



# "POETRY"

## RESOURCE PACK

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A group of participants from across Leicester City came together via Zoom recently to take part in poetry and spoken-word workshops led by two local poets **Mr Shay** and **Ty'rone Haughton**.

Inspired by **Leicester City Council's 'We've Missed You'** campaign and its **'By The Clock Tower'** poem (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YlwR3xwjUQ4>) especially written by **Arch Creative** co-founder **Joe Nixon** – the focus of the **European Regional Development Fund's (ERDF) Re-opening High Streets Safely** campaign – participants created their own poems celebrating the diversity, resilience, and individuality of the people of Leicester and their optimism as lockdown eases and what people are most looking forward to. Together, they created a collaborative poem, which has been filmed across Leicester and its neighbourhoods.

Throughout July, Curve is holding an exhibition of all the poetry created as part of this project, as well as film and other digital performances created by Curve's Associate Companies, **Sidekick** and **Moving Together**, and **Curve's Young Company**.

But it's not too late for YOU to get involved, too.

Mr Shay and Ty'rone Haughton – two of Leicester's most celebrated poets – have written this helpful resource pack for budding poets and wordsmiths to get involved – and maybe even featured in the living exhibition at Curve!

The pack contains resources, ideas and exercises for you to write your own poem at home, or as part of your creative writing group. Anyone and everyone is invited to submit their work for consideration in this exciting project which helps tell the story of Leicester during – and after – lockdown.



# MR SHAY & TY'RONE HAUGHTON

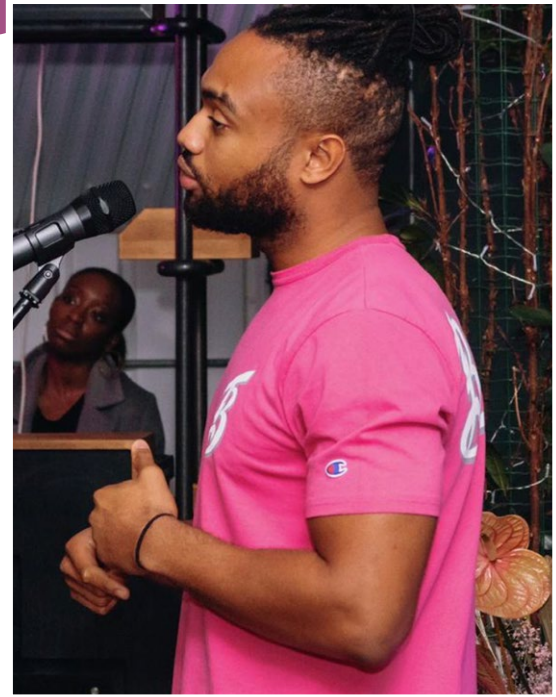
Leicester Poets



## Mr Shay

Mr Shay is a dynamic Leicester based Poet and Rapper. His poetry is influenced by social topics, culture and heritage and often incorporates rhythm and rhyme to paint vivid pictures through words. Shay has made a name as the poet of Leicester and regularly receives commissions by **Leicester City Council, BBC Radio** and various community arts festivals, to convey social commentary through his lyrical paintings.

His most renowned poem is a piece titled **Golden Mile** which celebrates the rich South Asian culture which inhabits one of Leicester's most famous landmark roads.



## Ty'rone Haughton

Ty'rone Haughton is a Jamaican born, Leicester based poet, freelance practitioner and advocate. Ty'rone's poetry focuses on society, identity and vulnerabilities.

Ty'rone has performed nationwide, supporting artists on tour such as **Akala** and **John Berkavitch**. Ty'rone's international work has seen him produce writing retreats in The Gambia, Valencia and a European tour with a co-hort of other British artists.

He works in close partnership with various arts and youth service providers nationally, delivering specialised youth engagement work using poetry and other creative disciplines. Ty'rone's work as a workshop facilitator has seen him work with companies such as **The Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Coventry City of Culture, Women and Theatre, Leicester Curve** and **Writing East Midlands**.

# "POETRY TOOLKIT"

## Poetic Devices

This is a utility belt for every poet. Poetic devices are a bunch of tools that you can use to create extra impact with your writing:

- **Metaphors** e.g. I **am** the wind flowing through the air.
- **Similes** e.g. I am sweet **like** toffee or I am **as** sweet as toffee.
- **Personification:** Giving life to a non-living object or concept.  
e.g. The tsunami was angry and showed no mercy.
- **Imagery** e.g. Snow fell on the ground like millions of fairies falling from the sky.
- **Alliteration** e.g. **Six sizzling sausages sizzling** in the **scorching September sun**.
- **Onomatopoeia** e.g. Whoosh. Bang. Crackle.
- **Double Meanings:** Using a word or concept which can be interpreted in two ways.
- **Repetition:** Repeating the same sentence or word either in the same line or throughout the poem e.g. as a chorus.
- **Rhythm (Syllabic)** e.g. Reflecting rhythm patterns by using a series of repeated syllables.

- **Rhyme (Schemes)** e.g.

Couplets:

\_\_\_A  
\_\_\_A  
\_\_\_B  
\_\_\_B

1 2 4 Scheme:

\_\_\_A  
\_\_\_A  
\_\_\_B  
\_\_\_A

Alternating Couplets:

\_\_\_A  
\_\_\_B  
\_\_\_A  
\_\_\_B

Internal Rhymes:

\_\_\_A\_\_\_A  
\_\_\_A\_\_\_A  
\_\_\_B\_\_\_B  
\_\_\_B\_\_\_B

# "INSPIRATION"

## Tips on how to get started

Always start with a pool full of ideas.

- **Respond to stimuli** e.g. music, imagery, a photograph, a film, a news article.
- **Create a word bank** A list of words related to the stimuli.
- **Create a rhyme bank** Using the word bank, select a handful of words that stand out to you and write down as many rhyming words as you can.

# "FINDING YOUR VOICE"

## Ask yourself 5 questions:

- **What do I want to say?** What exactly is the message I want to get across? How would it look as a sentence? Or as a word?
- **Why do I want to say it?** Why do I want to get message heard? Is my message is important?
- **Why should I be saying it?** Think of the reasons why the message you have should be shared by you! How can you and your perspective make it interesting and specific?
- **Who am I saying it to?** Picture the person/people you are speaking to. Who will benefit from your message? Strangers? Friends? Family? Yourself? Write it in a way they can understand.
- **Has it affected by personally?** Has this subject matter affected me emotionally, mentally or physically? Or someone close to me? Or someone I have never met but their story makes me empathetic?





# "IT'S ALL ABOUT PERSPECTIVE"

Look at this image of Bradgate Park. If you were to write a poem based on this image, think about which perspective you would write the poem from. Remember we can use personification to give a voice to non-living objects.



## Here are some ideas:

- The people in the background taking a walk through the park.
- The adult.
- The child.
- Yourself remembering when you were a child visiting the park.
- The old trees witnessing life over the years.
- The water constantly passing through the stream.
- The rocks changing and evolving over time.
- The sky observing all of the above from a unique angle.

What would each perspective have to say?



# "POETRY ACTIVITIES"

## ACTIVITY 1

### Acrostic Poetry Activity

This is a great way to explore a set theme. Write words or sentences beginning with each letter of a word. This may be a starting point for a bigger poem or the finished piece itself.

|                   |                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Example:</b>   | <b>L</b> ively           |
| <b>P</b> lay      | <b>E</b> lectic          |
| <b>O</b> penly    | <b>I</b> nspirational    |
| <b>E</b> very day | <b>C</b> ulture          |
| <b>T</b> o        | <b>E</b> veryone matters |
| <b>R</b> emain    | <b>S</b> tands           |
| <b>Y</b> outhful  | <b>T</b> all             |
|                   | <b>E</b> xpressive       |
|                   | <b>R</b> esilient        |

### Poetry Activity For Families And Children

1. Go outside on a word hunt – in your garden, or the local park, or on a walk somewhere. Write down words relating to the following:
  - Colours.
  - Feelings and Emotions.
  - Senses (touch, taste, see, hear, smell).
  - Textures.
  - Animals and Insects.
2. Circle your 5 favourite words.
3. Create a rhyme stream (a more exciting name for a list of rhymes) using the 5 words. e.g.
  - **Bird** – heard, word, curd, purred
  - **Sky** – pie, lie, try, shy, cry, by
4. Use a rhyme scheme from the previous section to arrange your rhymes into a 4 or 8 lined poem.

#### Example:

*In the magical garden filled with nature **A***  
*I felt so free and alive with glee **B***  
*Flat on the grass I slept and later **A***  
*A little ladybird woke me from a dream **B***

# “POETRY ACTIVITIES”

## ACTIVITY 2

1. Compare yourself to something in the room using a **metaphor**, **alliteration** and **rhyme**. This is a great way to find creativity in everyday objects and really challenges you to think outside the box, whilst being in the box (your room).

**A** – I am the door

**B** – I can open up to let you in

**C** – **B**ut **b**e careful **b**ecause I can **s**lam **s**hut!

**B** – My patience is sometimes very thin

2. Once you've had a go at this, why not try comparing yourself to a landmark in your city!  
e.g. Clock Tower, Old John, Space Centre, Leicester City Football Stadium.

### Example:

Here's an example of **Mr Shay**'s poem giving a voice to Leicester's Golden Mile



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NCMZSNWf3zw>



# “POETRY ACTIVITIES”

## ACTIVITY 3

1. Write a poem responding to one of the following images (or choose another place in Leicester that is significant for you). Challenge yourself by taking on a perspective that you wouldn't normally write from.





# "DRAFTING AND EDITING"

Once you've written the first draft of your poem and are happy with it, read back through it and look for ways to improve it. You may consider its meaning, tone, rhythm and use of language.

## "TIPS ON EDITING YOUR POETRY"

### **Miss a line!**

Read through it but miss the first line, then again missing the second, then third and fourth line and so on. If your poem still makes sense and stays on topic without the line you've missed – get rid of the line. You definitely do not want any wasted lines. So, if you don't need it, bin it.

### **Balance the syllables**

When reading your poem out loud, think about how it sounds in terms of flow, rhythm and balance. If there is a line which is too long or too short it may feel squashed or rushed and it can stick out like a saw thumb. You may need to consider adding/removing words or performing with more space in between the words to pad it out. Silence and space can be a very effective tool to emphasise key words or to create moments of tension. You can always find alternative words and ways of saying the same thing more succinctly.

### **The Thesaurus is your friend**

Upon completing your masterpiece, have a look in the thesaurus for some alternative words to replace some of the ones you already have. Of course, you may not need to but it's a great way to find opportunities for alliteration, maybe a rhyme or just a word that fits the rhythm better.

# "EXHIBITION ACTIVITY" AND CALLOUT FOR POETRY.

1. Using techniques from the previous exercises, create a poem which responds to the question – what are you most looking forward to in Leicester as lockdown eases?
2. As part of the **Community Creative Writing Challenge**, we want you to send us your poems about Leicester and your hopes for what the future might hold. The poems can be in any style and length but they must celebrate the diversity, resilience, and individuality of the people of Leicester and focus on the optimism of a post-pandemic world.
3. You can write it out, make your own film or send us a voice recording.

Send your poems in in whatever format best suits you and your work to;  
**CYCC@curvetheatre.co.uk**

Selected poems will be chosen to become part of the living exhibition at Curve throughout July.

This project is inspired by **Leicester City Council's 'We've Missed You'** campaign and its **'By The Clock Tower'** poem, especially written by **Arch Creative** co-founder **Joe Nixon** – the focus of the **European Regional Development Fund's (ERDF) Re-opening High Streets Safely** campaign.



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