita Sada. Toronto: Groundwood.
- Bernier-Grand, Carmen T. 2006. *César; ¡Sí, Se Puede! Yes, We can!* New York: Marshall Cavendish.
- Bernier-Grand, Carmen T. 2007. *Frida: ¡Viva la vida! Long Live Life!* New York: Marshall Cavendish.
- Bernier-Grand, Carmen T. 2009. *Diego; Bigger Than Life*. Ill. by David Diaz. New York: Marshall Cavendish.
- Carlson, Lori M, comp. 2005. *Red Hot Salsa; Bilingual Poems on Being Young and Latino in the United States*. New York: Henry Holt.
- Cofer, Judith Ortiz. 2004. *Call Me Maria; A Novel in Letters, Poems, and Prose*. New York: Orchard.
- Delacre, Lulu. 2004. *Arrorró Mi Niño: Latino Lullabies and Gentle Games*. New York: Scholastic.
- Durango, Julia. 2011. *Under the Mambo Moon*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.
- Engle, Margaret. 2006. *The Poet Slave of Cuba: A Biography of Juan Francisco Manzano*. New York: Holt.
- Engle, Margarita. 2008. *The Surrender Tree*. New York: Holt.

- Engle, Margarita. 2009. *Tropical Secrets: Holocaust Refugees in Cuba*. New York: Holt.
- Engle, Margarita. 2010. *The Firefly Letters; A Suffragette's Journey to Cuba*. New York: Holt.
- Engle, Margarita. 2011. *Hurricane Dancers; The First Caribbean Pirate Shipwreck*. New York: Holt.
- Engle, Margarita. 2012. *The Wild Book*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Herrera, Juan Felipe. 2004. *Featherless/Desplumado*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Herrera, Juan Felipe. 2005. *Cinnamon Girl: Letters Found Inside A Cereal Box*. New York: Rayo/HarperCollins.
- Herrera, Juan Felipe. 2005. *Downtown Boy*. New York: Scholastic.
- Herrera, Juan Felipe. 2011. *Skate Fate*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Lee, Claudia M. Ed. 2011. *Mandaderos de la lluvia/Messengers of Rain*. Ill. by Rafael Yockteng. Toronto: Groundwood. (new bilingual edition).
- Luján, Jorge. 2008. *Colors! Colores!* Ill. by Piet Grobler. Toronto: Groundwood.
- Luján, Jorge. 2010. *Brunhilda and the Ring*. Translated by Hugh Hazelton. Toronto: Groundwood.
- Luján, Jorge. 2012. *Con el sol en los ojos/ With the Sun in My Eyes*. Ill. by Morteza Zahedi. Toronto: Groundwood.
- McCall, Guadalupe Garcia. 2011. *Under the Mesquite*. New York: Lee & Low.
- Medina, Jane. 2004. *The Dream on Blanca's Wall*. Honesdale, PA: Boyd's Mill Press.
- Mora, Pat. 1996. *Confetti: Poems for Children*. New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Mora, Pat. 1994. *The Desert is My Mother/El Desierto es Mi Madre*. Houston, TX: Pinata Books.
- Mora, Pat. 2001. *Love to Mama: A Tribute to Mothers*. New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Mora, Pat. 2000. *My Own True Name: New and Selected Poems for Young Adults, 1984-1999*. Houston, TX: Pinata Books.
- Mora, Pat. 1998. *This Big Sky*. New York: Scholastic.
- Mora, Pat. 1996. *Uno Dos Tres, One, Two, Three*. New York: Clarion Books.
- Mora, Pat. 2007. *Yum! Mmmm! Que Rico!: America's Sproutings*. New York: Lee & Low.
- Mora, Pat. 2010. *Dizzy in My Eyes*. New York: Knopf.
- Nye, Naomi Shihab, comp. 1995. *The Tree is Older than You Are: A Bilingual Gathering of Poems and Stories from Mexico with Paintings by Mexican Artists*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Orozco, José Luis. 2002. *Diez Deditos: Ten Little Fingers and Other Play Rhymes and Action Songs from Latin America*. New York: Dutton.
- Ruesga, Rita Rosa. 2011. *Cantaba la rana/The Frog Was Singing*. Ill. by Soledad Sebastián. New York: Scholastic.
- Shahan, Sherry. 2009. *Fiesta!: A Celebration of Latino Festivals*. Ill. by Paula Barragan. Atlanta, GA: August House.
- Soto, Gary. 1990. *A Fire in My Hands*. New York: Scholastic.

- Soto, Gary. 1992. *Neighborhood Odes*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Soto, Gary. 1995. *Canto Familiar*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace.
- Soto, Gary. 2002. *Fearless Fernie: Hanging Out with Fernie & Me*. New York: Putnam.
- Soto, Gary. 2005. *Worlds Apart: Fernie and Me*. New York: Putnam.
- Soto, Gary. 2008. *Partly Cloudy; Poems of Love and Longing*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Sullivan, Charles. Ed. 1994. *Here is My Kingdom: Hispanic-American Literature and Art for Young People*. New York: Abrams.

### **Native American Poetry For Young People**

*Voices from Native American or Indian tribes and traditions offer poetry in many forms. Here is a selection of these poetry books for young people.*

- Begay, Shonto. 1995. *Navajo; Visions and Voices Across the Mesa*. New York: Scholastic.
- Bierhorst, John. Ed. 1994. *On the Road of Stars; Native American Night Poems and Sleep Charms*. New York: Macmillan.
- Bierhorst, John. Ed. 1998. *In the Trail of The Wind*. New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux.
- Bruchac, Joseph. 1996. *Between Earth and Sky*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace.
- Bruchac, Joseph. 1996. *The Circle of Thanks*. Mahwah, NJ: Bridgewater Books.
- Bruchac, Joseph. 1995. *The Earth Under Sky Bear's Feet: Native American Poems of the Land*. New York: Philomel.
- Bruchac, Joseph. 1996. *Four Ancestors: Stories, Songs, and Poems from Native North America*. Mahwah, NJ: Bridgewater Books.
- Bruchac, Joseph. 1992. *Thirteen Moons on Turtle's Back: A Native American Year of Moons*. New York: Philomel.
- Carvell, Marlene. 2005. *Sweetgrass Basket*. New York: Dutton.
- Castillo, Ana. 2000. *My Daughter, My Son, the Eagle, the Dove: An Aztec Chant*. New York: Dutton.
- Francis, Lee. 1999. *When The Rain Sings: Poems by Young Native Americans*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Geis, Jacqueline. 1992. *Where the Buffalo Roam*. Nashville, TN: Ideals Children's Books.
- Hirschfelder, A. and Singer, B. Eds. 1992. *Rising Voices: Writings of Young Native Americans*. New York: Scribner's.
- Jones, Hettie. Ed. 1971. *The Tree Stands Shining: Poetry of the North American Indian*. New York: Dial.
- Littlechild, George. 1993. *This Land Is My Land*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- McLaughlin, Timothy. Ed. 2012. *Walking on Earth and Touching the Sky; Poetry and Prose by Lakota Youth at Red Cloud Indian School*. New York: Abrams.

- Ochoa, Annette Piña, Betsy Franco, And Traci L. Gourdine. Ed. 2003. *Night Is Gone, Day Is Still Coming; Stories and Poems by American Indian Teens and Young Adults*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick.
- Philip, Neil. Ed. 1996. *Earth Always Endures: Native American Poems*. New York: Viking.
- Philip, Neil. Ed. 1997. *In a Sacred Manner I Live: Native American Wisdom*. New York: Clarion.
- Slapin, Beverly, And Doris Seale. Eds. 1998. *Through Indian Eyes: The Native American Experience in Books for Children*. Berkeley, CA: Oyate.
- Sneve, Virginia. D. H. Ed. 1989. *Dancing Teepees: Poems of American Indian Youth*. New York: Holiday House.
- Swamp, C. J. 1995. *Giving Thanks; A Native American Good Morning Message*. New York: Lee & Low.
- Swann, B. 1998. *Touching the Distance: Native American Riddle-Poems*. San Diego, CA: Browndeer Press/Harcourt Brace.
- Wood, Nancy. 1995. *Dancing Moons*. New York: Doubleday.
- Wood, Nancy. 1998. *Sacred Fire*. New York: Doubleday.
- Wood, Nancy. 1993. *Spirit Walker*. New York: Doubleday.

### **International Poetry for Young People**

*As we seek poetry for children from many cultural perspectives, we can expand beyond the cultures in the U.S. and include poetry from other countries. Some of the following works are imported from across the oceans and others are anthologies of global poems collected by poets within the U.S. Sharing poems from these collections can put a face on a news story from far away lands.*

- Agard, John and Grace Nichols, Eds. 1994. *A Caribbean Dozen: Poems from Caribbean Poets*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick.
- Agard, John, and Nichols, Grace. Eds. 1995. *No Hickory, No Dickory, No Dock: Caribbean Nursery Rhymes*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick.
- Aldana, Patricia. Ed. 2004. *Under the Spell of the Moon*. Toronto, Canada: Groundwood.
- Argante, Jenny. Ed. 2007. *Poetry Pudding; A Delicious Collection of Rhyme and Wit*. Ill. by Debbie Tipuna. Auckland, NZ: Reed Publishing, p. 168.
- Beck, Carolyn. *Buttercup's Lovely Day*. Custer, WA: Orca Books.
- Benjamin, Floella. Ed. 1995. *Skip Across the Ocean: Nursery Rhymes from Around the World*. New York: Orchard.
- Brenner, Barbara. Ed. 2000. *Voices Poetry and Art from Around the World*. Washington, DC: National Geographic Society.
- Brownlee, Liz. 2012. *Animal Magic*. Ill. by Rose Sanderson. London: Iron Press.
- Cashman, Seamus. Ed. 2004. *Something Beginning with P: New Poems from Irish Poets*. Dublin: O'Brien Press.
- Chorao, Kay. 2009. *Rhymes Round the World*. New York: Dutton.
- Cooling, Wendy. Ed. 2004. *Come to the Great World; Poems from Around the Globe*. New York: Holiday House.

- Cooling, Wendy. Ed. 2010. *All the Wild Wonders: Poems of Our Earth*. Ill. by Piet Grobler. London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books.
- Denton, Graham. 2006. *Silly Superstitions*. London: Macmillan Children's Books.
- Denton, Graham. 2009. *Orange Silver Sausage*. London: Walker Books.
- Denton, Graham. 2010. *My Cat is in Love with the Goldfish*. London: A&C Black.
- Denton, Graham. 2009. *Wild! Rhymes that Roar*. London: Macmillan.
- Foster, John. Ed. 1997. *Let's Celebrate: Festival Poems*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Greenberg, Jan. Ed. 2008. *Side by Side: New Poems Inspired by Art from Around the World*. New York: Abrams.
- Gunning, Monica. 1993. *Not a Copper Penny in Me House*. Honesdale, PA: Wordsong/Boyd's Mills Press.
- Gunning, Monica. 1998. *Under The Breadfruit Tree: Island Poems*. Honesdale, PA: Boyd's Mills Press.
- Hallworth, Grace. Ed. 1996. *Down by the River: Afro-Caribbean Rhymes, Games, and Songs for Children*. New York: Scholastic.
- Henderson, Kathy. 2011. *Hush, Baby, Hush! Lullabies from Around the World*. Ill. by Pam Smy. Seattle: Frances Lincoln.
- Herrick, Steven. 2004. *By the River*. Asheville, NC: Front Street.
- Herrick, Steven. 2004. *The Simple Gift*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Herrick, Steven. 2006. *The Wolf*. Asheville, NC: Front Street.
- Herrick, Steven. 2008. *Naked Bunyip Dancing*. Honesdale, PA: Boyd's Mills/Wordsong.
- Herrick, Steven. 2009. *Cold Skin*. Asheville, NC: Front Street.
- Houle, Michelle M. Ed. 2010. *Poetry Rocks: Modern British Poetry; "The World is Never the Same."* Enslow.
- Lawson, JonArno. 2008. *Black Stars in a White Night Sky*. Honesdale, PA: Boyd's Mills/Wordsong.
- Lawson, JonArno. 2010. *Think Again*. Kids Can Press.
- Lee, Dennis. 1997. *Dinosaur Dinner with a Slice of Alligator Pie*. New York: Random House.
- Lee, Dennis. 1991. *The Ice Cream Store*. New York: Scholastic. Reprint, New York: HarperCollins, 1999.
- Lee, Dennis. 2001. *Alligator Pie*. Toronto: Key Porter Books.
- Lee, Dennis. 2001. *Bubblegum Delicious*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Lee, Dennis. 2002. *Garbage Delight: Another Helping*. Toronto: Key Porter Books.
- Luján, Jorge. 2008. *Colors! Colores!* Ill. by Piet Grobler. Toronto: Groundwood.
- Luján, Jorge. 2012. *Con el sol en los ojos/ With the Sun in My Eyes*. Ill. by Morteza Zahedi. Toronto: Groundwood.
- Mado, Michio. 1992. *The Animals: Selected Poems*. New York: McElderry.
- Mado, Michio. 1998. *The Magic Pocket*. New York: McElderry.
- Nye, Naomi Shihab. Ed. 1992. *This Same Sky: A Collection of Poems from Around the World*. New York: Four Winds Press.

- Nye, Naomi Shihab. Ed. 1995. *The Tree is Older than You Are: A Bilingual Gathering of Poems and Stories from Mexico with Paintings by Mexican Artists*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Nye, Naomi Shihab. Ed. 1998. *The Space Between Our Footsteps: Poems and Paintings From the Middle East*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Nye, Naomi Shihab. 1998. *The Flag of Childhood: Poems from the Middle East*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Nye, Naomi Shihab. 2002. *Nineteen Varieties of the Gazelle*. New York: Greenwillow.
- Olaleye, I. 1995. *The Distant Talking Drum: Poems from Nigeria*. Honesdale, PA: Wordsong.
- Pomerantz, Charlotte. 1982. *If I Had a Paka: Poems in Eleven Languages*. New York: Greenwillow.
- Rasmussen, Halfdan. 2011. *A Little Bitty Man and Other Poems for the Very Young*. Translated by Marilyn Nelson and Pamela Espeland. Somerville, MA: Candlewick.
- Rosen, Michael. Ed. 1991. *A World of Poetry*. London: Kingfisher Books.
- Rosen, Michael. Ed. 1992. *Itsy-bitsy Beasties: Poems from Around the World*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books.
- Sayer, Viv. Ed. 2008. *Poems of Love and Longing*. Pont Books.
- Schmidt, Annie M. G. 2011. *A Pond Full of Ink*, translated by David Colmer. Amsterdam: Querido Children's Books.
- Swann, Brian. 1998. *The House with No Door: African Riddle-poems*. San Diego, CA: Browndeer Press.
- Warren, Celia. Ed. 2011. *RSPB Anthology of Wildlife Poetry*. London: A&C Black.
- Wright, Danielle. Ed. 2008. *My Village; Rhymes from Around the World*. Wellington, NZ: Gecko Press.
- Yolen, Jane. Ed. 1992. *Street Rhymes from Around the World*. Honesdale, PA: Wordsong/Boyd's Mills Press.
- Yolen, Jane. Ed. 1994. *Sleep Rhymes around the World*. Honesdale, PA: Wordsong/Boyd's Mills Press.

## **RECENT PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES ON SHARING POETRY WITH CHILDREN**

The selected titles listed below are full of practical information to provide additional guidance in selecting and sharing poetry with students.

*Conversations With a Poet: Inviting Poetry into K-12 Classrooms* by Betsy Franco (Richard C. Owen, 2005)

*Outspoken: How to Improve Writing and Speaking Through Poetry Performance* by Sara Holbrook and Michael Salinger (Heinemann, 2006)

*Poetry Aloud Here: Sharing Poetry with Children* by Sylvia Vardell (ALA, 2013)

*Poetry Everywhere; Teaching Poetry Writing in School and in the Community* by Jack Collom and Sheryl Noethe (Teachers and Writers Collaborative, 2005)

*The Poetry Friday Anthology and The Poetry Friday Anthology for Middle School* both by Sylvia Vardell and Janet Wong (Pomelo Books, 2012/2013)  
*Poetry Lessons to Meet the Common Core State Standards: Exemplar Poems with Engaging Lessons and Response Activities that Help Students Read, Understand and Appreciate Poetry* by Georgia Heard (Scholastic, 2013)  
*Reading Poetry in the Middle Grades: 20 Poems and Activities that Meet the Common Core Standards and Cultivate a Passion for Poetry* by Paul B. Janeczko (Heinemann, 2011)  
*The Poetry Experience; Choosing and Using Poetry in the Classroom* by Sheree Fitch and Larry Swartz (Pembroke, 2008)  
*The Poetry Teacher's Book of Lists* by Sylvia Vardell (Pomelo Books, 2012)  
*Using Poetry Across the Curriculum* (second edition) by Barbara Chatton (ABC-CLIO, 2010)

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THE POETRY FRIDAY ANTHOLOGY GRADES 6-8 (with Janet Wong)  
THE POETRY FRIDAY ANTHOLOGY GRADES K-5 (with Janet Wong)  
THE POETRY TEACHER'S BOOK OF LISTS (2012)  
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN ACTION; A LIBRARIAN'S GUIDE (2008)  
POETRY PEOPLE; A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO CHILDREN'S POETS (2007)  
POETRY ALOUD HERE! SHARING POETRY WITH CHILDREN (2006/2013)

**Related Blogs:**

PoetryforChildren.Blogspot.com  
PoetryFridayAnthology.Blogspot.com  
PFAMS.Blogspot.com  
PoetryTeachersBookofLists.Blogspot.com  
PomeloBooks.com