

poetry box ideas 

# MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

Something about death must be about life as well. Celebrate the Day of the Dead by remembering the poems that have shaped your life; discuss, share, and discover some new poems.

Choose a poet you'd like to bring back to life. What would you ask?

What would you ask him or her to write one more poem – what would it be about?

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Write a poem that instantly brings back memories of someone you've loved.

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These Scottish poets died in the last ten years.  
Rediscover the freshness and power of their work:

Norman MacCaig  
Sorley MacLean  
George MacKay Brown  
Ian Hamilton Finlay

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books about life and death:

**Scottish poems for funerals and consolation,**

by Lizzie MacGregor (Edinburgh: Scottish Poetry Library / Polygon, 2005)



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## Book of Lives

by Gillian Triggs (Manchester: Carcanet, 2007)

What is the most moving poem about death you've ever read?

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Write a poem about the meeting of two dead poets.

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Which famous person should have an elegy written for them?

And who do you want to write it?

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What poem do you want on your gravestone?

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In many countries, 1 November is called the Day of the Dead – it's a vibrant festival that celebrates and remembers the dead. Pick a poem to read at your own poetry box for the Day of the Dead. What, for whom, and why?

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## Some poems to enjoy

'Alexander Graham' by W S Graham, in *100 Favourite Scottish Poems* (2006)

'Stranger', by Elizabeth Burns, in *100 Favourite Scottish Poems* (2006)

'Allaig', by Sorley MacLean, in *100 Favourite Scottish Poems* (2006)

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[www.spl.org.uk](http://www.spl.org.uk)

**Scottish Poetry Library**

download your copy from [www.splreadingroom.org.uk](http://www.splreadingroom.org.uk)



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The Scottish Poetry Library can help you find half-remembered poems? Call 0131 557 2876 or choose 'Lost for Words' from the Library Services pages at [www.spl.org.uk](http://www.spl.org.uk)

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