



MacquarieNet Poetry Competition

to be judged by Les Murray

MacquarieNet, with the support of Macquarie Dictionary and *Teachers' Toolkit* magazine are proud to announce their primary school Poetry Competition. Any middle or upper primary school student can enter this FREE competition. The competition is divided into Middle Primary and Upper Primary sections.

Opening date: 1 September 2008

Closing date: 31 October 2008

Overall winner: Macquarie Dictionary, Fourth edition

Runners-up: Macquarie Budget Dictionary, 2009

Poems must be:

- accompanied by the appropriate entry form and signed by the class teacher
- 100 words or less, students' original work, and not previously published
- attached and delivered by email to **poetry@teacherstoolkit.net.au**

A full set of rules, terms and conditions, plus the entry form, can be found at: **www.teacherstoolkit.net.au**

Les Murray: Poetry Competition judge

Les Murray is a visiting professor at the University of Sydney, working with the Macquarie Dictionary. As part of his great knowledge of and love for Australian English, and his duties on the dictionary, Professor Murray has agreed to take on the role of judge for the Poetry Competition.

Les Murray has written a poem, *Observing (Boris) the Mute Cat*, that you can download from **www.teacherstoolkit.net.au** (Download Lesson Plans).

Poetry in the classroom

Children's author and Literacy Ambassador for National Literacy and Numeracy Week, Christopher Cheng, firmly believes in the importance of poetry in the classroom. He writes:

For most of us it starts very early on — 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star' and those great nursery rhymes. But soon all that rhyming verse and other poetry forms are absent — and they don't have to be. It just takes a little thought and knowledge of our great Aussie poetry to drop it into the curriculum.

- Studying the drought? Then read 'Said Hanrahan', as Hanrahan moans, 'We'll all be rooned'.
- Or maybe it's insect behaviour? Try 'The Ant Explorer' by CJ Dennis, about an ant who 'made up his mind to roam/To fare away far away, far away from home'.
- Interested in life on the land? Then try Banjo Paterson's 'Clancy of the Overflow' or Henry Lawson's 'Andy's Gone with Cattle'.

If your students aren't inspired by your desire to discover poetry, then tell them that today poetry is all around them ... it's in the songs they listen to.

To find out more about Chris Cheng, visit his website: **www.chrischeng.com**