

Here is a poem by Allan Ahlberg. He was a poet who loved to write funny poems for children.

Things I have been doing lately

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Pretending to go mad

Eating my own cheeks from the inside

Growing taller

Keeping a secret

Keeping a worm in a jar

Keeping a good dream going

Picking a scab on my elbow

Rolling the cat up in a rug

Blowing bubbles in my spit

Making myself dizzy

Holding my breath

Pressing my eyeballs so I become temporarily blind

Being very nearly ten

Practising my signature...

Saving the best till last.

At the moment, when we are all stuck inside and unable to go out, this poem really seemed to reflect that sense of not knowing what to do with yourself and inventing things to do. It also shows how you can get really involved with doing nothing at all when you are very nearly ten! The last line is intriguing! What do you think it means?

When I talk to people at the moment, I am really aware that I have nothing much to tell: I haven't been anywhere or done anything worth speaking about. I find myself listening to conversations about queues and shopping for food and these are things people don't usually talk about, because they are not that interesting!

So I thought it would be fun to write a list of things I have been doing lately and include some of the boring things but also things that are a bit silly or a bit sad or a bit mad but things that reflect the fact we are living at a time when you can't do much of the normal stuff.

Things I have been doing lately:

Getting up too early

Listening to the rain

Squashing random ants

Snorkeling in custard

Shouting at squirrels

Counting in thousands

Washing my hands

Wrangling chickens

Dancing strangely

Scoffing white chocolate

Searching for things not lost

Hoping for the best.

Notice the pattern. The poem starts with the same line and then there is a colon as it is a long list. Each item on the list has its own line and the lines are different lengths. There are no rhymes (but you can make lines rhyme if you wish). The lines all start with verbs which all end in -ing e.g. pretending, keeping, dancing etc.

All lines start with a capital letter. All ends of lines are bare (no commas – in poetry, you can play fast and loose with punctuation!)

And that's about it.

You have a go. Your poem should show what it is like being very nearly (or actually!) eleven. It can include real things or made up things but should tell the reader

a little of how you are feeling about writing at this time.

Plan:

You can write/edit/publish your poem on Purplemash 2publish and use the Page Border option.

Have a chat with an adult or someone about what you have been doing. Think of the things that maybe less obvious as well as the most obvious. When you have a few ideas, jot them down, following the pattern. Then think about the order you like best. Say the lines and hear them. Rearrange the order until you like it.

What will be your last line? Something to keep the reader interested and maybe a bit intrigued?