

# A FOREST OF POETRY FROM AN ANIMAL'S PERSPECTIVE

Everyone can be a reader and writer.  
Playing with language helps us discover how language works.

## GATHER MATERIALS

- Paper or your writer's notebook
- Writing and drawing tools

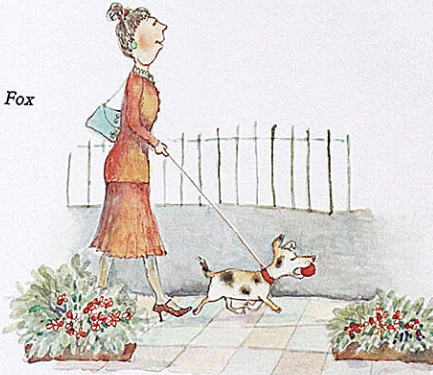
## LISTEN AND IMAGINE

Listen to author Deborah Ruddell as she reads a poem from her book, *A Whiff of Pine, A Hint of Skunk: a Forest of Poetry*. The poem is called Nobody's Pet. You can also read it here along with her other poem, *A Wild Turkey Comments On His Portrait*. As you read, notice what the animals might be feeling or thinking.




**NOBODY'S PET**  
*A Word to the Wise from a Red Fox*

I will never take walks  
in the park wearing socks  
like some spoiled little dog  
on a leash—I'm a fox.



I won't come when you call.  
I won't jump for the ball.  
I won't wait for your step  
like a lump in the hall.

You can tell me to stay  
if you want to, but hey—  
there's no way in the world  
that I'll ever obey.





**A WILD TURKEY  
COMMENTS ON HIS PORTRAIT**

I find it most insulting  
that you traced around your hand  
and colored all my feathers  
either plain old brown or tan.

Where's the copper? Where's the gold  
that a turkey should expect?  
Where on earth is raw sienna,  
and where is the respect?

Finally, I'm baffled  
that you've made me look so dumb.  
My head is quite distinguished  
and it's nothing like your thumb.



## CREATE AND SHARE

Deborah's poems *Nobody's Pet* and *A Wild Turkey Comments on His Portrait* are written from the point of view of the animals themselves. Choose an animal and write your own poem in that animal's voice. Brainstorm ideas for the poem by thinking about what might make the animal happy, sad, or angry; what the animal thinks of humans or another animal; and so on.

## GO BEYOND

- Create a cinquain poem about anything you want. Here you will find an example after you hear more of Deborah Ruddell's poems including, *Eau De Forest*, *A Woodsy Cologne*.