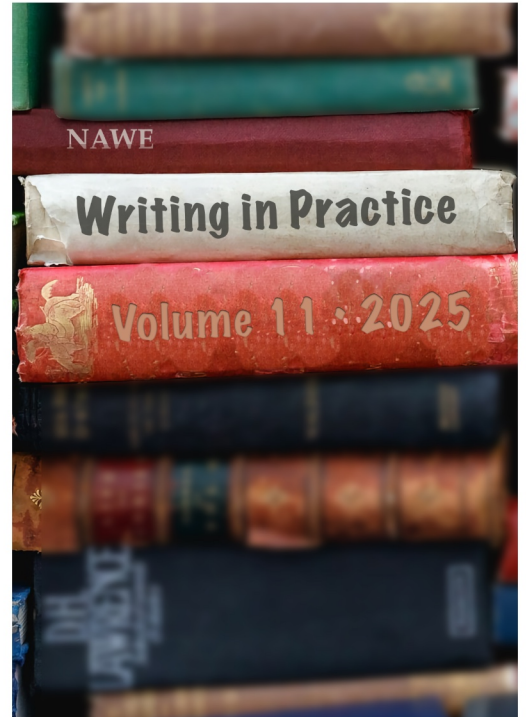




Found Poetry Digital Space: Constructing a Model to Enhance Children's Confidence in Writing and Sharing

Yuka Nakai

Writing in Practice
volume 11, 2025

CrossRef DOI: [10.62959/WIP-11-2025-04](https://doi.org/10.62959/WIP-11-2025-04)

Found Poetry Digital Space: Constructing a Model to Enhance Children's Confidence in Writing and Sharing

Yuka Nakai

ABSTRACT

This study explores the implementation of a web-based poetry-writing app designed to support students' confidence in creative writing. Using the found poetry method, the app enables users to select and rearrange words from source texts, thus bridging digital tools and creative pedagogy. A workshop involved 114 fifth-year students in Japan to evaluate the app's effectiveness. Pre- and post-workshop questionnaires measured autonomy, competence, and relatedness in poetry writing based on self-determination theory. The results indicated significant improvements in students' confidence and motivation, particularly in connection to autonomy and competence. Pupils expressed enjoyment in selecting words, creating poems, and receiving peer feedback through the app's intuitive interface. The challenges included difficulties with material vocabulary and limited time for feedback. To address usability issues, new app features, such as warning messages for unsaved work, were introduced. This paper highlights the potential of integrating digital tools with collaborative poetry-writing activities to foster creativity, confidence, and community. Future directions include expanding the app to English-speaking contexts, encouraging cross-cultural connections, and supporting educators with practical materials. The findings suggest that such approaches can redefine literacy education by promoting psychological need satisfaction through creative expression.

KEYWORDS

Found poetry, Poetry writing, Digital tools, Self-determination theory (SDT), Writing confidence, Peer feedback, Primary education, Poetry workshop, International collaboration

Poetry writing focuses on “making new connections between objects or concepts through choices of metaphors, word collocations, juxtaposition of images or the overall construction of a text” (Dymoke 2020: 80). This can be a keystone of creativity in literacy education.

However, learning about poetry writing in schools has been extremely slow, and in many countries, both teachers and students lack confidence in poetry writing, which is considered problematic (Dredger et al. 2017; Dymoke and Hughes 2009; Another and Author, 2022). Accordingly, students tend to feel unmotivated to write poetry and avoid or dislike it. Moreover, despite enjoying writing in the early years of primary school, there is a concern that by the time students reach upper grades, they will either dislike or avoid writing (Boscolo and Gelati 2019: 51; Pritchard and Honeycutt 2007: 32).

Pajares and Valiante (2006: 158–159) point out that students' confidence in their writing capabilities influences their writing motivation, leading to various writing outcomes in school. To foster confidence in learning to write, studies have shown that it is important to give students autonomy over topics and assignments to ensure they can choose them independently (Pajares and Valiante 2006: 167) and feel that they have control and can make their own choices (Myhill et al. 2023: 2–3).

Self-determination theory (SDT) explains why having a sense of control or choice in a particular context is important in motivating behaviour (Deci and Ryan 2000; Ryan and Deci 2000). Notably, SDT focuses on how external motivation can be internalized and transformed into self-determined motivation (Niemic and Ryan 2009: 139). Ideally, students should find learning activities enjoyable and engage in them voluntarily. However, school education is often viewed as an external compulsion, making it challenging to rely solely on intrinsic motivation. During the internalization

process, three psychological needs – autonomy, competence, and relatedness – must be satisfied (Niemiec and Ryan 2009: 139; Ryan and Deci 2000).

- **Autonomy:** The feeling that one’s actions are guided by one’s own choices and intentions.

- **Competence:** The sense that one has the ability to accomplish tasks.

- **Relatedness:** The feeling of being connected to others, experiencing love and consideration.

It is important to note that this includes not just personal factors but also “relatedness”, which refers to a connection with others.

Graham (2018) highlights the diversification of writing motivation and proposes the writer(s)-within-community (WWC) model, which emphasizes collective improvement within a community.

In this study, I aim to examine how confidence in poetry creation improves within the writing community based on both SDT and WWC contexts, which assume that extrinsic motivation is internalized within a group.

First, I define the state of having a sense of self-determination in poetry writing as the image of a confident student who experiences autonomy, competence, and relatedness in relation to poetry writing.

- **Autonomy:** The feeling that students can choose their own methods of expression and content, fix any parts that feel strange, and write and share at their own pace.

- **Competence:** The sense that students can enrich their expressions by analysing others’ poetry and incorporating new ideas, while believing in their ability to write poetry.

- **Relatedness:** The feeling that students are psychologically and emotionally connected to others that they write with, and thus trust them and trust that they cooperate with each other by sharing ideas and feedback.

Digital Technology Support for Poetry Writing

The use of digital technology, which has developed rapidly over the past 20 years, has been key to reducing writing anxiety and improving confidence.

Poetry classes incorporating digital and artificial intelligence technologies have been developed and implemented in various countries in different forms (Dredger et al. 2017; Dymoke and Hughes 2009; Hassler et al. 2020; Kantosalo et al. 2014).

The potential for creativity on a computer

screen and ease of editing, specifically, the reduced unwillingness to rewrite, have also been highlighted as important factors (Yates 2007: 14).

Moreover, with the growth of social networking services, the digitization of writing has enabled the instant sharing of written work via the Internet.

As part of the digital generation (McFarlane et al. 2015), students are in daily contact with digital technology and use it to interact with others. Bridging the gap between their digital lives and school activities is essential.

Found Poetry as an Introduction to Writing Poetry

Found poetry “has a long history of practice in poetry as the imaginative appropriation and reconstruction of already-existing texts” (Prendergast 2006). Using original texts from a wide range of genres such as junk mail, web news, advertisements, recipes, or letters, we can choose and combine words as desired to create new poems (Dymoke 2016).

Rather than composing a poem on a blank sheet of paper, the main process in writing found poetry is to contrive a new poem by selecting specific words from one or several found texts, perhaps rearranging or keeping them in the order in which they exist in the original and changing their form slightly, paying attention to the sound, shape, and meaning of the words.

The fact that the words are already available and waiting to be selected and reused can subdue some of the fear of a blank page or screen, making it a potentially useful method for teachers and students who lack confidence in writing poetry. The potential of found poetry methods has also begun to be explored more widely in recent years.

Dymoke (2016: 69) explains that digital technology in found poetry offers writers the opportunity “to cast their net widely for texts (including texts that are still in the making), to cut, paste, and recreate with a sense of immediacy”. Hughes (2013) also notes that digital technology enables new ways of reading and writing poetry, as well as performances for a wider audience, compared to traditional “pen and paper technology”.

However, digital technology should complement, not replace, pen and paper methods. Simply replicating or limiting what can be done with pen and paper would be counterproductive.

Drawing on the aforementioned literature, I decided that the web app should operate under the same conditions as writing found poetry using pen and paper. In addition to replicating

pen-and-paper approaches, there was a need to consider the distinctly different additional affordances offered by digital technology (Laurillard et al. 2000; Mangen et al. 2016) and use them to inform the development of the app.

One of the affordances is “navigability” (Sundar and Limperos 2013: 516), where users are navigated or aided in their work by digital technology. As an additional affordance, building on the pen-and-paper approach, it seemed necessary for the app to have the capacity to navigate users to respond to and, hopefully, enjoy the found poetry composition process. It was also essential to add affordances that encouraged users to think consciously about the layout, such as buttons that promote the idea of creating stanzas and a pop-up screen to select the level of indentation.

Sharing work was another key factor. It was also required that the source of the original text be hyperlinked to convey the existence of further relevant information to ensure users would be tempted to click on the link, navigate the information space, and consult the source. Based on these things, the app includes the following features:

- Select and upload original texts, while setting a specific length.

- Rearrange and edit selected words (order, position, tense, and form).

- Modify drafts as often as needed.

- Cut, paste, and edit words freely.

- Ensure automatic credit for source texts to respect copyright.

- Share poems with title, pen name, source, and reference.

Users are naturally aided to follow the creative process of found poetry, as they are invited to operate the app by design. These features can also extend their thoughts about the words they use and ideas that arise during or from the writing process.

Digital technology needs to be effective not just when writing but also when sharing newly created work. This foundational design supports individual creativity and facilitates the collaborative and interactive potential of digital spaces, as explored below.

Digital Spaces for Shared Interests

Abidin et al. (2021) describe online learning communities as virtual environments that promote shared learning through the exchange of opinions. This concept is similar to Gee’s (2004) “affinity space”, wherein people with common interests connect through digital

technology. The found poetry web app also serves as a “portal” providing this kind of affinity space. Building on the concept of affinity spaces (Gee, 2004), the found poetry web app acts as a portal for connecting users with shared interests, encouraging cross-cultural engagement between Japan and the UK. The main features include the ability to switch between English and Japanese, easy access via a short URL, and role-based permissions (Table 1).

Table 1: User Type Permission Overview

User Role	Access	Functions
Unregistered Users	Can view public content on public sessions.	Can register themselves as general users.
General Users	Can access public sessions and private sessions created by administrators.	Can attend and view work in these sessions.
Administrators	Can create their own sessions, register users, and access all other registered users.	Can manage sessions, register users, and assign private sessions to users.
Supervisors	Full access to all sessions and content.	Can manage all users on the platform.

Notes:

1. "Public sessions" are accessible to all users on the platform.

2. Sessions registered by administrators are managed by them and may have additional permissions set.

3. User-created sessions are private unless explicitly shared.

This system enables users to share and experience poetry across geographical boundaries.

Development of the Web App

The pilot version of the web app, developed as the Found Poetry Website (FPW.Dev), was released in May 2021, with improvements leading to the release of FPW3.0 (available at <https://foundpoetry.net>). Users can write and share poems using the following functions:

Text selection (Figure 1 overleaf): After logging in, users navigate to the “Write a Poem” page to start creating poems.

The system supports both Japanese and English, and users can switch the interface language at any time using the language switch (Figure 1E).

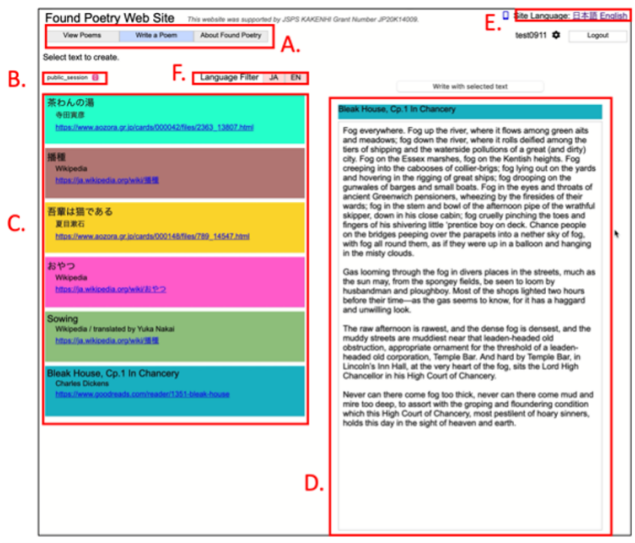
Once on the text selection screen, users select a session (Figure 1B) and choose a source text from the text selection box (Figure 1C).

To narrow down the available texts, users can apply a language filter (Figure 1F), selecting

either Japanese or English texts.

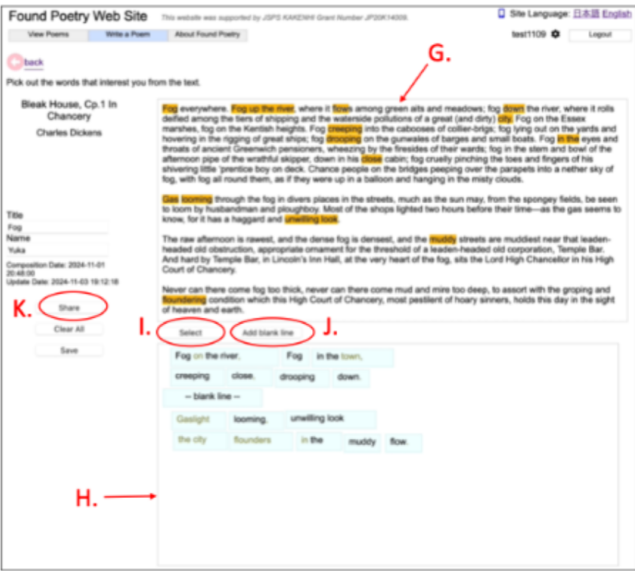
The chosen text is then displayed on the preview screen (Figure 1D), where users can review it before proceeding to the editing stage.

Figure 1. Screen Layout for Text Selection



Writing and editing poems (Figure 2): Users begin by hovering over the words they wish to edit in the source text (highlighted in yellow, Figure 2G) and pressing the “select” button (Figure 2I). The selected words are automatically added to the editing box (Figure 2H), where they can be intuitively rearranged. Additional options, such as the inclusion of blank lines (Figure 2J), allow users to effectively structure their stanzas. Once the poem is complete, users can share it using the button provided (Figure 2K).

Figure 2. Screen Layout for Poem Writing and



Editing

Edit pop-up (Figure 3): Words can be edited by

double-clicking (Figure 3), allowing users to delete or modify unwanted words.

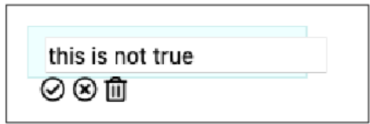


Figure 3. Edit Pop-up for Selected Words

Viewing poems (Figure 4): Poems written by other users are displayed in a tiled format (Figure 4), making them easy to view.

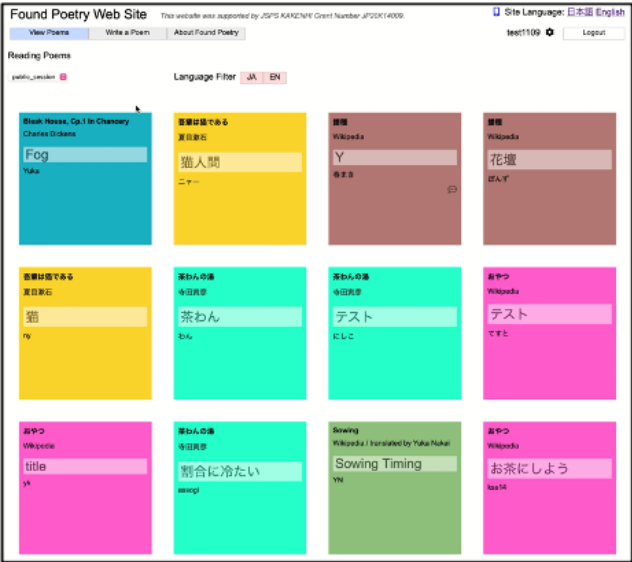


Figure 4. Viewing and Selecting a Poem

Display of the poem and comments (Figure 5): When a user selects a poem, its details are displayed in a pop-up window. The completed poem (Figure 5 N) appears alongside the original text for reference (Figure 5O), with highlighted sections corresponding to the selected words. Users can also post comments and feedback (Figure 5Q), encouraging collaboration and interaction within the system.

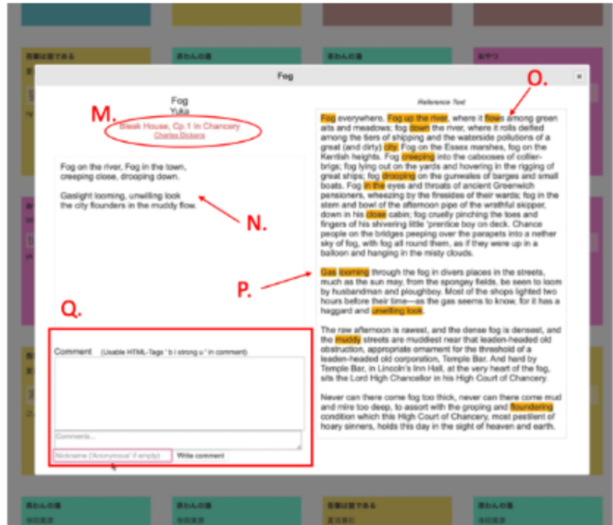


Figure 5. Pop-up Window for Viewing and Commenting on a Poem

Implementation of Workshops at Primary Schools

To test the developed web app, a face-to-face workshop was held on 30 September 2024 with 114 fifth-year students (aged 10–11 years) from four classes at a Japanese primary school. The target age was chosen based on previous research indicating a decline in writing motivation from the upper grades of primary school (Boscolo and Gelati 2019: 51; Pritchard and Honeycutt 2007: 32).

Each class, comprising approximately 30 students, participated in a 45-minute period, which is the standard duration of a Japanese primary school class. All the students had access to their own tablets. I served as the facilitator, and the workshop structure and guidelines were decided upon in consultation with the class teachers. Before the workshop, students received accounts and passwords to join class-specific invitation-only sessions.

The purpose and procedures of the workshop were explained to the school principal, class teachers, and students themselves, wherefrom informed consent was obtained before proceeding with the study.

Only data from participants who provided consent were included in the analysis. These data included written responses, verbal comments, and creative works produced during the workshop. To protect the privacy of participants, all data were anonymized before analysis, and no personally identifiable information was collected.

The workshop was divided into four main activities, each with specific goals and approximately timed as follows:

1. Introduction to found poetry (5 minutes): The facilitator explained the concept of found poetry and provided a brief introduction to the activity.

2. Introduction to web app usage (5 minutes): Pupils were shown how to navigate and use the web app to write and share poems.

3. Writing using the web app (15 minutes): Pupils spent 15 minutes creating their own poems using the app, during which the facilitator and teachers supported them with technical or creative guidance as needed.

4. Sharing, commenting, and rewriting poems (20 minutes): Pupils shared their poems with their peers, left comments, and made revisions based on feedback.

The facilitator encouraged active participation and supported the sharing process.

At the start of the workshop, I explained the basic rules to ease the pressure on the students

and encourage a creative and supportive atmosphere. The students were reassured that:

- They should treat everything written during the workshop as a draft.

- Finishing the poem within the time limit was not required.

- Poems did not need to be perfect and could be rewritten multiple times.

- Using friends' poems as references was acceptable.

- Comments did not have to be perfect.

- If they encountered difficulties, they could ask their friends or the teacher for help.

Following this, I introduced the concept of found poetry and explained how to use the app, spending 5 minutes covering these aspects. Pupils then spent 15 minutes writing their poems and 20 minutes sharing them with their peers. To provide an example during the introduction, I prepared a facilitator model poem in advance, titled “Window and Smartphone”.

This poem was created using a web news article from NHK NEWS WEB EASY, which described a rare weather phenomenon called “arch clouds” observed in Osaka. The poem, translated into English, is presented as follows:

Windows and Smartphones
Cold rain falls.
Thunder low in the sky
Clearly seen.
On Twitter
Similar photos
Line up,
Morning –
It's not unusual.
– Facilitator

The following three texts were used as materials because they met the criteria of being accessible to primary school students, scientific in nature, and concise:

- “Between the Half Moon and the Full Moon” from *Weekly San-in Gakubun* (Kanzo Takeuchi): A Children’s Newspaper Article

- “Nebula” from *Atlas: Kids’ Space Encyclopedia* (Junichi Watanabe): An astronomy encyclopaedia

- The opening line from *Into the Forest* (Hoshino Michio): A Travelogue in Alaska

After each 45-minute workshop, the students created 96 poems. For example, the text

“Nebula” from Atlas: Kids’ Space Encyclopedia inspired one pupil to write the following poem:

*Beyond the Explosion
A hole opened.
The star exploded.
Cradle of stars,
Spiral galaxy,
Vivid colours,
River of heaven,
Emitting light.
Summer night sky.
– Child A*

This poem combines words selected from the original scientific explanation, such as “spiral galaxy” and “cradle of stars”, with the pupil’s own additions, including “summer night sky”, to create a vivid and imaginative depiction of space.

Another pupil, using the text “Between the Half Moon and the Full Moon” from a children’s newspaper, wrote the following poem:

*King of the Big Eaters
Four years ago,
the moon got a little fatter
Egg moon, Lemon moon
Omelette rice moon
Thinly sliced moon.
Stuffed too full,
I’m happy.
– Child B*

In this poem, the phases of the moon are humorously reimagined as culinary metaphors, such as “Egg moon” and “Omelette rice moon”. The pupil’s playful language transformed the moon’s phases into a light-hearted and creative narrative. During a later reflection, the pupil mentioned enjoying the process of creating the title, which the pupil felt influenced the tone of the poem.

Analysis of the Questionnaire Survey and Interviews

Pupils who participated in the workshop completed a questionnaire via Google Forms both before and after the workshop. The questionnaire covered their experiences of writing poetry inside and outside school, their use of information and communications technology (ICT), and their feelings before and after the workshop.

It also included 21 items, obtained specifically from the Basic Needs for Self-Determination Scale (BNSS) adapted for poetry writing.

All questions, except for the open-ended questions, used a 5-point Likert-type scale, and the scores for the reverse-scaled questions were

adjusted accordingly. The full list of questionnaire items is provided in Appendix A.

Consequently, 98 pre- and 89 post-questionnaires were collected from 114 participants. For the responses to the poetry-writing BNSS items, listwise deletion was applied, and the pre- and post-questionnaire data were merged, resulting in 75 usable responses (65.8%).

The analysis was conducted using R version 4.4.1 (R Core Team 2024).

Table 2 presents the results of the pre-workshop questionnaire. Pupils’ experience of writing poetry is very limited, both inside and outside of school. This is partly because Japanese schools use textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, which rarely include materials for poetry writing.

Additionally, while there is little reluctance to use ICT devices, the students’ experience of using ICT for communication varies significantly. In particular, there is almost no ICT communication in schools.

Question items	1	2	3	4	5
I write private study of school.	80	0	0	0	0
I will join the forum discussion with my colleagues.	80	14	0	0	0
In school forums, I am ICT devices to interact with friends.	0	0	0	1	1
In school forums, I am ICT devices to interact with friends.	52	37	4	4	0
I always give a rating (of 5 stars). [Review icon]	0	5	16	30	3

Table 2. Basic Trends in Poetry Writing and ICT Use (*n* = 98)

Notes:

1. Numbers indicate the number of students who selected each option.

2. Questions 1–4: 1 = Never, 2 = Less than once a month, 3 = 2–3 times a month, 4 = About once a week, 5 = Almost every day.

3. Question 5: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree.

4. Due to non-responses, the total number may vary by question.

Confidence in Poetry Writing

The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was conducted separately for each question and category (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) in the BNSS poetry writing subscale to compare the pre- and post-questionnaire responses.

Significant differences were found for all questions and categories except for Q12 and

Q17 (see Table 3 below)

Question	Mean Before (SD)	Mean After (SD)	p-value
1	2.63 (1.183)	4.53 (0.640)	p<.001
2	3.11 (1.201)	4.69 (0.637)	p<.001
3	3.21 (1.076)	4.69 (0.661)	p<.001
4	2.81 (0.962)	3.43 (1.032)	p<.003
5	3.26 (0.891)	3.69 (0.761)	p<.001
6	2.57 (0.901)	3.74 (0.757)	p<.001
7	3.19 (1.117)	3.74 (1.006)	p<.001
8	3.47 (1.107)	3.94 (1.036)	p<.003
9	2.4 (1.086)	3.61 (1.024)	p<.001
10	3.13 (0.996)	3.69 (0.947)	p<.001
11	3.67 (1.014)	3.94 (0.877)	p<.042
12	3.26 (0.974)	3.63 (0.89)	p<.04
13	3.21 (1.113)	3.69 (1.115)	p<.001
14	2.83 (1.127)	3.48 (0.943)	p<.001
15	2.58 (0.965)	3.44 (0.831)	p<.001
16	2.67 (1.250)	3.83 (1.085)	p<.001
17	2.89 (1.170)	3.12 (1.096)	p<.04
18	3.29 (0.897)	3.68 (0.883)	p<.001
19	3.18 (0.907)	3.58 (0.915)	p<.001
20	3.37 (0.827)	3.69 (0.808)	p<.001
21	2.98 (1.047)	3.51 (1.049)	p<.001
Comparison	2.84 (1.031)	3.83 (0.73)	p<.001
All Mean	3.13 (1.053)	3.71 (0.95)	p<.001

Table 3: Changes in BNSS Scores for Poetry Writing before and after the Workshop

Furthermore, the differences between the mean and median scores before and after the questionnaire survey were calculated for each question and category to assess how the scores changed. All the BNSS categories improved, with autonomy showing the greatest increase.

For the individual questions, the scores improved for all items except Q19, with particularly notable increases for Q1, Q6, Q9, Q10, Q14, and Q20, suggesting that students became more independent in their writing, felt a sense of achievement and learning, and enjoyed the process of writing with their classmates.

Category	Number of Codes	Negative/Positive	Distinctive Codes
Motivation	15	Positive	Entertainment; Convenience; Education as WE are a challenge; Expectations for development
IS	18	Negative	Communication; Internet skills in communication
Competence	13	Positive	Expectations for using ICT
DF	17	Negative	Complicated in use
Relatedness	12	Positive	Expectations for collaborative work; Communication with mentor in education; Effectiveness of Appendices to student

Table 4. Emotions towards Poetry Writing before the Workshop

What were their attitudes towards poetry before the workshop? Free-response answers from the preliminary survey were coded and categorized according to the three BNSS categories (Table 4 at bottom of page).

Many students expressed positive emotions related to autonomy, such as looking forward to writing poetry or participating in class activities using tablets.

For instance, one pupil shared, “I’m looking forward to writing poetry”. Another pupil expressed a sense of challenge and motivation, stating that “I’m not good at writing poetry, but I want to try my best”.

However, negative emotions tied to competence were prevalent, reflecting uncertainty about the outcomes and concerns about their ability to write well. Comments like “I’m worried because I don’t think I have a good sense for writing” illustrate these concerns. Others voiced a lack of confidence, including “I’m worried because I don’t know if I’ll be able to do it well”.

Mentions of relatedness were relatively sparse. While some students held expectations about discussing poetry with their peers and building friendships, others expressed apprehension about social dynamics.

For example, one pupil said, “I’m worried that my friends might say something unpleasant if I write my own poem”.

Despite these concerns, there was still hope for collaborative engagement, as indicated by comments such as “I would be happy if I could deepen my friendships and talk more than usual”.

Next, descriptive statistics for their impressions after the workshop were calculated, and they are presented in Table 5 overleaf.

The closer the score is to 5, the more positive the students’ evaluation of that item.

Question Item	Mean (SD)
Did you find it easy to write poetry using this app?	3.58 (1.146)
Did you enjoy creating poetry today?	4.51 (0.624)
Did comments from your friends help improve your poem?	3.58 (0.709)
Was it easy to revise your poem using this app?	3.62 (1.047)
Did you become interested in writing poems written by other friends?	4.02 (0.758)

Table 5. Impressions after the Workshop

Focusing on items with a standard deviation of less than 1, we see that the responses for “Did you enjoy creating poetry today?” (mean = 4.51) and “Did comments from your friends help improve your poem?” (mean = 3.58) indicate positive sentiments. The students greatly enjoyed writing their poems during the workshop and expressed interest in the poems written by their friends, as evident in “Did you become interested in reading poems by other friends?” (mean = 4.02). Additionally, the items “Did you find it easy to write poetry using this app?” (mean = 3.58) and “Did sharing and commenting on each other’s work help improve your poem?” received slightly positive feedback.

Factors of Change: Analysis of Post-workshop Free-Text Responses

What factors contributed to these changes? While it was impossible to establish a direct causal relationship, free-text responses collected after the workshop provided valuable insights.

Analysis revealed three major contributing factors: the influence of found poetry, impact of digital tools, and role of writing communities. These were further examined through subcategories related to the process of writing and sharing poetry, identifying both positive and negative influences.

Influence of found poetry: Free-text responses regarding the found poetry method were overwhelmingly positive, with 97 instances highlighting its benefits. Pupils expressed joy in selecting and rearranging words, which contributed to their sense of ownership over the poems. For example, one pupil shared, “I really enjoyed being able to choose words from the materials and write my own poem in a fun and free way”.

However, 26 responses indicated challenges such as the difficulty of combining words or deciding on content. One pupil remarked, “It was hard to decide which parts to use and how to connect them”. Despite these difficulties, 23

comments reflected a determination to try again, with students noting, “I wasn’t confident at first, but I was happy with what I created”.

Impact of digital tools: Responses about the app’s digital editing features were mixed.

Out of 14 codes, 7 highlighted its benefits, such as “ease of rearranging words” and “making corrections quickly”. However, three responses pointed to challenges like difficulties with precise positioning, and four students mentioned a lack of time to explore the app fully.

The feedback received through the app’s comment function was another key factor, with 82 responses expressing joy. Pupils appreciated comments from their peers, sharing statements like, “I was thrilled that everyone praised my work”. This feedback not just boosted confidence but also motivated revisions. One pupil noted, “From my friend’s comments, I realized I should emphasise this part more”.

However, 21 responses highlighted negative experiences, including time constraints and missed opportunities for feedback. Some students said, “I didn’t have time to leave comments”, while others noted, “I didn’t receive any feedback”.

Role of writing communities: The collaborative aspects of the workshop elicited 26 responses, with 13 highlighting the positive effects of sharing and understanding others’ work.

Pupils noted, “it was hard to write, but fun to comment on and see my friends’ poems” and “I noticed some great expressions that were helpful”.

There were also many positive comments about using the app’s comment function, with statements such as, “I was happy to receive comments”, “I was glad that people took the time to look at my work”, and “I was thrilled that everyone praised my work and shared what they liked about it”. Receiving feedback was a significant source of joy for them.

Some comments led to revisions, such as, “I thought I couldn’t write a good poem without feedback” and “From my friend’s comments, I realized I should emphasize this part more, so I could revise my draft”.

Comment boxes are a common feature on social networking sites and other platforms that students use daily, making them familiar and accessible. Communicating in the comment box was perceived as a joy that facilitated feedback, leading to a sense of acceptance among friends, as students felt that “my poem was read carefully”.

However, three responses reflected indifference in engaging with peers, as they simply noted, “Nothing in particular”, when asked how they felt about exchanging comments (Q34).

Despite this, the sense of community fostered through sharing poetry created a positive impact for many.

Focus Group Interview

Finally, students exhibiting the largest score differences (threshold < 1) before and after the workshop were identified, narrowing the list to 16 students.

From this group, eight students were selected – two from each class – including three who showed the greatest improvement in the categories of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, as well as one from each category.

A 20-minute focus group interview was conducted a week after the workshop. The selected students included those who left the most comments and those who continued to access the website after the workshop by writing multiple pieces of work.

As a premise, the facilitator provided comments on all the works written during and after the workshop. These comments included impressions and observations about the poems, as well as highlighted lines and connections, to make the process easily replicable by the students. The accounts issued to the students during the workshop allowed continued access to the web app for future use.

In addition to the three texts used during the workshop, two other texts were included to encourage continued creative work after the workshop:

- “Passenger Dragon” from *Impossible Invention* (Małgorzata Micielska et al.): A fictional invention encyclopaedia

- “Why Do We Dream?” from *Why Can’t I Feel the Earth Spinning?: And Other Vital Questions About Science* (Why Is...?) (James Doyle et al.): A

scientific reading material

Seven of the eight selected students participated in the focus group interview. A semi-structured interview format was used, which allowed for free conversation while adhering to predetermined questions.

The questions were stated as follows.

- What was it like to write poetry using a tablet?

- How did writing poetry on a tablet compare to writing on paper? What aspects were easier?

- How did you feel when you shared your poems with your friends? Did their comments help you?

- What was your experience with found poetry?

- Is there anything else you would like to say or ask?

After coding and categorizing the interview responses, 122 codes were identified.

These were grouped into four main categories: found poetry, digital technology, sharing, and workshop management. These categories captured the range of experiences students had during the workshop, from the technical aspects of the method to their interactions with their peers and the facilitator.

Found poetry: A total of 36 codes were identified under the category of found poetry, with 20 focusing on the distinctive characteristics of the method and 16 on the writing process.

Many students appreciated the freedom and creativity it offered, saying things like, “I could create a different mood from the original material” and “I could express parts of myself that I usually don’t”.

The simplicity of the technique was particularly appreciated, as one pupil noted, “It was easy because I could decide using the text provided”. Others described a sense of achievement, with one pupil remarking, “I can create a world that seems fun if I were there”. This method also helped students empathize with professional writers.

One pupil shared, “I could understand how the authors feel”, highlighting how the process deepened their understanding of creative writing.

However, some challenges were also noted. Four comments highlighted difficulties with vocabulary, such as, “There were many words I didn’t understand, and I didn’t know how to use them”. These findings suggest that

providing age-appropriate materials could help lower entry barriers.

Digital technology: This category included 12 codes, with 7 focusing on ease of use and 5 addressing features of the tool. Pupils frequently commented on how the app facilitated editing tasks, saying things like, “It was fun and easy to delete and edit” and “I was able to operate it smoothly just by looking at the screen”. These comments reflect the app’s navigability, a term Sundar and Limperos (2013: 516) describe as the ability of a digital interface to guide users effectively through a process.

The novelty of the app was also appreciated, with one pupil describing, “It felt like playing”.

However, five responses suggested additional features, such as the ability to draw pictures under their poems, which students believed would enhance their creative expression.

Sharing: Sharing was the most frequently mentioned topic, with 69 codes across subcategories, including awareness of words (45 codes) and collaboration (24 codes). Pupils valued receiving feedback, as one noted, “Just receiving comments made me happy”.

Feedback often served as a motivator, helping students continue writing when stuck. One pupil remarked, “When my friends suggest something, it helps when I don’t know what to do”.

Observing others’ work also inspired students, as seen in comments like, “I realize that there are classmates who are good at rearranging the words” and “Some poems were really easy to read”. Additionally, students appreciated the effort their peers put into comments, saying, “I saw people giving thoughtful feedback on others’ poems”. Sharing poems also deepened connections among students.

A total of 13 coded comments highlighted how the activity helped students discover new sides of their friends, with one pupil noting, “Even though I know my friends well, I discovered new sides of them”.

Another remarked, “It was interesting to connect with classmates I don’t talk to often. It felt like we could become closer”.

However, some challenges were noted. A few students made harsh anonymous comments, saying, “There were some really harsh comments that criticised the poems for being too long”. Time constraints also limited their ability to leave or receive comments, with some students remarking, “I didn’t have enough time to comment on everyone’s poems”.

Workshop management: Workshop management was mentioned in five codes,

primarily focusing on the facilitator’s role and clarity of instructions. Pupils appreciated the guidance provided, with one saying, “The explanations were easy to understand”.

However, time constraints were a recurring issue, as another pupil noted, “We didn’t have enough time to leave comments”.

Facilitator feedback, although limited, was valued, with one pupil sharing, “The facilitator kindly left three lines of comments”.

The workshop not just allowed students to explore found poetry and digital tools but also fostered a sense of community through sharing.

Even after the workshop and interviews, a few new poems and drafts were written, indicating that the workshop helped some students to remain motivated to continue writing poems.

Discussion

Many of the interview comments indicated that the app had a positive effect on students’ confidence in writing poetry, although there remains a possibility that it has no effect in some cases. The following discussion focuses on three basic psychological needs based on SDT.

The found poetry method enhanced students’ sense of autonomy by enabling them to freely select and edit materials and words. The app’s user-friendly design allowed them to write poems with minimal guidance, thereby encouraging a sense of independence.

Additionally, the facilitators emphasized that their work was a “draft”, thus alleviating pressure and encouraging creative freedom without fear of mistakes.

For competence, the process of selecting words and creating poems instilled confidence in students, particularly in those who had never written poetry before. The app’s simplicity and ease of use contributed to their sense of accomplishment, making it easier for them to think, “I’ve written a poem”.

By reviewing and referencing works shared by others, they enhanced their expressive abilities, benefiting from exposure to diverse approaches and opportunities to refine their own writing.

In terms of relatedness, the feature allowing students to comment on their peers’ work was highly valued. Many used this function in a manner similar to that of social networking platforms, which fostered deeper engagement and mutual feedback.

Through these interactions, students discovered new facets of their friends’ personalities, consequently strengthening their relationships. The exchange of comments also sparked

discussions about poetry in their everyday lives, sustaining their motivation to continue writing.

Regarding the role of the facilitator, interventions were deliberately kept to a minimum, with the facilitator accepting the students’ suggestions and comments throughout the workshop. A follow-up study was conducted after the workshop; but, further exploration of the facilitator’s role and its impact remains an important direction for future research.

Conclusion

This paper introduced a web app designed to create a digital space for writing and sharing poetry, demonstrating its potential to boost students’ confidence in creative writing. The app digitized the found poetry method, while preserving its flexibility and facilitating meaningful peer-to-peer feedback through an intuitive interface.

The workshop’s success is evident in the students’ sustained engagement with poetry, as some continued to write and comment even after the workshop. Furthermore, the app’s ability to connect students through shared creative activities highlights its value as an educational tool.

To address the usability issues identified during the workshop, two key features were added to the app: (1) a warning message now appears when a user tries to navigate away without saving their work, and (2) the administrator can now identify users who post comments.

These updates were completed in January 2025, ensuring a smoother and more user-friendly experience.

Additionally, some students reported challenges with the vocabulary of the materials, stating, “The vocabulary of the materials was too difficult to understand how to use”. This highlights the importance of carefully selecting materials for found poetry in terms of difficulty, genre, and length.

Ensuring that materials are age-appropriate and accessible will help students focus on writing and fully enjoy the creative experience.

Looking ahead, expanding the app’s use to English-speaking countries is a key goal. By building a global community whereof students from different cultures can connect through poetry, this initiative aims to foster cross-cultural understanding and collaboration. Planned efforts include translating educational materials, providing teacher training, and piloting the app in diverse classroom settings.

This study underscores the potential of integrating digital tools with creative pedagogy.

By combining technological innovation with collaborative methods, it paves the way for transformative approaches to literacy education, inspiring confidence, creativity, and connections among students worldwide.

BIOGRAPHY

Yuka Nakai specializes in Japanese language education, with a particular focus on the significance and methods of teaching poetry writing in schools. She earned her PhD in Education through a study analysing workshop-style poetry classes widely practiced in the UK, aiming to clarify their educational value and methodologies.

In her career, she has collaborated extensively with the late Dr. Sue Dymoke to build a new framework for poetry education that bridges Japan and the UK. This long-term research partnership has contributed to the development of innovative pedagogical approaches that connect these two cultural contexts. She is currently an Associate Professor at Hiroshima University and was formerly based at University of Shimane.

Recently, she has focused on fostering confidence in writing as a key element of learning, conducting workshops designed to enable pupils and teachers to enjoy poetry writing together. Her work also involves creating “poetry writing communities” through the integration of digital tools, emphasizing collaborative and inclusive learning environments.

REFERENCES

- Abidin, C., Shaukat, S., Zain, N. M., Nawi, N. M., and Razak, M. R. (2021) Teaching with technology: The integration of online learning communities (OLCs). *Teaching with Technology Journal*. 8 (3), 45–67.
- Boscolo, P. and Gelati, C. (2019) ‘Best practices in promoting motivation for writing’ in C. Graham, C. MacArthur, and J. Fitzgerald (eds.) *Best Practices in Writing Instruction* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford.
- Deci, E. L. and Ryan, R. M. (2000) The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behaviour. *Psychological Inquiry*. 11 (4), 227–268.
- Dredger, K., Nobles, S., and Martin, J. M. (2017) Digital poetry practicum: Preservice English language arts teachers’ dispositions of new literacies. *Journal of Literacy and Technology*. 18 (1), 157–203.

Dymoke, S. (2016) ‘Integrating poetry-focused digital technology within a literacy teacher education course’ in C. Kosnik, S. White, C. Beck, B. Marshall, A. L. Goodwin, and J. Murray (eds.) *Building Bridges* (pp. 59–75). The Netherlands: Sense Publications.

Dymoke, S. (2020). Creativity in English learning and teaching. In J. Davidson, & C. Daly (Eds.). *Debates in English teaching* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Dymoke, S. and Hughes, J. (2009) Using a poetry Wiki: How can the medium support pre-service teachers of English in their professional learning about writing poetry and teaching poetry writing in a digital age? *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*. 8 (3), 91–106.

Dymoke, S. and Nakai, Y. (2022) Tinkering with words, playing with language: how do you stimulate the drafting, the sharing, the assessment of poetry? *The Open lecture booklet: Can we teach writing poetry?* 14, 45–59.

Gee, J. (2004) *Situated Language and Learning: A Critique of Traditional Schooling*. Routledge.

Graham, S. (2018) A revised writers-within-community model of writing. *Educational Psychologist*. 53 (4), 258–277.

Hassler, D., Pytash, K. E., Ferdig, R., and Gandolfi, E. (2020) The use of digital poetry to inform preservice teacher education and in-service teacher professional development during COVID-19. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education* 28 (2), 403–413.

Kantosalo, A., Toivanen, J. M., Toivonen, H., and Xiao, P. (2014) ‘From isolation to involvement: Adapting machine creativity software to support human-computer co-creation’ in S. Colton, D. Ventura, N. Lavra, and M. Cook (eds.) *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Computational Creativity*.

Laurillard, D., Stratfold, M., Luckin, R., Plowman, L., and Taylor, J. (2000) Affordances for learning in a non-linear narrative medium. *Journal of Interactive Media in Education*. 2000 (2).

Mangen, A. and van der Weel, A. (2016) The evolution of reading in the age of digitisation: An integrative framework for reading research. *Literacy*. 50 (3), 116–124.

McFarlane, A. (2015) *Authentic Learning for the Digital Generation: Realising the Potential of Technology in the Classroom*. Routledge.

Myhill, D., Cremin, T., and Oliver, L. (2023) The impact of a changed writing environment on

students’ motivation to write. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 14: 1212940.

Niemiec, C. and Ryan, R. M. (2009) Autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the classroom: Applying self-determination theory to educational practice. *Theory and Research in Education*. 7 (2), 133–144.

Pajares, F. and Valiante, G. (2006) ‘Self-efficacy beliefs and motivation in writing development’ in C. A. MacArthur, S. Graham, and J. Fitzgerald (eds.) *Handbook of writing research*. Guilford Press.

Prendergast, M. (2006) Found poetry as literature review research poems on audience and performance. *Quantitative Inquiry*. 12 (2), 369–388.

Pritchard, R. and Honeycutt, R. (2007) ‘Best practices in implementing a process approach to teaching writing’ in S. Graham, C. MacArthur, and J. Fitzgerald (eds.) *Best practices in writing instruction* (pp. 28–49). Guilford Press.

R Core Team. (2024) *R: A language and environment for statistical computing*. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. Available at <https://www.R-project.org/> [24 April 2025].

Ryan, R. M. and Deci, E. L. (2000) Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*. 55 (1), 68–78.

Sundar, S. S. and Limperos, A. M. (2013) Uses and Grats 2.0: New gratifications for new media. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*. 57 (4), 504–525.

Yates, C. (2007) Writing like writers in the classroom: Free writing and formal constraint. *English in Education*. 41 (3), 6–19.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply grateful to the late Dr Sue Dymoke, whose generous guidance and long-standing collaboration continue to inspire my work. I would also like to thank Professor Clare Wood for her valuable support and insightful suggestions.

This research was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number 23K02398.

Appendix: Questionnaire Items

Questions about ICT Devices (Pre-workshop only)

- 1. I write poems at school.
- 2. I write poems outside of school.
- 3. In my daily life, I use ICT to communicate with my friends.
- 4. In school lessons, I use ICT devices to communicate with my friends.
- 5. I am not good at using ICT devices. [Reverse item]
- Questions about Autonomy (Both pre- and post-workshop)
- 6. When writing a poem, I can decide for myself how I want to write it.
- 7. When writing a poem, I feel like I have to write it exactly as I am told. [Reverse item]
- 8. When writing a poem, I feel like I can freely express my own ideas and feelings.
- 9. When I write a poem, I feel that my feelings are understood.
- 10. When I write a poem, I don’t often decide how to proceed myself. [Reverse item]
- 11. When I write a poem, I feel that I can be myself.
- 12. When I write a poem, I sometimes feel that I have to follow others’ opinions. [Reverse item]

Questions about Feelings of Competence

- 13. I don’t think I can write poetry very well. [Reverse item]
- 14. When I write poetry, people say it’s good.
- 15. I feel like I’m learning new ways of writing and generating new ideas through poetry.
- 16. When I finish writing a poem, I often feel that I’ve done a good job.
- 17. When I write poetry, I feel like I’m not using my abilities well. [Reverse item]
- 18. When I write poetry, I sometimes feel like I don’t have much confidence. [Reverse item]

Questions about Relatedness

- 19. I enjoy talking about poetry with my friends and others.
- 20. I think writing poetry helps me get along

- better with my friends.
- 21. I don’t talk much with my friends about writing poetry. [Reverse item]
- 22. When I write poetry, I feel that my friends care about me.
- 23. When I write or read poetry, I feel that my friends are kind to me.
- 24. When I write poetry, I sometimes feel that my friends don’t like me very much. [Reverse item]
- 25. Writing poetry makes me feel more connected to my classmates.
- 26. When I write poems, I feel that the people around me are kind.
- Questions about the Workshop (Post-workshop only)
- 27. Did you find it easy to write poetry using this app?
- 28. Did you enjoy writing poetry today?
- 29. Did comments from your friends help improve your poem?
- 30. Was it easy to revise your poem using the app?
- 31. Did you become interested in reading poems written by other friends?

Free Description

- 32. Pre-event only: We will be having a class where we write poems using a tablet. Please share how you feel about this – whether it’s something you’re looking forward to or something you’re worried about.
- 33. Post-event only: What did you enjoy most about writing a poem? If there was anything you found difficult, please let us know.
- 34. Post-event only: How did you feel when exchanging comments with your friends? If you revised your poem, what did you change?
- 35. Post-event only: Please feel free to share any other comments or thoughts.