

# LITERACY learning springboards

Pappus

## Acrostic or Diamond poetry

### Use *Pappus* ID sheets for nettles

**Aim:** Devise an acrostic or diamond poem

Look at the *Pappus* Nettle ID sheet and devise an acrostic poem, or a diamond poem using facts gleaned from the text.

Here is an example of an acrostic poem:

Nutritiously  
Edible  
Tasty but  
Tricky  
Lush and  
Excellent:  
Stinging nettles!



## Comparatives

### Use of language in poetry

**Aim:** Compare and contrast two short poems about nettles

#### Tall Nettles by Edward Thomas

*Tall nettles cover up, as they have done  
these many springs, the rusty harrow  
the plough*

*Long worn out, and take roller made of  
stone:*

*Only the elm-butt tops the nettles now.  
This corner of the farmyard I like most:  
As well as any bloom upon a flower  
I like the dust on the nettles, never lost  
Except to prove the sweetness of a  
shower.*

#### Nettles by Vernon Scannell

*My son aged three fell in the nettle bed.  
'Bed' seemed a curious name for those green spears,  
That regiment of spite behind the shed:  
It was no place for rest. With sobs and tears  
The boy came seeking comfort and I saw  
White blisters beaded on his tender skin.  
We soothed him till his pain was not so raw.*

*At last he offered us a watery grin,  
And then I took my hook and honed the blade  
And went outside and slashed in fury with it  
Till not a nettle in that fierce parade  
Stood upright any more. Next task: I lit  
A funeral pyre to burn the fallen dead.  
But in two weeks the busy sun and rain  
Had called up tall recruits behind the shed:  
My son would often feel sharp wounds again.*

## Ladybird Poems

### Link to food chains and habitats - dependency

**Aim:** Look at the *Pappus* Nettle ID sheet to see which insects are dependent on nettles.

Nettles are a favourite egg laying plant for ladybirds and butterflies and provide an early food source for the aphids that colonise this plant.

Ladybirds are loved wherever they are found and are sometimes believed to bring good luck and are given special protection.

There are many rhymes about ladybirds, such as this one.

Can pupils use their knowledge of the ladybird lifecycle to imagine what the 'warming pan' might refer to?

*Ladybird, ladybird  
Fly away home,  
Your house is on fire  
And your children all gone  
All except one  
And that's little Ann  
And she has crept under  
The warming pan.*

## Butterfly writing

### Link to food chains and habitats - dependency

**Aim:** Research the life cycles of Tortoiseshell and Peacock butterflies.

These are just two butterfly species that rely on nettles for their larval stage.

Choosing a brief writing style (e.g. poem, newspaper report, micro-story, postcard home, series of text messages), pupils should explain why butterflies love nettles, including reference to the characteristics of the plant and the butterflies.

