Poems to Perform

* Read the first three verses of this poem out loud several times.
* Read slowly, clearly and with the appropriate volume (loudness).
* Put lots of expression in your voice!
* Try different ‘tones’. For example, read it as if it is a mysterious poem, then try reading it as if it was a funny poem. Which do you prefer? Once you have done this, answer the questions below.

TEN Little Children

TEN little children

Standing in a line,

One fell over a cliff

And then there were NINE.

NINE little children

At the school gate,

Along came a roaring lion

And then there were EIGHT.

EIGHT little children

Travelling to Devon,

One vanished in a puff of smoke

And then there were SEVEN.

Task 1: Discuss these questions with an adult or a friend.

1) Look at lines 1 and 4 in each verse. How are they the same? How are they different? What is happening each time?

2) Which lines rhyme in each verse? Can you identify the rhyming words?

3) Where are capital letters used?

4) Where are commas and full stops used in each verse?

Task 2

Now continue the poem, using your own ideas and the frame below:

* You can be as funny and whacky as you like!
* Try to have the right number of ‘beats’ in each line.
* Make sure lines 2 and 4 in each verse rhyme. The best way to do this is to think of lots of words that rhyme with the last word in the verse first. For example, for your first verse, you need to think of lots of words that rhyme with SIX (sticks, tricks, kicks, bricks, Weetabix, chicks, fix etc…). This will then give you ideas for line 2.
* Take your time. Have lots of fun trying different possibilities, before deciding on your favourite one.
* Remember to use capital letters for all the numbers and at the start of each line, and put commas and full stops in the correct places.

SEVEN little children

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , (last word must rhyme with SIX)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

And then there were SIX.

SIX little children

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , (last word must rhyme with FIVE)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

And then there were \_\_\_\_\_\_ .

FIVE little children

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , (last word must rhyme with FOUR)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

And then there were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

FOUR little children

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , (last word must rhyme with THREE)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

And then there were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

THREE little children

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, (last word must rhyme with TWO)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

And then there were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

TWO little children

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, (last word must rhyme with ONE)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

And then there was ONE.

ONE little child

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , (last word must rhyme with ZERO)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

And then there were ZERO.

Task 3

* Read your poem out loud, as before, using the appropriate expression, tone, rhythm and volume. Has it got the correct rhythm? Make changes if you need to.
* Check your work carefully, including spellings and punctuation. You could make any corrections using a purple pen, like we do in class. If you haven’t got purple, any colour will do just as well.
* Once you have checked your work, write the poem out in your book or on a special piece of paper as beautifully as you can, using your neatest joined handwriting. Pay particular attention to the layout of your poem, making sure all numbers are in capital letters.
* Perform your finished poem to an audience of people in your house.
* Perhaps you could ask someone to record your performance. I would love to see or hear them!