

2021 National Poetry Writing Month Prompts

prompts created and compiled by Christina Thatcher (@writetoempower)

April 1st: Read [‘Bliss Point or What Can Best Be Achieved by Cheese’ by Benjamin Garcia](#). Write a poem which includes your favourite food.

April 2nd: Read [‘The scent of fresh wood’ by Hans Børli](#). Write a poem which celebrates something (or someone) you trust.

April 3rd: Read [‘There are Birds Here’ by Jamaal May](#). Write a poem which begins with ‘What I’m trying to say’ OR ‘There are ____ here’. If you choose the second option, be sure to write *after Jamaal May* beneath the title before sharing or publishing this piece.

April 4th: Read [‘Poem Beginning With A Retweet’ by Maggie Smith](#). Pick a random book from your shelf, turn to page 18, go to line 4, and start your poem there.

April 5th: Read [‘cutting greens’ by Lucille Clifton](#). Answer this question: What is on your chopping board? Carrots, watermelon, poverty, sexism? Use the line ____ is on my chopping board to start your poem.

April 6th: Read [‘A Portable Paradise’ by Roger Robinson](#). Write your own paradise poem – consider the following questions while writing: what does paradise look like, feel like, smell like, taste like? What does ‘paradise’ mean?

April 7th: Read [‘My People’ by Kim Moore](#). Write a poem about your people, whoever they are. If you use Kim’s title, be sure to write *after Kim Moore* beneath it before sharing or publishing this piece.

April 8th: Read [‘All The Questions’ by Robert Tremmel](#). Use a random question generator (like [this one](#)) to generate a question. Use your poem to answer this question. Do not include the question in the poem.

April 9th: Read [‘Mother, Washing Dishes’ by Susan Meyers](#). Write a poem which includes a chore or task you love, even if others don’t enjoy it.

April 10th: Read [‘The English Astronaut’ by Simon Armitage](#). Write a poem which explores space (within the poem’s content or form) or includes an astronaut.

April 11th: Read [‘The Murderer’ by Luke Kennard](#). Write a poem which includes a joke, a question or a murder.

April 12th: Read [‘My Deepest Condiments’ by Taylor Mali](#). Pick your own [idiom](#) or any common saying and make it strange, wrong or funny in your own poem.

April 13th: Read [‘Pardon my Heart’ by Markus Jackson](#). Write your own ‘pardon’ poem which can speak to something concrete (i.e. Pardon my leg) or abstract (i.e. Pardon my hope). Be sure to write *after Markus Jackson* beneath your title before sharing or publishing this piece.

April 14th: Read [‘Coconut’ by Paul Hostovsky](#). Write a poem which includes a piece of produce from the grocery store and a strong emotion.

April 15th: Read [‘Relic’ by Katherine Stansfield](#). Write a poem which includes a religious relic, a collector’s item or a rare piece of pop culture memorabilia.

April 16th: Read [‘Poplar Street’ by Chen Chen](#). Pick a street name for your title – one you know well or one you want to visit – and begin your poem. See where it takes you.

April 17th: Read [‘Scary Movies’ by Kim Addonizio](#). Write your own poem which includes your favourite scary movie, scary life moments or both.

April 18th: Read [‘There’s Chaos in my Cornflakes’ by William Gee](#). Write a poem which includes a breakfast cereal and a crisis or catastrophe.

April 19th: Read [‘Pokédex Entry #4: Charmander’ by Marlin M. Jenkins](#). Write your own poem which includes a beloved character (from a game, TV show, movie, etc) OR a beloved toy you had growing up.

April 20th: Read [‘The Hummingbird Nest’ by Pascale Petit](#). Write a poem which includes a bird’s nest, eggs and/or bones.

April 21st: Read [‘Find Work’ by Rhian P Espaillet](#). Write a poem which explores the nature of work. Work, in this case, can be physical, emotional, intellectual or spiritual.

April 22nd: Read [‘Digging’ by Seamus Heaney](#). Write a poem which attempts to answer this question: What do we dig for?

April 23rd: Read [‘Song’ by Adrienne Rich](#). Write about loneliness as one of the following images: an empty swing, a pile of pebbles, an orange umbrella or a deep sea fish.

April 24th: Read [‘Yard’ by Caleb Femi](#). Write a poem which explores your own houses— whatever, wherever and whoever they might be.

April 25th: Read [‘Crow Song’ by Margaret Atwood](#). Listen [to bird song from the RSPB](#) website. Select a bird and write a poem in response to their song.

April 26th: Read [‘love / same old sex my pretty elbow’ by Alice Willitts](#). Write a poem which includes an elbow, a knee, a wrist or an ankle. Make it pretty.

April 27th: Read [‘At Last the New Arriving’ by Gabrielle Calvocoressi](#). Use a line from this poem to begin your own piece. Be sure to write *after Gabrielle Calvocoressi* beneath your title before sharing or publishing this piece.

April 28th: Read [‘Self-Portrait as a Band Audition’ by Prince Bush](#). Write your own self-portrait poem.

April 29th: Read [‘The mother dream’ by Rebecca Perry](#). Write a poem in which someone comes to you in a dream to offer advice, praise something, or warn of something bad that’s about to happen.

April 30th: Read [‘Harbour’ by Grace Nichols](#). Write your own poem which includes the word ‘harbour’. This word has many meanings. See where the poem takes you!