



# Poetry Teatime Quick Start Guide

*By Julie Bogart*

## A collective "ahhhh"

**Poetry Teatimes** offer you and your children a break from the fast-paced demands of parenting, educating, and household running. Everyone sighs a collective "ahhhh" as they settle into their chairs, tea cups or mugs in hand, poetry books scattered across the table.

When you pair poetry with tea, your children create a connection between contemplation and rest, while also creating memories of serenity and joy.

So let's get started, shall we?

# Steps for a Successful POETRY TEATIME



## **Buy quality tea**

PG Tips if you like British tea  
Typhoo tea from a specialty shop  
Black tea from the supermarket works too  
Herbal teas are also lovely

## **Purchase/make a treat**

Cookies  
Scones  
Muffins  
Toast and jam  
Sliced fruit  
Tea sandwiches

## **Lay a fresh tablecloth before teatime**

Hint: you can even throw a clean bed sheet over the table  
Placemats work just as well



### **Use nice ceramics**

Cream pot for milk  
Sugar bowl  
Little bowl with a spoon for jam  
A mug or cup for each person  
Small plates  
Napkins (cloth are extra special)  
And a teaspoon and knife  
at each place setting

### **A centerpiece is a plus**

Flowers  
Decorate a colorful plate with moss and leaves  
Grouping of candles  
Trinkets like marbles and old pearl necklaces  
Add little dolls to a scene  
Spare teapot filled with flowers

# What to READ



**Keep a stock of poetry books in the house.** Anything by Jack Prelutsky, Shel Silverstein, or Dr. Seuss is highly recommended.

## Other titles you might enjoy

*When We Were Very Young* by A.A. Milne

*Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* by T.S. Eliot

*You Read to Me, I'll Read to You* by John Ciardi

*A Child's Garden of Verses* by Robert Louis Stevenson

*Mirror Mirror: A Book of Reverso Poems* by Marilyn Singer

## Some anthologies

*The Random House Book of Poetry for Children*

*Favorite Poems Old and New* selected by Helen Ferris

*Read-Aloud Poems for Young People* edited by Glorvina Hale

*Poems to Learn by Heart* by Caroline Kennedy

**You might also bring the current read aloud to the table.**



# The PROCESS

**At the start of teatime, everyone selects a poetry book and brings it to the table.**

While you boil the hot water to steep the tea, encourage the kids to hunt through the books for the poem they will share.

**Begin by pouring tea for everyone.** Take time to add sugar/honey and milk. Pass the cookies/muffins around. Cut them open and add butter and jam.

**Once everyone has his or her tea and food, reading can begin.** Ask for a volunteer to start. Each child will read one poem (or a parent can read the poem for the pre-reader that she selected based on pictures!). Each person may read one or two poems (depending on length). *There is no need to analyze the poem.* This is a delight-driven practice. Enjoy the poem. Laugh at its humor, enjoy its rhythm, listen to the rhyme. It's okay to comment, but it's not required.

Feel free to offer more tea and food. You may even enjoy reading aloud from your chapter book. (I usually did the reading while the kids did the eating and sipping.)

**When you finish teatime,** each person brings her plate and cup to the sink, rinses and puts them in the dishwasher (if you have one). Candles are extinguished, the tablecloth is shaken out and folded, and the centerpiece is removed (or left out).

# Poetry Teatime Resources



Create a love for poetry in  
your whole family!

4 weeks of poetry lessons

## Exploring Poetry with Children

Children depict a poem's meaning through acting, copy a poetic form, create a visual poem using collected images, and write limericks to amuse and amaze you!

Poems for the whole family!

## Poetry Teatime Companion

Available in a paperback print edition, this illustrated, full-color volume of poems hand-picked by Brave Writer is organized by season and theme.

Includes brief biographies, questions to think about, and a few activities to try.



# The Poetry Teatime Website

[Poetry Teatime](#) is a gift back to the community of families who've discovered the happy benefits of sharing tea and poetry with each other. Poetry Teatime offers parents and children, teens and friends, grandparents and grandchildren, neighbors and out of town visitors, dorm mates and roommates—in short, any collection of people—a chance to slow the pace of daily life to tea and treats, accompanied by the glorious language of poetry.

Our website is designed to support your practice with creative ideas that will enrich your experience. That said, at its heart, poetry teatime is a practice that does not require expense, extravagant planning, or fuss. Lean into the properties of serendipity, enchantment, and lovely language. It is our hope that you will find much to love about poetry teatime itself, and will be helped and supported through our website.

Please [send us your photos and stories](#)! We look forward to creating a community of poetry teatime fans on the website and around the globe. Help us get the word out and share it with your friends, will you?

We can't wait to hear from you!



[Julie Bogart](#) homeschooled her five kids for 17 years and now enjoys traveling to see them wherever they are, be it New York, Thailand, or Peru.

*She's encouraged families to combine poetry and tea for almost two decades. She calls it "the gateway drug to a language-rich home."*

*Julie is the founder and owner of [Brave Writer](#), [The Homeschool Alliance](#), and [Poetry Teatime](#).*

*Images by Brave Writer moms Alexandra and Tina.*

*Girl with Book image by Sunny Studio / Fotolia*