

The Great Australian Platypus Search Poetry Competition.

Platypuses are mysterious, beautiful oddities that we love and marvel at. From city to country, their waterways and habitats connect us all. But they are in danger of becoming extinct due to impacts from humans.

Themed, 'Our Precious Platypus', this is your chance to express in words what the platypus, and its habitat, means to you.

**Open to all Victorian primary and secondary school students.
Enter as an individual OR class/ school.**

Judging panel:

Lorraine Marwood, award-winning Australian poet and writer

Nigel Sharp, Founder & Chair, Odonata

Hilary Van Leeuwen, Communications Manager, Odonata

Darren Grover, Head of Healthy Land and Seascapes at WWF-Australia

Entries close: Wednesday 15th December

Winners announced: late January

Prizes awarded at assembly: first term of 2022

\$3,000 in prizes to be won!

including vouchers for microscopes, telescopes and binoculars, board games, and beautiful books about platypuses and other animals.

For entry guidelines and prize details, visit:

eev.vic.edu.au/events



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Top tips for poetry writing from Lorraine Marwood



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Years F-2

Poetry is in the everyday.

- Think of a daily routine; we breathe poetry.
- Pick the strong words. Just two words to a line is a great way to break into poetry. For example:
 - eating breakfast
 - brushing teeth
 - patting dog
 - tidying bedroom

Simple words have their own rhythm.

- Find photos and snapshots of platypus to trigger your writing.
- Find words relevant to the platypus, for example:
 - Where they live
 - What they do
 - Characteristics
 - Life cycle

Then choose the best words to start a poem.

- A poem is like a ladder, short lines going down the page.
- Choose two, three, four or five words for each line.
- Could be a day in the life of a platypus; could be a look at their natural environment; could be showing their uniqueness...

Create a 'Word Bank' before writing your poem.

This might include words like: waterproof fur, lay eggs, clawed feet, habitat, cobbles, gravel. And anything else you can think of. Brainstorm!

Years 3-6

Platypus poems could include answering why it is a unique creature, why the male is venomous, a question and answer type poem, 'A where I am from- type poem'

I am from the rivers, the streams,
I love freshwater, those sandy creek beds

those cold waters in Tasmania and Victoria and New south Wales.

Twilight is the best time...

- Try and surprise us with words and images.
- Try some similes – a platypus is like a small underwater canoe,
- Metaphor- you are shaped to a moonlight shadow, a quick underwater flick

Years 7-11

Research habitat, use photos, Word Banks (see Years F-2 explainer), similes and metaphors, Also add senses and sounds, because poetry is sound.

- Immerse yourself in platypus facts, fiction, stories, photos, reactions.

Ways into your poem could include:

- Slowing down the platypus movement, and writing about each frame.
- Going to a river bank where platypus are located and writing about the sensory connections you experience: the textures, colours, sounds, tastes, and smells.
- The fauna and flora that exist in the platypus environment.

Write from the perspective of:

- The platypus - and what it sees as necessary for its survival and thriving.
- First Nations people and their connection to knowledge, stories, the land, waters and living things.
- Early European discovery and naming.
- Other parts of the world and their reaction in seeing such an odd looking creature.



More poetry resources from Lorraine Marwood:
www.dorothea.com.au/Learning-Resources

<http://keo-cms.appspot.com/storage-googleapis.com/sites/dorothea/assets/f3f533be-e4a7-444f-adff-59985f1401d4.pdf>
How to write a poem by Lorraine Marwood

<http://keo-cms.appspot.com/storage-googleapis.com/sites/dorothea/assets/b760e43d-03c4-458f-a922-79cb7fe7e163.pdf>
mentoring kit for writing poetry.
By Lorraine Marwood and Claire Saxby