INTENSIVE WRITING
BY PETER SANSON

The poems resulting from this exercise will have the sort of title you might see in an art exhibition, like ‘Shed at the Bottom of a Garden’ or ‘Mr Johnson at Number 35 Hanging Out Washing’. The writer works a little like some painters do too, letting the details appear just because they’re there, and allowing them to speak for themselves, avoiding interpretative statements.

Getting started
Give out copies of the accompanying activity sheet, which asks the students to imagine they are standing looking out of a window they know well. It might be their own bedroom or kitchen window, a window in school or at a friend’s house.

Using prompts
Now ask the students to write one or two short lines in response to the prompts on the sheet, creating the poem as they go along. Allow 30–60 seconds thinking and writing time after each prompt.

Developing the activity
You can adapt these questions, or add to them, to make the activity suitable for the age and ability of the students. Establish different situations to vary the results. As an extension or homework activity, ask the students to try the exercise again at home, or in situ, actually looking out of the window.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
Y7 DESCRIBE AN OBJECT, PERSON OR SETTING IN A WAY THAT DESCRIBES RELEVANT DETAILS AND IS ACCURATE AND EVOCATIVE
Y9 MAKE TELLING USE OF DESCRIPTIVE DETAIL
Imagine you are looking out of a window you know well. It might be your own bedroom or kitchen window, a window in school or at a friend’s house. Write your responses to the questions about the view from the window in short lines of poetry.

1. **WHAT DO YOU SEE STRAIGHT AHEAD OF YOU?**
2. **WHAT IS ON THE LEFT?**
3. **SOMETHING IS DIFFERENT TODAY – WHAT IS IT? (IT NEEDN’T BE OF GREAT SIGNIFICANCE)**
4. **WRITE ANY LINE THAT FOLLOWS ON HERE, BUT INCLUDE THE WORD ‘SOMETIMES’ OR THE WORD ‘ALWAYS’**
5. **WHAT ELSE CAN YOU SEE?**

**POET’S TIP**
Include detail. What is the time of day or the time of year?

**NAME:**