

Activities and Lesson Ideas

Sea Star Wishes

Poems from the Coast

Poems by Eric Ode
Illustrations by Erik Brooks

SHARING THE POEMS WITH YOUR STUDENTS

Poetry is best enjoyed when shared aloud. When your students experience a single poem several times and in different ways, they more easily appreciate the poem's words, sounds, and meanings. Rather than sharing many poems at once with your students, consider sharing one poem from *Sea Star Wishes – Poems from the Coast* each class day or perhaps one poem each week. As you share these poems with your students, display the poem using a document camera and projector if available. These activities are meant as a starting point. Feel free to modify and extend them as you wish.



SASQUATCH BOOKS
SEATTLE

LOOK

Read the poem once to the students and then again, the second time asking the students to join in chorally during the last lines, “look, watch, wonder.”

DISCUSSION 1: How might we choose to read aloud the words soar, bend, roar, rise, fall, and thunder so that our voices better match the meanings of these words?

DISCUSSION 2: This is a welcoming poem. What sounds might you hear as you approach the beach? (Share the poem again, this time with the students setting the mood by providing appropriate ocean sounds.)

THE BARNACLE

Read the poem once to the students. Read a second time, inviting the students to join chorally during the words stop, sit and watch.

Younger students may enjoy acting out the part of the barnacle, tucking themselves into a ball until it is time to slowly stand up and sway back and forth.

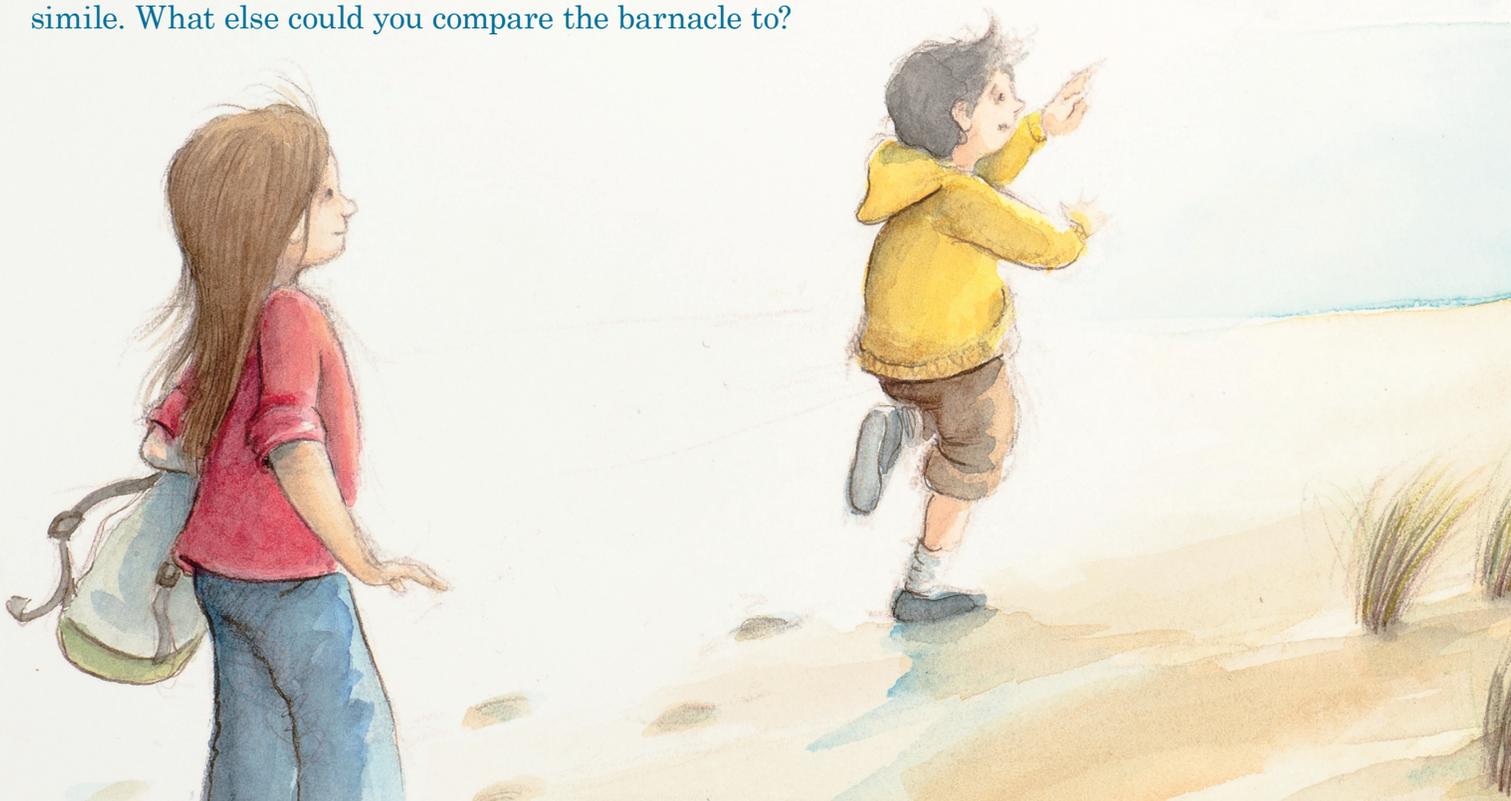
DISCUSSION: “Like a feather on a fancy hat caught in the wind,” is a simile. What else could you compare the barnacle to?

THE SEA URCHIN

Read the poem once to the students. The poet uses repetition in the opening lines of each stanza. As you share the poem a second time, have the students join you in chorally reading, “Let’s search for the sea urchin.”

This poem talks about searching. Together, go searching for rhyming pairs: spray and gray, shines and spines, me and sea, alone and stone, thistly and bristly. (Because they fall within lines rather than at the lines’ ends, shines/spines and thistly/bristly are referred to as internal rhymes.)

DISCUSSION: “Hedgehog of the sea” is a metaphor. In what ways is a sea urchin like a hedgehog?





THE FERRY BOAT

Read the poem once to the students. Before reading a second time, ask the students to create appropriate sound effects; seagulls, waves, the ship's bell, steam whistle, etc.

Invite the students to rock back and forth with the first stanza.

DISCUSSION 1: What do you think the author means when he says, "What was his tail becomes his head"?

DISCUSSION 2: Look at the shape of the words in the first stanza. Why do you think the poet didn't line up these words like the rest of the poem? (A poem whose lines are arranged in a way that helps convey the meaning of the poem is called a shape poem or a concrete poem.)

THE LIGHTHOUSE

Read the poem once to the students. Make a sign that says house. As you share the poem again, hold up the sign as a cue for the group to read chorally every time house appears in the poem.

To find the rhythm of the poem, ask the students to hold up a closed fist. Have them open and close the fist like a light turning on and off to match the poem's rhythm. LIGHThouse. BRIGHT house. STURDY red and WHITE house. Etc.

DISCUSSION: The author writes as if he's speaking to the lighthouse. (personification) What kinds of things does he say to the lighthouse? If you could talk to a lighthouse, what would you say?

THE LIMPET

Read the poem once to the students. Limpets are most often found where waves pound at them. When sharing a second time, have the students read in unison the last line, "hold on tight."

The poem includes a string of long "o" words – alone in her dome of a home. As you come to each word, have the students hold their arms in an "o" shape over their heads.

DISCUSSION: If you were a limpet, what might you dream about?

THE STUNT KITE

Read the poem once to the students.

This poem is filled with action words that describe the kite's movements, i.e. swoops, loops, lurches, climbs, plunges, pulling, scribble. As you read the poem aloud a second time, have the students raise one arm high in the air to be the kite and act out the movements as described in the poem. Alternatively, have the students create small paper kites to use in acting out the movements.

DISCUSSION: This poem doesn't look like a lot of other poems. How would you describe the way the poem looks on the page? Why do you think the poet wanted the words scattered on the page like this? (You may wish to take the opportunity to reintroduce the term shape poem or concrete poem.)

WRINKLES

Read the poem once to the students.

The poet uses many words with the long “a” sound; gray, railing, play, lazy and game. Put each of these five words on a card, and distribute to five helpers. Read the poem again, this time chorally as a class. Ask the volunteers to raise their cards in the air as each word is read.

DISCUSSION: What do you think the poet means when he says the grandfather is playing “a lazy game of tug-of-war with the water”? (A figure of speech where one thing is said to be something else in order to show how they are similar is called a metaphor.)

THE GEODUCK

Read the poem once to the students.

Hold up a yard stick to demonstrate three feet. What items can the students find in the classroom that are approximately three feet long?

DISCUSSION: Geoducks can be hard to find. Can the students find the rhyme partner(s) for each word? floor (more), that (fat), stuck (muck and geoduck), ears (years and disappears)



THE EEL

Read the poem once to the students. Divide the students into two groups, and read again, alternating lines between groups.

Group A – first line
Group B – second line
Group A – third line
Group B – fourth line
Together – last line

DISCUSSION: What do you think the word “appalling” means? What makes you think this?

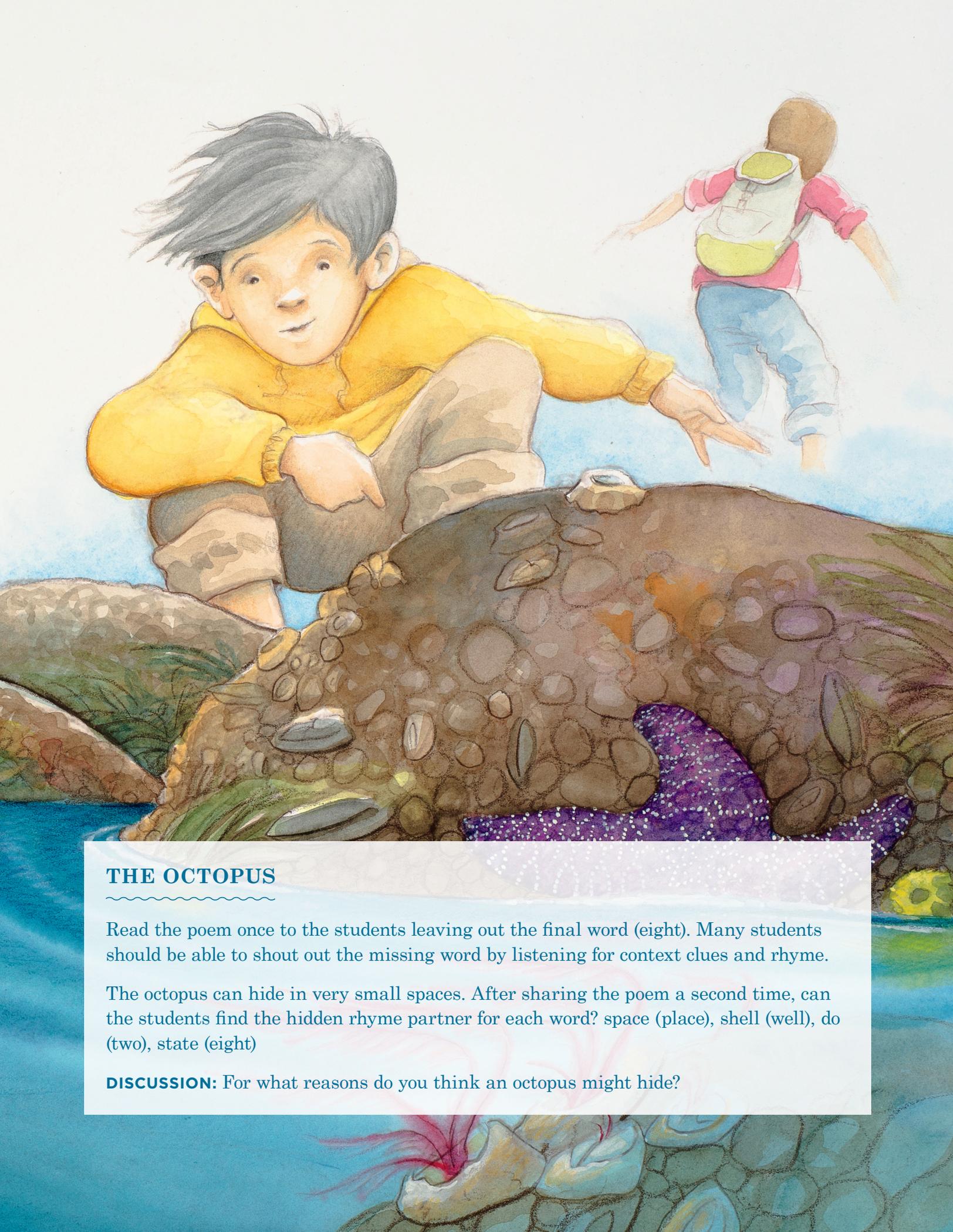
THE HERMIT CRAB

Read the poem once to the students.

Together, before sharing the poem a second time, make up hand motions, actions, or sounds to go with each line, especially for the taxi cab, the ship, the submarine, etc.

DISCUSSION: What do you think the word “skitters” means?





THE OCTOPUS

Read the poem once to the students leaving out the final word (eight). Many students should be able to shout out the missing word by listening for context clues and rhyme.

The octopus can hide in very small spaces. After sharing the poem a second time, can the students find the hidden rhyme partner for each word? space (place), shell (well), do (two), state (eight)

DISCUSSION: For what reasons do you think an octopus might hide?

THE DECORATOR CRAB

Read the poem once to the students. Before sharing a second time, help the students with any vocabulary that may be unfamiliar, especially frond, kelp, and anemone.

DISCUSSION 1: What do you think the word “drab” means? What makes you think this?

DISCUSSION 2: Why do you think the decorator crab covers herself with the things she finds around her?

THE JELLYFISH

Read the poem once to the students. Read it aloud a second time, this time leaving out the end rhymes and encouraging the students to call them out as you come to them.

The jellyfish is not a fish
and doesn't look the part.

He has no snout to nose about.

He has no brain or _____.

He has no gills. He has no fins.

(He has a mouth but never _____.)

Have the students echo-read the poem with you one line at a time. As everyone reads, make one hand into a jellyfish, palm down, fingers dangling. Let the jellyfish float about during the echo-reading.





THE SEA LION

Read the poem once to the students.

Have the students show what it would look like to sit with majesty.

DISCUSSION: What do you think the poet means when he says the dock must bow down to the massive weight of the sea lion's majesty? (Giving human traits to something that is not human is called personification.)



THE SEA CUCUMBER

Read the poem once to the students. Help the students identify words in the first stanza that contain the um sound. (comes, cucumber, slumberly, lumbering, number) As you share the poem a second time, have the students hold up a fist every time an um word turns up.

DISCUSSION: What do you think the poet means when he says the sea cucumber's feet are "too many to number"?



THE SANDCASTLE

Read the poem once to the students. Read it aloud a second time, this time leaving out the end rhymes (the last word of each stanza) and encouraging the students to call them out as you come to them.

How many times can the students find the word “sand” or a variation of the word?

DISCUSSION: The poem names many people and things that might be found if you could go inside a sandcastle. What else might you find in a sandcastle?

THE MOON SNAIL

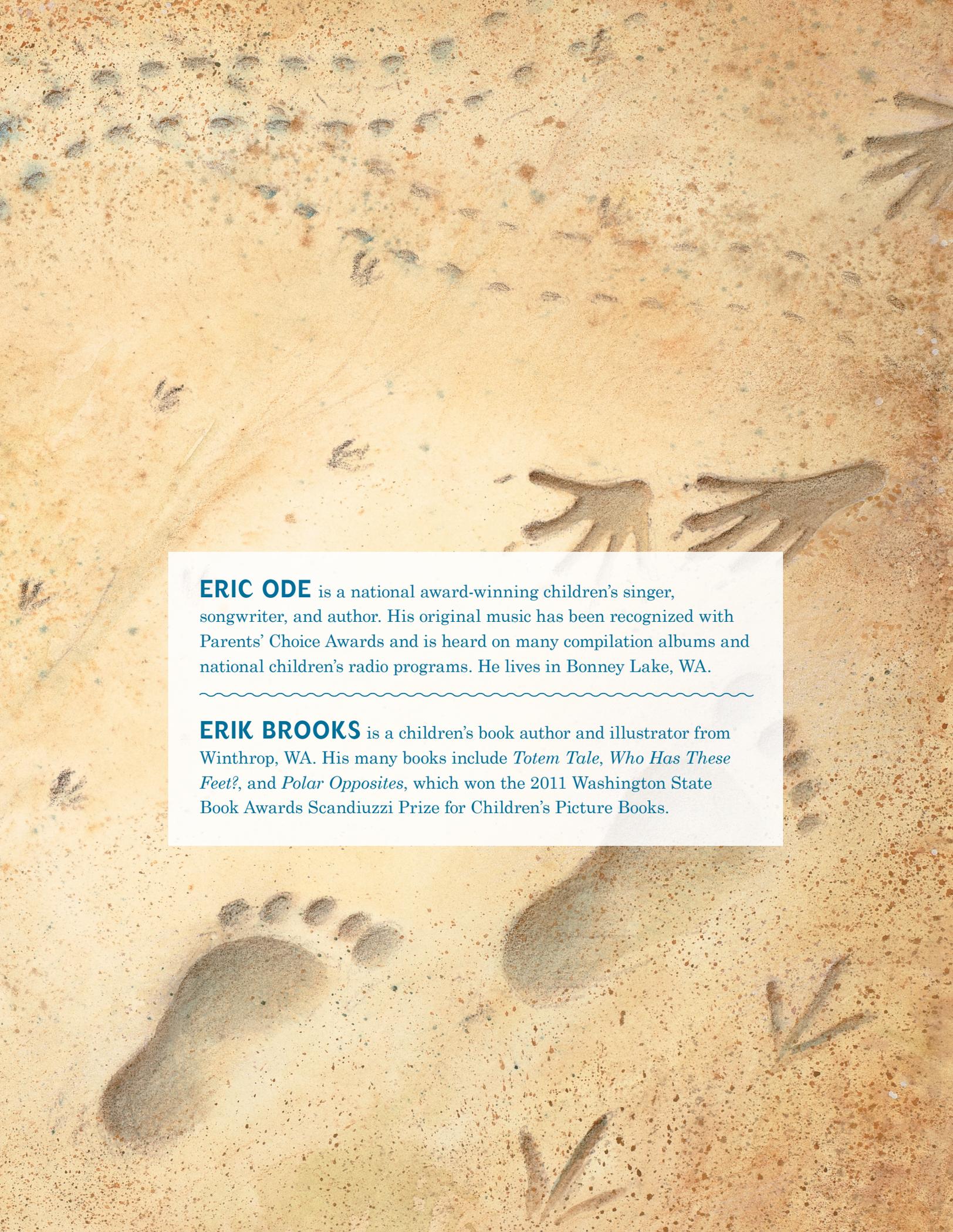
Read the poem once to the students. Assist the students in finding examples of repetition, especially How soon? and Not long. As you share the poem a second time, have the students chorally join in reading the words How soon? and Not long.

DISCUSSION: Why do you think the poet chose to make this poem the final poem of the book?

STORIES

Read the poem once to the students. As you share the poem a second time, have volunteers act out the words waddle, slither, and crawl. Have all students stomp through the words, “...march in a line.”

DISCUSSION: Why do you think the poet titled this poem Stories? What do you think this poem is about?



ERIC ODE is a national award-winning children's singer, songwriter, and author. His original music has been recognized with Parents' Choice Awards and is heard on many compilation albums and national children's radio programs. He lives in Bonney Lake, WA.

ERIK BROOKS is a children's book author and illustrator from Winthrop, WA. His many books include *Totem Tale*, *Who Has These Feet?*, and *Polar Opposites*, which won the 2011 Washington State Book Awards Scandiuzzi Prize for Children's Picture Books.

SEA STAR WISHES

Poems from the Coast

Eric Ode

Illustrated by Erik Brooks

HARDCOVER | \$16.99 | 32 PAGES

ISBN: 9781570617904

Sasquatch Books is distributed by Random House.

To place an order, please contact your Random House rep
or Random House customer service at 800-733-7000.

*This Activity and Lesson Guide may align with Common Core Standards
for grades 1-4. Please visit www.corestandards.org to learn more.*



SASQUATCH
BOOKS

www.sasquatchbooks.com