



Year 4

Poetry Anthology



JAMES COOK
LEARNING TRUST

Team Talk



Lads, believe me

You know it

I know it

We are not the best team

In this league

But this lot –

Marcus, are you listening?

This lot

I have to say it –

Are worse!

Believe me

We can beat 'em

What am I saying –

We *are* beating 'em

Yippee!

So this is the situation, lads

Stay calm

Stay focused

Get out there –

Yes, *now* Billy –

Get out there

And whatever it was you were doing –

This is the plan, right Michael?

Right Charles?

Whatever it was you were *doing*

Keep doing it.

OK?

Allan Ahlberg

Don't be scared

The dark is only a blanket
for the moon to put on her bed.

The dark is a private cinema
for the movie dreams in your head.

The dark is a little black dress
to show off the sequin stars.

The dark is the wooden hole
behind the strings of happy guitars.

The dark is a jeweller's velvet cloth
where children sleep like pearls.

The dark is a spool of film to photograph boys and girls,
so smile in your sleep in the dark.

Don't be scared.

Carol Ann Duffy

The Witches' Spell *from Macbeth*

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.
Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

William Shakespeare

Macavity – The Mystery Cat

Macavity's a Mystery Cat: he's called the Hidden Paw—
For he's the master criminal who can defy the Law.
He's the bafflement of Scotland Yard, the Flying Squad's despair:
For when they reach the scene of crime—*Macavity's not there!*

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
He's broken every human law, he breaks the law of gravity.
His powers of levitation would make a fakir stare,
And when you reach the scene of crime— *Macavity's not there!*
You may seek him in the basement, you may look up in the air—
But I tell you once and once again, *Macavity's not there!*

Macavity's a ginger cat, he's very tall and thin;
You would know him if you saw him, for his eyes are sunken in.
His brow is deeply lined with thought, his head is highly domed;
His coat is dusty from neglect, his whiskers are uncombed.
He sways his head from side to side, with movements like a snake;
And when you think he's half asleep, he's always wide awake.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
For he's a fiend in feline shape, a monster of depravity.
You may meet him in a by-street, you may see him in the square—
But when a crime's discovered, then *Macavity's not there!*

He's outwardly respectable. (They say he cheats at cards.)
And his footprints are not found in any file of Scotland Yard's.
And when the larder's looted, or the jewel-case is rifled,
Or when the milk is missing, or another Peke's been stifled,
Or the greenhouse glass is broken, and the trellis past repair—
Ay, there's the wonder of the thing! *Macavity's not there!*

And when the Foreign Office find a Treaty's gone astray,
Or the Admiralty lose some plans and drawings by the way,
There may be a scrap of paper in the hall or on the stair—
But it's useless to investigate— *Macavity's not there!*
And when the loss has been disclosed, the Secret Service say:
'It *must* have been Macavity!'—but he's a mile away.
You'll be sure to find him resting, or a-licking of his thumbs,
Or engaged in doing complicated long division sums.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
There never was a Cat of such deceitfulness and suavity.
He always has an alibi, or one or two to spare:
And whatever time the deed took place—**MACAVITY WASN'T THERE!**
And they say that all the Cats whose wicked deeds are widely known
(I might mention Mungojerrie, I might mention Griddlebone)
Are nothing more than agents for the Cat who, all the time,
Just controls their operations: the Napoleon of Crime!

TS Eliot

Extinct

We live in books and photographs.

Our stories all begin with 'once'.

Three, two, going... going... gone.

Barbary Lion, Atitlan Grebe

Caribbean Monk Seal, Carolina Parakeet.

We tasted good, our forests were yours

Our horn was magic, you wore our furs.

Three, two, going... going... gone.

Javan Tiger, Japanese Sea Lion

Laughing Owl, Passenger Pigeon.

We washed fur with a rasping tongue,

swam and slept beneath the sun.

Three, two, going... going... gone.

Western Black Rhinoceros, Aldabra Snail

Pyrenean Ibex, Wake Island Rail

Stripes and colours, feathers and song.

Skin, shell, teeth, bone.

Three, two, going... going... gone.

Mandy Coe



What is the Sun?

The Sun is an orange dinghy sailing across a calm sea.



It is a gold coin
dropped down a drain in heaven.

The Sun is a yellow beach ball
kicked high into the summer sky.



It is a red thumb print
on a sheet of pale blue paper.

The Sun is a milk bottle's golden top
floating in a puddle.



Wes Magee

The Treasures

Who will bring me the hush of a feather?

"I," screeched the Barn Owl. "Whatever the weather."

Who will bring me the shadows that flow?

"I," snarled the Tiger. "Wherever I go."

Who will bring me the colours that shine?

"I," shrieked the Peacock. "Because they are mine."

Who will bring me the crash of the wave?

"I," sang the Dolphin, "Because I am brave."

Who will bring me the secrets of night?

"I," called the Bat. "By the moon's silver light."

Who will bring me the scent of the flower?

"I," hummed the Bee. "By the sun's golden power."

Who will bring me the waterfall's gleam?

"I," sighed the Minnow. "By river and stream."

Who will bring me the strength of the small?

"I," cried the Spider. "When webs line your wall."

Who will bring me the shiver of snow?

"I," howled the Wolf Cub. "When icicles grow."

And who will bring me a nest, furry warm?

"I," squeaked the Rat, "When we hide from the storm..."

But who will care for the treasures we give?

"I," said the Child.

"For as long as I live."

Clare Bevan

TODAY I FEEL

Today, I feel as:

Pleased as PUNCH,
Fit as a FIDDLE,
Keen as a KNIFE,
Hot as a GRIDDLE,
Bold as BRASS,
Bouncy as a BALL,
Keen as MUSTARD,
High as a WALL,
Bright as a BUTTON,
Light as a FEATHER,
Fresh as a DAISY,
Fragrant as HEATHER,
Chirpy as a CRICKET,
Sound as a BELL,
Sharp as a NEEDLE,
Deep as a WELL,
High as a KITE,
Strong as a BULL,
Bubbly as BATH WATER,
Warm as WOOL,
Clean as a new PIN,
Shiny as MONEY,
Quick as LIGHTENING,
Sweet as HONEY,
Cool as a CUCUMBER,
Fast as a HARE,
Right as RAIN,
Brave as a BEAR,
Lively as a MONKEY,
Busy as a BEE,
Good as GOLD,
Free as the SEA.

I'M SO HAPPY – I'M JUST LOST FOR WORDS.

Gervase Phinn



The Vampire

The night is still and sombre,
and in the murky gloom,
arisen from his slumber,
the vampire leaves his tomb.

His eyes are pools of fire,
his skin is icy white,
and blood his one desire
this woebegotten night.

Then through the silent city,
he makes his silent way,
prepared to take no pity
upon his hapless prey.

An open window beckons,
he grins a hungry grin,
and pausing no one second
he swiftly climbs within.

And there, beneath the covers,
his victim lies in sleep.
With fang a gleam, he hovers
and with those fangs, bites deep.

The vampire drinks till sated,
he fills his every pore,
and then, his thirst abated,
licks clean the dripping gore.

With powers now replenished,
his thirst no longer burns.
His quest this night is finished,
so to his tomb he turns,

and there awhile in silence
he'll rest beneath the mud
until, with thoughts of violence,
he waits and utters... blood!

Jack Prelutsky



New Baby

My baby brother makes so much noise that the Rottweiler next door phoned up to complain.

My baby brother makes so much noise that all the big green frogs came out of the drains.

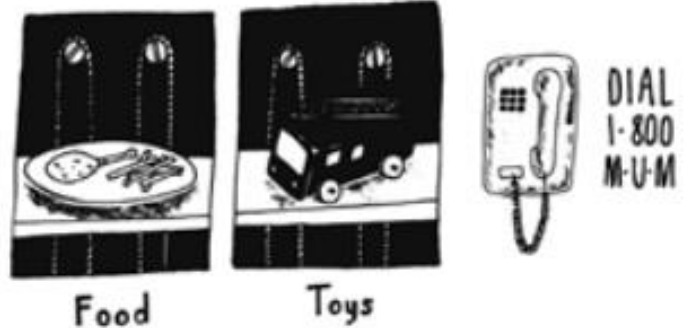
My baby brother makes so much noise that the rats and mice wear headphones.

My baby brother makes so much noise that I can't ask my mum a question, so much noise that sometimes

I think of sitting the cat on top of him in his pretty little cot with all his teddies. But even the cat is terrified of his cries.

So I have devised a plan. A soundproof room. A telephone to talk to my mum. A small lift to receive food and toys.

Thing is, it will cost a fortune. The other thing is, the frogs have gone. It's not bad now. Not that I like him or anything.



Jackie Kay

I Don't Like Poetry

I don't like similes.

Every time I try to think of one
my brain feels like a vast, empty desert;
my eyes feel like raisins floating in an ocean;
my fingers feel like sweaty sausages.

I don't like metaphors.

Whenever I attempt them
a hammer starts beating in my chest;
lava starts bubbling in my veins;
zombies have a fight in my stomach.

I don't like alliteration.

We learnt about it in school
but it's seriously, stupendously silly;
definitely drastically difficult;
terribly, troublingly tricky.

I don't like onomatopoeia.

I wish I could blow it up
with a ZAP! and a BANG! and a CRASH!
a BOOM! and a CLANG! and a POW!
a CLASH! and a BAM! and a THUD!

And I don't like repetition

I don't like repetition

I don't like repetition...

Joshua Seigal

A Bird came down the Walk

A Bird came down the Walk—
He did not know I saw—
He bit an Angeworm in halves
And ate the fellow, raw,

And then he drank a Dew
From a convenient Grass—
And then hopped sidewise to the Wall
To let a Beetle pass—

He glanced with rapid eyes
That hurried all around—
They looked like frightened Beads, I thought—
He stirred his Velvet Head

Like one in danger, Cautious,
I offered him a Crumb
And he unrolled his feathers
And rowed him softer home—

Than Oars divide the Ocean,
Too silver for a seam—
Or Butterflies, off Banks of Noon
Leap, splashless as they swim.

Emily Dickinson

Vocabulary for Villains

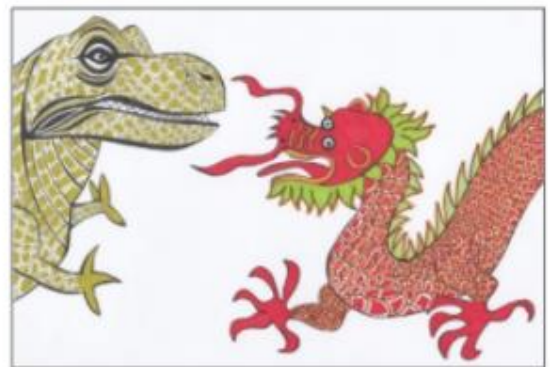
Fiendish, fearsome, filthy,
Revolting, rancid, vicious,
Detestable, disgusting,
Malevolent, malicious.

Ghastly, grisly, gruesome,
Menacing, atrocious,
Grim, grotesque, repulsive,
Loathsome, foul, ferocious,

Hellish, diabolical,
Hateful, hideous, mean,
Odious, malodorous,
Venomous, unclean.

Wicked, evil, ugly, vile,
Callous, cruel, spiteful,
Horrific, harsh, horrendous
Pitiless, and frightful.

I've given you the adjectives,
Now it's your turn to be clever,
Go ahead, enjoy it,
Write the vilest poem ever.



Eric Finney

I Was Born in the Stone Age



I was born in the Stone Age.
When I was at school,
We didn't have chairs or desks,
We sat on rocks,
And we didn't have paper or pens
So Miss used to say, 'Get out your rock'
And then we wrote on rocks with a smaller rock,
Or what's called a 'stone'.

Then, I went home
And we didn't have TV in the Stone Age.
We just had a rock.
Mum used to put a rock on top of the rock
And we'd say, 'What's on the rock tonight, Mum?'
She'd say, 'A rock'.
And then we watched 'The Rock'.
We just stared at it for hours.
Then we went to bed.
Which was also a rock.
We just lay on a rock.
I should remember...

Then the Stone Age came to an end.
We woke up one morning and
Everyone said, 'The Stone Age's finished.'

You can see when you look on your timeline
On the wall of your classrooms.
There's the Stone Age.
That's the beginning of everything.
The Stone Age starts your timeline
And the Stone Age begins with a line.
Then comes the Stone Age.
Then there's a line at the end of the Stone Age.
The Stone Age just ends.
That's how it was for us.

Then along came the next 'Age'.
That one's the Leaf Age or Twig Age or something.
What IS the next 'Age' called?
The Mud Age, I think.
I should remember...

Anyway,
I was born in the Stone Age.

Michael Rosen