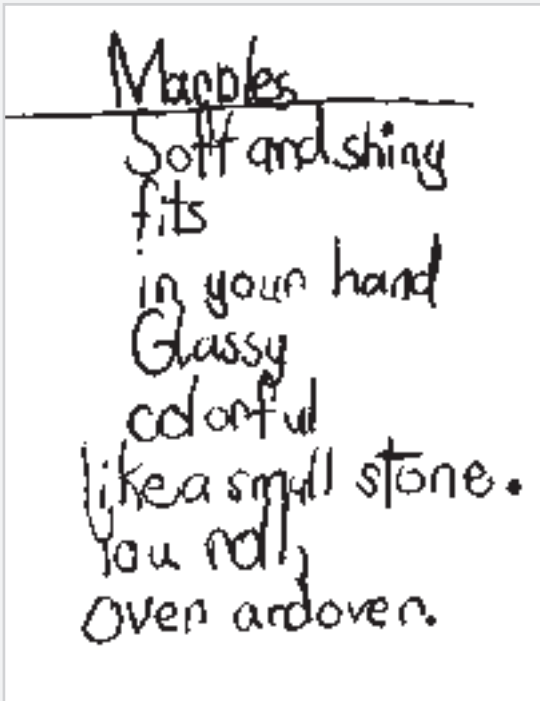


Demonstration Focus: Small Poems

Kids love writing small poems. Small poems demand less for some students and are fun to write for all. Such poems are also challenging because every word is important and makes a statement. Until I had kids' poems, I always began my demonstration by reading, noticing, and discussing poems from *all the small poems and fourteen more* by Valerie Worth, illustrated by Natalie Babbitt (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1996). These are mostly poems about ordinary objects, closely observed, with such topics as porches, a pig, coins, a caterpillar, and pebbles.

As with all poems I use as models, I read a bunch of these and ask the students, "What do you notice?" Some things we notice and discuss together are the layout and shape of the poems, the economy of words, the metaphors and similes, the descriptive language. For our session today, I expect everyone to try a small poem. Notice wonderful first attempts by Samantha and Greg.



Marbles

Soft and shiny
fits
in your hand
Glassy
colorful
like a small stone
You roll,
Over and over.

—Samantha Miller

My Sister Kayla

Silly
Crazy
abnormal
strange

Who loves

listening to the radio
bugging her sister
sucking up to her parents

Who needs

mental help
a brain transplant
plastic surgery

Who gives

Kisses
Hugs
Love (occasionally)

Who fears

Creepy crawlers
Her sister giving her a kiss
Bath time



Who'd like to see

Mickey Mouse
The Hunchback of Notre Dame
Michael Jordan in person

Teacher of
My Godsister Chelsea

Student of
Her big sister

Resident of

Planet X.

— DANIELLE JONES