

CLASSCONTENTSPAGESOLO VERSE-SPEAKING – 2016

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Class 188

“The Father Mathew Perpetual Challenge Cup”

Advanced Verse-Speaking – 18 Years and Over

a}

BOY AT THE WINDOW

Seeing the snowman standing all alone  
In dusk and cold is more than he can bear.  
The small boy weeps to hear the wind prepare  
A night of gnashings and enormous moan.  
His tearful sight can hardly reach to where  
The pale-faced figure with bitumen eyes  
Returns him such a god-forsaken stare  
As outcast Adam gave to paradise.

The man of snow is, nonetheless, content,  
Having no wish to go inside and die.  
Still, he is moved to see the youngster cry.  
Though frozen water is his element,  
He melts enough to drop from one soft eye  
A trickle of the purest rain, a tear  
For the child at the bright pane surrounded by  
Such warmth, such light, such love, and so much fear.

Richard Wilbur.

**Year of Birth: 1997 or earlier.**

b} **Shakespeare:**

Female:                                    **KING JOHN**            Act 2   Scene 2

**CONSTANCE:**    Gone to be married? Gone to swear a peace?  
False blood to false blood joined! Gone to be friends?  
Shall Louis have Blanche, and Blanche those provinces?  
It is not so, thou hast misspoke, misheard.  
Be well advised, tell o'er thy tale again.  
It cannot be, thou dost but say 'tis so.  
I trust I may not trust thee, for thy word  
Is but the vain breath of a common man.  
Believe me, I do not believe thee, man;  
I have a king's oath to the contrary.  
Thou shalt be punished for thus frightening me;  
For I am sick and capable of fears;  
Oppressed with wrongs, and therefore full of fears;  
A widow husbandless, subject to fears;  
A woman naturally born to fears;  
And though thou now confess thou didst but jest,  
With my vexed spirits I cannot take a truce,  
But they will quake and tremble all this day.  
What dost thou mean by shaking of thy head?  
Why does thou look so sadly on my son?  
What means that hand upon that breast of thine?  
Why holds thine eye that lamentable rheum,  
Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds?  
Be these sad signs confirmers of thy words?  
Then speak again – not all thy former tale,  
But this one word: whether thy tale be true.

**Year of Birth:    1997 or earlier.**

b) **Shakespeare:**

Male:

**RICHARD III**

Act 5 Scene 3

**RICHARD:** Give me another horse! Bind up my wounds!  
Have mercy, Jesu! – Soft, I did but dream.  
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!  
The lights burn blue. It is now dead midnight.  
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.  
What do I fear? Myself? There's none else by.  
Richard loves Richard; that is, I am I.  
Is there a murderer here? No – yes, I am:  
Then fly. What, from myself? Great reason why –  
Lest I revenge. Myself upon myself?  
Alack, I love myself. For any good  
That I myself have done unto myself?  
O, no! Alas, I rather hate myself  
For hateful deeds committed by myself!  
I am a villain: yet I lie, I am not.  
Fool, of thyself speak well: fool, do not flatter.  
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,  
And every tongue brings in a several tale,  
And every tale condemns me for a villain.  
Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree;  
Murder, stern murder, in the dir'st degree;  
All several sins, all used in each degree,  
Throng to the bar, crying all 'Guilty! Guilty!'  
I shall despair. There is no creature loves me;  
And if I die, no soul will pity me:  
Nay, wherefore should they, since that I myself  
Find in myself no pity to myself?  
Methought the souls of all that I had murdered  
Came to my tent, and every one did threat  
Tomorrow's vengeance on the head of Richard.

**Year of Birth: 1997 or earlier.**

c}

**MY STIFF-SPREAD ARMS**

My stiff-spread arms  
Break into sudden gesture;  
My feet seize upon the rhythm;  
My hands drag it upwards:  
Thus I create the dance.

I drink of the red bowl of the sunlight,  
I swim through seas of rain.  
I dig my toes into earth,  
I taste the smack of the wind.  
I am myself:  
I live.

The temples of the gods are forgotten or in ruins.  
Professors are still arguing about the past and the future.  
I am sick of reading marginal notes on life,  
I am weary of following false banners.  
I desire nothing more intensely or completely than the present.  
There is nothing about me you are more likely to notice than my being.  
Let me therefore rejoice slightly,  
A golden butterfly glancing against an unflecked wall.

John Gould Fletcher.

**Performers speak (a) and (b) and recalls (c)**

**Year of Birth: 1997 or earlier.**

Class 189

**“The Golden Jubilee Perpetual Trophy”**

**Sonnet Speaking – 16 Years and Over**

a}

**THE ZEBRAS**

From the dark woods that breathe of fallen showers,  
Harnessed with level rays in golden reins,  
The zebras draw the dawn across the plains  
Wading knee-deep among the scarlet flowers.  
The sunlight, zithering their flanks with fire,  
Flashes between the shadows as they pass  
Barred with electric tremors through the grass  
Like wind along the gold strings of a lyre.

Into the flushed air snorting rosy plumes  
That smoulder round their feet in drifting fumes,  
With dove-like voices call the distant fillies,  
While round the herds the stallion wheels his flight,  
Engine of beauty volted with delight,  
To roll his mare among the trampled lilies.

Roy Campbell.

b}

Own Choice.

**Performers speak both poems.**

**Year of Birth: 1999 or earlier.**



**“The Mollie Barker Memorial Perpetual Cup”**  
**Yeats Verse-Speaking – 16 Years and Over**

a}

**LONG-LEGGED FLY**

That civilization may not sink,  
Its great battle lost,  
Quiet the dog, tether the pony  
To a distant post;  
Our master Caesar is in the tent  
Where the maps are spread,  
His eyes fixed upon nothing,  
A hand under his head.  
*Like a long-legged fly upon the stream  
His mind moves upon silence.*

That the topless towers be burnt  
And men recall that face,  
Move most gently if move you must  
In this lovely place.  
She thinks, part woman, three parts a child,  
That nobody looks; her feet  
Practise a tinker shuffle  
Picked up on a street.  
*Like a long-legged fly upon the stream  
Her mind moves upon silence.*

That girls at puberty may find  
The first Adam in their thought,  
Shut the door of the Pope’s chapel,  
Keep those children out.  
There on that scaffolding reclines  
Michael Angelo.  
With no more sound than the mice make  
His hand moves to and fro.  
*Like a long-legged fly upon the stream  
His mind moves upon silence.*

W.B. Yeats.

b}

A Yeats’ poem of own choice.

**Performers speak both poems.**

**Year of Birth: 1999 or earlier.**

Senior Women – 18 Years and Over

a}

MUSHROOMS

Overnight, very  
Whitely, discreetly,  
Very quietly

Our toes, our noses  
Take hold on the loam,  
Acquire the air.

Nobody sees us,  
Stops us, betrays us;  
The small grains make room.

Soft fists insist on  
Heaving the needles,  
The leafy bedding,

Even the paving.  
Our hammers, our rams,  
Earless and eyeless,

Perfectly voiceless,  
Widen the crannies,  
Shoulder through holes. We

Diet on water,  
On crumbs of shadow,  
Bland-mannered, asking

Little or nothing.  
So many of us!  
So many of us!

We are shelves, we are  
Tables, we are meek,  
We are edible,

Nudgers and shovers  
In spite of ourselves.  
Our kind multiplies:

We shall by morning  
Inherit the earth.  
Our foot's in the door.

Sylvia Plath.

b}

**PERHAPS**

**(To R.A.L. Died of Wounds in France, 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 1915)**

Perhaps some day the sun will shine again,  
And I shall see that still the skies are blue,  
And feel once more I do not live in vain,  
Although bereft of You.

Perhaps the golden meadows at my feet  
Will make the sunny hours of Spring seem gay,  
And I shall find the white May blossoms sweet,  
Though You have passed away.

Perhaps the summer woods will shimmer bright,  
And crimson roses once again be fair,  
And autumn harvest fields a rich delight,  
Although You are not there.

Perhaps some day I shall not shrink in pain  
To see the passing of the dying year,  
And listen to the Christmas songs again,  
Although You cannot hear.

But, though kind Time may many joys renew,  
There is one greatest joy I shall not know  
Again, because my heart for loss of You  
Was broken, long ago.

Vera Brittain.

**Performers speak both poems.**

**Year of Birth: 1997 or earlier.**

Senior Men – 18 Years and Over

a}

JOHN MILTON AND MY FATHER

Milton was not my father’s favourite poet.  
Shakespeare was. And you got marks for that  
In the Victorian classroom with the brown  
Trusses of the pointed roof and the black fat  
Stove with the turtle, and always blowing through it  
The smell of clothes muggy with country rain.

Milton came second. You earned marks for that.  
My father, a conformist to his death,  
Would have believed even at the age of ten  
This value judgment to be gospel truth.  
But when he spoke of Milton to us, we got  
Much more than the right answer from his tone.

Seated on his high Dickensian stool  
From puberty to impotence, a clerk,  
(The chief clerk in the corner in his glass  
Box of authority) he felt that work  
And the world were a less smelly school  
Where seraphim and angels knew their place.

He tasted hierarchy as Milton did  
And was enchanted by it: jeweled stairs  
And thrones and powers and principalities.  
Each night he knelt but glanced up through his prayers  
To the mountain where sat golden Almighty God  
With nothing over him but empty space.

Patricia Beer.

**Year of Birth: 1997 or earlier.**

b}

### THE EARLY PURGES

I was six when I first saw kittens drown.  
Dan Taggart pitched them, 'the scraggy wee shits',  
Into a bucket; a frail metal sound,

Soft paws scraping like mad. But their tiny din  
Was soon soused. They were slung on the snout  
Of the pump and the water pumped in.

'Sure isn't it better for them now?' Dan said.  
Like wet gloves they bobbed and shone till he sluiced  
Them out on the dunghill, glossy and dead.

Suddenly frightened, for days I sadly hung  
Round the yard, watching the three sogged remains  
Turn mealy and crisp as old summer dung

Until I forgot them. But the fear came back  
When Dan trapped big rats, snared rabbits, shot crows  
Or, with a sickening tug, pulled old hens' necks.

Still, living displaces false sentiments  
And now, when shrill pups are prodded to drown  
I just shrug, 'Bloody pups'. It makes sense:

'Prevention of cruelty' talk cuts ice in town  
Where they consider death unnatural,  
But on well-run farms pests have to be kept down.

Seamus Heaney.

**Performers speak both poems.**

**Year of Birth: 1997 or earlier.**

“The Gloria Joy Perpetual Cup”

Under 18 Years

a}

THE SEND-OFF

Down the close, darkening lanes they sang their way  
To the siding-shed.  
And lined the train with faces grimly gay.

Their breasts were stuck all white with wreath and spray  
As men’s are, dead.

Dull porters watched them, and a casual tramp  
Stood staring hard,  
Sorry to miss them from the upland camp.  
Then, unmoved, signals nodded, and a lamp  
Winked to the guard.

So secretly, like wrongs hushed-up, they went.  
They were not ours:  
We never heard to which front these were sent.

Nor there if they yet mock what women meant  
Who gave them flowers.

Shall they return to beatings of great bells  
In wild train-loads?  
A few, a few, too few for drums and yells,  
May creep back, silent, to still village wells  
Up half-known roads.

Wilfred Owen.

**Performers speak both poems.**

**Years of Birth: 1998 and 1999.**

b}

**THE THOUGHT-FOX**

I imagine this midnight moment's forest:  
Something else is alive  
Beside the clock's loneliness  
And this blank page where my fingers move.

Through the window I see no star:  
Something more near  
Though deeper within darkness  
Is entering the loneliness:

Cold, delicately as the dark snow,  
A fox's nose touches twig, leaf;  
Two eyes serve a movement, that now  
And again now, and now, and now

Sets neat prints into the snow  
Between trees, and warily a lame  
Shadow lags by stump and in hollow  
Of a body that is bold to come

Across clearings, an eye,  
A widening deepening greenness,  
Brilliantly, concentratedly,  
Coming about its own business

Till, with a sudden sharp hot stink of fox  
It enters the dark hole of the head.  
The window is starless still; the clock ticks,  
The page is printed.

Ted Hughes.

**Performers speak both poems.**

**Years of Birth: 1998 and 1999.**

Class 194

“The Tracy Murphy Memorial Perpetual Cup”

Under 16 Years

a}

APRIL RISE

If ever I saw blessing in the air  
I see it now in this still early day  
Where lemon-green the vaporous morning drips  
Wet sunlight on the powder of my eye.

Blown bubble-film of blue, the sky wraps round  
Weeds of warm light whose every root and rod  
Splutters with soapy green, and all the world  
Sweats with the bead of summer in its bud.

If ever I heard blessing it is there  
Where birds in trees that shoals and shadows are  
Splash with their hidden wings and drops of sound  
Break on my ears their crests of throbbing air.

Pure in the haze the emerald sun dilates,  
The lips of sparrows milk the mossy stones,  
While white as water by the lake a girl  
Swims her green hand among the gathered swans.

Now, as the almond burns its smoking wick,  
Dropping small flames to light the candled grass;  
Now, as my low blood scales its second chance,  
If ever world were blessed, now it is.

Laurie Lee.

**Performers speak (a) and recalls (b)**

**Year of Birth: 2000.**



b}

## TOBOGANNING

At first, hesitantly, slithering,  
Now gliding, smoothing, silkily,  
With a shower of shimmering, crystalline  
    Snow-shavings behind me.  
The glass-smooth track plunges down,  
then up to the low hump ahead.  
The snow dives away below me.  
For a moment, I hover like a humming bird.  
Suddenly, the snow is rushing upwards,  
There is a breathtaking thud,  
the board wriggles uncontrollably.  
It hits the rough snow,  
Teeters drunkenly over the broken snow  
To the edge of the last, steep drop,  
Seems to hesitate, to decide,  
Hurls itself over.  
Trees are racing past so fast that they are not trees.  
Ahead are small mounds of snow-covered  
    tussock grass,  
        One just to the right.....  
            Brake! Right foot!  
            The snow is blue,  
            The sky is white,  
            I hear a dull thump, I sit up.  
Now the long, weary clambering up again.

Toni Hendrey.

**Performers speak (a) and recalls (b)**

**Year of Birth: 2000.**

**Class 195**

**Girls Under 15 Years**

**EITHER:**

**A BAD PRINCESS**

A bad princess stomped through the woods  
in a pair of boots  
looking for trouble –  
diamond tiara, satin dress, hair an absolute mess,  
ready to bubble.

Imagine her shock and surprise  
when she bumped straight into  
her very own double:

A Tree Girl  
with shiny holly-green eyes  
and a crown of autumn leaves on her wild head,  
the colour of both of their hair.

Don't you dare, screamed Bad,  
walk in these Royal woods like me!

I shall do as I please, you grumpy old thing,  
said tree.  
Give me those emeralds that hang from your ears  
or I'll kick you hard  
and pinch you meanly.  
Then we'll see which one of we two  
Is cut out  
to be Queenly!

Oh! The bad Princess turned and ran,  
ran for her life  
into the arms of the dull young Prince  
and became his wife.

Carol Ann Duffy.

**Year of Birth: 2001.**

**OR:**

**THE DANCER**

“What was she like?” they asked, and then I knew  
That I had never looked upon her face,  
That I could tell them of her timeless grace,  
Curve of the neck, light gesture of a hand:  
The picture of a swallow’s flight I drew,  
And hoped, perhaps, that they might understand.

“What colour was her hair?” I do not know,  
And yet I think it misted a white arm  
And mingled with her dancing. There was a charm  
In every movement, and of all most sweet,  
Most unforgotten, wind-swept to and fro,  
The leaf-blown motion of her elfin feet.

“Had her eyes beauty?” I cannot tell, alas!  
I saw the magic in a changing dream...  
A flash of silver on a wandering stream...  
And I have kept for my remembering  
How through the morning skies the wild swans pass,  
And I recall the tremor of a wing.

Celia Randall.

**Year of Birth: 2001.**

**Class 196**

**Girls Under 14 Years**

**EITHER:**

**RUNNING AND CATCHING**

There was a girl  
And she could run as fast as anything  
Faster than a racing bike.  
She could leap and jump over the crags with mountain animals  
But she couldn't catch a ball.

And there was a boy:  
Long arms shot out, he could catch anything  
Small balls on a bounce  
Frisbees that whizz past your nose like speeded-up planets  
But he couldn't run at all.

High in the air, low on the ground, he caught.  
She leapt over fences and ran great distances.  
He couldn't run for toffee, not even for a bus.  
She couldn't catch, even if you gently threw her a baby's ball.

So when the time came for the summer fair, and there were  
    games in the field  
What should they do? They teamed up, it was obvious.  
The fleet-footed, elastic-armed, catching-and-running pair  
Won all the prizes, and by the next year's fair  
The girl could catch balls and the boy never missed a bus.

Jenny Joseph.

**Year of Birth: 2002.**

**OR:**

**CAT AND THE WEATHER**

Cat takes a look at the weather.  
Snow.  
Puts a paw on the sill.  
His perch is piled, is a pillow.

Shape of his pad appears.  
Will it dig? No.  
Not like sand.  
Like his fur almost.

But licked, not liked.  
Too cold.  
Insects are flying, fainting down.  
He'll try

to bat one against the pane.  
They have no body and no buzz.  
And now his feet are wet;  
it's a puzzle.

Shakes each leg,  
then shakes his skin  
to get the white flies off.  
Looks for his tail,

tells it to come on in  
by the radiator.  
World's turned queer  
somehow. All white,

no smell. Well, here  
inside it's still familiar.  
He'll go to sleep until  
it puts itself right.

May Swenson.

**Year of Birth: 2002.**

**Class 197**

**Girls Under 13 Years**

**EITHER:**

**LITTLE FAN**

‘I don’t like the look of little Fan, mother,  
I don’t like her looks a little bit.  
Her face – well, it’s not exactly different,  
But there’s something wrong with it.

‘She went down to the sea-shore yesterday,  
And she talked to somebody there,  
Now she won’t do anything but sit  
And comb out her yellowy hair.

‘Her eyes are shiny and she sings, mother,  
Like nobody ever sang before.  
Perhaps they gave her something queer to eat,  
Down by the rocks on the shore.

‘Speak to me, speak, little Fan dear,  
Aren’t you feeling very well?  
Where have you been and what are you singing,  
And what’s that seaweedy smell?

‘Where did you get that shiny comb, love,  
And those pretty coral beads so red?  
Yesterday you had two legs, I’m certain,  
But now there’s something else instead.

‘I don’t like the looks of little Fan, mother,  
You’d best go and close the door.  
Watch now, or she’ll be gone for ever  
To the rocks by the brown sandy shore.’

James Reeves.

**Year of Birth: 2003.**

**OR:**

**AMANDA!**

Don't bite your nails, Amanda!  
Don't hunch your shoulders, Amanda!  
Stop that slouching and sit up straight,  
Amanda!

(There is a languid, emerald sea,  
where the sole inhabitant is me –  
a mermaid, drifting blissfully.)

Did you finish your homework, Amanda?  
Did you tidy your room, Amanda?  
I thought I told you to clean your shoes,  
Amanda!

(I am an orphan, roaming the street.  
I pattern soft dust with my hushed, bare feet.  
The silence is golden, the freedom is sweet.)

Don't eat that chocolate, Amanda!  
Remember your acne, Amanda!  
Will you please look at me when I'm speaking to you,  
Amanda!

(I am Rapunzel, I have not a care;  
life in a tower is tranquil and rare;  
I'll certainly *never* let down my bright hair!)

Stop that sulking at once, Amanda!  
You're always so moody, Amanda!  
Anyone would think that I nagged at you,  
Amanda!

Robin Klein.

**Year of Birth: 2003.**

**Class 198**

**Girls Under 12 Years**

**EITHER:**

**THE DONKEY**

When fishes flew and forests walked  
And figs grew upon thorn,  
Some moment when the moon was blood  
Then surely, I was born;

With monstrous head and sickening cry  
And ears like errant wings,  
The devil's walking parody  
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,  
Of ancient crookèd will;  
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,  
I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;  
One far fierce hour and sweet:  
There was a shout about my ears,  
And palms before my feet.

G. K. Chesterton.

**Year of Birth: 2004.**



**OR:**

**THE BOY WHO DROPPED LITTER**

‘ANTHONY WRIGGLY  
SHAME ON YOU!’  
screeched the teacher  
as she spotted him  
scrunching up his crisp packet  
and dropping it carefully  
on to the pavement outside school.

‘If everyone went around  
dropping crisp packets like you do  
where would we be?’

(Anthony didn’t know, so she told him.)

‘We’d be wading waist-high in crisp packets,  
that’s where!’

Anthony was silent.  
He hung his head.

It looked to the teacher  
as if he was very sorry.

When in fact he was trying to calculate  
just how many packets it would take  
to bring Basildon to a complete standstill.

Lindsay MacRae.

**Year of Birth: 2004.**

**Class 199**

**Girls Under 11 Years**

**EITHER:**

**BLANCHE**

A baby owl, whose name was Blanche,  
Perched bravely on a narrow branch.  
And wondered whether she should try,  
To jump off and attempt to fly.  
She bravely counted up to ten.  
And then she counted ten again.  
She jumped!  
She found she couldn't fly  
And lay there looking at the sky.  
"It's lucky that that branch," said she,  
"Was on the ground and not the tree."  
Then off she ran  
And flapped her wings  
And said "These are most awkward things.  
For though I skip and jump quite high,  
I'm still no nearer to the sky."  
And falling down, she gave a howl  
And wished she'd never been an owl!  
Till finally her mother found her,  
And put a great big wing around her,  
Then said, "Dear Blanche, don't be upset,  
You haven't grown your feathers yet."

Jeremy Lloyd.

**Year of Birth: 2005.**

**OR:**

**A SMALL DRAGON**

I've found a small dragon in the woodshed.  
Think it must have come from deep inside a forest  
because it's damp and green leaves  
are still reflecting in its eyes.

I fed it on many things, tried grass,  
the roots of stars, hazel-nut and dandelion,  
but it stared up at me as if to say, I need  
foods you can't provide.

It made a nest among the coal,  
not unlike a bird's but larger,  
it is out of place here  
and is quite silent.

If you believed in it I would come  
hurrying to your house to let you share my wonder,  
but I want instead to see  
if you yourself will pass this way.

Brian Patten.

**Year of Birth: 2005.**

**Class 200**

**Girls Under 10 Years**

**EITHER:**

**HOMEWORK**

I'm going to do my homework,  
As soon as I've had my tea.  
I'm going to get on with my homework –  
After I've watched TV.

I'll just have a run around the garden,  
And then I'll work really hard,  
As soon as I've telephoned Jane,  
And sent off that birthday card.

I'm going to get on with my homework,  
As soon as the rabbits are fed.  
I'm going to get on with my homework,  
Before it is time for bed.

What! Bedtime already? It can't be –  
To get all those good marks I planned,  
I simply must do my homework!  
Oh Mummy! You don't understand!

Elizabeth Smith.

**Year of Birth: 2006.**

**OR:**

**THE PARK**

In the middle of the city  
Is an open space called a Park;  
It is difficult for us to do what we like there  
Even after dark.

In the middle of the Park there is a statue,  
A huge man made of stone;  
We are not allowed to climb his legs or scribble on his  
trousers,  
He has to be left alone.

In the middle of the grass there is some water  
Surrounded by an asphalt path;  
We are forbidden to fish or throw stones into it  
Or swim or take a bath.

In the middle of the water is an island  
Full of mysterious things,  
But none of us has ever set foot upon it  
Because none of us has wings.

Olive Dehn.

**Year of Birth: 2006.**

**EITHER:**

**TEEVEE**

In the house  
of Mr and Mrs Spouse  
he and she  
would watch teevee  
and never a word  
between them spoken  
until the day  
the set was broken.

Then ‘How do you do?’  
said he to she.  
‘I don’t believe  
that we’ve met yet.  
Spouse is my name.  
What’s yours?’ he asked.

‘Why, mine’s the same!’  
said she to he,  
‘Do you suppose that we could  
be – ?’

But the set came suddenly right  
about,  
and so they never did find out.

Eve Merriam.

**OR:**

**LADLES AND JELLYSPOONS**

Ladles and jellyspoons:  
I come before you  
To stand behind you  
And tell you something  
I know nothing about.

Next Thursday,  
The day after Friday,  
There’ll be a ladies’ meeting  
For men only.

Wear your best clothes  
If you haven’t any,  
And if you can come  
Please stay home.

Admission is free,  
You can pay at the door.  
We’ll give you a seat  
So you can sit on the floor.

It makes no difference  
Where you sit;  
The kid in the gallery  
Is sure to spit.

Traditional.

**Class 202**

**Girls Under 8 Years**

**EITHER:**

**I WONDER**

I wonder why the grass is green,  
And why the wind is never seen?

Who taught the birds to build a nest,  
And told the trees to take a rest?

O, when the moon is not quite round,  
Where can the missing bit be found?

Who lights the stars, when they blow out,  
And makes the lightning flash about?

Who paints the rainbow in the sky,  
And hangs the fluffy clouds so high?

Why is it now, do you suppose,  
That Dad won't tell me, if he knows?

James Kirby.

**OR:**

**THE HIPPOPOTAMUS'S BIRTHDAY**

He has opened all his parcels  
but the largest and the last;  
His hopes are at their highest  
and his heart is beating fast.  
O happy Hippopotamus,  
what lovely gift is here?  
He cuts the string. The world stands still.  
A pair of boots appear!

O little Hippopotamus,  
the sorrows of the small!  
He dropped two tears to mingle  
with the flowing Senegal.  
And the "Thank you" that he uttered  
was the saddest ever heard  
In the Senegambian jungle  
from the mouth of beast or bird.

E.V. Rieu.

**Year of Birth: 2008.**

**Class 203**

**Girls Under 7 Years**

**EITHER:**

**MY SISTER'S EATING PORRIDGE**

My sister's eating porridge  
It's going everywhere.  
Up her nose and down her front;  
A dollop in her hair.

My sister's eating porridge,  
She's missed her mouth again.  
Now it's dripping off her spoon  
Like lumpy porridge rain.

My sister's eating porridge,  
And most is on the floor.  
No wonder she is hungry  
And crying out for, "More!"

John Coldwell.

**OR:**

**WINDY NIGHTS**

Whenever the moon and stars are set,  
Whenever the wind is high,  
All night long in the dark and wet,  
A man goes riding by.  
Late in the night when the fires are out,  
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

Whenever the trees are crying aloud,  
And ships are tossed at sea,  
By, on the highway, low and loud,  
By at the gallop goes he.  
By at the gallop he goes, and then  
By he comes back at the gallop again.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

**Year of Birth: 2009.**



**Class 204**

**Girls Under 6 Years**

**EITHER:**

**HE LEAVES THE NEST**

He leaves the nest;  
And flaps his wings;  
And stops, and struts;  
And bit by bit,  
He makes his way  
To top of tree:  
    And,  
    His neck up,  
    His tail up,  
    His foot up,  
    His comb up,  
    The cock lifts  
    His voice up,  
    And  
    CROWS.

Anon.

**OR:**

**TABLE MANNERS**

The Goops they lick their fingers,  
    And the Goops they lick their knives;  
They spill their broth on the tablecloth –  
    Oh, they lead disgusting lives!  
The Goops they talk while eating,  
    And loud and fast they chew;  
And that is why I'm glad that I  
    Am not a Goop – are you?

Gelett Burgess.

**Year of Birth: 2010 or later.**

**Class 205**

**Boys Under 15 Years**

**EITHER: THE LAKE ISLE OF INNINFREE**

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,  
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made:  
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,  
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,  
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;  
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,  
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day  
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;  
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,  
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

W.B. Yeats.

**Year of Birth: 2001 and 2002.**

**OR:**

**THE WAYFARER**

The beauty of the world hath made me sad,  
This beauty that will pass;  
Sometimes my heart hath shaken with great joy  
To see a leaping squirrel in a tree,  
Or a red lady-bird upon a stalk,  
Or little rabbits in a field at evening,  
Lit by a slanting sun,  
Or some green hill where shadows drifted by,  
Some quiet hill where mountainy man had sown  
And soon will reap, near to the gate of Heaven;  
Or children with bare feet upon the sands  
Of some ebb-ed sea, or playing on the streets  
Of little towns in Connacht,  
Things young and happy.  
And then my heart hath told me:  
These will pass,  
Will pass and change, will die and be no more,  
Things bright and green, things young and happy;  
And I have gone upon my way,  
Sorrowful.

Padraic Pearse.

**Year of Birth: 2001 and 2002.**

**EITHER:****MAN AND BEAST**

Hugging the ground by the lilac tree,  
With shadows in conspiracy,

The black cat from the house next  
door  
Waits with death in each bared claw

For the tender unwary bird  
That all the summer I have heard

In the orchard singing. I hate  
The cat that is its savage fate,

And choose a stone with which to  
send  
Slayer, not victim, to its end.

I look to where the black cat lies,  
But drop my stone, seeing its eyes –

Who is it sins now, those eyes say,  
You the hunter, or I the prey?

Clifford Dyment.

**OR:****JELLY JAKE AND BUTTER BILL**

Jelly Jake and Butter Bill  
One dark night when all was still  
Pattered down the long, dark stair,  
And no one saw the guilty pair;  
Pushed aside the pantry-door  
And there found everything galore –  
Honey, raisins, orange-peel,  
Cold chicken aplenty for a meal,  
Gingerbread enough to fill  
Two such boys as Jake and Bill.  
Well, they ate and ate and ate,  
Gobbled at an awful rate  
Till I'm sure they soon weighed more  
Than double what they did before.  
And then, it's awful, still it's true,  
The floor gave way and they went  
through.

Filled so full they couldn't fight,  
Slowly they sank out of sight.  
Father, Mother, Cousin Ann,  
Cook and nurse and furnace man  
Fished in forty-dozen ways  
After them, for twenty days;  
But not a soul has chanced to get  
A glimpse or glimmer of them yet.  
And I'm afraid we never will –  
Poor Jelly Jake and Butter Bill.

Leroy F. Jackson.

**EITHER:**

**DAD'S HIDING IN THE SHED**

Dad's hiding in the shed.  
He's made me swear  
Not to tell Mum  
That he's hiding in there.

She was having a lie-down  
With the curtains drawn.  
We were playing cricket  
Out on the lawn.

The scores were level.  
It was really tense.  
Dad had just hit a six  
Right over the fence.

I bowled the next ball  
As fast as I could.  
Dad tried it again  
As I knew he would.

But he missed and the ball  
Struck him hard on the toe.  
He cried out in pain,  
And, as he did so,

He let go of the bat.  
It flew up in an arc  
And crashed through the window  
Where Mum lay in the dark.

Dad's hiding in the shed.  
He's made me swear  
Not to tell Mum  
That he's hiding in there.

John Foster.

**OR:**

**THE LION**

The lion just adores to eat  
A lot of red and tender meat,  
And if you ask the lion what  
Is much the tenderest of the lot,  
He will not say a roast of lamb  
Or curried beef or devilled ham

Or crisp pork or corned-beef hash  
Or sausages or mutton mash.  
Then could it be a big plump hen?  
He answers 'No'. What is it, then?  
Oh, lion dear, could I not make  
You happy with a lovely steak?

Could I entice you from your lair  
With rabbit pie or roasted hare?  
The lion smiled and shook his head.  
He came up very close and said,  
'The meat I am about to chew  
Is neither steak nor chops. It's you.'

Roald Dahl.

**EITHER:**

**HAIRCUT**

What I hate  
about having a haircut  
is being asked  
how I want it  
when I don't want it cut at all.

What I hate  
about having a haircut  
is being asked  
questions with  
the whole room listening to my  
answers.

What I hate  
about having a haircut  
is being asked  
to look in  
the mirror and say how I like it.

What I hate most  
about having a haircut  
is going to school  
and everyone  
telling me I've had my hair cut.

Michael Harrison.

**OR:**

**OLIPHAUNT**

Grey as a mouse,  
Big as a house,  
Nose like a snake,  
I make the earth shake,  
As I tramp through the grass;  
Trees crack as I pass.  
With horns in my mouth  
I walk in the South,  
Flapping big ears.  
Beyond count of years  
I stump round and round,  
Never lie on the ground,  
Not even to die.  
Oliphaunt am I,  
Biggest of all,  
Hugh, old and tall.  
If ever you'd met me,  
You wouldn't forget me.  
If you never do,  
You won't think I'm true,  
But old Oliphaunt am I,  
And I never lie.

J.R.R. Tolkien.

**EITHER:**

**WET PLAY**

Rainy windows,  
Rainy faces,  
Peering out at  
Rainy Places.

In the classroom  
On a tray  
Games that no-one  
Wants to play.

Unkicked balls and  
Unskipped ropes;  
Unworn hats and  
Gloves and coats.

Waiting for the  
Wind to drop;  
Waiting for the  
Rain to stop.

Slowly it  
Begins to clear.  
Bright blue patches  
Now appear.

Rainy clouds are  
Blown away  
And everyone  
Goes out to play.

Marcus Parry.

**OR:**

**RECIPE**

If I tell you this tale you might wince,  
It concerns an old mixture for mince,  
Made from dogs' teeth and tails  
By a witch from North Wales  
In a pot with a pattern of chintz.  
You take pigs' ears and lemons and cheese,  
And the wings and the stings from queen bees,  
Some frogs live and frisky,  
A cupful of whisky,  
Some slugs and a few black-eyed peas.  
Boil it an hour or two,  
Season with essence of shrew;  
If it turns out too salty,  
The frogs must be faulty –  
There's nothing at all you can do  
(Except throw out the whole beastly brew!)

Shelagh McGee.

**EITHER:**

**FURRY BEAR**

If I were a bear  
And a big bear too,  
I shouldn't much care  
If it froze or snowed;  
I shouldn't much mind  
If it snowed or friz –  
I'd be all fur-lined  
With a coat like his!

For I'd have fur boots and a brown fur wrap,  
And brown fur knickers and a big fur cap.  
I'd have a fur muffle-ruff to cover my jaws,  
And brown fur mittens on my big brown  
paws.  
With a big brown furry-down up to my  
head,  
I'd sleep all winter in a big fur bed.

A.A. Milne.

**OR:**

**THE MAGIC PIPER**

There piped piper in the wood  
Strange music – soft and sweet –  
And all the little wild things  
Came hurrying to his feet.

They sat around him on the grass,  
Enchanted, unafraid,  
And listened, as with shining eyes  
Sweet melodies he made.

The wood grew green, and flowers sprang up,  
The birds began to sing;  
For the music it was magic,  
And the piper's name was – Spring!

E.L. Marsh.

**Year of Birth: 2007.**



**EITHER:**

**SPAGHETTI**

Spaghetti, spaghetti, all over the place,  
Up to my elbows – up to my face,  
Over the carpet and under the chairs,  
Into the hammock and wound round the  
stairs,  
Filling the bathtub and covering the desk,  
Making the sofa a mad mushy mess.

The party is ruined, I'm terribly worried,  
The guests have all left (unless they're all  
buried).  
I told them, 'Bring presents.' I said,  
'Throw confetti.'  
I guess they heard wrong  
'Cause they all threw spaghetti!

Shel Silverstein.

**OR:**

**THE SHARK**

The shark  
Swims  
In the dark  
Of the deep  
Its eye gleams  
As it sees  
Streams  
Of gold fish –  
Bold fish  
Swimming too near  
For the shark is well  
aware  
That here  
Is a tasty dish  
Of fish  
And the shark lies  
In wait –  
No fisherman,  
No flies  
No bait,  
And the fish swim past  
The shark follows –  
Fast,  
And swallows.

Lalla Ward.

**Class 212**

**Boys Under 7 Years**

**EITHER:**

**FIVE LITTLE OWLS**

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!”

Anon.

**OR:**

**THE POOR COW**

I’m very sorry for  
A cow;  
Its clothes seemed fashioned  
Anyhow.  
They never look as if  
They fit.  
I wonder what is wrong  
With it?

And if a cow should need  
A patch  
Instead of finding one  
To match,  
It makes the oddest pieces  
Do;  
I think it’s very sad,  
Don’t you?

Elizabeth Flemng.

**Year of Birth: 2009 or later.**

**Class 213**

**Boys Under 6 Years**

**EITHER:**

**AFTER A BATH**

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.

Aileen Fisher.

**OR:**

**NIGHT FRIGHT**

My hair stood on end  
and I trembled with fright  
when I heard a strange noise  
on the stairs in the night.  
“CREAK”, it went.  
“EEK”, I went.  
What should I do?  
Then my brother  
leaped into my room  
and yelled, “BOO!”

Marian Swinger.

**Year of Birth: 2010 or later.**

## **214 “THE MUNSTER LITERATURE CENTRE CUP”**

### **Cork Poets 18 Years and Under (1997 and later)**

Performers to present a poem of own choice, written by a contemporary Cork born or Cork based poet in English, Irish or a translation. List of poets available from the Feis Office. Copy of poem to be provided for the adjudicator.

## **215 WAR POETS - OPEN**

Performers to present two contrasting poems, with an introduction, from the works of the War Poets. One poem may be read. Copy of poems to be provided for the adjudicator.

## **216 BALLAD SPEAKING 16 Years and Under (1999 and later)**

Performers to present a Ballad of own choice, not to exceed 6 minutes.

## **217 “THE ANTOINETTE LAMBERT PERPETUAL CUP”**

### **Ballad Speaking 12 Years and Under (2003 and later)**

Performers to present a Ballad of own choice, not to exceed 4 minutes.

## **218 OWN CHOICE VERSE 15 Years and Under (2000 and later)**

Performers to present a poem of own choice, not to exceed 3 minutes.

## **219 OWN CHOICE VERSE Under 13 Years (2003 and later)**

Performers to present a poem of own choice, not to exceed 3 minutes.

## **220 OWN CHOICE VERSE Under 10 Years (2006 and later)**

Performers to present a poem of own choice, not to exceed 2 minutes.

### **DUO VERSE-SPEAKING**

**For Duo Verse-Speaking, there should be a combination of unison speaking and solo lines. Poem should be conveyed by Voice and Face, without the use of intrusive movement or gesture. Costume permitted.**

## **221 DUO VERSE Under 16 Years (2000 and later)**

Performers to present a poem of own choice, not to exceed 4 minutes.

## **222 DUO VERSE Under 13 Years (2003 and later)**

Performers to present a poem of own choice, not to exceed 3 minutes.

### **DUO ACTING OF A POEM**

**Performers to present a dramatization of a poem: in costume and with actions.**

## **223 UNDER 16 YEARS (2000 and later)**

Performers to present a poem of own choice, not to exceed 4 minutes.

## **224 UNDER 13 YEARS (2003 and later)**

Performers to present a poem of own choice, not to exceed 3 minutes.