

## These notes are for:

- Primary school
- Years 3-8

## Key Learning Areas:

- English
- Art

## Example of:

- Poetry
- Language techniques
- Poetic structures including free verse, shape poems and prose poems

## Experience of:

- Reading
- Writing/composing
- Representing
- Self-reflection

## Values addressed:

- Care & compassion
- Respect
- Understanding, tolerance & inclusion

## Themes:

- Family
- Growing up
- School life
- Identity & individuality
- Australian culture & identity

\*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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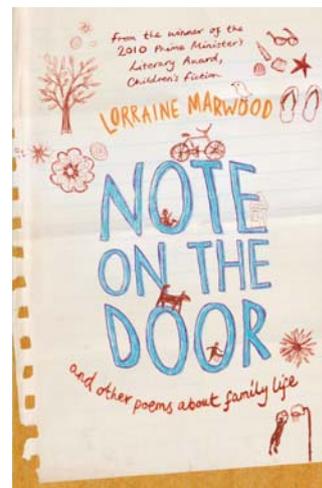
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## Note on the Door

### Note on the Door and other poems about family life

Author: Lorraine Marwood  
 ISBN: 9781921720611  
 ARRP: \$15.95  
 NZRRP: \$17.99  
 No. of Pages: 144  
 Sept 2011



## Synopsis

This beautiful collection of poetry by Lorraine Marwood focuses on family: holidays, siblings, school life, relatives and play. Whether she is describing the joys of a holiday at the beach, or the frustration of a day spent sick in bed, Lorraine's poems deftly capture the innocence, wonder and difficulties of growing up. This skilfully designed collection, interspersed with images and drawings, immerses the reader in the everyday realities of family life, encouraging students to reflect upon their own experiences of growing up in Australia.

## Author/Illustrator Information

Lorraine Marwood was born and raised in rural Victoria and has lived for most of her married life on a dairy farm with her husband and their six children. Lorraine is an award-winning poet who has been widely published in literary magazines across Australia, as well as internationally. She has also published several children's novels and collections of poetry. Her titles with Walker Books Australia include *A Ute Picnic and Other Australian Poems*, *Ratwhiskers and Me* and *Star Jumps*, which was short listed for the 2010 Speech Pathology Australia Book of the Year Awards, received a Notable mention in the 2010 CBCA Awards and won the 2010 Prime Minister's Literary Awards in the Children's Fiction category.

For more information about Lorraine, visit her website:  
[www.lorrainemarwood.com](http://www.lorrainemarwood.com)

## How to use these notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

### Lorraine Marwood on writing *Note on the Door*

“Most of my writing life I’ve kept notebooks with ideas, fragments of conversations, jottings, opinions, descriptions, feelings; all squirrelled away waiting to be polished, joined with another fragment or completely given a fresh coat of words.

An author, and especially a poet, looks at the world from a different angle and always finds a detail that someone else has missed. As my children were growing up I’d surprise them completely with what I could see in the garden, in the paddock, on a street, in a crowd. I hope I never lose this poetic way of capturing the world.

This collection is the result of many years of writing (and observing everyday life), and contains many examples of different types of poems and certainly different angles of family life. Some poems came together from a fragment written in those writing journals. For example “Javelin Thrower” was about one of my sons and how nervous he was before a school sports’ competition.

Poetry is very versatile and vibrant. I love the play on words like those found in my poems ‘Dishes’ or ‘What to Say.’”

### In the classroom

- Break into groups of four or five with each group assigned one of the following headings: “family”, “holiday”, “school”, “extended family” or “playtime”. (N.B. these are all sections of the book.) Write your heading in the middle of a sheet of cardboard or butcher’s paper, then brainstorm words and phrases which you associate with it and write these around it. These should include objects, feeling words, adjectives, verbs and descriptions relating to the senses (e.g. the warmth of sunshine on your skin). Present your ideas to the rest of the class.
- Locate the contents then read the titles of the poems in your section of the book. Choose one title which intrigues you and write your own poem using that title. (You may like to use the words and phrases you have brainstormed as inspiration.) After you have written your poem, compare it with Lorraine Marwood’s version. Was hers like you expected? How were the subjects, themes and poetic style similar and different to your poem?
- As a class, create an anthology for the school library featuring the poems you have written.
- Many of the poems in the book feature line drawing, photographs, frames, unusual backgrounds or other illustrative elements. Choose one poem without illustrations and present it in a creative visual way. Try to avoid simply doing a literal representation of the subject, and instead try to emphasise a key theme or the mood.
- Choose a poem from *Note on the Door* to recite to the class. Think carefully about how you can use volume, expression, pace, posture and gesture to bring your recital to life. Afterwards, share your reasons for selecting this particular poem.
- Working in groups of two or three, prepare a dramatic recital of a poem. You may like to find a poem which has a variety of voices in it (for instance, “Grandmother”, “At Ballet”, “There are many phone lingoos in my house” or “Grey”), or simply divide a poem into stanzas or lines. After rehearsing a few times, perform your poem for the class. How does a poem change with different voices reading it?
- Look at the following poems: “Christmas Cracker”, “Seven Postcard Words” and “Popcorn”. What is unique about the way they are set out? Look for other examples of this type of poem on the internet or in other poetry books. Use these as a model to write your own shape poem.
- Write a metaphor poem using Lorraine Marwood’s instructions on page 3 of these notes. (You can find more of Lorraine’s ideas on writing poetry in the Classroom Notes for her other books, available on the Walker website.)
- Create a collage or other visual representation of *Note on the Door*. This should use pictures and found objects, font, colour and composition to reflect the main subjects and themes of the book. Display these in the classroom.
- Have a class “scavenger hunt” and see who is first to locate the language techniques and types of poems listed on the following page. (You may like to work in pairs for this activity – and make sure you remember to write down the quotes and/or page numbers!) After completing this activity, use the quotes you’ve found to create a memory card game where you match up techniques and examples from the book.



Locate the following in *Note on the Door*:

### Language techniques

- rhyme
- rhetorical question (a question that doesn't really seek an answer)
- repetition
- pun (a play on words)
- hyperbole (extreme exaggeration)
- alliteration (where the first letters of words near each other are repeated for poetic effect)
- assonance (where the internal sounds of words near each other are repeated for poetic effect)
- direct speech (something someone says aloud)
- onomatopoeia (where a word imitates the sound it represents)
- simile (a comparison using "like" or "as")
- metaphor (a comparison where one thing is said to be another)
- first person ("I")
- aural imagery (description which appeals to sound or hearing)
- visual imagery (description which appeals to how something looks)
- olfactory imagery (description which appeals to how something smells)
- tactile imagery (description relating to the sense of touch)
- *italics*
- enjambment (where a sentence continues from one line to the next without punctuation)
- ellipsis ( ... )
- colloquial language (slang)
- parentheses (brackets)
- sentences made of one word
- words written in CAPITAL LETTERS
- three verbs (action words) in a row

### Types of poems

- a shape poem
- a prose poem (a poem set out as if it was not a poem, with the lines stretching all the way across the page)
- a poem with stanzas
- a poem where some words are set out
  - like
  - this
- a poem written in an adult's voice
- a poem written in a child's voice
- a poem which uses different fonts (lettering)
- a humorous poem
- a sad poem
- a poem set in a museum
- a poem about playing board games

## A classroom idea from Lorraine Marwood

"Here's a way to write a poem like 'Red all over':"

- Choose four or five favourite colours.
- Brainstorm what objects are that colour – think of fruit, food, animals, and natural features. (Hint: poetry offers the reader delectable surprises. Delectable memories. Really jot down as many objects as you can and choose the ones that pack a punch.)
- Follow my formatting below. Aim for short lines with the strongest word. (Hint: Nouns and verbs are the strongest words.)

Orange is.....

.....

or.....

.....

- Look back at my poem to see what I've written:

*Yellow  
is the scoop of chicken  
hatched yesterday from our bantam hen*

*or the ripe bananas that Sis always wants  
in her school lunch box.*



Enjoy writing!"

– Lorraine Marwood

For information about new releases, the latest awards news and links to a range of teacher resources, sign up to our **education newsletter** at [www.walkerbooks.com.au/Teachers](http://www.walkerbooks.com.au/Teachers)