



FOREST HAS A SONG (Clarion, 2013) takes a reader on a year-long journey through a forest. This book can also take children on a journey through poetry as it includes a variety of poetic structures & techniques. Here are a few suggestions for inviting children to write poems inspired by the ones they read in FOREST. First, though, just read. Take in the words. Go on a nature walk. Talk about your own outdoor memories and wonderings. Then read again. You can find more of my poems & lessons at my blog, The Poem Farm. - Amy Ludwig VanDerwater

<u>Poem Title</u>	<u>Meaning and Content</u>	<u>Structure & Stance</u>	<u>Language & Words</u>
<i>In this grid, you will find a few possible writing teaching ideas for each poem. More importantly – please enjoy reading the book!</i>	<i>Here is a wee bit about the back story of each poem in FOREST HAS A SONG. This information might help children find their own ideas, approaching their life topics in varied ways. How might the way that Amy thought (in order to write this poem) inspire you? As we learn from Katie Wood Ray, an author does a lot of thinking and wondering and living before meeting a page with ink.</i>	<i>I study organizational structures of others' poems to help me learn new structures for my own writing. Here you can read a few words about the stance and aerial view of each poem. Most of FOREST's poems are not written in strict forms, but rather find their own ways through line breaks and approach and varied shapes. Sometimes a story, a list, or a metaphor will create the backbone for a poem, threading all of the way or partway through.</i>	<i>Poets depend on each word in a poem, listening and choosing carefully for rhyme (sometimes near rhyme), alliteration (repetition of beginning sounds), assonance (repetition of vowel sound), sound effects, repetition, and other word play. Metaphors and well-painted imagery give color to words on a page. Here I list sounds to notice, but be sure to talk about which images strike you and your students as you read these poems.</i>
<i>Invitation</i>	Our back forest is an important place to me. I thought about how this well-loved place might feel and what it might do and say if it were human.	<u>List Poem</u> – three descriptions are followed by a stanza of Forest's voice <u>Mask Poem</u> – Forest speaks	<u>Rhyme</u> – breeze, trees, please
<i>Dead Branch</i>	I remembered a time when our young daughter was having fun picking apart an old soft dead branch. She said she'd "rather play with dead wood" than play with her friend. I thought that was funny!	<u>Haiku</u>	<u>Alliteration</u> – spongy, springy, stick, slivers, sail <u>Assonance</u> – stick, pick, thin, bits, slivers, wind
<i>Chickadee</i>	I learned that chickadees really do eat from people's hands. I've fed them and will never forget it. I like to write about unforgettable times.	<u>Two Part Poem</u> – two voices speak this poem, each with its own stanza and print <u>Repetition</u> – fly here / I'm	<u>Rhyme</u> – hand, land / free, me <u>Alliteration</u> - here, hand, hurt / small, still, seeds

<i>Forest News</i>	Our family talks about tracks we find, asking, "What happened here?" Recent or long ago conversations often inspire poem ideas. Also, our children loved Lindsay Barrett George's WHO'S BEEN HERE books, and these have surely seeped into my blood.	<u>Metaphor Poem</u> - compares tracks of animals in snow to a newspaper all the way through, sustained metaphor <u>List</u> - stanza two is simply a list	<u>Rhyme</u> - snow, go / through, food / creek, seek / wild, child / sleep, creeps / day, away
<i>April Waking</i>	We have many ferns in the forest near our home. We like to cook them and eat them, and when they start to sprout, I love looking at how pretty they are. I wanted to write a description of that prettiness.	<u>Quatrain</u>	<u>Rhyme</u> - beds, heads / sing, Spring <u>Alliteration</u> - ferny, frondy, fiddleheads, unfurl / stretching, stems, sweetly, sing, sent, spring / greenest, greetings <u>Assonance</u> - unfurl, curls
<i>Fossil</i>	I mixed magic with reality here, remembering holding a real fossil and then thinking what it would be like if it came to life. I love mixing magic with real life.	<u>Narrative Poem</u> - a story poem with a magic twist at the end	<u>Rhyme</u> - found, underground / sand, hand / palm, calm <u>Invented Hyphenation</u> - flicker-minute
<i>Proposal</i>	This poem was inspired by sound. I based it on the science that tree frogs to call mates but I sprinkled in the whimsy of a marriage proposal.	<u>Mask Poem</u> - italicized first and last stanza in the tree frog's voice, sandwiching a mid-poem description	<u>Rhyme</u> - me, tree / above, love / choice, voice <u>Alliteration</u> - hoping, hopping, high <u>Similar Words</u> - hoping, hopping
<i>Lady's Slipper</i>	Since I was little, I've loved lady's slipper flowers and have been interested in the fact that they are protected. While writing about them, I thought of Cinderella and decided to carry this connection through. Fairy tale connections are fun to explore.	<u>Poem of Address</u> - speaks TO the lady's slipper <u>List Poem of Questions</u> <u>Repetition</u> - Were / Did you	<u>Rhyme</u> - fun, run / them, stem / why, goodbye
<i>Spider</i>	I often write about spider webs. They are so beautiful and so temporary. Something about this grabs my heart and says, "Look!"	<u>Description Poem</u> - simply shows what is there and what is happening now <u>Two Line Poem</u> - very short	<u>Rhyme</u> - tangling, dangling, angles <u>Assonance</u> - spinner, dinner, knitting

<i>Dusk</i>	As a mother, I love baby anythings. So at night time, I imagine animals going to bed. To write this poem, I pretended that I was tucking animals into bed. This is what I would say.	<p><u>Poem of Address</u> – speaks TO the animals, telling them what to do</p> <p><u>List Poem</u> – middle stanza is a list of gentle commands</p> <p><u>Ending</u> - slows down and winds down – three word line, two word line, one word line at very end</p>	<p><u>Rhyme</u> – <i>zest, nest / stone, alone / west, rest / sun, fun / cuddle, huddle</i></p>
<i>Lichens</i>	Lichens always draw my attention; there are so many types, and sometimes they look like writing to me. Writing on rocks = nature graffiti!	<p><u>Description Poem</u> – paints a picture of seeing something WITH the reader</p> <p><u>Metaphor Poem</u> – compares the lichens to handwriting and graffiti</p>	<p><u>Rhyme</u> – <i>dark, bark, mark</i></p> <p><u>Alliteration</u> – <i>late, lichens / cursive, code, cover / bumpy, bark / make, mark</i></p> <p><u>Assonance</u> – <i>tracing, flakes, shades</i></p>
<i>First Flight</i>	I spend a lot of time imagining the inner lives of objects and animals. As a mom, I think about baby animals learning new skills. If I were a mom owl, this is how I would hope to be. Imagining myself as another species is a helpful for my writing.	<p><u>Poem for Two Voices</u> – alternates lines between child and mother</p> <p><u>Rhyming Couplets</u></p>	<p><u>Rhyme</u> – <i>high, try / fear, steer / black, back / whooosh, swooosh / fly, sky</i></p> <p><u>Sounds</u> – <i>FLAP FLAP...WHOOOSH</i></p> <p><u>Streamlined Language</u> – last line reads <i>born for sky</i> instead of <i>born for the sky</i></p>
<i>Moss</i>	This poem is about one of my favorite things to touch. My bare feet love the feeling of moss, especially when we go camping.	<u>Quatrain</u>	<p><u>Rhyme</u> – <i>across, moss</i></p> <p><u>Alliteration</u> – <i>squish, softly, sink, socks</i></p>
<i>Bone Pile</i>	Once, on a hike, we found an old bone pile. This made me curious and sad. Both of these emotions evoke writing feelings in me. Deep feelings offer meaningful writing topics.	<p><u>List Poem</u></p> <p><u>Repetition</u> – <i>I wonder</i></p> <p><u>Ending</u> – deeper feeling enters here</p>	<u>Rhyme</u> – <i>old, cold / could, should</i>
<i>Wintergreen</i>	My husband Mark teaches me a lot about nature, and he taught me about wintergreen. It's delightful to taste a wintergreen leaf, and this taste inspired a magical idea of a snowflake-filled summer mouth.	<u>Haiku</u>	<u>Assonance</u> – <i>winter, lingers</i>

<p><i>Waiting for Deer</i></p>	<p>I had a friend once who would sit in the woods and try to touch a deer. This poem is about that patience, that waiting feeling, the memory of my friend telling me his memory.</p>	<p><u>Story Poem</u> - written as if it is happening NOW with the reader</p> <p><u>Slowed Line Breaks</u> - stanza one slows down with only one word per line - waiting feels like this</p> <p><u>Repetition</u> - <i>no deer</i> on a line by itself stretches out that waiting feeling</p> <p><u>Surprise Ending</u></p>	<p><u>Rhyme</u> - <i>here, deer / behind, find / surprise, eyes</i></p> <p><u>Hyphenated Word</u> - <i>s-t-a-r-i-n-g</i> is stretched out for a slower read</p>
<p><i>Home</i></p>	<p>I was fascinated by the fact (thank you, Mark!) that rotten logs have lots of life in them - and so I wrote a poem from this fact. It is a nonfiction poem.</p>	<p><u>List Poem</u> - with a twist</p>	<p><u>Rhyme</u> - <i>bug, slug / bee, tree</i></p> <p><u>Alliteration</u> - <i>bug, beetle / log, bug, slug / lively living / hidden home</i></p>
<p><i>Puff</i></p>	<p>This poem is about a simple experience I love - the act of puffing a puffball. Small daily gifts are great places to find writing ideas.</p>	<p><u>Talking to the Reader Poem</u> - this poem invites a reader along for an experience in real time, as s/he reads.</p> <p><u>Repetition</u> - Puff alternates with each action, also beginning and ending the poem.</p>	<p><u>Rhyme</u> - <i>plump, pump / spore, more / air, everywhere</i></p> <p><u>Alliteration</u> - <i>puff, plump, pump / smoke, scatters, summer</i></p>
<p><i>Warning</i></p>	<p>Everyone has experiences that are not-so-nice. I got poison ivy on my honeymoon! At least it yielded a writing idea. A bad event can beget a good poem.</p>	<p><u>Talking to the Reader Poem</u> - this poem warns a reader of something, like a caution sticker</p> <p><u>Back and Forth Poem</u> - description alternates with warning words</p>	<p><u>Rhyme</u> - <i>beware, care, there</i></p>
<p><i>Woodpecker</i></p>	<p>We hear many woodpeckers where we live, and this sound always perks up my ears. I ask, "Is there a meaning to these sounds and holes?"</p>	<p><u>Description Poem</u> - shows something happening in present tense</p> <p><u>Concrete Poem</u> - the middle section of this poem is like a concrete poem in that the word hole repeats many times, in a pattern of sound, like a pattern of holes</p>	<p><u>Rhyme</u> - <i>tree, me / he, me</i></p> <p><u>Sounds</u> - the word <i>hole</i>, repeated over and over, makes it sound as if a woodpecker is really here</p>

<i>Maples in October</i>	I've always wondered why leaves all change color at once and wrote this poem to pretend-explain a natural mystery in a fanciful way. Is it true? No. But is it fun? Yes!	<u>Back and Forth Structure</u> - regular text alternates with italic text to show the two voices <u>Conversation Poem</u>	<u>Rhyme</u> - <i>day, way / ahead, red</i>
<i>Squirrel</i>	I had a question about something..."Where do squirrels hide those acorns?" and then invented what I would say to a squirrel and what he would say to me if I could only ask.	<u>Two Part Poem</u> - like "Chickadee", this poem includes two voices, each with its own stanza, one in regular type and one in italics	<u>Rhyme</u> - <i>tell, well / store, floor / soul, hole / treasure, measure / goes, snows / September, remember</i> <u>Alliteration</u> - <i>forest, floor / single, soul / gathered, gobs / stash, September</i>
<i>Song</i>	I invited my ears to think of a writing idea for a poem, and they listened very carefully. This list of sounds reminds me of the list of sounds in THE LISTENING WALK by Paul Showers.	<u>List Poem</u> - stanza two is simply a list of sounds <u>Ending Line</u> - is the title of the book	<u>Rhyme</u> - <i>hear, clear / call, fall / flap, snap / long, song / everywhere, air</i> <u>Alliteration</u> - <i>crisp, clear</i> <u>Assonance</u> - <i>forest, chorus/trees, creak</i>
<i>Snowflake Voices</i>	As in "Fossil", here I mix magic with reality. I have always loved (and often write about) the idea that snowflakes all look different from each other. Here I take that idea and extend it - do they sound alike too? Crossing the senses is one of my favorite things to do.	<u>Talking to the Reader Poem</u> - second to last line asks a direct question of the reader <u>Slowed Line Breaks</u> - <i>outside</i> and <i>alone</i> stand alone on their lines to slow the reading <u>Surprise Whimsical Ending</u>	<u>Rhyme</u> - <i>alone, home / hear, clear / name, same</i> <u>Alliteration</u> - <i>winter, woods / softly, snowy / crystal, clear / silver, snowflake, sings</i>
<i>Colorful Actor</i>	One winter day, driving down a country road, I was struck by a flash of red in a sea of white and brown. This scarletflash made me want to write a poem. I started writing it in my head as I drove.	<u>Description Poem</u> - simply shows what is there, play-by-descriptive-play <u>Metaphor Poem</u> - complete poem is built on the idea of cardinal as actor on a stage	<u>Rhyme</u> - <i>white, right, kite</i> <u>Alliteration</u> - <i>wintry, wooded, world/ freely, flying</i>
<i>Farewell</i>	Just as in the first poem of the book, here Forest speaks. Forest wants to be remembered. We are Forest and Forest is us. We need each other.	<u>Mask Poem</u> - after a bit of description, this poem is all in the voice of Forest, speaking to the writer and all readers too	<u>Rhyme</u> - <i>breathes, breeze/ deer, here</i> <u>Repetition</u> - <i>remember</i>