



## National Poetry Competition 2022 Writing Prompts

### Write a poem about metamorphosis, about becoming something new.

A mother becomes a grandmother. Arrows become rain. Perhaps a team of rowers speed so fast along the river they become a flock of birds ascending into the sky. Allow your language to change too.

**Christopher James, Winner, 2008**

### Fill a transparent receptacle with water. Place it near a source of daylight.

Do a free write on what you see. Look at how the light plays on the water and the reflections. Next, half empty the receptacle (maybe drink it or water a plant). Do a similar rewrite, thinking about what has changed. Finally, drain the container entirely and repeat. See how the three linked pieces speak to each other and suggest a poem.

**Lisa Kelly, Longlisted, 2016, 2018, 2020**

### Write An Imaginary Translation

This one is my favourite exercises to kick-start writing something new without any fear of the blank page.

Choose a poem written in a language you don't know and invent a 'translation' without looking up the meaning of any of the words. You will end up with a poem that has a similar number of lines but is otherwise a surprise.

**Laura Theis, Longlisted, 2020**

### What's your best time to write?

When do you usually write your poetry? Think about that and maybe try something different. Write down an important theme or topic for your next poem. Then do nothing. Go about your business, observe and listen to the world. Then go back to your writing at a time of the day, or night, which may be unusual or challenging for you. I've recently found that very early in the morning works for me, producing ideas I might not have had otherwise.

**I. Patterson, Longlisted 2019, 2020, 2021**

### Write a poem about climate change.

Poets speak of the world around them when others won't. What is it like for a poet to see that the world is changing so quickly, and irrevocably? What does climate change mean to you?

**Marie Baléo, Commended 2020**

### Smell something.

It could be a favourite perfume, a flower, fruit, coffee, an old piece of clothing, the smell when you walk into a pub, unbox a new pair of trainers or empty an ashtray, anything. Anything that unlocks memories or reminds you of a person, a time, a place and your place within it, and helps you imagine beyond your experience.

Without overthinking it, write down the words that come up and see where they take you.

**Fran O'Leary Longlisted 2020**

**Judges: Jason Allen-Paisant, Greta Stoddart and Michael Symmons Roberts**

First prize: £5,000

Deadline: 31st of October

**[poetrysociety.org.uk/npc](https://poetrysociety.org.uk/npc)**

