

ENGLISH · Y6

Free Verse Poetry — Year 6

WAGOLL: The Old Library

The Model Text

THE OLD LIBRARY The library waits at the corner of my street like a tired old man who has seen too many summers come and go. Its windows, smudged with the breath of children, frown out at the rain. A notice — yellow, curling at the edges — hangs in the door: Closing soon. Inside, the books still sleep on their shelves, dreaming of fingers and voices, of small chairs being scraped across the carpet, of Saturday mornings when the radiator clicked and hummed and someone, somewhere, was always reading aloud. When I was small, this was a cathedral. The librarian knew my name and the names of every book I had ever borrowed. Now, the lights flicker. The door creaks shut. A single leaf — the colour of an old photograph — dances along the empty pavement and is gone.

Notated features

What makes this a strong Y6 free v

- NO RHYME: free verse — relies on imagery and rhythm instead
- PERSONIFICATION: 'library waits like a tired old man,' 'books sleep,' 'door creaks'
- SIMILE: 'like a tired old man / who has seen too many summers'
- METAPHOR: 'this was a cathedral' (library = sacred place)
- LINE BREAKS for emphasis: short lines slow the reader down
- STANZA STRUCTURE: each stanza is a different memory or moment
- SENSORY DETAILS: 'smudged with breath,' 'radiator clicked and hummed'



- EMOTIONAL WEIGHT: nostalgia, loss — without saying 'I am sad'
- CONCRETE DETAILS: 'yellow, curling at the edges,' 'small chairs being scraped'
- ENDING with an image, not a statement: 'a single leaf... is gone'
- TENSE SHIFT: 'When I was small' → 'Now' — past memory contrasted with present loss

Writing prompt

Write your own free verse poem. Choose a place that means something to you — a grandparent's kitchen, your old playground, a relative's house, a beach you visited as a small child. Don't tell us how you feel about it; **SHOW** us through images. Include: at least one personification, one simile, sensory details (sound, smell, touch, not just sight), short lines and stanza breaks, and an ending image rather than an ending statement. **NO** rhyming required — focus on imagery and rhythm. Aim for 5-7 short stanzas.

