

Glimpses

*On Jack's jumper
a burr
clings.*

*In the field
grass flows
with the wind.*

Jack

*Through the mincer
meat squidges. Kian Hume*

*Under the oak leaf
a spangle gall
spreads like a star.*

Maia

*On the woody nightshade
tiny tomatoes
hang.*

Jack

*Behind the fence
the teasle
sways.*

Louella

*Inside the ash tree
the branches creak
like an old sailing ship.*

William

We used this technique to encourage children to look closely at specific details in specific locations during our Autumn hedgerow walk. It also provided an opportunity for identification of plants and creatures, showing the power of knowing the name of what you're describing – not just plant but woody nightshade! Such a short form can be inviting to less confident writers and it begins to develop the idea that 'A poem is the most powerful thing you can say in the shortest possible space'. (Charles Causley).

Guidelines:

- Zoom in on a plant or a creature in the hedgerow
- Notice exactly where it is – under, on, against, above...
- Notice what it is doing – dangling, hovering, spinning...
- Catch your glimpse in a three line stanza, like this:

Line 1: where it is (preposition + plant or creature)

Line 2: its name - and perhaps another detail about it

Line 3: what it's doing – (verb)

Throughout the workshops we encouraged participants to play with ideas, words, materials. The two poems below were also written after the hedgerow walk. Both show this element of play with what the writers had seen and learned.

The Amazing Hedge
where beech leaves twist,
ivy leaves turn to the beech leaves,
and lady's bedstraw
once used as a mattress
grows below!

Denver

Acorn, acorn, acorn,
shiny and smooth,
wearing a hat, a rough old hat,
high in the sky,
come down please,
come down please,
acorn, acorn, high in the sky.

William

Lydia Fulleylove