

Exercise 1 - These are the hands

In this exercise we are thinking about our hands. Our hands can tell the story of our lives.

This workshop is inspired by the brilliant Michael Rosen. He is a poet and writer who wrote a series of poems celebrating the NHS.

The poem describes everything that doctors and nurses do with their hands.

These are the hands - By Michael Rosen

for the 60th anniversary of the NHS

These are the hands
That touch us first
Feel your head
Find the pulse
And make your bed.
These are the hands
That tap your back
Test the skin
Hold your arm
Wheel the bin
Change the bulb
Fix the drip
Pour the jug
Replace your hip.
These are the hands
That fill the bath
Mop the floor
Flick the switch
Soothe the sore
Burn the swabs
Give us a jab
Throw out sharps
Design the lab.
And these are the hands
That stop the leaks
Empty the pan
Wipe the pipes
Carry the can
Clamp the veins
Make the cast
Log the dose
And touch us last.

Let's think about your hands. What have your hands done over the years? What stories do they tell? What is the scariest thing you have done with your hands? The hardest thing you have done with your hands? Here are six questions about your hands. You could either write down the answers to each question and make the poem in the way I suggest or you can create your own poem in your own way.

1. Think of something you have done with your hands during most days and write it below. An example could be these are the hands that brush my teeth or these are the hands that stretch each morning. Write it below

These are the hands that

2. Think of something you have done with your hands that you are very proud of? An example could be these are the hands that held my new born baby. Or these are the hands that worked the mines for 25 years. Write it below

These are the hands that.....

3. Think of something you do with your hands that makes you very happy. For example, these are the hands that hug my daughter or these are the hands that warm in the Spring sunshine. Write it below

These are the hands that.....

4. Think of something you have done with your hands that was extremely difficult. For example you could say: These are the hands that bid farewell to my dying dog or these are the hands that said set sail away from my family. Write it below

These are the hands that.....

5. Think of something you have done with your hands that you are not proud of. For example, these are the hands that pulled the trigger, a bullet to someone i never knew. Or these are the hands that wiped my mother's tears away. Write it below

These are the hands that.....

6. Think of something you want to do in the future. For example, these are the hands that will lift my grandson or these are the hands that will pull the boat to shore. Write it below.

These are the hands that.....

Now you can write these into your own poem. You are free to add or take away, you can change and switch the order, it really is unto you. The main thing is to HAVE FUN!