

Poetry at the Craggs

Alphabet Poetry

Welcome to Poetry at the Craggs! Today's poetry exercise is all about celebrating the world around us.

'Alphabet' is a poem by Danish poet, Inger Christensen. It starts with a list of things that exist, in alphabetical order. Here are the opening lines:

The word 'alphabet' comes from the fact that the Greek alphabet begins with the letters 'alpha' and 'beta'!



1
apricot trees exist, apricot trees exist



2
bracken exists; and blackberries,
blackberries;
bromine exists; and hydrogen, hydrogen

3
cicadas exist; chicory, chromium,
citrus trees; cicadas exist;
cicadas, cedars, cypresses, the cerebellum

A piece of writing structured according to the alphabet is called an 'abecedary' – if you look at the word, can you see why?

Why do you think some words are repeated? Maybe you could try experimenting with repetition in your poem.

This is a translation – the original poem was written in Danish. You might notice that hydrogen begins with an 'h', but it's in the 'b' section – that's because the Danish word for hydrogen is 'brint' - it starts with a b!

This poem looks simple, but by including a huge variety of things – from trees to metal and parts of the brain – it becomes a celebration of the world and everything in it.



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Now it's your turn to have a go!

Step one: In the grid, write down things beginning with each letter. Try and think of all your favourite things, and where they might go in the grid. Think about food, objects, plants, animals, colours – everything and anything! We've started you off with some examples...

Inger Christensen wrote her poem in Danish. If you know any other languages, why don't you try including some words of that language? You can mix them in with the English words, or write the whole poem in another language, if you want!

	Description
A	<i>Apples exist, and antlers...</i>
B	<i>Bison exist...</i>
C	<i>Caves exist, and crags exist....</i>
D	
E	
F	
G	



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Remember to add 'exist' or 'exists' after you've added something to the grid, just like the examples

	Description
H	
I	
J	
K	
L	
M	
N	
O	
P	
Q	



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	Description
R	
S	
T	
U	
V	
W	
X	
Y	
Z	

When you're finished, why not ask your parent or guardian if you can show us your finished poem on Twitter – remember to tag us @CreswellCraggs, and use the hashtag #creswellpoetry!