That is My Dream! By Langston Hughes, illustrated by Daniel Miyares – An inspiring poem by Langston Hughes showing a little boy walking through his small segregated town and dreaming of a brighter and more inclusive future. Ages 4-7.


OTHER BOOKS ABOUT Poetry and Nature/Outdoors:

A Child’s Garden of Verses by Robert Louis Stevenson, illustrated by Barbara McClintock – This is a timeless collection of poetry for children, many of the poems are about outdoor play. Ages 4-8.

A Place to Start a Family: Poems about Creatures that Build by David L. Harrison – In this fun poetry collection, children learn all about animal homes and the animals who build them – underground, on land, in water, and in the air. Ages 5-9.

Because of an Acorn by Lola M. Schaefer – A simple introduction to nature’s lifecycles. Ages 3-6.

Care for Our World by Karen Robbins – Told in rhyming verse, this book emphasizes the importance of caring for all of our earth’s creatures, even the creepy crawlies! Ages 3-6.

Mama Built a Little Nest by Jennifer Ward – A great book to introduce children to a variety of birds and the various locations they choose to build their nests. Perfect for spring. Ages 3-7.

Meow Ruff: a Story in Concrete Poetry by Joyce Sidman – This is a story of a cat and dog coming together to stay warm when they are caught in a storm. What makes it so unique is that each part of the tree, clouds, and other natural elements in the story’s background illustrations are made up of words that describe them! This is a great visual introduction to poetry for very young children. Ages 3-6.

Poetrees by Douglas Florian – A collection of everything trees – from different types of trees to different parts of a tree. Florian integrates words and illustrations very cleverly, making this an extra fun exploration! Ages 5-9.

Sweep Up the Sun by Helen Frost and Rick Lieder – Outstanding up close photographs of birds, many in flight, accompany the simple but effective rhyme in this stunning book. Ages 3-6. Helen Frost also wrote Step Gently Out which includes up close insect photos and a look at the world from a bug’s eye view.
Rhymes of the Month

A Tree is a Home
A tree may be a home for bird,  
A tree may be a home for bee,  
A tree may be a home for snake,  
A tree may be a home for monkey,  
Hmmmm, would a tree make a good home for me?  
*Act out each of the animals from above and,  
for the last line, point to yourself...*  
*Ask children if they know of other animals that  
make their homes in trees?*

During the Spring
During the spring, it often showers  
*Flutter fingers down*  
Or the sun shines for many hours  
*Form circle in the air with arms*  
Both are good for the flowers!  
*Cup hands and extend arms like flowers...*

Learning for APRIL – Two Ideas for Creating Poetry with Pre-Writers

Use Familiar Rhymes and Make Them Your Own
Using a fun, familiar rhyme that repeats, go around the circle and invite children to fill in the blank. You will want this to be a rhyme that you have shared several times with children first so they understand the pattern. If children can’t finish the rhyme or if they say a word that doesn’t rhyme, that’s okay! They are hearing rhyming words and practicing all the same. A favorite silly rhyme that Raffi has made famous is “Down by the Bay!” Be as creative as you like with this one and use silly visuals -

Down by the bay, where the watermelons grow,  
Back to my home, I dare not go,  
For if I do, my mother will say,  
“Did you ever see a fly, wearing a tie?”  
Down by the bay!  
*Here are some other silly rhymes:*  
“Did you ever see a goose, kissing a moose?”  
“Did you ever see a whale with a polka dot tail?”

Make Poems Visual
Write out a simple poem and give each child their own copy. Leave a blank space so that children can fill in ONE word. They can either tell their response and you write it for them OR they can draw their answer in the blank space.  
If you want to model this activity as a large group first, that would work as well. Here is a sample poem to use, but you can use a favorite rhyme that children already know.  
*This idea came from www.scholastic.com*

We’re a little classroom,  
Bright and bold.  
We are all four and five years old.  
When we get to learning hear us say,  
“We all learned about ________ today!”

You may register for FREE STARS classes by clicking on the date of the class on the CALENDAR of the Pierce County Library web site: www.piercecountylibrary.org. The next STARS Class will be Saturday, April 21st, and is titled:  
“Taking Literacy Outside.”