

# Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children

This lesson plan spans one lesson (approx. 60 minutes) but can be adapted for longer or shorter sessions.

**Aim:** Create your own BSL poem.



**Term:** **Class: (Age Group: 6–11 years)** **Topic: BSL Poetry** **Date:**

**Mental Starter Questions:** What is our topic? What are we learning? What have we learnt so far? How are we doing this week? Why are we learning?

**Key Vocabulary:** poem, poetry, BSL Poet Laureate, title, rhyme, imagery, expression, creative, types of poems, descriptive & emotive language.

**Resources:** Paper or poetry worksheets. Pencils /markers. Whiteboard & whiteboard pens. Example poems. BSL Poetry Clips (online) - Computer. iPad.

Learning Objectives	Success Criteria (Outcomes)	Teaching method & Group/individual activities (with differentiation)	Assessment/ Pupil progress
<p>Understand what a BSL poem is and identify different types of BSL poetry.</p> <p>Use imagination and descriptive language.</p> <p>Create and share their own original BSL poem.</p>	<p>By the end of the lesson, pupils should be able to:</p> <p><b>Understanding Poetry</b></p> <p>I can explain what a BSL poem is.</p> <p>I can name at least one type of poem (e.g., rhyming, handshape).</p> <p>I know that BSL poems can use rhythm, rhyme, and creative signs.</p> <p><b>Creating a BSL Poem</b></p>	<p><b>Starter Activity (10 mins) – “What is a BSL Poem?”</b></p> <p><b>Materials:</b> Whiteboard, marker, example poems.</p> <p><b>Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask: “What do you think a BSL poem is?”</li> <li>Show a few short poems (BSL video clips available online).</li> <li>Discuss key features: rhythm, rhyme, emotions, imagery, structure.</li> </ul> <p><b>Warm-up Activity (10 mins) – “Sign Play!” (Word Play)</b></p> <p><b>Materials:</b> Whiteboard or paper, markers</p> <p><b>Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pick a theme (e.g., animals, being deaf, colours).</li> <li>Ask pupils to sign out loud various signs for that theme (nouns, verbs, adjectives).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teacher Observation Checklist</b></p> <p>Use a simple checklist during the activity to informally assess pupil engagement and outcomes.</p> <p><b>Pupil Self-Assessment (Exit or Worksheet Add-On)</b></p> <p>At the bottom of their worksheet or as a 2-minute wrap-up activity:</p> <p><i>Today I signed a poem. I’m proud because...</i></p> <p><i>Something I found tricky was...</i></p> <p><i>Next time, I want to try...</i></p>

	<p>I used a theme or idea to help me write.</p> <p>I made my own short poem using one of the structures we learned.</p> <p>I included at least 3 descriptive or imaginative signs.</p> <p>I tried to use rhyme or a creative sign.</p> <p><b>Sharing and Reflecting</b></p> <p>I shared my poem or talked about it with someone else.</p> <p>I watched other BSL poems respectfully.</p> <p>I can say one thing I liked about creating my BSL poem.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write them up or let pupils build a "sign/word bank" for later. Record signs on a device e.g., iPad or alternatively, draw quick pictures/symbols to remind them later.</li> </ul> <p>Make it playful! Maybe do a quick “handshape” challenge (e.g., what signs can we come up with for the ‘B’ handshape?).</p> <p><b>Main Activity (25 mins) – “My BSL Poem”</b></p> <p>Pupils create a short BSL poem using their chosen theme or sign/word bank.</p> <p><b>Options (depending on age/ability):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Acrostic Poem:</b> Think of a sign/word (e.g., SPRING) and start each signing line with the handshape for each letter S (create a sentence) then P (create a sentence) then R, repeat until each letter has been signed.</li> <li>• <b>Simile Poem:</b> sign a theme and use ‘like’ to form a sentence e.g., red like (a) fire, orange like (a) tiger, yellow like (the) sun.</li> <li>• <b>Handshape Poem:</b> Sign a poem that uses one or two handshapes throughout.</li> <li>• <b>Alliteration Poem:</b> decide on a classifier e.g., index finger to represent a person walking, repeat using this sign throughout the poem, fitting this in amongst the narrative.</li> </ul>	<p>This encourages reflection and gives insight into their self-perception and next steps.</p> <p><b>Work Sampling (Over Time)</b></p> <p>If poetry is part of a larger BSL or literacy unit, keep copies of their BSL poems in a video file and/or if written, in a “writing portfolio” or literacy folder. This helps track growth in: Vocabulary use / Sentence structure / Creativity and confidence / Understanding of different poem types.</p> <p>Compare early poems to later ones to show progress and encourage pride in their improvement!</p> <p><b>Linked Learning Objectives for Formative Assessment</b></p> <p>Link assessment to these skill areas:</p> <p><b>Using / Productive Skills:</b> Can they express ideas clearly using poetic structure?</p>
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## **British Sign Language Curriculum and English National Curriculum Outcomes for Poetry:**

### **KS1 (Years 1–2)**

#### **BSL: Using language: Productive Skills & English Writing:**

- Create sentences by:
  - Signing out loud what they are going to sign about.
  - Composing a sentence verbally before delivering it.
  - Sequencing sentences to form short narratives or poems.
- Develop positive attitudes towards signing/writing by:
  - Signing, writing poetry.
  - Expressing, signing, writing for different purposes.

#### **BSL: Understanding language: Receptive Skills & English: Reading:**

- Develop pleasure in BSL, reading, motivation, vocabulary and understanding by:
  - Watching / listening to and discussing a wide range of poems.
  - Learning to appreciate rhymes and poems, and to recite some by heart.

#### **British Sign Language (Years 1–6):**

- Watch and respond appropriately to adults and peers.
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, and debates.
- Gain, maintain, and monitor the interest of the audience.
- Articulate and justify answers, arguments, and opinions.

### **KS2 (Years 3–6)**

### BSL: Using language: Productive Skills & English: Writing:

- Plan, draft, and sign/write by:
  - Discussing examples similar to that which they are planning to create.
  - Composing and rehearsing sentences verbally.
- Evaluate and edit by:
  - Assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing/signing.
  - Proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve their poem.
- Signing Composition – Poetry:
  - Watch / Read / Write, and perform poems.
  - Recognise different forms of poetry (e.g., free verse, narrative poetry).

### BSL: Understanding Language: Receptive Skills & English Reading:

- Develop positive attitudes to watching / reading by:
  - Watching BSL clips / BSL poetry that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes.
  - Learning a wider range of poetry by heart.
  - Preparing poems to sign out loud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, signing space and action.

### Expressive Language:

- Give well-structured descriptions and explanations.
- Sign clearly and fluently with an increasing command of BSL vocabulary.
- Use BSL to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, and exploring ideas.
- Perform poetry and plays for an audience.

### British Sign Language Curriculum: overall outcomes:

Pupils should be taught to:

- ★ sign out loud their thoughts and ideas.
- ★ recheck their own signs to ensure their sentences or meaning is clear.
- ★ understand and express a range of topical presentations, poems and narratives in BSL at a comfortable pace.
- ★ understand and express unfamiliar signs with increasing accuracy.
- ★ present in BSL their own compositions, using appropriate manner, aspect and handshape movement so that meaning is clear.
- ★ enjoy and have confidence in their BSL mastery.

British Sign Language Curriculum: Programmes of Study

<https://www.fbarnes.camden.sch.uk/bsl-curriculum-2/>

English National Curriculum: Programmes of Study for Key Stages 1 and 2

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7de93840f0b62305b7f8ee/PRIMARY\\_national\\_curriculum\\_-\\_English\\_220714.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7de93840f0b62305b7f8ee/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_English_220714.pdf)