

**CHORAL SPEAKING 2016**

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**Please read Regulations for Choral Speaking as in Syllabus, 2016**

- (d) Movement must not **detract** from the form of the verse pattern and the quality of the speaking.*
- (e) The verse shape and pattern must not be distorted by addition of external words, song or music.*
- (f) A large percentage of the work must be choric.*

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**Please read Regulations for Action Verse as in Syllabus, 2016**

- (c) Movement and gesture are permissible and **RECOMMENDED**.*
- (d) The verse shape and pattern must not be distorted by addition of external words, song or music.*
- (e) A large percentage of the work must be choric.*

Choral Speaking Under 18 Years

a}

HARVEST HYMN

We spray the fields and scatter  
The poison on the ground  
So that no wicked wild flowers  
Upon our farm be found.  
We like whatever helps us  
To line our purse with pence;  
The twenty-four-hour broiler-house  
And neat electric fence.

All concrete sheds around us  
And Jaguars in the yard,  
The telly lounge and deep-freeze  
Are ours from working hard.

We fire the fields for harvest  
The hedges swell the flame,  
The oak trees and the cottages  
From which our fathers came.  
We give no compensation,  
The earth is ours today,  
And if we lose on arable,  
Then bungalows will pay.

All concrete sheds around us  
And Jaguars in the yard,  
The telly lounge and deep-freeze  
Are ours from working hard.

John Betjeman.

b}

Own Choice.

**Year of Birth: 1998 and later.**

Choral Speaking Girls Under 15 Years

a} ALTERNATIVE ENDINGS TO AN UNWRITTEN BALLAD

I stole through the dungeons, while everyone slept,  
Till I came to the cage where the Monster was kept.  
There, locked in the arms of a Giant Baboon,  
Rigid and smiling, lay ... MRS RAVOON!

I climbed the clock tower in the first morning sun  
And ‘twas midday at least ‘ere my journey was done;  
But the clock never sounded the last stroke of noon,  
For there, from the clapper, swung MRS RAVOON!

I hauled in the line, and I took my first look  
At the half-eaten horror that hung from the hook.  
I had dragged from the depths of the limpid lagoon  
The luminous body of MRS RAVOON.

I fled in the storm, the lightning and thunder,  
And there, as a flash split the darkness asunder,  
Chewing a rat’s-tail and mumbling a rune,  
Mad in the moat squatted MRS RAVOON!

I stood by the waters so green and so thick,  
And I stirred at the scum with my old withered stick;  
When there rose through the ooze, like a monstrous balloon,  
The bloated cadaver of MRS RAVOON.

Facing the fens, I looked back from the shore  
Where all had been empty a moment before;  
And there by the light of the Lincolnshire moon,  
Immense on the marshes, stood... MRS RAVOON!

Paul Dehn.

b} Own Choice.

**Year of Birth: 2001 and later.**

Choral Speaking Girls Under 13 Years

a}

THE SERPENT

There was a Serpent who had to sing.  
There was. There was.  
He simply gave up Serpentine.  
Because. Because.  
He didn't like his Kind of Life;  
He couldn't find a proper Wife;  
He was a Serpent with a soul;  
He got no Pleasure down his Hole.  
And so, of course, he had to Sing,  
And Sing he did, like Anything!  
The Birds, they were, they were Astounded;  
And various Measures Propounded  
To stop the Serpent's Awful Racket:  
They bought a Drum. He wouldn't Whack it.  
They sent – you always send – to Cuba  
And got a Most Commodious Tuba;  
They got a Horn, they got a Flute,  
But Nothing would suit.  
He said, “Look, Birds, all this is futile:  
I do *not* like to Bang or Tootle.”  
And then he cut loose with a Horrible Note  
That practically split the Top of his Throat.  
“You see,” he said, with a Serpent's Leer,  
“I'm Serious about my Singing Career!”  
And the Woods Resounded with many a Shriek  
As the Birds flew off to the End of Next Week.

Theodore Roethke.

b}

Own Choice.

**Year of Birth: 2003 and later.**

**Class 254 “The Geraldine Foley Campion Perpetual Trophy”**

**Choral Speaking Girls Under 11 Years**

a}

**THE BLOB**

And... and what is it like?

Oh, it's scary and fatbumped  
and spike-eared and groany.  
It's hairy and face-slumped  
and bolshie and bony.

And... and where does it live?

Oh, in comets and spaceships  
And pulsars and blackholes.  
In craters and sheepdips  
And caverns and northpoles.

And... and what does it eat?

Oh, roast rocks and fishlegs  
and x-rays and mooncrust.  
Then steelmeat and sun-eggs  
and lava and spacedust.

And... and who are its enemies?

Oh, Zonkers and Moonquakes  
And Sunquarks and Zigbags.  
Dumb Duncers and Milkshakes  
And Smogsters and Wigwags.

And... what does it wear?

Not a thing! It's bare!

Wes Magee.

b}

Own Choice.

**Year of Birth: 2005 and later.**

Choral Speaking Girls Under 9 Years

a}

FINGUMMY...

Fingummy’s fat  
And Fingummy’s small,  
And Fingummy lives  
With the boots in the hall.

If Fingummy bites,  
If Fingummy tears,  
If Fingummy chases you  
Up the stairs

Shout ‘Bumble-Bee-Soup  
And Bluebottle Jam.’  
And run up to bed as fast as you can!

Cos Fingummy lives  
Where there’s never no light  
And Fingummy makes  
The dark sounds of the night,  
And Fingummy’s fat  
And Fingummy’s small,  
And Fingummy lives  
In the dark, in the hall...

Mike Harding.

b}

Own Choice.

**Year of Birth: 2007 and later.**

Choral Speaking Boys Under 15 Years

a}

JABBERWOCKY

‘Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

‘Beware the Jabberwock, my son!  
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!  
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun  
The frumious Bandersnatch!’

He took his vorpal sword in hand:  
Long time the manxome for he sought –  
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,  
And stood a while in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,  
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,  
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,  
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One two! And through and through  
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!  
He left it dead, and with its head  
He went galumphing back.

‘And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?  
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!  
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!’  
He chortled in his joy.

‘Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Lewis Carroll.

b}

Own Choice.

**Year of Birth: 2001 and later.**



**“The Weston Perpetual Cup”**  
**Choral Speaking Boys Under 13 Years**

a}

**THE HAIRY TOE**

Once there was a woman went out to pick beans,  
and she found a Hairy Toe.

She took the Hairy Toe home with her,  
and that night, when she went to bed,  
the wind began to moan and groan.

Away off in the distance  
she seemed to hear a voice crying,  
‘Where’s my Hair-r-ry To-o-e?  
Who’s got my Hair-r-ry To-o-e?’

The woman scrooched down,  
way down under the covers,  
and about that time  
The wind appeared to hit the house,

smoosh,

and the old house creaked and cracked  
like something was trying to get in.

The voice had come nearer,  
almost at the door now,  
and it said,

‘Where’s my Hair-r-ry To-o-e?  
Who’s got my Hair-r-ry To-o-e?’

The woman scrooched further down  
under the covers  
and pulled them tight around her head.

The wind growled around the house  
like some big animal  
and r-r-um-umbled  
over the chimbley.

All at once she heard the door cr-r-a-ack  
and Something slipped in  
and began to creep over the floor.

The floor went  
cre-e-eak, cre-e-eak  
at every step that thing took towards her bed.

The woman could almost feel  
it bending over her bed.

There in an awful voice it said:  
‘Where’s my Hair-r-ry To-o-e?  
Who’s got my Hair-r-ry To-o-e?  
You’ve got it!’

Traditional.

b}

Own Choice.

**Year of Birth: 2003 and later.**

Choral Speaking Boys Under 11 Years

a}

THE MARROG

My desk’s at the back of the class  
And nobody nobody knows  
I’m a Marrog from Mars  
With a body of brass  
And seventeen fingers and toes.  
Wouldn’t they shriek if they knew  
I’ve three eyes at the back of my head  
And my hair is bright purple  
My nose is deep blue  
And my teeth are half yellow half red?  
My five arms are silver with knives on them sharper than  
spears.  
I could go back right now if I liked –  
And return in a million light years.  
I could gobble them all for  
I’m seven foot tall  
And I’m breathing green flames from my ears.  
Wouldn’t they yell if they knew  
If they guessed that a Marrog was here?  
Ha-ha they haven’t a clue –  
Or wouldn’t they tremble with fear!  
Look, look, a Marrog  
They’d all scrum and shout.  
The blackboard would fall and the ceiling would crack  
And the teacher would faint I suppose.  
But I grin to myself sitting right at the back  
And Nobody nobody knows.

R.C.Scriven.

b}

Own Choice.

**Year of Birth: 2005 and later.**

**Choral Speaking Boys Under 9 Years**

a}

**GIANT THUNDER**

Giant Thunder, striding home,  
Wonders if his supper’s done.

‘Hag wife, hag wife, bring me my bones!’  
‘They are not done,’ the old hag moans.

‘Not done? Not done?’ the giant roars  
And heaves his old wife out of doors.

Cries he, ‘I’ll have them, cooked or not,’  
But overturns the cooking pot.

He flings the burning coals about;  
See how the lightning flashes out!

Upon the gale the old hag rides,  
The cloudy moon for terror hides.

All the world with thunder quakes;  
Forest shudders, mountain shakes;

From the cloud the rainstorm breaks;  
Village ponds are turned to lakes;

Every living creature wakes.  
Hungry Giant, lie you still!

Stamp no more from hill to hill –  
Tomorrow you shall have your fill.

James Reeves.

b}

Own Choice.

**Year of Birth: 2007 and later.**

Choral Speaking 6<sup>th</sup> Class – Mixed Boys and Girls

a}

THE HAG

The Hag is astride,  
This night for to ride;  
The Devil and she together:  
Through thick and through thin,  
Now out and then in,  
Though n'er so foul be the weather.

A thorn or a burr  
She takes for a spur:  
With a lash of a bramble she rides now,  
Through brakes and through briers,  
O'er ditches and mires,  
She follows the Spirit that guides now.

No beast, for his food.  
Dares now range the wood;  
But hushed in his lair he lies lurking:  
While mischiefs, by these,  
On land and on seas,  
At noon of night are a-working.

The storm will arise  
And trouble the skies;  
This night, and more for the wonder,  
The ghost from the tomb  
Affrighted shall come,  
Called out by the clap of the thunder.

Robert Herrick.

b}

Own Choice.

Choral Speaking 5<sup>th</sup> Class – Mixed Boys and Girls

a}

RUINOUS RHYMES

Pussycat, pussycat, where have you been,  
Licking your lips with your whiskers so clean?  
Pussycat, pussycat, purring and pudgy,  
Pussycat, pussycat. WHERE IS OUR BUDGIE?

This little pig went to market  
But I think that the point is well taken –  
It’s the cute little pig that wisely stayed home  
Who succeeded in saving his bacon.

Mary, Mary quite contrary,  
How does your garden grow?  
With snails and frogs and neighbours’ dogs  
And terribly, terribly slow.

Sing a song of sixpence?  
It’s hardly worth the sound.  
So if you want my singing  
Please offer me a pound.

When old Mother Hubbard  
Went to the cupboard  
Her dog for a morsel would beg.  
‘Not a scrap can be found,’  
She explained to her hound  
So he bit the poor dear on the leg.

Max Fatchen.

b}

Own Choice.

Choral Speaking 4<sup>th</sup> Class – Mixed Boys and Girls

a}

THE FOX AND THE GRAPES

(a fable by Aesop)

Grapes are growing, round and ripe,  
High upon the vine.  
Fox says, as he licks his lips,  
‘Those grapes will soon be mine.’

The grapes look plump and juicy.  
The fox, on his hind legs,  
Stretches up to reach for them  
Just like a dog that begs.

Fox jumps and keeps on jumping  
To try and take his treat.  
The grapes will be so tasty:  
Succulent and sweet.

At last, the hungry fox gives up.  
He’s tried for many an hour.  
He cannot reach the fruit and cries:  
‘I bet those grapes are sour!’

MORAL

*If something is good  
But it’s not to be had,  
Don’t fool yourself  
By pretending it’s bad.*

Celia Warren.

b}

Own Choice.

**Class 263     “The William O’Sullivan Memorial Perpetual Cup”**

**Choral Speaking 3<sup>rd</sup> Class – Mixed Boys and Girls**

a}

**SWINGING**

Swinging, swinging,  
Low and high,  
Down in the green grass  
And up in the sky.  
When I’m bigger I’ll stand when I swing,  
When I’m bigger I’ll do everything.

Swinging, swinging,  
Low and high,  
Up in the tree-tops  
Down by and by.  
When I’m bigger, then I can try,  
When I’m bigger I’ll reach to the sky.

Swinging, swinging,  
High and low,  
Up to the sun  
And down I go.

Leila Berg.

b}

Own Choice.

Action Verse – 11 Years and Under

a}

HULLABALOO!

Hullabaloo!  
We'll race downstairs,  
Splatter our porridge and bump the chairs,  
And teach the budgie a thing or two!  
Hullabalay baloo!

Hullabaloo!  
We'll spend the day  
In the most magnificent kind of way!  
We'll shout whenever we want to shout,  
And throw whatever we like about,  
And turn the neighbourhood inside out!  
Hullabaloo balay!

Hullabaloo!  
The sun is high,  
The clouds are shooshing across the sky,  
Birds are soaring and winds are free,  
Trees are tossing and we are WE!  
(Nobody else we would rather be!)  
Hullabalay baloo!

Hullabaloo!  
The day is done.  
We've had the funniest kind of fun,  
And once for ever belied the fears  
That morning laughter must end in tears,  
... *We're* not crying! So sucks to you!  
Hullabaloo... boohoo... boohoo!  
Hullabaloo... boohoo!

Ursula Moray Williams.

b}

Own Choice.

**Year of Birth: 2004 and later.**



Action Verse – 8 Years and Under

a}

BUSY DAY

Pop in  
pop out  
pop over the road  
pop out for a walk  
pop in for a talk  
pop down to the shop  
can't stop  
got to pop

got to pop?

pop where?  
pop what?

well  
I've got to  
pop round  
pop up  
pop in to town  
pop out and see  
pop in for tea  
pop down to the shop  
can't stop  
got to pop

got to pop?

pop where?  
pop what?

well  
I've got to  
pop in  
pop out  
pop over the road  
pop out for a walk  
pop in for a talk...

Michael Rosen.

b}

### TADPOLES

Ten little tedpoles  
    playing in a pool,  
‘Come’ said the water-rat,  
    ‘come along to school.  
Come and say your tables,  
    sitting in a row.’  
And all the little tadpoles said,  
    ‘No, no, no!’

Ten little tadpoles  
    swimming in and out,  
Racing and diving  
    and turning around about.  
‘Come,’ said their mother,  
    ‘dinner-time, I guess.’  
And all the little tadpoles cried,  
    ‘Yes, yes, yes!’

Rose Fyleman.

c}

### MOTHS AND MOONSHINE

Moths and moonshine mean to me  
Magic – madness – mystery.

Witches dancing weird and wild  
Mischiefs make for man and child.

Owls screech from woodland shades,  
Moths glide through moonlit glades,

Moving in dark and secret wise  
Like a plotter in disguise.

Moths and moonshine mean to me  
Magic – madness – mystery.

James Reeves.

**Year of Birth: 2007 and later.**

d}

**SCHOOL-BELL**

Nine-o'clock Bell!

Nine-o'clock Bell!

All the small children and big ones as well,  
Pulling their stockings up, snatching their hats,  
Cheeking and grumbling and giving back-chats,  
Laughing and quarrelling, dropping their things,  
These at a snail's pace and those upon wings,  
Lagging behind a bit, running ahead,  
Waiting at corners for lights to turn red,  
Some of them scurrying,  
Others not worrying  
Carelessly trudging or anxiously hurrying,  
All through the streets they are coming pell-mell  
At the Nine o'clock  
Nine-o'clock  
Nine-o'clock  
Bell!

Eleanor Farjeon.

**Year of Birth: 2007 and later.**