

# Happiness, Love and Understanding



## Activity: Praise Poems

Praise Poems are used in different cultures around the world. In Scotland in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Filidh bards were poets who wrote praise poems to celebrate the greatest leaders, thinkers and warriors. In this activity, we encourage you, the teacher, to reflect on what you have heard from children and to create a Praise Poem as a gift for each of them. You will write each poem, which takes time and dedication. The outcome is a powerful, special way of appreciating and thanking children for their contributions as a member of your class.

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### Links to Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes

- I recognise that each individual has a unique blend of abilities and needs. I contribute to making my school community one which values individuals equally and is a welcoming place for all. *HWB 1-10a/HWB 2-10a/HWB 3-10a*
- Representing my class, school and/or wider community encourages my self-worth and confidence and allows me to contribute to and participate in society. *HWB 1-12a/HWB 2-12a/HWB 3-12a*

### Learning Intention

- Learners recognise that they and others are a unique blend of abilities and needs.

### Duration

45 minutes - 1 hour

### What You Need

#### Activity 1 – Praise Poems

- Template E (printed onto A4 paper for each child)
- High quality A4 writing paper or thin card
- Fine liner colouring pens
- Ribbon (approximately 20cm per child)

#### Activity 2 – The Ceremony

- A thin card strip for each child (8-10cm wide, long enough for a headband)
- Foliage - leaves, sticks, feathers or flowers
- Sticky tape, double-sided sticky tape and/or glue

## Activity 1 – Praise Poems

Bringing the children into a circle, introduce the concept and history of Praise Poems. Explain that these poems did not rhyme but they used images of nature as inspiration for celebrating important people.

Hand out the printed Praise Poem preparation sheets (Template E) to each child and ask them to work with a partner to answer the questions about one another. Encourage the children's creativity and highlight the importance of working together to complete the activity. Explain to the children that you will read their ideas and, as the class 'Filidh bard', you will create Praise Poems for everyone.

After the class is over, use the preparation sheets the children have completed, create Praise Poems for each child. We suggest writing on high quality paper or thin card with a fine liner pen but you can also type these using an 'antique' typeface and print out instead. Each Praise Poem should be rolled and tied with a ribbon.

Here are some examples:

*Hail Michael!  
The curious one,  
He laughs like the wind,  
Creative like the wandering river,  
No problem can stop him,  
His imagination flies like a bird!*

*Behold Flora!  
Determined adventurer,  
Her hair is the colour of the sun's fire,  
She never gives up, Loyal to friends,  
She cares with the strength of a  
mighty bear!*



## Activity 2 - The Ceremony

Once you have completed the Praise Poems, explain to the children that each child will create their own foliage crown. Hand out the thin strip of card to each child and ask them to help one another to secure the card as headband with sticky tape. Using double-sided sticky tape or glue, encourage the children to decorate their crowns in the foliage you have gathered.

Inside or outside, work with the children to create a special, ceremonial space. Invite the children to sit in a circle wearing their crowns and one-by-one, read out your Praise Poems to the children.



Praise poems are used in different cultures around the world. In Scotland in the 17th and 18th centuries, Filidh bards were poets who wrote praise poems to celebrate great leaders, thinkers and warriors.

Your teacher is going to be your Filidh bard. Help your teacher by working with a partner to think positively about what makes them a really unique, special person. They will do the same for you in return. Work together to complete the steps below.

*My name is...*

*These words describe my partner...*

First, choose an ancient greeting to start your praise poem, such as:

*Hail!*

*We salute...*

*Rejoice!*

Next, choose ideas or images from nature that remind you of your partner:

*Something from the weather*

*A creature*

*Something from the landscape*

Finally, note down positive, special things about your partner's character or personality: