

## **Poetry for the spirit**

An anthology for teachers and pupils to stimulate creativity

Spirited Poetry 2005 – A PCFRE Project generously supported by the St Peter's Saltley Trust.

These examples are designed to be used with pupils across the age range to stimulate their own poetry. They can provide a challenge to any learner – do something like this – or something different, better.

**THE WORLD AS I SEE IT**

If I ruled the world  
 Everyone would sing and shout  
 School and bombs are the things I would  
 throw out  
 Little children need starve no more  
 As I would give them a big food store  
 A house for everyone to live in  
 Is something else I would give them  
 Rain and cold weather would be sent away  
 I would order it to be a hot sunny day  
 Christmas would be twice a year  
 So we could have lots of good cheer  
 There's lots of things I would like to do  
 If I ruled the world. How about You!

**Justine Damms (8)****THE GARDEN AND THE STREET**

Outside my front door  
 The traffic rumbles by  
 Dirt and dust around  
 Fumes fill the air.

Morning, noon and night  
 Always there is noise  
 Close the window, close the door  
 For a little peace.

This view I have suffered  
 From my front room window  
 But how different the sight  
 When I look toward the south.

Although my house is not so large  
 And my garden very small  
 Still it seems like the country  
 Quiet, peaceful and at rest.

Many birds visit the garden  
 There I feed them scraps and nuts  
 Sparrows, robins, starlings, blackbirds  
 Fly in for their daily bread.

Many times when I feel angry  
 Many times when I feel cross  
 How I love to see my garden  
 And my friends that come to call.

**Susan Sheppard (12)****INNER SPACE**

Alone  
 Meditating  
 My mind is wandering  
 Uncovering old memories  
 Darkness

**Stephen Hill (14)****TO BE A HUMAN WITH A HUMAN THOUGHT**

To be a human being  
 To have an intelligence above all  
 To have feelings and privileges  
 Challenges and responsibilities  
 To have a want for knowing  
 An inquisitive mind  
 Yet to be concerned, disappointed and shamed  
 To be wrong, to want to cry,  
 To look up to the stars  
 To gaze and wonder why . . .  
 Why am I here? When will I die?  
 The want to fly high  
 To visit a foreign sky  
 Find a new planet  
 A new world, a new sign.  
 To have the pressure inside us  
 A cross feeling of mind  
 Why can't I know what is beyond the endless  
 sky?  
 Where does the dark all go?  
 Is there a solid wall?  
 And if there is  
 What is beyond that solid wall?  
 To want to know  
 To hunt the corners of our imagination  
 To feel our blood curdle inside  
 Frustration and anger  
 The human feels it all  
 To wonder, to want, to care  
 To flare, to fear  
 Oh what is around the next corner?  
 What's beyond our sky?

**Julia Metcalfe (13)**

I looked out over the sea  
 With the sun setting  
 Glinting with joyous celebration  
 And its reflection dancing in the water  
 I looked at the quiet sea  
 Feeling sudden peace in my heart  
 Like nothing mattered at all  
 Then, as the sun began to do down  
 I looked up into the darkening sky  
 Feeling God's presence  
 As the sky darkened even more  
 And the moon shone through the trees  
 I walked back along the beach.

### Jonathan Davies (10)

How do the planets orbit the sun  
 Without losing their places?  
 Is it just an accident?

How does Earth stay,  
 After Venus and before Mars?  
 Is it just an accident?  
 Why is Jupiter so big?  
 Why does Saturn have rings round it?  
 Why does baby Mercury  
 Stay close to Mother Sun?  
 Why do stars light up in the dark?  
 Why do they look so small  
 When they really are so big  
 Are there really trillions of stars  
 In the universe?  
 Is it all just an accident?

### Gary Lowthian (10)

### HOW AND WHY?

Oh! How did the world begin?

Oh! How did the world begin?  
 Oh! Really I do give in  
 I think and think about it  
 Oh! How did the world begin?

Oh! How did the world begin?  
 As a round circle in the sky  
 Or as a star up up high  
 Oh! How did the world begin?

Oh! How did the world begin?  
 Did aliens come from planet Mars  
 Or did people come with milky bars  
 Oh! How did the world begin?

Oh! How did the world begin?  
 Oh! Really I do give in  
 I think and think about it  
 Oh! How did the world begin?

### Kathryn Butterworth (11)

### WHAT DID HE THINK?

What did he think when he made the sunlight  
 Carved the mountains  
 Poured out the sea?  
 He must have known how to make it just right  
 Like a marble fountain  
 Or a small green pea.

What did he think when he saw the deer run  
 Deer that he made for us  
 Man, to care for  
 Just like when I first turned a tap on  
 I thought it was marvelous  
 I was only four

He must have known that he was all powerful  
 And pure like the water  
 Running down into the sink  
 When he saw Eve's baby smile and gurgle  
 And shine with laughter  
 What did He think?

### Tania Gabbidon (13)

**I WONDER!**

I wonder why people are here on the Earth  
I wonder why there is death and birth  
I wonder what is the point of living  
Why are we taking? And why are we giving?

These ultimate questions have puzzled Man  
Why the world's here, why it began?  
Why are there wars and why do we fight?  
Why are things wrong? And why are things right?

These ultimate questions have puzzled us so  
What are the answers, does anyone know?  
Why is there living and why is there dying?  
Why are some people laughing and some people crying?

Why are some countries rich and some countries poor?  
What is this thing 'LIFE' and what's it all for?  
Is there a heaven up in the sky?  
And where do we all go when we die?

**Paula Bishop (13)****DEATH**

What happens when we die?  
The thought fills me with terror  
Chilling the soul  
Always there  
At the back of my mind  
Creeping  
Trying to gain foothold  
Where do we go?  
Do we dissolve into nothingness?  
Drifting for eternity  
Spine chilling, fearful  
Nagging to distraction  
My mouth goes dry  
My throat like sandpaper  
Quaking with fear  
Trembling  
I lie there trying to imagine no me.  
Eternal sleep  
Is that what happens?  
Are we punished for our sins on earth?  
Are we sent to heaven or to hell?  
Visions of graveyards  
Float between my eyes  
Morbid, macabre, terrifying  
Death, death, death  
Echoes round my head.  
It will never leave me till I am  
DEAD.

**Susan Ogden (14)**

**WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE**

What is the meaning of life?  
 Is it just trouble and strife?  
 Is it worrying, dying, grieving,  
 Or is it, living, enjoying, believing,  
 Is it suffering we have to do,  
 Or is it the happiness that lives with us too.

What about the bills that we have to pay,  
 Not like the rich who lay around all day.  
 The exams we'll take when we're in school.  
 The sports, the games, the swimming pool.  
 Is it work, or is it play. That's something I've  
 thought about everyday.

Is it happiness, or is it sorrow.  
 Will I be able to find out tomorrow?  
 What about the men who fight in the War?

Will they die?  
 And fight no more.  
 Or will peace reign for evermore.  
 With everyone on the side of the law.  
 The meaning of life is different to everyone.

What's it to you?  
 What is true?  
 For me it's a host of unanswered questions.  
 Lots of people's different suggestions.  
 Throughout this long journey,  
 Of life, they'll decrease,  
 These questions will lessen.  
 But no-where will cease.

**Poonam Joshi (11)****CROSSED LINES?...ENGAGED?...**

'Hallo God, it's me again'  
 The adolescent agnostic  
 Yes, I know...one of the millions on earth.  
 Bother! Line's engaged again!  
 Aren't I receptive enough to talk to him!  
 I suppose I'll have to wait patiently  
 Until I move on to a higher exchange!

Why won't he speak to me?  
 Is my mind too full of the refuse of worlds?...  
 (Perhaps the fault's a loose connection)  
 I can't even get a recording surface  
 To pass my message on

'Hallo. God is out at the moment, but if you'll  
 leave  
 your name and number...'

Not even an answering service  
 To....  
 IS THERE...?  
 ...PROOF..  
 ...IS THERE?...

Must keep dialing  
 One day I'll get plugged in ...  
 'Oh...Hallo, God...'

**Lynne Rees (17)****SORROW**

A tear is for sorrow,  
 For a lost loved one,  
 For unnecessary wa and deaths,  
 A tear is for a cut or graze,  
 For a broken heart,  
 And a tear is for joy,  
 Knowing that God loves you.

**Hirsty MacDonald (12)**

**BIRTH**

It's dark and cosy everything's still  
 I'm nearing life's beginning or is it the end  
 Then from below, above  
 I'm being grabbed at my legs  
 I've turned to the world  
 Then one mighty push and life is changing  
 I'm cold, I'm hungry  
 A beaming, blinding light is approaching  
 My life has begun  
 I'm one with the world

**Christopher Higgs (12)**

**THE SCAN**

'Mrs Haynes please'  
 The Doctor called  
 She was a very cheerful Asian lady  
 And she was incharge  
 Of the ultra sound department  
 We were to see a lot of her.

We knocked at the door  
 And entered a small  
 Box-shaped room  
 Its walls were covered in notices  
 And many diagrams.

The cluttered room  
 Contained a desk and filing cabinets  
 But it was dominated by  
 The huge scanning machine and bed  
 My Mum lay on the bed  
 While the doctor switched on the machine.

A blurred image appeared  
 On one of two small television-like screens  
 The doctor pointed out the baby's limbs  
 And also the umbilical cord

It was hard to believe  
 That in six months  
 This would be my brother  
 Over this time  
 I was to see  
 His fingers, toes, eyes and ears form  
 And later his heart beat.

**Michelle Haynes (12)**

**THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS**

I feel like a thing on legs  
 Like a remote control boy  
 And God is using me to do things

I feel like a thing on legs  
 And I will grow to be a man  
 When I am old  
 He will switch me off

**Derren Atkinson (11)**

**A TIME TO LIVE, A TIME TO DIE**

Birth

Infancy, Lively

Young, Adolescence, Fit

Captive, Working, Retired, Free

Slow, Broke, Limited

Ageing, Tired

Death

**Shane Creech (13)**

**DEATH**

As told by a young girl inquisitive about God,  
Death and things .....

Nobody wants to talk about death  
It's gruesome and 'deadly' and bad  
I ask what it means, and where people go  
But someone just frowns and looks sad.

Oh, how will I ever know what's this thing  
That everyone's frightened to mention?  
What's this thing about heaven and hell  
That turns people over with tension.

I expect when I'm older I'll understand  
About the problem that worries us all  
But now I know that we all have an end  
That life is over when death gives a call.

**Elizabeth Nice (12)****NOTHING LEFT**

I came home, I saw him, lying so pathetic and  
sad  
He passed away they said into a better place  
I know, somehow, I was glad, but at first  
I could not believe it, why did this happen to  
me?  
A flood of tears welled up inside me, as I stroked  
his limp paw.

A message of relief; it came at last, good yet  
bad,  
A painless leaving, that was natural, in his sleep  
It came as a shock, a bolt from blue  
So unhappy, so sorrowful, nobody said a word  
I could not cry, nor eat any food, with sorrow in  
my heart, i  
Thanked God for his release

Everyone, I know, feels the same, yet you think  
you are the only one  
The sorrow, the regrets, the utter unbelieving  
The silence and nearness of death, no one is  
prepared  
But just think of the anguish God suffered  
As his only son, Lord Jesus Christ, was hung  
upon the cross.

**Andrea Kemp (12)**

Delicate primroses clustered in grass  
Violets hiding away as we pass  
Carpets of bluebells spread under the trees  
Trumpeting daffodils dance in the breeze  
These are important to me.

The beams of the sun which warms up my face  
The brightness of light which shines in the  
glades  
The jewels of raindrops in gossamer place  
The green spears of grass with sharpest of  
blades  
These are important to me.

Grain ripens in acres to give us our bread  
Green apples are turned to deep orange or red  
Squirrels scamper through nut trees to fill up  
their store  
And mushrooms are gathered as in days of yore  
These are important to me.

The winter wind howls round hill and through  
barn  
But wise owl ensures that I come to no harm  
The coldness of winter turns me into ice  
But Mummy's hot meals thaw me out in a trice  
These are important to me.

**Caroline Dyer (9)**

**INNER FEELINGS**

'Yer Granny's died' Dad dutifully informed us  
 The chatter came to a halt  
 One by one my sisters and I left the room  
 Trying to cover up our feelings  
 I headed for the bathroom  
 A room so small yet secure  
 Numbly, I placed the bowl of dessert on the floor  
 Staring at the bathroom scales  
 I wanted to cry a river of tears  
 I couldn't. Why couldn't I?  
 What was stopping me?

At school, our boisterous class  
 Was quieter than usual  
 I tried hard to occupy my mind, but failed  
 Relief overcame me when the bell rang.

Home was like a morgue  
 A cold, dark place filled with grief  
 In the bedroom sat Mum  
 Sobbing quietly to herself  
 I seated myself next to her  
 And impulsively put my arms round her  
 shoulders  
 Ready to console her  
 A funny thing then happened  
 We stared at each other  
 A tear rolled down my cheek  
 I cried.

**Lorna Hendry (14)****HAJJ PILGRIMAGE**

The most important thing for me  
 Is my pilgrimage to Makka in Saudi  
 Although I have never been for Hajj  
 I have been to the Kaaba  
 Most of all I enjoy sitting and praying  
 In front of the Kaaba  
 On the cool, white, marble stones  
 Under the hot 'winter' sun  
 As soon as I set eyes on the Kaaba  
 A feeling of purification runs through me.

Hajj is important to me because it's one main  
 'pillar' of Islam  
 And therefore one main pillar of my way of life.

**Aisha Bawhab (12)****A FOUND POEM**

I wrote this poem after reading the side of a  
 cornflakes packet

A serving of 30g  
 Of Kelloggs cornflakes provides  
 At least one quarter of the average adult's  
 Or one third of a child's  
 Recommended daily intake of vitamins  
 And one sixth of their iron needs ...

**THAT IS IF**

You live in the rich third of the world  
 The third which is not starving  
 And which receives its  
 Recommended daily intake of vitamins  
 From a 30g serving  
 Of Kelloggs cornflakes which provides  
 At least one quarter of an adult's or  
 One third of a child's recommended daily intake  
 Of vitamins ...

**Tracy Barnard(12)****UGLINESS**

A derelict graveyard  
 Where dead people rot  
 Billowing smoke swirling  
 Silently from a grey crumbling chimney  
 Pylons towering motionless  
 Over the countryside.  
 Poverty and unemployment destroys  
 Many souls  
 War and violence threaten mankind  
 Blood, injury and death causes  
 Ugly suffering.  
 All these things are ugly, but  
 Without ugliness we cannot appreciate beauty.

**Daniel Attew (10)**

**SCHIZOPHRENIA**

Through the centuries  
We have created a fine world  
Seeing how infinitely wiser than God we are  
Shelters to protect from radiation  
Homes to shut refugees and junkies in  
Plastic flowers and gaudy fakes  
Created by mass production  
But some notice the  
Concrete slabs and rusting pipes  
Machine silver glaring  
Stench of bodies and gas  
And above it all the sun glows  
Fresh as its first day  
Early mornings still frost up  
And escaped trees still abandon  
Crinkly orange leaves  
Unpolluted streams still run  
Like liquid crystal over furry moss  
Down into curved rocks  
As man strives and confuses the earth,  
This happens.

**Jennifer Chaplin (16)**

Most of these poems were entered for RE  
Today's previous poetry competition, 'It's  
important to me' from over a decade ago.

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