

**Watch, then read, the interview with Joseph Coelho about his poem 'Richmond Park'. What do you learn about him and how he writes? Highlight interesting points.**

**Tim: I really like that poem, that was great. We were wondering why you decided to contrast the beauty of Richmond Park with its dangers, was that based on experience?**

Joe: It was definitely based on experience! I grew up very close to Richmond Park and have very fond memories of exploring it, looking into the rivers for frogs and things, but also falling into the Pen Ponds, which was terrifying! So I wanted to get across that idea of these natural places, that part of the beauty of these natural places is also the danger, and that we have to be careful and respectful of our natural environment, and to explore them and enjoy them, but also to be careful.

**Tim: So you talked about some techniques that you used there - which other techniques did you use in the poem that stood out for you, and how did you think it has an impact on the reader?**

Joe: Well I hope that the impact to the reader is that it brings the place more to life, makes it more real, because I think places in reality do share this element of beauty and danger, which we've seen even here today with a flock of geese narrowly missing our heads! (laughs) So it's beautiful, but also... there's danger!

**Tim: (laughs) We had a bit of a haircut from that! What kind of techniques did you use?**

Joe: One of the techniques I used a lot in the poem is repetition, and the reason I'm using that is to really just keep bringing the reader back to that location and highlight the importance of the place. For me, writing the poem, Richmond Park was it's own little magical hamlet, area, and so I wanted to honour the place, so I didn't want the place to be forgotten. I kept repeating 'Richmond Park' to keep anchoring the poem in this place, in this time.

**Tim: Great - how do you think people could use some of these techniques you've used in your poem while they're writing some of their own?**

Joe: Well, repetition is a fantastic thing to use in a poem, and I would really invite young people to use it in their poems. It's a wonderful way of getting a sense of rhythm, and of revisiting a topic or an area. Every time I was repeating Richmond Park in the poem, another memory would come to mind; it's almost like I was waking myself up. It's like 'Richmond Park is this, oh and it was this, and it's this, and it's this...' and the act of repetition in the process of writing was helpful in that, but then whilst reading it having that repetition creates that sense of rhythm and familiarity which helps draw the reader in.

**Tim: Great, thank you very much.**



**Comprehension Questions:**

- What helped Joe write his poem and come up with ideas?
- What techniques did Joe use in his poem?
- Why did he choose those techniques?
- Can you write a short poem about a place that is special to you?