

Could you be a poet?

Finding your voice

One of the poems that really connected me to Dylan Thomas is Do not go gentle into that good night. This is a poem I recited to myself a lot when my father was ill.

[Benjamin Zephaniah performs on stage]

“Rage, rage against the dying of the light”

I wanted to use it to inspire some of the people from Townhill to write their own poetry, and I think they surprised themselves with the outcome.

The great thing about this poem, it's called a villanelle, the way it rhymes. It's a perfect example of this. And then even in the middle lines you've got day, they, they, way, gay...It's amazing. Very talented.

And the other thing that he's done, he's used repetition without being repetitious.

Workshop participant: It's really strong. Really strong, even raw, you know. Really strong, powerful words.

Benjamin: It's a poem that is pleading. There's a passion in there, there's a kind of anger in there. And what I would like us to do is to now write something about something that means something to us.

Workshop participant: OK. Mine's called 'Hiraeth'. It's about Nye, who's my grandson.

I think of you Nye, each day
I came to you Nye, at birth
I hope for you Nye, the best
I'm linked with you Nye, via Skype
I'm connected to you Nye, by genes
I'm loving you Nye, at home
I wish for you Nye, with me
I'm proud of you Nye, in Wales
I long to cwtch you Nye, today

If you're having problems getting started, take one of your favourite poems, or even a song, anything that means something to you, and use that as a starting point. Apply your life to it, your emotions, your feelings. And you will get creative. Trust me. I'm a poet.