

Poetry Starters

based on FROM THE DOGHOUSE by Amy E. Sklansky

- Using "Guess Who" as a model, ask students to write riddle poems of their own. Then share and solve them as a class.
- Discuss point of view. All poems in FROM THE DOGHOUSE are told from the perspective of dogs. Ask students to select another animal (a class pet?) or even an inanimate object (a desk? a pencil?) and write a short poem from its point of view.
- Read "Doggy Days" and discuss how the dog feels differently each day of the week. Ask students to think about how they feel on the different days of the week, and then write a poem using days of the week as a structure.
- Read "The Bath." Point out that each line is only one word – mostly action verbs. Ask students to create their own poems with one-word lines.
- Read "Saturdays at the Park" and discuss the structure of the poem. Ask students to think about what they like to do on Saturdays and write a poem using the same structure:

I like Saturdays _____
the _____
the _____
the _____
From deep inside I _____
and _____

- Oral presentation. Divide the class into pairs or groups. Ask them to select a poem and prepare a performance for the rest of the class.
- Class project. Discuss and vote on a theme or subject for a class poetry collection. Ask each student to write a poem on the subject using any kind of form or point of view. They might choose to illustrate their poetry as well.

