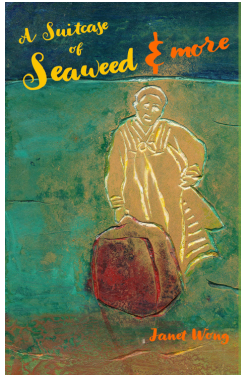


Campfire by Janet Wong

Take 5: Poetry Brain Breaks



Poetry can bring comfort and joy, reduce stress, and increase language learning. And it's fun!

Our brain breaks have everything you need to share poetry one-on-one or as a group.

Thanks to our friends at [Pomelo Books](https://www.pomelobooks.com), publishers of The Poetry Friday Anthology for Celebrations and more.

Take a 5-minute poetry brain break!

Watch the “Campfire” [video read-aloud](#) with children at home or in your classroom. Follow along with the poem on the next page.

Set the scene with props. Use a brown bag or a stick for emphasis as you read the poem aloud.

Have fun together with the conversation starters and activities included in this packet!

Want more?

For more poetry fun, visit [PomeloBooks.com](https://www.pomelobooks.com).



CAMPFIRE *by janet wong*



Find more poems from Janet
and others at PomeloBooks.com

Just think —
when Mother was my age,
she could build a fire
with sparks from rocks,
catch a bunch of
grasshoppers and
roast them whole
for a summer
night's snack!

"Get me a good stick,"
she says, "thin but strong,"
and I bring her one
from the woods
behind our tent.
On the way back
I see a brown bag
by her feet —
could it be?

When the fire is spitting ready,
she reaches
in the bag, rustling,
and hands me
one big, fat, luscious
marshmallow.

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(YUZU/Pomelo Books)

CAMPFIRE *by janet wong*

an excerpt from *A Suitcase of Seaweed & MORE*

The first time we went camping, my mother told me the story of how she roasted grasshoppers when she was a child.

I thought it was disgusting until she explained why she did it. She grew up on a farm, so they should've had plenty of food — but this was the time of the Japanese wartime occupation of Korea, and much of their food went to the soldiers. Some nights all they had to eat for dinner was a small bowl of rice.

My mother, from when she was five years old, learned to catch food and cook it for herself. She would catch a fish, build a small fire on the riverbank, roast the fish, and eat the whole thing. Or, if she couldn't catch a fish that day, she would catch grasshoppers.

When we went camping, my mother loved building our fire. It was always a great fire. And we always toasted marshmallows — never grasshoppers, which was perfectly fine with me.

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Poetry Brain Break



Watch the video to hear the poet Janet Wong read her "Campfire" poem and talk about the story behind it.



Try this!

Have you ever camped outdoors, maybe even in your own backyard?

What did you enjoy eating?

Talk with a friend about your favorite outdoor snacks.



Try this!

Spending time outdoors is a sensory experience.

Sit and notice what you hear, see, smell, and feel. It might be birds, traffic, tree bark, or bricks.

Make a list poem from your observations!



Try this!

Ask older family members or neighbors about their summer memories.

Camping? Fishing?
Cooking? Reading?
Traveling?



Outdoor Scavenger Hunt

Spend an hour outdoors with family or friends and work in pairs or small groups to hunt for each item on the list below.

Draw a picture or take a photo of the object. At the end of the hunt, share your pictures and talk about each object. What did you notice? What surprised you?



Something smooth



Something brown



Something recyclable



Something in the shape of a circle



Something with a hole in it



Something that lets light shine through it



Something wet



Something tiny



Something bumpy



Something heavy

