

# POETRY NOW!

## "Invitation" poem

### **April Rain Song**

Let the rain kiss you.  
Let the rain beat upon your head with silver liquid drops.  
Let the rain sing you a lullaby.

The rain makes still pools on the sidewalk.  
The rain makes running pools in the gutter.  
The rain plays a little sleep-song on our roof at night—

And I love the rain.

*by Langston Hughes*

*© Langston Hughes (1902-1967). Hughes, one of America's most beloved poets, was born in Missouri but spent much of his adult life in New York's Harlem neighborhood. This poem is from The Dream-Keeper and Other Poems, originally published in 1932, but reissued in a beautiful edition illustrated by Brian Pinkney (Knopf, 1994).*

### **Poetry Idea**

This poetry idea is based on ideas in Barbara Esbensen's book *A Celebration of Bees: Helping Children Write Poetry*.

"April Rain Song" is what I call an "invitation" poem. You write one when you want something to happen! Spring, in my part of the country (Minnesota), needs a little encouragement. Try writing an "invitation" poem to spring—or to any other season or event. This kind of poem is fun to write with a friend:

1. Start by brainstorming spring words on a piece of paper: Spring sights, smells, sounds, colors, animals, insects, activities.
2. Then, write a poem to spring, as if you were talking to it. Use your brainstormed ideas, and start your sentences with these words:

Come ...  
Bring ...  
Remember ...  
Loosen ...  
Let ...

Here is an example from two of my students:

***Welcome, Spring!***

*by Siri & Anna*

*Come make our tall trees stretch into green.*

*Bring us the wheat-colored sunshine.*

*Remember the flowing light breeze?*

*Loosen the fuzzy bees and the jeweled butterflies.*

*Let the brick-hard winter vanish for months.*

*Please come, Spring!*

Prose © Joyce Sidman 2012 *May be copied for classroom use but may not be reprinted or resold for commercial purposes*