At first glance, it may seem odd to combine science and poetry, but they share one major attribute in common: the importance of keen observation. Poetry offers highly charged words and vivid imagery that tap the essence of a subject using sensory language. Poetry is also accessible to a wide range of ages and reading abilities and can help introduce or reinforce important science concepts. A brief consideration of a handful of poetry books will quickly lead one to discover many poems that connect with the sciences. In fact, there are numerous thematic poetry collections devoted to science-related subjects.

The National Science Education Standards identify seven major areas of science that are critical to the K–12 curriculum. (Visit http://www.nap.edu/readingroom/books/nses/6a.html for more information.) For each of these areas, poems can serve to initiate a topic or enrich and extend it. Below is just a sampling of science-related poetry books arranged by the seven science standard areas. For a complete list of titles mentioned here, turn to “Comprehensive Bibliography” on p.61.

Science as Inquiry

- BrainJuice: Science, Fresh Squeezed! by Carol Diggory Shields (Handprint, 2003)
- Scien-trickery: Riddles in Science by J. Patrick Lewis (Harcourt, 2004)
- Spectacular Science: A Book of Poems, selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins (Simon & Schuster, 1999)

These poetry collections can lay the groundwork for helping children develop their understanding about scientific inquiry. Students will also enjoy Rebecca Kai Dotlich’s poetic picture book What Is Science? (Holt, 2006), an exploration of the field of science as well as the nature of scientific thinking. Students may enjoy choosing their favorite aspects of science and creating acrostic poems using the letters in the word science. Or, challenge their deduction skills by placing objects in a box and inviting them to describe and identify the objects. Then pair them with (or create) corresponding poems.

Physical Science

- Central Heating: Poems about Fire and Warmth by Marilyn Singer (Knopf, 2005)
- Flicker Flash by Joan Bransfield Graham (Houghton, 1999)
- Splish Splash by Joan Bransfield Graham (Houghton, 1994)
- Winter Lights by Anna Grossnickle Hines (Greenwillow, 2005)

As we introduce children to physical science and the concepts of motion, matter, energy, atoms, light, heat, electricity, and magnetism, poetry can help pave the way. Read by flashlight when you share Graham’s poems in Flicker Flash, about the different ways that light appears in our world. Many of the poems in Graham’s water-themed collection Splish Splash lend themselves to reading aloud with props such as soap bubbles, Christmas tree “icicles,” or audio recordings of waterfalls or the ocean surf.

Life Science

- Butterfly Eyes and Other Secrets of the Meadow by Joyce Sidman (Houghton, 2006)
- Hey There, Stink Bug! by Leslie Bulion (Charlesbridge, 2006)
- Insectlopedia by Douglas Florian (Harcourt, 1998)
- Song of the Water Boatman and Other Pond Poems by Joyce Sidman (Houghton, 2005)

Life science focuses on the life cycles of organisms and cells, reproduction, heredity and evolution, populations and ecosystems, diversity and adaptations, and the interdependence of organisms and their environments. There are more poetry books in this area of science than any other, by far. The collections listed above introduce readers to creatures of the insect world in particular, through descriptive poems and beautiful illustrations. Bring a bug in a jar (with air holes) for children to study and describe. They
can create thumbprint insect characters or draw pictures to accompany their writing. Contact a local museum of natural history or children's museum to see whether they offer a “loan” program to borrow items (such as rocks, shells, animal skeletons, etc.) to pair and share with poems. Challenge children to use parallel informational books to look up the facts they glean from the poetry. Encourage them to use new facts in poems of their own.

**Earth and Space Science**
- *The Earth Is Painted Green: A Garden of Poems about Our Planet*, selected by Barbara Brenner (Scholastic, 1994)
- *Shape Me a Rhyme: Nature’s Forms in Poetry*, selected by Jane Yolen (Boyd Mills/Wordsong, 2007)
- *The Sun in Me: Poems about the Planet*, selected by Judith Nicholls (Barefoot, 2003)

The study of Earth and space is an important part of the science curriculum, including an examination of the properties of Earth’s structure, energy, geochanical cycles, history, origin and evolution of the universe, the solar system, and changes in Earth and sky. Share the poetry collections listed above during Earth Day celebrations; children can choose favorite poems to copy onto “globe” shapes. Expand a display of favorite “earth poems” to include other poems about planets, stars, and space on shapes arranged strategically around the Earth. Poetry about space and the solar system can be found in Myra Cohn Livingston’s *Space Songs* (Holiday, 1988), Seymour Simon’s anthology *Star Walk* (Morrow, 1995), and Douglas Florian’s *Comets, Stars, the Moon, and Mars: Space Poems and Paintings* (Harcourt, 2007).

**Science in Personal and Social Perspective**
- *Color Me a Rhyme: Nature Poems for Young People* by Jane Yolen (Boyd Mills/Wordsong, 2000)
- *Footprints on the Roof: Poems about the Earth* by Marilyn Singer (Knopf, 2002)
- *Old Elm Speaks: Tree Poems* by Kristine O’Connell George (Clarion, 1998)

The study of science also includes an examination of natural resources, environment quality, personal and community health, population growth, and local, national, and global challenges. Nature and environmental themes are the focus of the poetry collections listed above. After reading a selection of these poems, children can research ecological issues that touch their lives, such as recycling, or participate in clean-up efforts in a local park or roadside (with adult supervision).

**History and Nature of Science**
- *Behind the Museum Door: Poems to Celebrate the Wonders of Museums*, selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins (Abrams, 2007)
- *Trailblazers: Poems of Exploration* by Bobbi Katz (Greenwillow, 2007)

Finally, the science standards also include a component focused on science as a human endeavor, the nature of scientific knowledge, and science history. In Katz’s collection children can seek out poetry about the people of science, such as scientist-astronaut Mae Jemison or oceanographer Sylvia Earle. Children can prepare dramatic readings dressed as the poem’s character and research additional facts to learn more about these famous scientists. Alternatively, children could experience a virtual “field trip” through the poems in Hopkins’ anthology.

**Sylvia M. Vardell** is a professor of children’s and young adult literature at Texas Woman’s University. She is the author of *Poetry Aloud Here! Sharing Poetry with Children in the Library* (ALA Editions, 2006), *Poetry People: A Practical Guide to Children’s Poets* (Libraries Unlimited, 2007), and the Poetry for Children blog at [http://poetryforchildren.blogspot.com](http://poetryforchildren.blogspot.com).
The poem, by becoming science-fictional, simultaneously subsumes and frees itself from its commodity status. Then the poem’s emergence in the commodity system recapitulates the mystery of the emergence of mind in natural history. What is poetic always exists on the border between the human and the inhuman. For more recent examples of poetry that borrow from science fiction, read Jasper Bernes’ densely layered Starsdown and Joyelle McSweeney’s ridiculous Flet. Originally Published: December 5th, 2008. Cathy Park Hong is the author of Translating Mo’um, (Hanging Loose Press, 2002); Dance Dance Revolution (W.W. Norton, 2007), winner of the Barnard New Women Poets Prize; and Engine Empire (W.W. Norton, 2012). Science poems written by famous poets. Browse through to read poems for science. This page has the widest range of science love and quotes. Share this page: Science Poems - Poems For Science - - Poem by | Poem Hunter. Poems about science. You can read the best science poems. Browse through all science poems. Science Poems: 1 / 100. next poem ». Sonnet- To Science - Poem by Edgar Allan Poe. Autoplay next video. Science! true daughter of Old Time thou art! Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes. Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart, Vulture, whose wings are dull realities? How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise, Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies, Albeit h