

A writing activity from

Grimm & Co



Word Play: I Remember

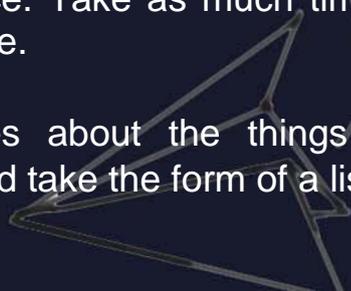
You will need: something to write with (could be typed, could be pen and paper); somewhere comfortable and quiet where you can concentrate.

Step one: our challenge this week is inspired by 'I Remember', a book-length poem by the American writer and artist Joe Brainard (1942 – 1994). 'I Remember' is a memoir poem, in which Joe Brainard recounts many moments from his life. Each line or paragraph in the poem begins with the words 'I remember...', and Joe's remembrances range from the matter-of-fact, to the surreal, to the deeply personal and poignant.

Step two: Inspired by Joe's writing, you're going to create your own 'I Remember' poem. First of all, find somewhere comfortable and quiet where you can relax and concentrate. Now, focus on a place that you know well. It needs to be a place that you're *remembering* – which means it can't be where you are right now. It could be your school, either primary or secondary. It could be the home of a friend or family member. It could be another place you remember well. The choice is entirely up to you.

Focus on this place, and try and remember it in as much detail as possible: the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures of that place; the things you remember happening there; the emotions you felt there; the people and things that were in that place. Take as much time as you need to remember and focus on this place.

Step three: next, jot down some notes about the things you remember about this place. These notes could take the form of a list, a



mind map, or bullet points. Again, it's up to you. Your notes don't need to be complete sentences. If you can, try and note down a few things you remember that respond to each of the following prompts:

- **sounds** you remember from that place
- **tastes** you remember from that place
- **smells** you remember from that place
- **happy memories** you remember from that place (these could be funny or joyful memories; they could have happened to you, or to someone else)
- **poignant memories** you remember from that place (this doesn't need to mean sad or upsetting: it could mean memories that resonate with you somehow. Perhaps they are wistful, or nostalgic)
- anything else that came to mind which doesn't fit under the previous prompts

Write down as many images and memories as you like.

Step four: Out of all the images and memories that you have written down, pick out your favourites (you can choose as many or as few as you want). Write your favourite images up separately. While you're doing this, you might like to change the order of the lines, or to expand or edit them.

Step five: Once you're happy with your lines, add the words 'I remember...' to the start of each one. Repeating the same phrase at the beginning of a number of successive sentences or lines is a technique called *anaphora*. You have now written your own 'I Remember' poem.

Step six: Share your writing with us! You could do this by emailing your work to grimmapotheary@gmail.com, or, if you are a Seesaw user, you could upload your poem to your Seesaw journal (and to our Seesaw blog, too). Happy writing!