Reading and Acting Out Poetry

Poems provide delightful opportunities for dramatic play. Children can act out “My Moves” (page 16), or teach each other things based on “A Friendly Circle” (page 10). “If You’re Happy and You Know It” (page 24) is also a natural vehicle for dramatic play.

Some poems can be adapted to a call-and-response format in which half the children say some of the lines or verses and the other half complete the lines or verses. You can use “Sing Song” (page 11) in this way. A poem such as “Talent Show” (page 15) works well in a Reader’s Theater format—different lines can be assigned to different children, and they can act out the poem as well. You can even hold a real talent show in your classroom.

With many poems in the collection, it can be fun to emphasize the rhyme and rhythm as you read. Encourage children to clap, snap, or jump to the rhythm so they can feel the poems in their bodies.
Talent Show

We all showed off our talents at the school talent show,
Each person’s good at different things—as if you didn’t know.

Teresa read a funny poem,
and Tommy played the drums,
Rosita’s good at magic tricks
and Mei-Mei really hums.

And as for me, I talk a lot—
now that’s a real fact.
So I was the announcer who announced each person’s act!

_Betsy Franco_
My Moves

I can skip
and I can hop
and I can jump a rope.
I can tiptoe,
I can climb
and roll
  right down
    a slope

But when I’m late
I never skip,
I never jump or hop,
I never tiptoe, roll or climb.
I run as fast as my legs will go
to try to be on time!

Betsy Franco

Colors

Colors are pretty. Colors are fun.
Tell me. Which color’s your favorite one?

Blue is the sky and blue is the sea.
Yellow’s the stripes on a bumblebee.

Red is an apple; white is a blizzard.
Green is the back of a baby lizard.

Black and brown are the garden dirt.
Purple’s the throat of a hummingbird.

Orange are the pumpkins out in the sun.
Tell me. Which color’s your favorite one?

Betsy Franco