

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February

LO: Kennings

**Story-reader  
Problem-solver  
Board-writer  
Homework-setter  
Playground-whistler  
Register-taker**



**I don't know – it's beyond my ken!**

## Success Criteria:

- I know that a kenning can consist of either noun-noun phrases or noun-verb phrases;
- I understand that kennings do not name the theme of the poem;
- I use the language in the poem to work out the theme;
- I understand that kennings are understood best when they are read aloud.

# What is a kenning?

Kennings are like riddles.  
They describe something without ever saying what it is.

Read these phrases out loud. What could they be describing?



lip-licking

sauce-swirling

chin-dripping

cone-filling

flake-holding

tongue-freezing

# What is a kenning?

How about these?



tail-wagger

face-licker

ball-catcher

sofa-hogger

door-scratcher

cat-chaser

# What is a kenning?

What did you notice about the poems?

tail-wagger

face-licker

ball-catcher

sofa-hogger

door-scratcher

cat-chaser



lip-licking

chin-dripping

sauce-swirling

cone-filling

flake-holding

tongue-freezing



# What is a kenning?

What did you notice about the phrases in each poem?

Each line of the poem is made of a two-word phrase.

tail-wagger

face-licker

Here the phrases are made up of a noun + a noun (by adding -er to the second noun).



The words are joined by a hyphen.

lip-licking

chin-dripping

Here the phrases are made up of a noun + a verb (the verb usually ends in -ing).



# Did you know?

The two-word format for a kenning relates to the Old Norse tradition of naming things like weapons, e.g. **Skull-Splitter** or **Blood-Taker**.

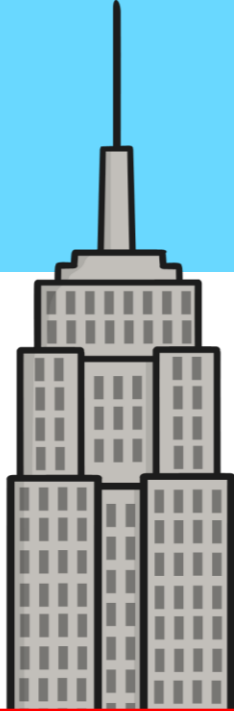
The word 'kenning' derives from the Old Norse word 'kenna eitt við', which means 'to express a thing in terms of another'.



Kennings came into our language via the Anglo-Saxon and Norse cultures. These people came from what is now Scandinavia and northern Germany.

# We even use them in everyday language!

How do we describe a very tall building?



Oh look – here's some alliteration! Other poetic devices can also be found in kennings.

sky-scraper

A really sad film or story is often called a...

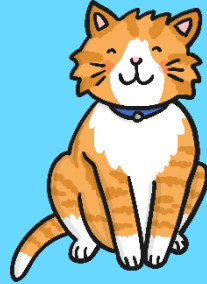


tear-jerker

# Let's have a go!

How can we write a kenning?

First, we need to choose a theme. (It doesn't have to be gory, like the Vikings!)



**eat**

Then, we brainstorm lots of words or phrases associated with that theme...

**mice** drinks milk nuzzle scratch

stalk **sleeps a lot** fur night

hunter hates **rubs ankles** purr  
dogs

# Let's have a go!

How can we write a kenning?

To start creating your kenning, try and make a noun + noun phrase or a noun + verb phrase using your words.

**mice**

drinks milk

nose

ear

nuzzle

scratch

night

stalk

**sleeps a lot**

lick

fur

**night**

**hunter**

hates

**rubbs ankles**

purr

dogs

# Let's have a go!

How can we write a kenning?

Finally, put them together in your two-word phrases.

Don't forget the hyphens!

mouse-hunter

milk-drinker

night-stalker

fur-licker

ankle-rubber

dog-hater

nose-nuzzler

ear-scratcher

loud-purrer



# Let's have a go!

You could write a kenning about all sorts of things. Here are a few ideas...

football

mums or dads

teachers

car

winter

**pets**

pizza

lockdown

# Plenary

What have we learned about Kennings?

- Kennings are like riddles – they describe a thing but don't tell you its name.
- They usually have only two words- a noun plus a noun OR a noun plus a verb.
- Poetic devices like alliteration can be used.
- They're great when you read them out loud so you can imagine the thing being described.

