

St. Mark's Church of England Primary School



11th February 2019

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Dear Parents

'Off by Heart' Poetry Competition

We are very excited to announce that St Mark's will be holding the first 'Off by Heart' Poetry competition to be held in school for many years.

For this competition we are asking all the children to learn and perform one of the poems in the anthology enclosed with this letter. Children can do this on their own, in pairs or in a group. It is important that they know their poem by heart and have a performance that brings the poem to life.

The children are welcome to use props and costumes, but this is not essential.

Our Book Week this year will run from Monday 4th to Friday 8th March, with a focus on books of poetry.

The children will be reciting / performing their poems in class on Tuesday 5th March and the three winning entries from each class will go through to the Grand Final, to be held in the hall, on Friday 8th March. Parents, family members and the classes of finalists are invited to join us for the Grand Final. Our panel of judges will be considering:

- how well the poem has been learnt
- how clear and loudly the poem is delivered
- the overall performance of the poem

The best way to learn a poem is not to try and do it all at once. Little and often, line by line, is often the best approach.

Staff and parents are also encouraged to have a go as this will also give the children some extra encouragement !

Good luck and have fun learning your chosen poem.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs R Shone
English Subject Leader

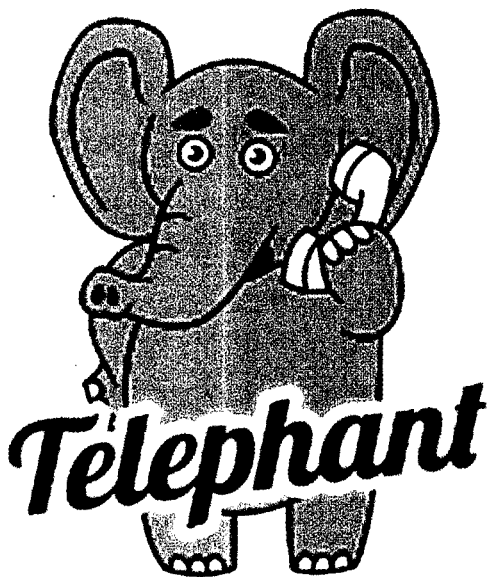
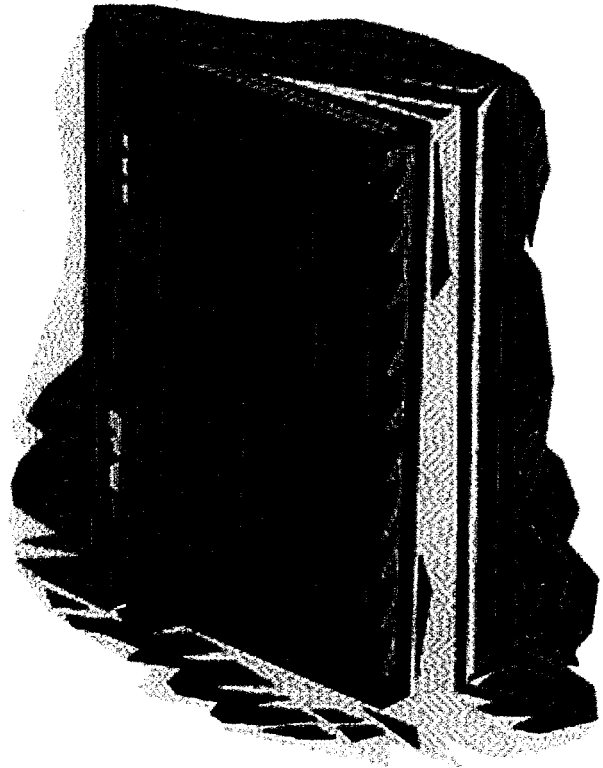


'Off By Heart' Poetry Competition - Key Stage 2

Someone

Someone came knocking
At my wee, small door;
Someone came knocking;
I'm sure-sure-sure;
I listened, I opened,
I looked to left and right,
But nought there was a stirring
In the still dark night;
Only the busy beetle
Tap-tapping in the wall,
Only from the forest
The screech-owl's call,
Only the cricket whistling
While the dewdrops fall,
So I know not who came knocking,
At all, at all, at all.

by Walter De La Mare



Elelephony

Once there was an elephant,
Who tried to use the telephant.
No! No! I mean an elephone
Who tried to use the telephone.
(Dear me! I am not certain quite
That even now I've got it right.)
Howe'er it was, he got his trunk
Entangled in the telephunk.
The more he tried to get it free,
The louder buzzed the telephee.
(I fear I'd better drop the song
Of elephop and telephong!)

by Laura Richards

The Sea

The sea is a hungry dog,
Giant and grey.
He rolls on the beach all day.
With his clashing teeth and shaggy jaws
Hour upon hour he gnaws
The rumbling, tumbling stones,
And 'Bones, bones, bones, bones!'
The giant sea-dog moans,
Licking his greasy paws.

And when the night wind roars
And the moon rocks in the stormy cloud,
He bounds to his feet and snuffs and sniffs,
Shaking his wet sides over the cliffs,
And howls and hollos long and loud.

But on quiet days in May or June,
When even the grasses on the dune
Play no more their reedy tune,
With his head between his paws
He lies on the sandy shores,
So quiet, so quiet, he scarcely snores.

by James Reeves

City Jungle

Rain splinters town.

Lizard cars cruise by;
their radiators grin.

Thin headlights stare –
shop doorways keep
their mouths shut.

At the roadside
hunched houses cough.

Newspapers shuffle by,
hands in their pockets.

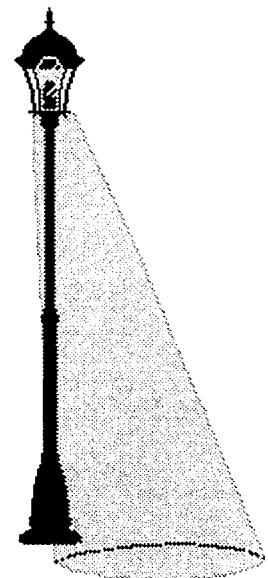


The gutter gargles.

A motorbike snarls;
Dustbins flinch.

Streetlights bare
their yellow teeth.
The motorway's
cat-black tongue
lashes across
the glistening back
of the tarmac night.

by Pie Corbett



How to Cut a Pomegranate

'Never,' said my father,
'Never cut a pomegranate
through the heart. It will weep blood.
Treat it delicately, with respect.
Just slit the upper skin across four quarters.
This is a magic fruit,
so when you split it open, be prepared
for the jewels of the world to tumble out,
more precious than garnets,
more lustrous than rubies,
lit as if from inside.
Each jewel contains a living seed.
Separate one crystal.
Hold it up to catch the light.
Inside is a whole universe.
No common jewel can give you this.'
Afterwards, I tried to make necklaces
of pomegranate seeds.
The juice spurted out, bright crimson,
and stained my fingers, then my mouth.
I didn't mind. The juice tasted of gardens
I had never seen, voluptuous
with myrtle, lemon, jasmine,
and alive with parrots' wings.
The pomegranate reminded me
that somewhere I had another home.

by Imtiaz Dharker



Fisherman Chant

Sister river
Brother river
Mother river
Father river
O life giver
O life taker
O friend river
What have you
in store
for a poor
fisherman
today?
From my boat
I cast my net
to your heart
O friend river

and I hope
you return it
gleaming with silver
O friend river
Sister river
Brother river
Mother river
Father river
O life giver
O life taker
O friend river
What have you
in store
for a poor fisherman
today?

by John Agard



What is Pink?

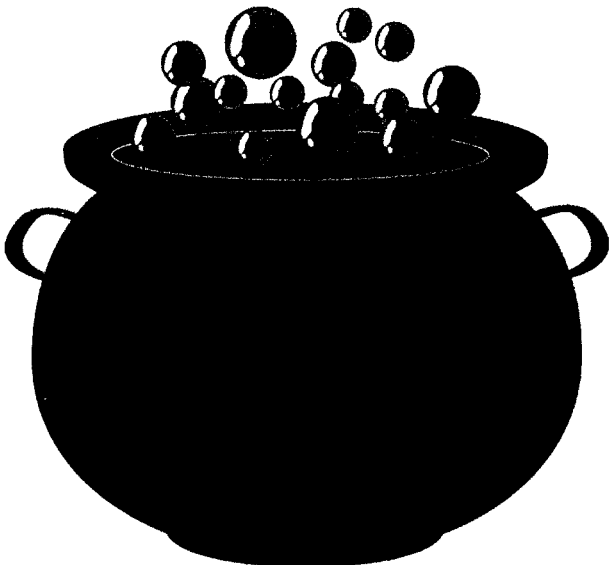
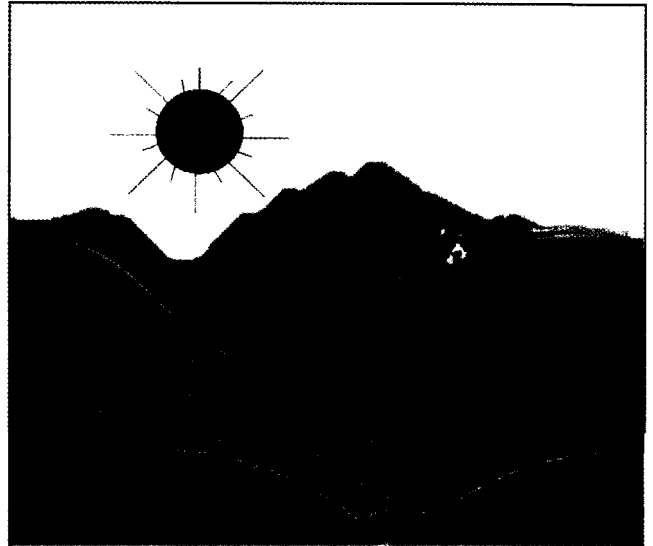
What is pink? A rose is pink
By the fountain's brink.
What is red? A poppy's red
In its barley bed.
What is blue? The sky is blue
Where the clouds float through.
What is white? A swan is white
Sailing in the light.
What is yellow? Pears are yellow,
Rich and ripe and mellow.
What is green? The grass is green,
With small flowers between.
What is violet? Clouds are violet
In the summer twilight.
What is orange? Why, an orange,
Just an orange!

by Christina Rossetti

Written in March

The cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!
Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The Ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon:
There's joy in the mountains;
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

by William Wordsworth



The Witches Spell

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and caldron bubble.
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the caldron 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 howlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and caldron bubble.
Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

by William Shakespeare

Wings

If I had wings

I would touch the fingertips of clouds
and glide on the wind's breath.

If I had wings

I would taste a chunk of the sun,
as hot as peppered curry.

If I had wings

I would listen to the clouds of sheep bleat
that graze on the blue.

If I had wings

I would breath deep and sniff
the scent of raindrops.

If I had wings

I would gaze at the people
who cling to the earth.

If I had wings

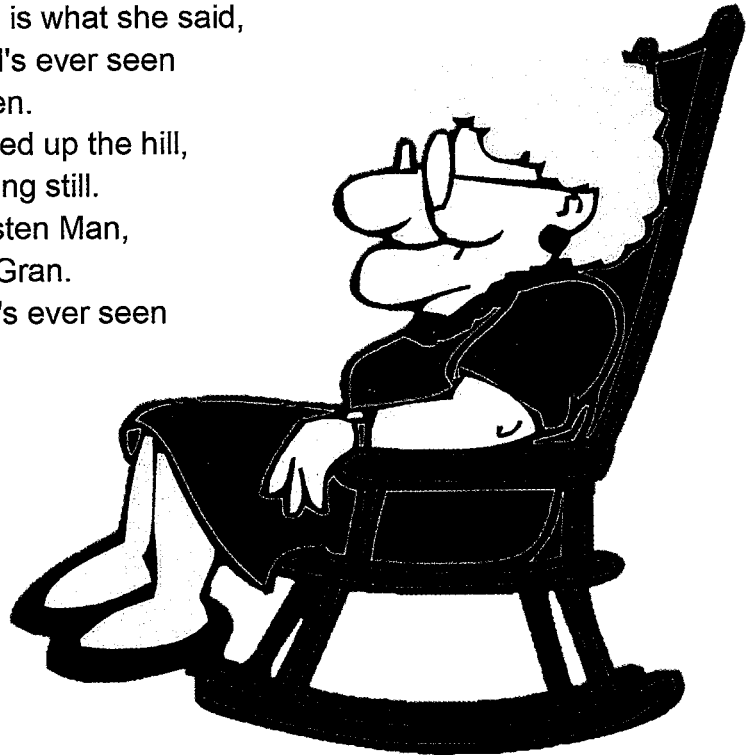
I would dream of
swimming the deserts
and walking the seas.

by Pie Corbett



Gran Can You Rap?

Gran was in her chair she was taking a nap
When I tapped her on the shoulder to see if she could rap.
Gran can you rap? Can you rap? Can you Gran?
And she opened one eye and she said to me, Man,
I'm the best rapping Gran this world's ever seen
I'm a tip-top, slip-slap, rap-rap queen.
And she rose from the chair in the corner of the room
And she started to rap with a bim-bam-boom,
And she rolled up her eyes and she rolled round her head
And as she rolled by this is what she said,
I'm the best rapping gran this world's ever seen
I'm a nip-nap, yip-yap, rap-rap queen.
Then she rapped past my Dad and she rapped past my mother,
She rapped past me and my little baby brother.
She rapped her arms narrow she rapped her arms wide,
She rapped through the door and she rapped outside.
She's the best rapping Gran this world's ever seen
She's a drip-drop, trip-trap, rap-rap queen.
She rapped down the garden she rapped down the street,
The neighbours all cheered and they tapped their feet.
She rapped through the traffic lights as they turned red
As she rapped round the corner this is what she said,
I'm the best rapping Gran this world's ever seen
I'm a flip-flop, hip-hop, rap-rap queen.
She rapped down the lane she rapped up the hill,
And she disappeared she was rapping still.
I could hear Gran's voice saying, Listen Man,
Listen to the rapping of the rap-rap Gran.
I'm the best rapping Gran this world's ever seen
I'm a -
tip-top, slip-slap,
nip-nap, yip-yap,
hip-hop, trip-trap,
touch yer cap,
take a nap,
happy, happy, happy, happy,
rap-rap-queen.



by Jack Ousby