

Meeting held on 14th October 2025 - Comic Verse

Paul joined the group for this meeting and chose the following three poems

The Letter 'D' from
'A Moral Alphabet'
by Hilaire Belloc

The Dreadful Dinotherium, he
Will have to do his best for **D**

The early world observed with awe
His back, indented like a saw.
His look was gay, his voice was strong;
His tail was neither short nor long;
His trunk, or elongated nose,
Was not so large as some suppose;
His teeth, as all the world allows,
Were graminivorous, like a cow's.
He therefore should have wished to pass
Long peaceful nights upon the Grass,
But being mad the brute preferred
To roost in branches, like a bird.
(We have good reason to suppose
He did so, from his claw-like toes.)
A creature heavier than a whale,
You see at once, could hardly fail
To suffer badly when he slid
And tumbled (as he always did).
His fossil, therefore, comes to light
All broken up: and serve him right.

MORAL:

If you were born to walk the ground,
Remain there; do not fool around.

From 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland'
by Lewis Carroll

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head —
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"
"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,
"I feared it might injure the brain;
But, now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again."
"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned before,
And have grown most uncommonly fat;
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door —
Pray, what is the reason of that?"
"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his grey locks,
"I kept all my limbs very supple
By the use of this ointment — one shilling the box —
Allow me to sell you a couple?"
"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too weak
For anything tougher than suet;
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak -
Pray, how did you manage to do it?"
"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength, which it gave to my jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life."
"You are old," said the youth, "one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever;
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose —
What made you so awfully clever?"
"I have answered three questions, and that is enough,"
Said his father; "don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you downstairs!"



John Tenniel

The Common Cormorant or Shag
by Christopher Isherwood

The Common Cormorant or shag
Lays eggs inside a paper bag.
The reason you will see no doubt
It is to keep the lightning out.
But what these unobservant birds
Have never noticed is that herds
Of wandering bears may come with buns
And steal the bags to hold the crumbs.

Lin picked two narrative poems, one here and the other on the next page

Cinderella by Roald Dahl

I guess you think you know this story.
You don't. The real one's much more gory.
The phoney one, the one you know,
Was cooked up years and years ago,
And made to sound all soft and sappy
just to keep the children happy.
Mind you, they got the first bit right,
The bit where, in the dead of night,
The Ugly Sisters, jewels and all,
Departed for the Palace Ball,
While darling little Cinderella
Was locked up in a slimy cellar,
Where rats who wanted things to eat,
Began to nibble at her feet.

She bellowed 'Help!' and 'Let me out!
The Magic Fairy heard her shout.
Appearing in a blaze of light,
She said: 'My dear, are you all right?'
'All right?' cried Cindy. 'Can't you see
'I feel as rotten as can be!'
She beat her fist against the wall,
And shouted, 'Get me to the Ball!
'There is a Disco at the Palace!
'The rest have gone and I am jealous!
'I want a dress! I want a coach!
'And earrings and a diamond brooch!
'And silver slippers, two of those!
'And lovely nylon panty hose!
'Done up like that I'll guarantee
'The handsome Prince will fall for me!'
The Fairy said, 'Hang on a tick.'
She gave her wand a mighty flick
And quickly, in no time at all,
Cindy was at the Palace Ball!

It made the Ugly Sisters wince
To see her dancing with the Prince.
She held him very tight and pressed
herself against his manly chest.
The Prince himself was turned to pulp,
All he could do was gasp and gulp.
Then midnight struck. She shouted, 'Heck!
I've got to run to save my neck!'
The Prince cried, 'No! Alas! Alack!'
He grabbed her dress to hold her back.
As Cindy shouted, 'Let me go!'
The dress was ripped from head to toe.

She ran out in her underwear,
And lost one slipper on the stair.
The Prince was on it like a dart,
He pressed it to his pounding heart,
'The girl this slipper fits,' he cried,
'Tomorrow morn shall be my bride!
I'll visit every house in town
'Until I've tracked the maiden down!'
Then rather carelessly, I fear,
He placed it on a crate of beer.

At once, one of the Ugly Sisters,
(The one whose face was blotched with blisters)
Sneaked up and grabbed the dainty shoe,
And quickly flushed it down the loo.
Then in its place she calmly put
The slipper from her own left foot.
Ah ha, you see, the plot grows thicker,
And Cindy's luck starts looking sicker.

Next day, the Prince went charging down
To knock on all the doors in town.
In every house, the tension grew.
Who was the owner of the shoe?
The shoe was long and very wide.
(A normal foot got lost inside.)
Also it smelled a wee bit icky.
(The owner's feet were hot and sticky.)
Thousands of eager people came
To try it on, but all in vain.
Now came the Ugly Sisters' go.
One tried it on. The Prince screamed, 'No!'
But she screamed, 'Yes! It fits! Whoopee!
'So now you've got to marry me!'
The Prince went white from ear to ear.
He muttered, 'Let me out of here.'
'Oh no you don't! You made a vow!
'There's no way you can back out now!'
'Off with her head!' The Prince roared back.
They chopped it off with one big whack.
This pleased the Prince. He smiled and said,
'She's prettier without her head.'
Then up came Sister Number Two,
Who yelled, 'Now I will try the shoe!'
'Try this instead!' the Prince yelled back.
He swung his trusty sword and smack
Her head went crashing to the ground.
It bounced a bit and rolled around.
In the kitchen, peeling spuds,
Cinderella heard the thuds
Of bouncing heads upon the floor,
And poked her own head round the door.
'What's all the racket?' Cindy cried.
'Mind your own bizz,' the Prince replied.
Poor Cindy's heart was torn to shreds.
My Prince! she thought. He chops off heads!
How could I marry anyone
Who does that sort of thing for fun?

The Prince cried, 'Who's this dirty slut?
'Off with her nut! Off with her nut!'
Just then, all in a blaze of light,
The Magic Fairy hove in sight,
Her Magic Wand went swoosh and swish!
'Cindy! she cried, 'come make a wish!
'Wish anything and have no doubt
'That I will make it come about!'
Cindy answered, 'Oh kind Fairy,
'This time I shall be more wary.
'No more Princes, no more money.
'I have had my taste of honey.
'I'm wishing for a decent man.
'They're hard to find. D'you think you can?'
Within a minute, Cinderella
Was married to a lovely feller,
A simple jam maker by trade,
Who sold good home-made marmalade.
Their house was filled with smiles and laughter
And they were happy ever after.

Adventures of Isabel by Ogden Nash

Isabel met an enormous bear,
Isabel, Isabel, didn't care;
The bear was hungry, the bear was ravenous,
The bear's big mouth was cruel and cavernous.
The bear said, Isabel, glad to meet you,
How do, Isabel, now I'll eat you!
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry.
Isabel didn't scream or scurry.
She washed her hands and she straightened her hair
up,
Then Isabel quietly ate the bear up.

Once in a night as black as pitch
Isabel met a wicked old witch.
the witch's face was cross and wrinkled,
The witch's gums with teeth were sprinkled.
Ho, ho, Isabel! the old witch crowed,
I'll turn you into an ugly toad!
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry,
Isabel didn't scream or scurry,
She showed no rage and she showed no rancor,
But she turned the witch into milk and drank her.

Isabel met a hideous giant,
Isabel continued self reliant.
The giant was hairy, the giant was horrid,
He had one eye in the middle of his forehead.
Good morning, Isabel, the giant said,
I'll grind your bones to make my bread.
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry,
Isabel didn't scream or scurry.
She nibbled the zwieback that she always fed off,
And when it was gone, she cut the giant's head off.

Isabel met a troublesome doctor,
He punched and he poked till he really shocked her.
The doctor's talk was of coughs and chills
And the doctor's satchel bulged with pills.
The doctor said unto Isabel,
Swallow this, it will make you well.
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry,
Isabel didn't scream or scurry.
She took those pills from the pill concocter,
And Isabel calmly cured the doctor

Liz read the following mix of 3 poems

A Topsy-Turvey World by Albert Midlane

If the butterfly courted the bee,
And the owl the porcupine;
If the churches were built in the sea,
And three times one was nine;
If the pony rode his master,
If the buttercups ate the cows,
If the cat had the dire disaster
To be worried, sir, by the mouse;
If mamma, sir, sold the baby
To a gypsy for half-a-crown;
If a gentleman, sir, was a lady –
The world would be Upside Down!
If any of all of these wonders
Should ever come about,
I should not consider them blunders
For I should be Inside Out!

I'm Nobody—Who Are You? By Emily Dickinson

I'm nobody! Who are you?
Are you nobody, too?
Then there's a pair of us—don't tell!
They'd banish us, you know.
How dreary to be somebody!
How public, like a frog
To tell your name the livelong day
To an admiring bog!

The third poem is on the next page
'The Jumblies' by Edward Lear

Fiona gave us three of her homegrown poems.

This is her Limerick.

A silly young girl called Morwenna

Tried to get "high" for a tenner

But she woke in the night

In a terrible plight

For the pills she had swallowed were Senna

The Jumblies by Edward Lear

They went to sea in a Sieve, they did,
In a Sieve they went to sea:
In spite of all their friends could say,
On a winter's morn, on a stormy day,
In a Sieve they went to sea!
And when the Sieve turned round and round,
And every one cried, 'You'll all be drowned!'
They called aloud, 'Our Sieve ain't big,
But we don't care a button! we don't care a fig!
In a Sieve we'll go to sea!
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

They sailed away in a Sieve, they did,
In a Sieve they sailed so fast,
With only a beautiful pea-green veil
Tied with a riband by way of a sail,
To a small tobacco-pipe mast;
And every one said, who saw them go,
'O won't they be soon upset, you know!
For the sky is dark, and the voyage is long,
And happen what may, it's extremely wrong
In a Sieve to sail so fast!
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

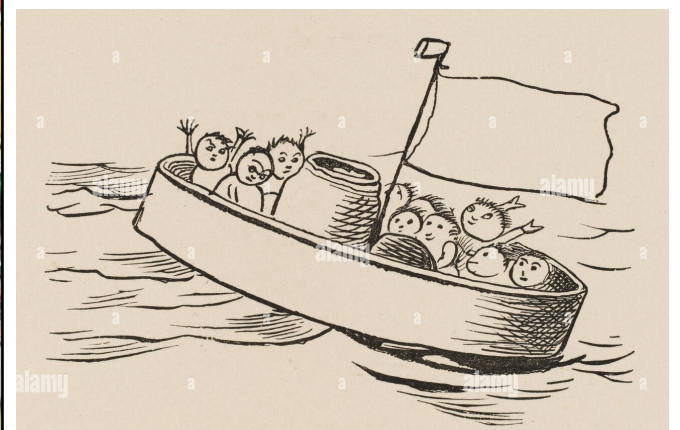
The water it soon came in, it did,
The water it soon came in;
So to keep them dry, they wrapped their feet
In a pinky paper all folded neat,
And they fastened it down with a pin.
And they passed the night in a crockery-jar,
And each of them said, 'How wise we are!
Though the sky be dark, and the voyage be long,
Yet we never can think we were rash or wrong,
While round in our Sieve we spin!
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

And all night long they sailed away;
And when the sun went down,
They whistled and warbled a moony song
To the echoing sound of a coppersy gong,
In the shade of the mountains brown.

'O Timballo! How happy we are,
When we live in a Sieve and a crockery-jar,
And all night long in the moonlight pale,
We sail away with a pea-green sail,
In the shade of the mountains brown!
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

They sailed to the Western Sea, they did,
To a land all covered with trees,
And they bought an Owl, and a useful Cart,
And a pound of Rice, and a Cranberry Tart,
And a hive of silvery Bees.
And they bought a Pig, and some green Jack-daws,
And a lovely Monkey with lollipop paws,
And forty bottles of Ring-Bo-Ree,
And no end of Stilton Cheese.
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

And in twenty years they all came back,
In twenty years or more,
And every one said, 'How tall they've grown!
For they've been to the Lakes, and the Terrible
Zone,
And the hills of the Chankly Bore!'
And they drank their health, and gave them a feast
Of dumplings made of beautiful yeast;
And every one said, 'If we only live,
We too will go to sea in a Sieve,---
To the hills of the Chankly Bore!'
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.



Edward Lear

Dervla's two poems

The Satnav by Pam Ayers

I have a little Satnav,
It sits there in my car
A Satnav is a driver's friend,
It tells you where you are.

I have a little Satnav,
I've had it all my life
It's better than the normal ones,
My Satnav is my wife.

It gives me full instructions,
Especially how to drive
"It's sixty miles an hour", it says,
"You're doing sixty five".

It tells me when to stop and start,
And when to use the brake
And tells me that it's never, ever,
Safe to overtake.

It tells me when a light is red,
And when it goes to green
It seems to know instinctively,
Just when to intervene.

It lists the vehicles just in front,
And all those to the rear
And taking this into account,
It specifies my gear.

I'm sure no other driver,
Has so helpful a device
For when we leave and lock the car,
It still gives its advice.

It fills me up with counselling,
Each journey's pretty fraught
So why don't I exchange it,
And get a quieter sort?

Ah well, you see, it cleans the house,
Makes sure I'm properly fed
It washes all my shirts and things,
And keeps me warm in bed!

Despite all these advantages,
And my tendency to scoff,
I only wish that now and then,
I could turn the bugger off.

Warning by Jenny Joseph

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.
And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves
And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.
I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells
And run my stick along the public railings
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain
And pick the flowers in other people's gardens
And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go
Or only bread and pickle for a week
And hoard pens and pencils and beer mats and things in boxes.

But now we must have clothes that keep us dry
And pay our rent and not swear in the street
And set a good example for the children.
We must have friends to dinner and read the papers.

But maybe I ought to practise a little now?
So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised
When suddenly I am old, and start to wear purple.

One of my chosen poems

Marguerite

ME-STEW

I have nothing to put in my stew, you see,
Not a bone or a bean or a black-eyed pea,
So I'll just climb in the pot to see
If I can make a stew out of me.
I'll put in some pepper and salt and I'll sit
In the bubbling water—I won't scream a bit.
I'll sing while I simmer, I'll smile while I'm stewing,
I'll taste myself often to see how I'm doing.
I'll stir me around with this big wooden spoon
And serve myself up at a quarter to noon.
So bring out your stew bowls,
You gobblers and snackers.
Farewell—and I hope you enjoy me with crackers!

Anne read these two poems

Old Tongue by Jackie Kay

When I was eight, I was forced south.
Not long after, when I opened
my mouth, a strange thing happened.
I lost my Scottish accent.
Words fell off my tongue:
eedyit, dreich, wabbit, crabbit,
stummer, teuchter, heidbanger,
so you are, so am ur, see you, see ma ma,
shut yer geggie, or I'll gie you the malkie!
My own vowels started to stretch like my bones
and I turned my back on Scotland.
Words disappeared in the dead of night,
new words marched in: ghastly, awful,
quite dreadful, *scones* said like *stones*.
Pokey hats into ice-cream cones.
Oh where did all my words go -
my old words, my lost words?
Did you ever feel sad when you lost a word,
did you ever try and call it back
like calling in the sea?
If I could have found my words wandering,
I swear I would have taken them in,
swallowed them whole, knocked them back.
Out in the English soil, my old words
buried themselves. It made my mother's blood boil.
I cried one day with the wrong sound in my mouth.
I wanted them back; I wanted my old accent back,
my old tongue. My *dour, soor* Scottish tongue.
Sing-songy. I wanted to *gie it laldie*.

My Shadow by R L Stevenson

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow —
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an india-rubber ball,
And he sometimes goes so little that there's none of him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close behind me, he's a coward you can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.

Isobel was unable to come at the last minute
but she sent in some quirky epitaphs found on
gravestones.

1. A ship's captain and his wife.
Here we lie in horizontal position like a ship laid
up
Stripped of her sails and rigging.
2. From St Andrews.
In memory of — — who fell off the Step Rock
Into the arms of Jesus.
3. The Falkirk Flirt.
Here lies in peace secure
A lass inclined to mirth
Who by the way of making sure
Took her paradise on earth.
4. The Haberdasher.
Here lies John Smith, sometime Hosier and Hab-
erdasher in this place
He left his hose, his Anna and his love,
To sing Hosanna in the realms above.
5. Fife.
Of children in all she bore him twenty-four:
Thank the Lord there will be no more.

6. Inverness.
Here lyeth wrapped in clay
The body of Ester Wray:
I have no more to say
Except bless the day
She went away
3rd May
1872.
7. Holy Rude, Stirling.
Chief Constable, of Stirlingshire.
Our life is but a winter day;
Some only breakfast and away;
Others to dinner stay
And are full fed:
The oldest man but sups
And goes to bed
Large is his debt
That lingers out the day;
He that goes soonest
Has the least to pay.

Mary's three chosen poems

Sarah: Fed Up by Janet Paisley

See ma mammy;
says eat yer dinner.
Gies me cabbidge.
See ma granny;
says the wean
wullnae eat that,
leave it, hen.
Gies me choclit.
See ma daddy;
says ah've goatie
clear ma plate.
Dinnae like that
greasy gravy;
stane cauld tatties.
See ma granda,
says the bairn
s'no goat a stummick
like a coo.
Gies me lickris,
pandrops, chews.
Ett thum aw.
Feel seek noo.

Blethertoun Rovers by Matthew Fitt

Blethertoun Rovers play in blue
But they have'nae got a clue.
Jist last Sunday oot they ran
And got banjaxed fifteen-wan.

Their striker's name is Magnus Shore,
Couldn't hit a coo-shed door.
Last week he got the baw and spooned it -
Even noo, they have'nae found it.

The left back has them aw in fits
When he forgets his fitbaw bitts.
If he cannae get the skipper's,
He plays in the groundsman's slippers.

Jooglie the goalie lowps and rolls,
Biels the Blethertouner's goals.
Where the baw is he jist guesses
Through his muckle jam-jar glesses.

The Rovers fans are never singin,
The coach's heid is ayewise hingin.
His team are sic a bunch o' duddies -
He should hae signed eleven cuddies

Street Talk by J K Annand

There was a rammie in the street,
A stishie and stramash.
The crabbit wifie up the stair
Pit up her winda sash.

"Nou what's adae?" the wifie cried,
"Juist tell me what's adae."
*A day is twinty-fower hours, missis,
Nou gie us peace to play.*

"Juist tell me what's ado," she cried,
"And nane o yer gab," cried she.
*D'ye no ken a doo's a pigeon, missis?
Nou haud your wheesht a wee.*

"I want to ken what's up," she cried,
"And nae mair o yer cheek, ye loun."
*It's only yer winda that's up, missis.
For guidsake pit it down.*

Fiona wrote her reflection on the NHS

The NHS is broke and facing some lean years
So they've hatched a plot to dispose of us seniors,
They are trying very hard to keep it all quiet
And have innocently called it "the recommended diet."

It's so good for us and so healthy they say
To stuff ourselves with the five-a-day -
Cabbage and sprouts, pulses and beans
Well, we all know what that lot means!

Maybe doctors in future will get promotion
When our death certificate says "DIED of EXPLOSION"

Barbara read three poems - this is the first

The Owl Critic by James Thomas Fields
(1817-1881) American poet

"Who stuffed that white owl?" No one spoke in the shop,
The barber was busy, and he couldn't stop;
The customers, waiting their turns, were all reading
The "Daily," the "Herald," the "Post," little heeding
The young man who blurted out such a blunt question;
Not one raised a head, or even made a suggestion;
And the barber kept on shaving.

"Don't you see, Mr. Brown,"
Cried the youth, with a frown,
"How wrong the whole thing is,
How preposterous each wing is,
How flattened the head is, how jammed down the neck is --
In short, the whole owl, what an ignorant wreck 't is!
I make no apology;
I've learned owl-eology.

I've passed days and nights in a hundred collections,
And cannot be blinded to any deflections
Arising from unskilful fingers that fail
To stuff a bird right, from his beak to his tail.
Mister Brown! Mr. Brown!
Do take that bird down,
Or you'll soon be the laughingstock all over town!"
And the barber kept on shaving.

"I've studied owls,
And other night-fowls,
And I tell you
What I know to be true;
An owl cannot roost
With his limbs so unloosed;
No owl in this world
Ever had his claws curled,
Ever had his legs slanted,
Ever had his bill canted,
Ever had his neck screwed
Into that attitude.
He cant do it, because
'Tis against all bird-laws.

Anatomy teaches,
Ornithology preaches,

An owl has a toe
That can't turn out so!
I've made the white owl my study for years,
And to see such a job almost moves me to tears!
Mr. Brown, I'm amazed
You should be so gone crazed
As to put up a bird
In that posture absurd!
To look at that owl really brings on a dizziness;
The man who stuffed him don't half know his business!"
And the barber kept on shaving.

"Examine those eyes
I'm filled with surprise
Taxidermists should pass
Off on you such poor glass;
So unnatural they seem
They'd make Audubon scream,
And John Burroughs laugh
To encounter such chaff.
Do take that bird down;
Have him stuffed again, Brown!"
And the barber kept on shaving!

"With some sawdust and bark
I could stuff in the dark
An owl better than that.
I could make an old hat
Look more like an owl
Than that horrid fowl,
Stuck up there so stiff like a side of coarse leather.
In fact, about him there's not one natural feather."

Just then, with a wink and a sly normal lurch,
The owl, very gravely, got down from his perch,
Walked around, and regarded his fault-finding critic
(Who thought he was stuffed) with a glance analytic,
And then fairly hooted, as if he should say:
"Your learning's at fault this time, anyway:
Don't waste it again on a live bird, I pray.
I'm an owl; you're another. Sir Critic, good day!"
And the barber kept on shaving.



Barbara's second poem

The Tale of Custard the Dragon by Ogden Nash

Belinda lived in a little white house,
With a little black kitten and a little gray mouse,
And a little yellow dog and a little red wagon,
And a realio, trulio, little pet dragon.

Now the name of the little black kitten was Ink,
And the little gray mouse, she called her Blink,
And the little yellow dog was sharp as Mustard,
But the dragon was a coward, and she called him Custard.

Custard the dragon had big sharp teeth,
And spikes on top of him and scales underneath,
Mouth like a fireplace, chimney for a nose,
And realio, trulio, daggers on his toes.

Belinda was as brave as a barrel full of bears,
And Ink and Blink chased lions down the stairs,
Mustard was as brave as a tiger in a rage,
But Custard cried for a nice safe cage.

Belinda tickled him, she tickled him unmerciful,
Ink, Blink and Mustard, they rudely called him Percival,
They all sat laughing in the little red wagon
At the realio, trulio, cowardly dragon.

Belinda giggled till she shook the house,
And Blink said Week!, which is giggling for a mouse,
Ink and Mustard rudely asked his age,
When Custard cried for a nice safe cage.

Suddenly, suddenly they heard a nasty sound,
And Mustard growled, and they all looked around.
Meowch! cried Ink, and Ooh! cried Belinda,
For there was a pirate, climbing in the winda.

Pistol in his left hand, pistol in his right,
And he held in his teeth a cutlass bright,
His beard was black, one leg was wood;
It was clear that the pirate meant no good.

Belinda paled, and she cried, Help! Help!
But Mustard fled with a terrified yelp,
Ink trickled down to the bottom of the household,
And little mouse Blink was strategically mouseholed.

But up jumped Custard, snorting like an engine,
Clashed his tail like irons in a dungeon,
With a clatter and a clank and a jangling squirm
He went at the pirate like a robin at a worm.

The pirate gaped at Belinda's dragon,
And gulped some grog from his pocket flagon,
He fired two bullets but they didn't hit,
And Custard gobbled him, every bit.

Belinda embraced him, Mustard licked him,
No one mourned for his pirate victim
Ink and Blink in glee did gyrate
Around the dragon that ate the pyrate.

Belinda still lives in her little white house,
With her little black kitten and her little gray mouse,
And her little yellow dog and her little red wagon,
And her realio, trulio, little pet dragon.

Belinda is as brave as a barrel full of bears,
And Ink and Blink chase lions down the stairs,
Mustard is as brave as a tiger in a rage,
But Custard keeps crying for a nice safe cage.

Isobel also remembered a little verse composed by 8 year old James in her class in her 2nd year of teaching.

I have two holes in my stocking
Oh! Dearie me
I know I should have one
But I find I have three!



Barbara's third poem

Talking Turkeys by Benjamin Zephania

Be nice to yu turkeys dis christmas
Cos' turkeys just wanna hav fun
Turkeys are cool, turkeys are wicked
An every turkey has a Mum.
Be nice to yu turkeys dis christmas,
Don't eat it, keep it alive,
It could be yu mate, an not on your plate
Say, Yo! Turkey I'm on your side.
I got lots of friends who are turkeys
An all of dem fear christmas time,
Dey wanna enjoy it, dey say humans de-
stroyed it
An humans are out of dere mind,
Yeah, I got lots of friends who are turkeys
Dey all hav a right to a life,
Not to be caged up an genetically made up
By any farmer an his wife.

Turkeys just wanna play reggae
Turkeys just wanna hip-hop
Can yu imagine a nice young turkey saying,
'I cannot wait for de chop',
Turkeys like getting presents, dey wanna
watch christmas TV,
Turkeys hav brains an turkeys feel pain
In many ways like yu an me.

I once knew a turkey called...Turkey
He said "Benji explain to me please,
Who put de turkey in christmas
An what happens to christmas trees?",
I said "I am not too sure turkey
But it's nothing to do wid Christ Mass
Humans get greedy an waste more dan
need be
An business men mek loadsa cash'.

Be nice to yu turkey dis christmas
Invite dem indoors fe sum greens
Let dem eat cake an let dem partake
In a plate of organic grown beans,
Be nice to yu turkey dis christmas
An spare dem de cut of de knife,
Join Turkeys United an dey'll be delighted
An yu will mek new friends 'FOR LIFE'.

Fiona's third reflective poem fits in well here

Happy New Year

Fairylights are twinkling – Christmas is drawing near
But all I long for, all I want, is a Happy New Year.
All I wish is simply this – that the days would pass much faster
For 2025 has been, for us, an unmitigated disaster.

Sister Meg fell off her stool while sitting at the bar
Brother John went to help, but pranged his brand new car
It took four men to lift poor Meg off the bar-room floor
But then they couldn't get her out till they'd removed the door.

Meg, I admit, is rather large, in fact she's really stout,
So they called a local carpenter to come and get her out.
Now I'm really worried, as today I received the bill
I haven't any money, so I'll have to raid the till.

Grandad, too, has got himself into an awful tangle
Somehow he managed to catch his beard in Granny's washing
mangle
Poor Grandad...he used to be such a really lovely singer,
But now he's lying in hospital with a mouth chock full of wring-
er!

But Mother's misfortune, I believe, it really is the worst
She tried to turn the tap on, but found we had a burst
Water was gushing, pouring out from every nook and cranny
It even reached the basement and nearly drowned poor Granny.

"Can it get worse?" I hear you ask, I'm afraid that, yes, it can
For Grandad discharged himself today and then stole someone's
van
He arrived back - we were all asleep - in the middle of the night
Looking deathly pale and exhausted, he gave us such a fright.
I awoke again to a deafening noise, about 2.00am, I think
It must have been the police, because now Grandad's in the
clink.
I really don't believe that things could possibly get any worse
It seems to me this family is living under a curse.

To cheer us up, John has said he'd take us to the pub
Well, here we are, we've drunk a lot and even had some grub.
With so much wine, I feel as drunk as a tipsy Christmas elf??
Oh no! I don't believe this.. I've only gone and wet myself!

Roll on 2026, when things surely must get better
Though, according to the forecast, it's going to be much wetter
So I've booked my seat on an aeroplane and I'm off to find the
sun
I know I can't afford it... but SURELY I'll have some fun!

Irene's three great choices

Bidie-in A collaboration between Diana Hendry
and Hamish Whyte

APPLICATION - Diana Hendry

O let me be your bidie-in
And keep you close within
As dearest kith and kin
I promise I'd be tidy in
Whatever bed or bunk you're in
I'd never ever drink your gin
I'd be your multi-vitamin
I'd wear my sexy tiger-skin
And play my love-sick mandolin
It cannot be a mortal sin
To be in such a dizzy spin
I'd like to get inside your skin
I'd even be your concubine
I hope you know I'm genuine
O let me be your bidie-in.

APPOINTMENTS - Hamish Whyte

Of course you may be my Bidie-in.
You didn't need to apply within.
A braw new world's about begin,
We'll gang together through thick and thin.
We'll walk unscathed through burr and whin.
If you're to be my porcupine
I'll just have to bear it and grin.
I'll be your sheik, your djinn,
I'll be yang to your yin.
You'll be my kitten, my mitten, my terrapin.
All night long we'll make love's sweet din,
And never mind the wheelie-bin.
In our romantic cinema there'll be no FIN.
And so I say again - you're in,
You've got the job of bidie-in.

Glasgow Street Rhymes

Murder in the Chip Shop

Last night there was a murder in the chip shop
A wee dug stole a haddy bone
A big dug tried tae get it aff him
So ah hit him wi' a big tattie scone

Ah shouted tae ma Auntie Sarah
Ma Auntie Sarah wasnae in
Ah peeped through a hole in the windae
An shouted "Auntie Sarah, are ye in?"

Her teeth were lyin' on the table
Her hair was hangin' oot the bed
An ah nearly burst ma sides wi' laughin'
When I saw her screwin' aff her wooden leg

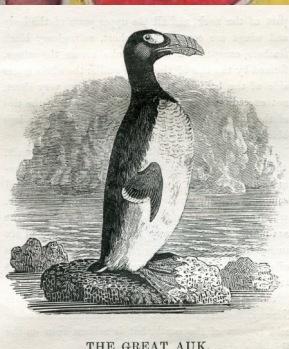
Ah married a wife

Ah merried a wife, oh then, oh then,
Ah merried a wife, oh then,
I merried a wife an' she hit me wi' a knife,
Oh the world must be coming to an end!

Ah sent her fur butter, oh then, oh then,
Ah sent her fur butter, oh then,
Ah sent her fur butter, and she fell in the gutter,
Oh the world must be coming to an end!

Ah sent her fur cheese, oh then, oh then,
Ah sent her fur cheese, oh then,
Ah sent her fur cheese,
An' she fell an' skint her knees,
Oh the world must be coming to an end!

Ah sent her fur bread, oh then, oh then,
Ah sent her fur bread an' she drapped doon dead!
Oh the world must be coming to an end!



THE GREAT AUK.

A little Ditty by Ogden Nash (to fill a space)

Consider the Auk;
Becoming extinct because he forgot how to fly
And could only walk.
Consider Man;
Who may well become extinct because he forgot how to walk
And learned how to fly
Before he thought.

To finish with, a tale of treachery, chosen by me

Roald Dahl

The animal I really dig,
Above all others is the pig.
Pigs are noble. Pigs are clever,
Pigs are courteous. However,
Now and then, to break this rule,
One meets a pig who is a fool.
What, for example, would you say,
If strolling through the woods one day,
Right there in front of you, you saw
A pig who'd built his house of STRAW?
The Wolf who saw it licked his lips,
And said, 'That pig has had his chips.'

*'Little pig, little pig, let me come in!'
'No, no, by the hairs on my chinny-chin-chin!'
'Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in!'*

The little pig began to pray,
But Wolfie blew his house away.
He shouted, 'Bacon, pork and ham!
Oh, what a lucky Wolf I am!
And though he ate the pig quite fast,
He carefully kept the tail till last.
Wolf wandered on, a trifle bloated.
Surprise, surprise, for soon he noted
Another little house for pigs,
And this one had been built of TWIGS!

*'Little pig, little pig, let me come in!'
'No, no, by the hairs on my chinny-chin-chin!'
'Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in!'*

The Wolf said, 'Okay, here we go!
He then began to blow and blow.
The little pig began to squeal.
He cried, 'Oh Wolf, you've had one meal!
Why can't we talk and make a deal?
The Wolf replied, 'Not on your nelly!'
And soon the pig was in his belly.

'Two juicy little pigs!' Wolf cried,
'But still I'm not quite satisfied!
I know how full my tummy's bulging,
But oh, how I adore indulging.'
So creeping quietly as a mouse,
The Wolf approached another house,
A house which also had inside
A little piggy trying to hide.
'You'll not get me!' the Piggy cried.

'I'll blow you down!' the Wolf replied.
'You'll need,' Pig said, 'a lot of puff,
And I don't think you've got enough.'
Wolf huffed and puffed and blew and blew.
The house stayed up as good as new.
'If I can't blow it down,' Wolf said,
I'll have to blow it up instead.
I'll come back in the dead of night
And blow it up with dynamite!
Pig cried, 'You brute! I might have known!
Then, picking up the telephone,
He dialled as quickly as he could
The number of Red Riding Hood.

'Hello,' she said. 'Who's speaking? Who?
Oh, hello, Piggy, how d'you do?'
Pig cried, 'I need your help, Miss Hood!
Oh help me, please! D'you think you could?'
'I'll try of course,' Miss Hood replied.
'What's on your mind...?' 'A Wolf!' Pig cried.
'I know you've dealt with wolves before,
And now I've got one at my door!'

'My darling Pig,' she said, 'my sweet,
That's something really up my street.
I've just begun to wash my hair.
But when it's dry, I'll be right there.'

A short while later, through the wood,
Came striding brave Miss Riding Hood.
The Wolf stood there, his eyes ablaze,
And yellowish, like mayonnaise.
His teeth were sharp, his gums were raw,
And spit was dripping from his jaw.
Once more the maiden's eyelid flickers.
She draws the pistol from her knickers.
Once more she hits the vital spot,
And kills him with a single shot.
Pig, peeping through the window, stood
And yelled, 'Well done, Miss Riding Hood!'



Ah, Piglet, you must never trust
Young ladies from the upper crust.
For now, Miss Riding Hood, one notes,
Not only has two wolfskin coats,
But when she goes from place to place,
She has a PIGSKIN TRAVELING CASE.