

The Squirrel Olympics

Dash up branches
Scramble back down
Balance up high
above the ground.

Chitter-chat in a game of chase.
Dash around trunks in a circle race.

Jump!

Leap!

from tree to tree.

Bury nuts. Dig down deep.

Then curl up tight
for a winter's sleep.

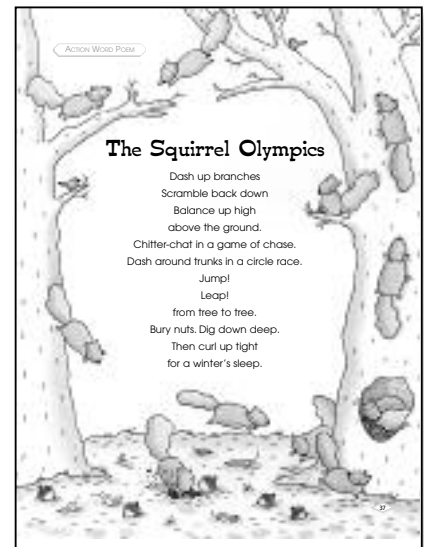
Writing an Action Word Poem

Activate Prior Knowledge

Write several simple words on the chalkboard, such as *glass*, *jump*, *leap*, and *spoon*. Ask children to find the words that show action. Invite children to give their own examples of action words, and write these as well. Explain that action words tell what is happening.

Share the Poem

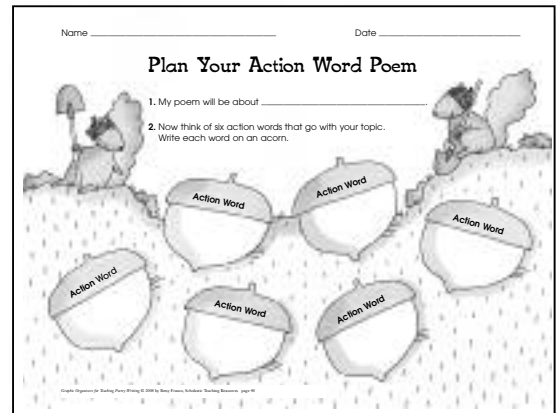
1. Explain that today you will share a poem that has lots of action words.
2. Distribute copies of the poem (page 37), write it on chart paper, or copy it onto an overhead transparency.
3. Read the poem aloud once and then invite children to read along with you.
4. Ask children to find the action words in the poem. Use a marker to highlight or underline the action words.
5. Discuss the idea that, in this poem, action words help tell a story. Help children realize that the action words tell how the squirrels spend their days.



Scaffold Using the Graphic Organizer

1. Tell children that the class will plan and write an action poem. Together, choose an animal, person, or object that brings to mind lots of action words, such as a kite, a kitten, or a dancer.
2. Photocopy and distribute the graphic organizer (page 40). If possible, copy the organizer onto an overhead transparency or enlarge it so that you can model how to use it.
3. Write the topic of the poem at the top of the organizer.

4. Help students generate six action words that come to mind when thinking about the topic. (For example, for kites, they might say *dip*, *soar*, *fly*, *race*, *rise*, and *dive*.) Write each word on one of the acorns on the organizer.
5. On chart paper, begin to build the poem by writing a short phrase or sentence using each action word (for example, *racing with the wind*).
6. In what order do children want to use the action phrases and sentences in their poem? Write a number beside each one. Then copy them, in order, on a fresh sheet of paper.
7. On the same day or during another session, give children a fresh copy of the organizer. Following the same techniques used above, help children plan their own action word poems. When they have finished writing the action words on the organizer, give each child a sheet of paper. Have children write a phrase or short sentence for each action word, then number the sentences in the order they want them to appear in their poem. When you feel children are ready, have them write their poems on a fresh sheet of paper.



POETRY TIPS

- * After children write their action word poems, try this extra challenge. Ask them to mix up the lines, putting them in a different order. Discuss what difference this makes to the poem. Does it sound the same, better, or not as good? Does the meaning change at all? In what ways?
- * Stress that, like many poems, the words in an action word poem do not have to rhyme.

Name _____

Date _____

Plan Your Action Word Poem

1. My poem will be about _____.
2. Now think of six action words that go with your topic.
Write each word on an acorn.

