



WHISPERS OF THE RAINFOREST AND NATURE

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As a performance poet and English teacher, I recently had the pleasure of leading an assembly for the Year 5 students titled 'Whispers of the Rainforest and Nature: Discovering the Magic of Poetry'. This assembly was designed to ignite their interest in poetry while introducing them to the beauty of the rainforest, which ties into their cross-curricular studies.

I began the session by performing some of my own nature-themed poems. The students were taken on an adventure through poetry forms, sharing my love for nature and the power of words to inspire positive change. The lively performance encouraged students to see poetry as an exciting, creative outlet.

We began with a fun poem illustrating a playful take on what poetry means — how words can 'wiggle and play, paint pictures, hop, trip, and zigzag.' Students were encouraged to see poetry not just as 'old books' by classic poets but as a dynamic art form also written by diverse modern poets, full of possibilities and relevant to the modern world.

Students explored different poetry styles, from acrostics,

haikus and haigas to odes and ekphrastic poems. By performing my own nature-themed pieces, like an ekphrastic poem inspired by photographs of the Australian bush after wildfires and an ode to a butterfly, the students were made to understand that poetry can be used to raise awareness of issues like environmental protection.

Students learned that poetry can be inspired by anything — from the smallest insect in the rainforest to global issues and challenges. They were introduced to fun ways to collect inspiration, such as scrapbooks, journals, memory jars, and digital inspiration boards.

The session left everyone buzzing with enthusiasm and inspiration. Year 5 students were challenged to use what they had learned to write their own poems, capturing the magic of the rainforest in their unique voices. Who knows? Perhaps the next great poet is right here in Year 5!

This assembly reminded us all that poetry is a powerful way to see, feel, and understand the world — and that anyone can be a poet with the right tools and inspiration.