

# Poetry

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t a k e o v e r

SOUTH  
AUSTRALIA'S  
HISTORY  
FESTIVAL

## South Australian students engaging with history through poetry 2021 Theme: *TRANSFORMATION*



*Image: Andre Castellucci*

The History Festival **Poetry Takeover Challenge** gives young people a voice in museum spaces by encouraging them to interpret objects and collections in new and creative ways.

During May 2021, we invite young people to take inspiration from the collections that the History Trust and other museums and galleries hold across the state of South Australia. Students will be encouraged to engage with objects, think creatively, connect those thoughts to the theme **'transformation'** and then develop a poem of any kind.

### How can museums get involved?

Another of our aims for the Poetry Takeover Challenge is to provide a way for museums to connect with their local schools during History Festival. With this in mind, we encourage museums and galleries throughout the state to take part using the following guidelines.

- Add yourself to the [Poetry Takeover mailing list](#) to be sure you receive important updates.
- Contact your local school and work with them directly to arrange class visits.
- If a school group contacts you and is keen to participate, please use the reflection cards and notes we have developed to support the visit.
- Display an A3 or A4 Poetry Takeover Venue poster, at your location so visitors will know you are participating. Download venue posters from the resources page on the [Poetry Takeover website](#).
- Use the guidelines at the end of this document as a roadmap for classroom visits.
- Be sure to let your social media followers know you're taking part and invite them to check out the Poetry Takeover website for student entries.

- Plan a poetry reading or display in your museum or gallery following the challenge.

Poems and the objects of inspiration will be displayed on the Poetry Gallery on our website, <https://poetrytakeover.com.au> and shared on social media. Prizes will be awarded according to the year groups 4-6 and 7-9.

## When

The Poetry Takeover Challenge will open for entries on Saturday 1 May and close on Monday 31 May. Class visits can happen before May and anytime until the end of the challenge.

## Who

All South Australian students in years 4 through 9 can enter the challenge. Museum staff, parents, caregivers and teachers can provide support – curriculum-linked resources are available on our website.

Museums, galleries and other collecting institutions can get involved by making objects in their collection available to students as inspiration.

Families, friends and communities are encouraged to share their favourite poems on social media and vote for the People's Choice prize.

## Where

For information and resources visit the Poetry Takeover website: <https://poetrytakeover.com.au>

Like the History Festival on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/historyfestival>

[Contact the History Trust](#) if you have any questions: [historyfestival@history.sa.gov.au](mailto:historyfestival@history.sa.gov.au)

## Guidelines for museums and galleries

Thank you for participating in the **History Festival Poetry Takeover**! We hope your visitors will be inspired by the collection that your institution values and supports. Our goal is to encourage young people to engage with objects, think creatively, connect with the theme *Transformation* and then compose a poem of any kind – slam, haiku, sonnet, free verse etc.

- If a school group contacts you and is keen to participate, then please use the reflection cards and notes we have developed to support the visit.
- As part of the orientation it is suggested that students sit down together for ten minutes to introduce yourself and for a briefing including the rules, toilets, emergency exit and expectations (i.e. being respectful of other visitors – remind them that whispering voices are valued).
- If your students are new to your museum/gallery, walk them through the whole place quickly before you start the object hunt.
- Once students are starting their hunt, encourage them to wander into every part of the museum/gallery. Only once they have had a look right through the place should they start to think about the object that inspires them the most.
- They have plenty of time, so now encourage them to go slow and let their imaginations wander – they have up to an hour!
- When students are wandering, encourage them to think in broad and even outrageous terms about the object. Use the reflection cards to prompt contemplation and discussion. Pose alternative ideas to just the history of the object. They could also think about the objects use, its journey, its relevance to today, any of its previous owners, how it got to Australia, why it is in a museum, something it reminds them of, how it was made etc.
- Encourage the students to think creatively. There is no wrong answer.
- Let the choice of object drive the type of poem the student selects.
- If students have not yet found an object that appeals to them after 25-30 minutes, encourage and support them to make a decision.
- Before they leave, ask the students to take photos of the objects to upload with their poetry submission.
- Students will then return to their classroom to write their poems. The teachers will take charge of the next step, which is helping students craft and submit their poems to the Poetry Takeover site.

*Thanks again! Be sure to let us know if you have any other tips so we can share them with other museums and galleries.*