Commonwealth Games: Poetry classroom activities

Commonwealth Games Poetry for Super-Athletes (across the Primary age range!)

- Read to your class ‘Super Feats for Super Athletes’ by Brian Moses

- Show your group a few short clips from some impressive Commonwealth athletes. Pick and choose from Usain Bolt, Tom Daley, Nicola Adams (boxing against a Commonwealth rival Mary Kom from India) and Robbie Renwick. Their feats are impressive but could there be even wilder feats as Brian Moses suggests?

- Ask the pupils to brainstorm some super feats. Let their imaginations go wild! Somersaulting down the length of the Royal Mile? Tightrope walking across the Thames? Abseiling down the Sydney Harbour Bridge?

- Give this idea with a Commonwealth flavour. This now might be an ideal chance to look at some landmarks within Commonwealth countries, mark them on a map and then incorporate them into their super feat poem. See Pupil Worksheet for inspiration. This will help them to scaffold their ideas.

- Each child now has the tools to write their own ‘Super feats for Super Commonwealth Athletes’ poem. Their first verse could be borrowed entirely from Moses’ poem. They might then have an awe-inspiring list of feats, shopping-list-style, with a new line for each feat. Perhaps a question mark at the end of each line would work well?

  E.g. Scaling the heights of Mount Kilimanjaro whilst its dormant volcano wakens?

By Emma Speedy for the Scottish Poetry Library’s education blog  http://makingmakars.wordpress.com/
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Commonwealth Games Poetry for Upper Primary

• Read together ‘TV Hockey’ by Canadian poet, Anne Wilkinson. This will challenge some of the children but it really is worth the brain-stretch!

• Ask the children to work out what the “oxen”, “gulls” and “little black moon” represent. With the use of three coloured highlighters, get the children individually to isolate the phrases/words that go with each of these metaphors and then assemble them on the white board as a group.

• Check out this brilliant link to the 17 Commonwealth Sports taking place during the Glasgow 2014 Games. The children can click on individual sports, scroll down and at the bottom of most pages there are video clips. Ask them to consider comparing the athletes/their required equipment to an animal, as in the poem TV Hockey.

• Brainstorm as many Commonwealth animals as you can as a group (Australian kangaroo, South African penguin, Indo-chinese tiger in Malaysia, Canadian black bear…) and ask each child to research one in further detail. Find out how each creature moves. Now listen to the language used by a sports commentator. Note some of the phrases used. It is now time to use the Commonwealth animals and set them into motion in a 100m race...

“ A Cape Town penguin waddles across the starting line
Distracted by smooth ash-grey rocks that serve well for new nests.”

“ The Kangaroo bounces energetically from her marks
Struggling under the weight of Joey in her soft velvet pouch” etc

Each animal might have a two line verse. Line one describes their movement, line two a potential encumbrance! There is plenty of display potential here. Why not put together a display of the 100m track with its animal athletes at various stages along the course!

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