

# Interpreting poems

In each of the poems below an object is being described as if it were alive.

Next to each poem, write down the ways in which the object is described to make it seem as if it is alive. The first one has been done as an example.

a)

**Tulip Sunday**

In the Botanical Gardens  
bright tulips  
spread out  
like a yellow tablecloth  
on a table with thousands of legs.

Some tulips  
have red lips  
and dark black eyes.  
They bow and curtsy  
in the wind.

*By Laura Ranger*



The tulips in this poem seem alive because they:

- have red lips.
- have eyes.
- bow.
- curtsy.

*Source: 'Laura's Poems', Godwit, 1995.*

b)

**Rags**

The night wind  
rips a cloud sheet  
into rags,

then rubs, rubs  
the October moon  
until it shines  
like a brass doorknob.

*By Judith Thurman*



The wind in this poem seems alive because it:

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*Source: 'Shadow Dance; Poems of the Night for Young People', Collected by Adrian Rumble, Cassell Educational Ltd., 1987.*

c)

**Paperclips**

A jumbled sight,  
The sheets I write –  
High time for paperclips  
To take a bite  
And clasp them tight  
Between bright bulldog lips!

*By X. J. Kennedy*



The paperclips in this poem seem alive because they:

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*Source: 'all the small poems'.  
Written by Valerie Worth, Michael di Capua Books.  
Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1987.*

d)

**lawnmower**

The lawnmower  
Grinds its teeth  
Over the grass,  
Spitting out a thick  
Green spray;



Its head is too full  
Of iron and oil  
To know  
What it throws  
Away:

The lawn's whole  
Crop of chopped  
Soft,  
Delicious  
Green hay.

*By Valerie Worth*

The lawnmower in this poem seems alive because it:

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*Source: 'all the small poems', Michael di Capua Books. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1987.*

e)

**sun**

The sun  
Is a leaping fire  
Too hot  
To go near,



But it will still  
Lie down  
In warm yellow squares  
On the floor

Like a flat  
Quilt, where  
The cat can curl  
And purr.

*By Valerie Worth*

The sun in this poem seems alive because it:

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*Source: 'all the small poems', Michael di Capua Books. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1987.*