

BALLYMENA FESTIVAL OF MUSIC, SPEECH AND DANCE

SPEECH AND DRAMA SECTION

SET POEMS 2025

SS16 Boys Primary 1

'Pancake Day' by Shan Fountain

Mummy made pancakes on Tuesday,
She tossed them in the air.
One fell on the table,
Two fell on the chair,
One fell on the cooker
And one fell in the grate,
But lucky for me,
I had three
Because they fell on my plate.

From 'Rhyme Time' by Barbara Ireson Page 59

SS15 Girls Primary 1

'After my bath' by Aileen Fisher

After my bath
I try, try, try
To wipe myself
Till I'm dry, dry, dry.

Hands to wipe
And fingers and toes
And two wet legs
And a shiny nose.

Just think how much
Less time I'd take
If I were a dog
And could shake, shake, shake.

From 'Rhyme Time' by Barbara Ireson Page 62

SS17 Girls Primary 2

'In the mirror' by Elizabeth Fleming

In the mirror
On the wall,
There's a face
I always see;
Round and pink
And rather small
Looking back again
At me.

It is very
Rude to stare,
But she never
Thinks of that,
For her eyes are
Always there;
What can she be
Looking at?

From 'Read me first - Poems for younger readers', Page 28

SS18 Boys Primary 2

'Five Little Owls' by Anonymous

Five little owls in an old elm tree,
Fluffy and puffy as owls could be,
Blinking and winking with big round eyes
At the big round moon that hung in the skies;
As I passed beneath I could hear one say,
'There'll be mouse for supper, there will, today!'
Then all of them hooted, 'Tu-whit, tu-who
Yes, mouse for supper, Hoo hoo, hoo hoo!'

From 'Rhyme Time' by Barbara Ireson Page 149

SS19 Girls Primary 3

'My cat' by Nigel Gray

My cat
got fatter
and fatter.
I didn't know
what was the matter.
Then,
know what she did?
She went into the cupboard
and hid.

She was fat when she went in,
but she came out
thin.
I had a peep.
Know what I saw?
Little kittens
All in a heap
1 – 2 – 3 – 4

My cat's great.

From 'Read me 2', A poem for every day of the year, Page 249

SS20 Boys Primary 3

'The Watching Crocodile' by Irene Rawnsley

The crafty crocodile
always keeps
one eye open
when the other eye sleeps.

He lies in the river
pretending to doze,
and waits for a fish
to swim past his nose.

Snap! Go his jaws;
the meal is gone.
He smiles and waits
for another one.

Take care, little fishes
as you swim by.
Remember, remember
the crocodile's eye.

From 'A Purple Poetry Paintbox', Page 16

SS21 Girls Primary 4

'Break up' by June Crebbin

I've always sat next to Shirley,
And what I'd like to know
Is why she's been moved to another desk?
Why did she have to go?

It's true we sometimes argued,
And when we can't agree
It's true I've pinched her once or twice,
But the teacher didn't see.

I know we shouldn't borrow,
But I do it all the time,
And when I use her pens and things,
Shirley doesn't mind.

I don't like the girl I'm next to,
The one in Shirley's place,
She keeps her pens and rubbers
Zipped up in a pencil case.

And she's started this nasty rumour
I'd like to see it proved –
I don't believe it . . . but she said
Shirley ASKED to be moved.

From 'The Jungle Sale' by June Crebbin, Page 16

SS22 Boys Primary 4

'Grandad's Wonderful Marrow' by Marian Swinger

It was huge, it was striped,
it was yellow and green,
the biggest, the fattest
that ever was seen.
It was watered and polished,
that vegetable marrow,
too big for the garden,
too big for the barrow
and Grandad said proudly,
'I'm boasting I know,
but we can't fail to win
at the vegetable show.'

Poor Grandad, that evening
the rain wouldn't stop
and his beautiful marrow
swelled up and went – POP!

From 'A Purple Poetry Paintbox', Page 34

SS23 Girls Primary 5

'Wanted' by Shelagh McGee

Wanted – a witch's cat.
Must have vigour and spite,
Be expert at hissing
And good in a fight,
And have balance and poise
On a broomstick at night.

Wanted – a witch's cat.
Must have hypnotic eyes
To tantalise victims
And mesmerise spies,
And be an adept
At scanning the skies.

Wanted – a witch's cat,
With a sly, cunning smile,
A knowledge of spells
And a good deal of guile,
With a fairly hot temper
And plenty of bile.

Wanted – a witch's cat,
Who's not afraid to fly,
For a cat with strong nerves,
The salary's high.
Wanted – a witch's cat;
Only the best need apply.

From 'Read Me 2', Page 407

SS24 Boys Primary 5

'Mr Baggs' by Michael Rosen

I was walking home from school
with Mr. Baggs
the teacher who took us for football
and he said:
'You see, Michael, what we need in the team
is a really good centre-half,
someone who can control the game from midfield
collect the ball in the middle
distribute the ball to the front players.
A good centre-half can turn a game.
He can make all the difference.
Now who have we got playing in the middle?
- Oh, my goodness it's you
I forgot
I'm sorry
I wasn't thinking
No hard feelings, OK?'

From 'Read me 2', Page 300

SS25 Girls Primary 6

'Driving Home' by Gerard Benson

Coming back home from Granny's in the car
I try to stay awake. I really do.
I look around to find the evening star
And make a wish. Who knows? It might come true.

I watch the yellow windows whizzing by
And sometimes see a person in a room,
Cutting a loaf of bread, tying a tie,
Stretching, or watching telly in the gloom.

I see the street lamps flash past, one by one,
And watch how people's shadows grow and shrink.
It's like a trick; I wonder how it's done.
I breathe and watch, and settle back to think.

But everything gets mixed and far away;
I feel I'm moving but I don't know where.
I hear a distant voice which seems to say,
'Wake up! (She's fast asleep) Wake up! We're there!'

From 'Read me 2', page 369

SS26 Boys Primary 6

'Not a Nightingale' by Jennifer Curry

Today my teacher said I mustn't sing
Because I had a voice like a crab.
Or did he say a frog?
I don't know which, but
Crab or frog, it's all the same.
He didn't say a nightingale.
So after school I took a walk
Along the lane, to where
The cows live in the field.
And I climbed on the gate
And I threw back my head
And I opened my mouth
And I SANG.

And those cows – they stood in a row
And looked at me, and listened,
And then nodded their great big heads,
Up and down, very slow, very gentle,
Just like Grandmas at the school concert.

My teacher says I sound like a crab.
Or a frog? I don't know which.
But those cows don't care.
They like the noise I make.
And so do I.

From 'Read me at school', Page 174

SS27 Girls Primary 7

'Parents Evening' by Gervase Phinn

So you are Matthew's mother
Then you must be his dad?
I'm so very pleased to meet you,
I am extremely glad.
He's such a gifted pupil,
And such a little dear,
There's been a vast improvement
In all his work this year.
His writing is exceptional,
So beautifully neat,
His spelling quite incredible,
His poetry a treat.
His number work is flawless
And his painting so inspired.
He's interested and lively,
And he's never ever tired.
He's amazingly athletic,
And excels in every sport.
Your Matty is the brightest child
That I have ever taught.
I should say he's gifted – he comes top in every test.
In fact in every single subject
Your Matthew is the best!
I must say, Mr and Mrs Flynn,
You're fortunate to have a child like him.

Pardon?
Oh! You're not Matthew Flynn's father,
Then you can't be his mum.
You say I've got the names mixed up.
Oh dear! What have I done?
Well, I'm very, very sorry.
So your child's Matthew Brown.
Well, before I tell you about your son
You had better both sit down!

From 'It takes one to know one' by Gervase Phinn, Page 21

SS28 Boys Primary 7

'Every night Mr Miller Dreams' by Bernard Young

Every night Mr Miller dreams
of the day he will retire.
There'll be a small party
in the staffroom
during the lunch hour
and at final assembly
he'll receive a major gift
from the whole school
plus presents
from individual pupils
who will be heartbroken
to see him leave.
Children, past and present,
(some now grown-up)
will file past to thank him
for being so inspirational
- for changing their lives.

In the evening
a large group of colleagues and friends
will take him out for drinks
and a meal.
There will be speeches
charting his impressive career
and praising his achievements.

He can't wait.

Day two. Week one. First job.
A long way to go.

Every night Mr Miller dreams.

From 'Read me at school' Page 30