

## **Talking Points: The Pied Piper by Robert Browning**

Make sure you have a copy of the poem to look at.

Read the poem aloud. Think about these ideas; what do you think?

What do others think?

Use evidence from the poem to support your discussion.

*The year is about 1510.*

### **Talking Points**

1. The rats lived in the river bank and in people's houses.
2. The Mayor and Corporation were very poor leaders for the city people.
3. The Pied Piper was a magician.
4. People will promise anything when they are desperate.
5. The Mayor really did mean to pay the Piper.
6. The music for the rats was high pitched and squeaky.
7. The Mayor thought the Piper was greedy.
8. The Piper needed the money to live on.
9. The Piper expected the people to be able to afford to have the rats removed.
10. Whatever the Mayor had done, it was not fair of the Piper to steal the children.
11. The children were enchanted by the music.
12. The lame boy was lucky to be left behind.

### **Thinking Together**

Think together to make up a sentence which starts,

'The message of this poem is....'

Draw a banner with rats holding it up to display your sentence.

## In the Station of the Metro *by Ezra Pound*

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;  
Petals on a wet, black bough.

**Note:** Metro is short for metropolitan, and is used as a name for transport systems in many cities of the world. Ezra Pound was an American who lived in London, France and Italy. This poem was inspired by arriving at La Concorde station on the Paris metro in 1912. It took a year to write.

### Talking Points

1. 'Apparition' - we can think of some meanings of this word
2. The station was very busy
3. The writer liked what he saw
4. He could have been in other cities with a metro – Tyne & Wear, Manchester, San Francisco, Leeds, Adelaide – and seen the same sort of crowds
5. The writer was alone
6. He was waiting at the station for someone he knew
7. No-one spoke to him
8. 'Petals on a wet, black bough' sounds like a Japanese picture
9. The poem is a kind of haiku
10. The poem does not contain any verbs – this makes a difference
11. Both lines are equally important
12. The black bough is dark and foreboding; the petals are cherry blossom
13. This poem is about good things that come out of bad situations
14. The poem is not about anything, it is just a picture
15. The poem is an instant of human thought, not really a real situation
16. The semi-colon could be erased

### Thinking Together

Where have you been in a crowd of people? Think together to write a poem of no more than fourteen words describing how you think people appear when they are in a crowd.

## Works of Art Talking Points: Vincent Van Gogh: The Bedroom at Arles



[http://www.vggallery.com/painting/p\\_0482.htm](http://www.vggallery.com/painting/p_0482.htm)

On 17 October 1888, Vincent Van Gogh wrote to his brother Theo: "I am adding a line to tell you that this afternoon I finished the canvas representing the bedroom." He added that he thought his picture showed 'absolute restfulness'. Does your group agree with this, and with the Talking Points? For what reasons?

### Talking Points

1. The walls are pale violet, the floor tiles red, and the chairs are yellow wood.
2. The scarlet bed cover looks warm
3. The shutters are closed – they are green and let in some light
4. There is no white in the picture
5. There are no shadows but the room still looks real
6. Vincent had very few possessions
7. All his coats were blue
8. Vincent enjoyed painting this picture
9. He also painted the portraits he shows hanging on the walls
10. The room does not look comfortable
11. A room is not an interesting subject to paint

With your group, find out about Vincent's life at Arles. There are five versions of this picture. Find out when they were painted and look for similarities and differences.

## **Talking Points – Force**

**Are these statements true, false, or is your group unsure?**

**Prepare a group response with your reasons.**

1. A small object falls to the ground at the same speed as a large object
2. Things stop when they run out of force
3. A large ship takes a long time to stop because there is little friction between its hull and the water
4. A marble has a gravitational field and attracts other objects
5. There is no gravity above the earth's atmosphere
6. The weight of an object measures how much stuff it's made up of
7. A larger object always has more air resistance
8. A falling stone pulled by gravity is pushed up by air resistance
9. You can reduce pressure by spreading weight out over a larger area
10. The air is too light to be affected by the earth's gravity
11. The weight of water in a glass creates pressure which pushes equally in all directions, including upwards
12. Steel ships float because they have air in them

## **Thinking Together**

Think together to draw a picture of the forces involved in a game of football, tennis, netball or cricket, or in swimming or walking.

## **Talking Points: Money**

**Talk together to share your ideas.**

**Listen carefully and think about the reasons others give.**

**Can you work towards a group agreement to share with everyone?**

1. Money causes a lot of problems for people.
2. Money does not make people happy.
3. Everyone should have enough money, but not too much.
4. It is important to have rich people because they support all sorts of charities to help others.
5. Poor people are lazy.
6. All children the same age should have the same pocket money.
7. We can think of things to do with the money if we won the Lottery.
8. There is never a good reason to steal money.
9. Some people, like footballers, get paid too much.
10. If you have a problem, money usually helps.
11. A sensible ambition is to get rich.

## Talking Points - Seeds

What do you think?  
Why do you think that?

Seeds are empty

Seeds have a whole new plant inside them

Seeds have to be in soil to grow

Seeds have everything they need to grow inside them

Seeds are completely waterproof

Seeds need it to be Spring before they will grow

Some seeds have a food store in them, for the new young plant

Seeds will not grow if it is light

We can say what things seeds need to start them growing