



The SPACE Between

Comino Poet in Residence 2025/26



Thanks & Acknowledgements

Funded by the Comino Foundation for North West Comino Consortium schools in partnership with Manchester Poetry Library at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Thank you to all the participating organisations and individuals, especially Jo Sliwa, Kaye Tew and Becky May. We especially thank the pupils for their enthusiasm and creativity.







North West Comino Consortium

The Comino Foundation provides funding to the North West Comino Consortium, a Community of Practice that brings together schools, businesses, and charities. These organisations collaborate with the Comino Foundation to deliver projects aimed at nurturing cultural and social capital among young people across Greater Manchester.

Central to our mission is the belief that learning experiences developed in partnership with people and places beyond the classroom have the power to motivate and inspire young people. These experiences also help cultivate the skills necessary for them to face the future with confidence. Many of the schools we work with have diverse pupil populations who greatly benefit from the personal and career development opportunities offered by our carefully co-created projects. These initiatives aim to connect students and teachers with passion and potential through innovative learning programmes that extend beyond traditional classroom settings.

Our annual Poet in Residence programme exemplifies this mission by creating unique opportunities for pupils and teachers to engage with poetry in transformative ways. The programme has fostered lasting partnerships with cultural and creative organisations across Greater Manchester, engaging hundreds of young people with the power of poetry and language. At the heart of this initiative is our partnership with the Manchester Poetry Library at Manchester Metropolitan University, which plays a pivotal role in its success.

Children, who are often natural poets, find huge advantages in opportunities to engage with poetry and work with emerging poets, all Manchester Met University students, who share their enthusiasm and passion. This connection encourages pupils to express their ideas and opinions, explore their creativity, and build confidence, all while finding inspiration to write, perform, and create.

Comino Poets in Residence were paired with a North West Comino school and a regional cultural partner. Together with support from the Comino Foundation and Manchester Poetry Library colleagues, they developed eight bespoke projects inspired by the theme “The Space Between.”

The poets receive bursaries from the Comino Foundation to lead their individual projects. Celebrating achievement is a key aspect of this programme. Pupils' work is showcased in schools, at cultural partner venues, and at the Manchester Poetry Library, providing a platform for others to appreciate and celebrate their creativity.

Pat, Deborah & Jo

NWCC Team

Manchester Poetry Library

The Manchester Poetry Library recruits Manchester Metropolitan student poets to this project and then, with the support of Jo Sliwa and Becky May from the Comino team, we support them through a programme of training and mentoring. More than 40 students have benefited from being involved in the five years of the Comino Poet in Residence project. Each student poet comes to us with varying degrees of experience and confidence but all leave having enhanced skills in communication, planning and session delivery as well as an increased understanding of what it means to work in a school environment and across multiple stakeholders.

The support from Comino is invaluable, both in terms of the practical support given by Jo and Becky but also the links to Comino schools and the many cultural partners who also contribute to the project. As well as benefiting

the individual project, the connections with the schools and the cultural partners are another, added benefit for our student poets, who are further supported by a bursary, provided by Comino, to cover their out-of-pocket expenses.

On a personal level, this is the fifth year that the Manchester Poetry Library has run this project with Comino and I have to say it has been a joy; a real example of partnership working in practice that benefits all involved. Here's to many more years of our Poet in Residence collaboration.

Kaye Tew,
Education Manager,
Manchester Poetry Library at
Manchester Metropolitan University

Participating Schools & Teachers

Abraham Moss Community School
Hathershaw College
Ladybridge High School
Pioneer House High School
St Gabriel's RC High School
St Patrick's RC High School
The Derby High School
The East Manchester Academy

Comino Poets in Residence 2025/26

Lexi Aldred
Nuha Chaudry
John Greenwood
Joseph Conway
Theo Langdale
Millie Davidson
Shauna Jackman
Aqeel Parvez / Becky May

Cultural Partners

Manchester Art Gallery
The Whitworth
Science and Industry Museum
The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Centre
Manchester Central Library
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Chetham's Library

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Abraham Moss Community School

In partnership with Manchester Art Gallery and Lexi Aldred

The Art of Our Origins

Given that this group of year 8's was predominantly ESL, the focus of this project was on fostering self-expression by incorporating themes of diaspora, dual identities and journeys, both in the literal and emotional sense. Threaded throughout the workshops was the idea of ekphrastic poetry and the intersection between artistic expression in both art and poetry.

During their visit to **Manchester Art Gallery**, pupils were supported to make personal connections with artwork, using techniques like slowing down to see beyond the obvious and using thought tracking to open up new ways of seeing. Students relished the chance to put their imaginations to work to form their own interpretations and stories.

A session in **Manchester Poetry Library** furthered the groups' understanding of the playfulness involved in poetic creation and its visual presentation, with pupils experimenting with lines of poetry in a creative collaboration which helped develop their confidence.

This group had the benefit of longer sessions in school, which allowed them to play poetry games, create their own comic strips and take inspiration from artwork, all whilst reflecting on the theme of journeys. A workshop on editing was particularly helpful, including an emphasis on line breaks and the inclusion of kennings, which aided clarity and concision to the final poems. The end result is a collection of poetry and art that each student can feel truly proud of.

"Lexi created a welcoming and engaging atmosphere, introducing the theme of journeys in a way that really captured students' imaginations"

Fatema Siddeka, Teacher



Man on a Boat

by Maariah

As I gaze up at the shining moon,
My boat rocks gently on the ripples of the calm sea.
I am approaching my impending doom,
And I can only dream of being free.

I've been sent away from my land.
I can't help but wonder if I'll die.
My age is now in the palm of my hand,
And to survive,
I have to try.

My only companion is my bird,
Called Nears.
Losing her would be my greatest loss.
I face up towards the rain,
As it washes away my tears.
To reach my fate, I have to cross.

I know I've made a grave mistake.
I have to live with the crushing guilt
To my country, I've had to forsake.
The flower of my soul is starting to wilt.

"By making and sharing personal connections, students were encouraged to create responses that made sense to them and gave unique perspectives that would support their poetry writing. As always it is a delight to look at art with young people and see artworks that I may have known for years in a new light"

Emma Carroll, Manchester Art Gallery

BUTTERFLY EFFECT

by Maymunah

What do you mean if I didn't forget my bag that I would have never met that amazing teacher?
What do you mean that if one thing changes from the past
we would all be completely different people?
What do you mean that you will never experience the same exact moment ever again?
Because the past is everything before now,
everything before today,
everything before right this moment in time.
I guess this poem counts as the past,
Because how can you tell me that if my teacher never showed me the game
my dad wouldn't be playing the daily wordle with me and my siblings.
Because how can you tell me if my mother never taught me how to braid a bracelet,
I would never have been able to teach my friends how to loop a chain of thread by hand.
So, when you say that should or shouldn't have happened,
rethink that
because if it wasn't meant to happen,
it wouldn't have happened.

Above the Umbrellas

by Mahira

Everyday feels like something new.
You can never believe what is and isn't true.
It feels like a constant loop,
Like you have already made your own comfy coop.
You have tried to face your fears,
But still,
Every night your pillow fills with tears.
Everyone else has an umbrella,
But the shoe yet hasn't been found by Cinderella.
You're the only one who isn't sat on the swing,
But anything can change with a simple
'ding!'
I gaze up to the gentle rain as it touches my face,
Thinking about all the pain.
I tried to find my place.
Now, you won't find me without
a trace.

A Place Far Away

by Tawheed

I come from a place circled in grey,
Hate around everyone,
Except those whose pockets are able to pay.
A place full of small wars,
Micro battles that slowly chip away;
Chip away at the things that brought people to one faith,
People hanging their heads low,
Scared of the things they will portray.
Hate, anger, useless emotions.
Yet it is confined to everyone's fate,
The blind and deaf choose to convey.
The message of a treacherous, mind consuming place,
Choosing to move,
The shadows still linger,
As they can't imagine a home without that
part of their finger.

Far to the west,
Far across the sea,
There lies a special land,
A land full of fruit trees.
And grassy meadows as far as the eye can see.
It's warm there,
Much warmer than the grasp of home.
Truthfully,
Such a land doesn't exist here,
But it exists in my heart.
A place where people can move on, forgive, accept
Because that is the only way.
The land exists, yes.
But for me, it lacks a name.
I yearn for such a place.

I come from a place I regret calling home.
However for now,
It remains my abode.
People gloom upon the sight of rain.
Although the slow trickle of water
Is an astonishing sight for me.
From rain comes growth and quenching of thirst
But people pessimist the beauty of everything,
Because they were taught it, to be that way.
I come from a place I hope to change,
For the better of those who stay.

The Brave Knight

by Aryan

The brave knight stood by the castle gate.
Watching the statue, still and straight.
It shone in the bright and sunny day,
As if it might suddenly run away.
He stayed there till the day was gone,
Protecting the castle walls.

**“The art gallery trip was fun
because we learned how to
look deeper into artwork
and come up with our own
interpretations”**

Pupil

Home, where I belong

by Taleen

I come from a place that I call home
Though some may disagree
Others may see this place as grey and gloomy,
Wet and cold,
But that's what makes it home
The beauty of nature, the meandering rivers,
Even the smell of wet mud cheers me up
As I canter like a horse, wild, free and misunderstood
Because it reminds me that this is Manchester,
And this is where I belong
In leaf-fall and white-season, or during rainy days
I can stay in my warm, familiar bed,
And scribble with my pencil
And when flowers begin to bloom, and I bloom with them
I can step outside and enjoy the light of the sky-lamp,
I can smile
Because this is Manchester, and this is where I belong
And when I walk in the streets, I smell the food
I smell the spices of the meals of other cultures
And when it's scorching hot,
I can feel the soft sand and tiny rocks
As I wander around the beaches nearby
Or stay at home and enjoy a nice, cool ice lolly
While watching the beautiful sunset
This is home, and nothing will change that.

Just The Beginning

by Raafe

A state of joy broken by a place.
 Living happily in a place with the lingering trail of coffee, everywhere.
 I thought I reached heaven early,
 I did not eat pizza and pasta everyday,
 but I surely was cheering.
 I was born here, here in is that really necessary?
 Devastated by recent information of moving,
 I left a part of my soul here,
 But now that I come to think of it,
 I reframed my sense of happiness.
 The End

I Passed

by Rana

I passed my love to
 my love.
 I passed my grades,
 phew!
 I passed my friend above,
 I passed the long queue.
 Now it's being passed to me.
 Why is the sky so voluminous and free?
 But then it dropped,
 down,
 down to the ocean blue.
 The sun rays stopped.
 There and now,
 I accepted the truth.

The Beginning of the End

by Jamal

Bursting with colours, is a night sky
 Red, blue, green and yellow,
 Colours popping with meaning and feeling,
 My journey is a real journey,
 A journey with a start and an end,
 Just like any journey,
 My journey is with thought,
 My journey is with gratefulness,
 It makes me think of the creator,
 The one who made all of this,
 And the one who is going to end all this.
 The end isn't like any end,
 The end is the type of end someone would dread,
 The end will be bursting with red, orange, yellow and white,
 This end is the type of end where stars will fall,
 This is the end of the beginning,
 This is the end of mine and everyone else's journey.

My Home

by Maliha

Where I come from,
 The streets beam with light.
 Where I come from,
 The history is bright.
 Where I come from,
 The people are mad.
 Diversity is how we tell each other apart,
 If you come to Manchester you'll have a new start.
 My home is as packed as a street,
 There's still new people to meet.
 I hear the laughter of people in my house,
 It is never quiet like a mouse.
 In this city that I call home,
 Everyone's with you.
 You're not alone.

**"I loved how we were able to
 look at all the different ways
 poetry could be expressed"**

Pupil

Where I'm From

by Fatema Siddeka, Year 8 teacher

I was born under grey British skies,
on streets washed with quiet rain,
but my roots were already growing
somewhere warmer.

I come from kitchens warm with ghee and sizzling garlic,
from fish frying golden in mustard oil,
from tables stretched wide
for cousins, neighbours, and strangers;
plates refilled before they're empty.

I come from karak chai after every meal,
steam curling through laughter
and late-night stories,
from mishti shared without counting,
from shalwar kameez soft as memory,
from sarees folded carefully
like heirlooms of light.

I come from rainy British streets
and Manchester halls,
from books and classrooms,
eight years shaping words.
Been guiding voices to find themselves in words,
watching confidence rise
like tea brewing stronger with time.

I am mother and daughter braided into one,
her journey living quietly in mine,
hoping my love rises just as steady,
just as strong.

Traipsing young minds

by Lexi Aldred, Poet in Resident

Beasts verses stags,
colour stained compasses,
quests of heroism and isolation.
Examining roots,
and how they may stem.
It did not take much: paper and a flowing pen,
fountaining cauldrons, bubbling creations.
I traipsed the tips of young imaginations;
In awe.
Unravelling journeys,
by blooming young poets.



"This project has been life changing for me. I have learned so much from the students and been incredibly inspired by their imaginations, creativity and kindness. Teaching them about my greatest passion and seeing them flourish as poets has been the most rewarding experience I have ever had"

Lexi Aldred, Poet

Hathershaw College

In partnership with The Whitworth and Nuha Chaudry

Natural Limitations

Taking inspiration from the idea of liminal spaces, Poet **Nuha Chaudry** was keen to get the year 7 students from **Hathershaw College** actively engaging with the world around them, with nature as a focus and a third space between the more familiar environments of home and school.

At **the Whitworth**, the exhibition on 'Performing Trees' allowed for a further exploration of this, while simultaneously encompassing themes of mythology and folklore, which connected with the Greek Mythology the students had been studying in English. The group were shown spoken word performances from a Cabaret for Freedom event, where nature was used as a metaphor to discuss social issues. They were then given a zine to make notes as they explored the gallery, aiding them to observe and understand what was around them, with the exhibition providing a valuable platform for dialogue.

Later that day, the group visited **Manchester Poetry Library** for a tour of both the library and the Grosvenor East Building, including All Saints Park, discovering poetry and inspiration at every step. A workshop drew these together, resulting in a group poem that represented everything that they'd taken from the day.

Within the school setting, students were exposed to a wide variety of writing exercises and prompts. They wrote about their journeys to school, tried their hand at ekphrastic poetry and took part in freewriting poetry sprints. Nuha introduced them to 'L'appel Du Vide' by Yomi Sode and 'The Part I Keep Forgetting' by Safia Elhillo as a way to reflect on the idea of 'The Space Between' being a mental state as much as a physical one, which led to pupils writing about their daydreams, shifting between the places this happens and their state of mind.

Throughout the project, students were introduced to poetry in a way that truly engaged them, relishing the chance to write creatively without limitations. As well as giving pupils confidence in speaking aloud and sharing their opinions, it also taught them to verbalise and contextualise their emotions, as evidenced by the range and depth of the work produced.

"Working with someone with experience in the poetry field helped me to learn and increase my confidence"

Pupil

Rotten Wood

by Anonymous

The trees stand in thousands,
Shaking in fear.
Knowing,
Soon,
They'd be cut from their lands.
Knowing,
Soon,
They'd all disappear.
Every human alive,
From nature they steal.
Never thinking twice;
About how the trees feel.
If trees have watched over us forever.
Doing so,
In any weather.
If trees are there for us, wherever.
To them, why are we such terrors?
Why do we make their load heavier?
Why are we our own destroyer?
Why, nature, do we slaughter?

The Art of Nature

by Talia

Rain drops pound on the window of my room,
As lightning flashes through the sky,
Lights flicker as people jump at the sound of thunder,
Wind howls as if whispering secrets of its kind,
Trees sway in the dark,
Dancing to the terrifying melody of the wind,
Houses collapse under nature's pressure,
And children get buried under the debris,
The sea screams aggressively revealing the art of nature,
But the part I keep forgetting is that I am in my room smiling happily as the sun casts a shadow over
my house.

The sweet smell of summer

by Gracie

Here, I was gazing at flowers,
They are free,
Alive and so pretty.
Fields of roses, lilies, sunflowers and poppies
Orchids and tulips like a collage
Tapestry impressionist
Artistry, scattered by nature's
Abstract unseen forces of
mind and rain, random
Seeding of colour and sweet aroma
Perfuming and intoxicating
Every breath
The sweet smell of summer.

Sad

by Yusuf

An unsettling forest is where I am,
No leaves and it feels like life has been sucked out of it.
No birds are chirping
The sky is grey and no sun shines on this wasteland,
The trees are idle and they will stay that way for years to come

But earlier it was thriving and they have been punished by none other than us
They have witnessed years of villainy, suffering and chaos,
They are secret spectators hiding in plain sight
But now humans have gone too far
Killing the innocent,
Nuclear wars making this planet
Unrecognisable

Despite all this chaos
There is still peace and happiness
So, make use of it while it lasts.

The Cruelty of the World

by Muhammed HR

I sit in my room
Bored out of my mind
People suffer in war and conflict
While I sit in my room
As missiles fire and destroy homes
While I sit in my room
Families torn apart
People mourn the loss of loved ones
While I sit in my room
People starving with no food to eat
People being dragged into war
While I sit and think about what to do

“Nuha showed a captivating talent for teaching word play, poetry and creative writing and her ability to clearly communicate her ideas to students using a range of skills was wonderful to witness”

Steven Roper, The Whitworth

My Life is Incomplete

by Aliza AR

When you feel happy and angry,
Sad but glad,
Excited but nervous what does that say about me?
When you run but walk, stop but go, jump and stay still,
When you read but watch, play and sleep what does that say about me?
And then I can see...
A room with no door,
A light with no bulb,
glasses with no glass,
A pen with no ink,
A fan with no air,
A heater with no heat,
A well with no water.
If I can see that, what does that say about me?
A class with no teacher
A school with no rooms,
A door with no handle.
If I can see that, what does that say about me?
A winter with no cold,
A summer with no sun,
An autumn with no leaves,
A spring with no flowers.

Everything is incomplete all around me.

THE STONE QUARRY

by Roman

Once there was a place.
A beautiful place with many features.
Nature all around.
This place is a stone quarry
With a fantastic waterfall that shimmers in the sun
You can hear and see many variations of frogs and spotted deer
You see trees and impossibly shaped stone blocks
They're quite intimidating
They look like they can fall onto you at any moment
You can climb if you're talented and have fun with your family
It's a fantasy of a place with shimmering trees and shiny stones
It could calm you down in seconds
You will get a beautiful view that would look like Royalty if you reach the top.

Random Thoughts

by Zehna

My neighbour lives alone but somehow make a lot of noise.
He sings alone all the time.
Beneath me, a noisy restaurant with no guests.
I thought this was going to be peaceful, but my thoughts got lost in my head.
My heart stopped!
I clenched my fists.
My legs were shaking.
Cracked lips
Wrinkled skin
My thoughts on her went out the window!

The Peaceful Forest

by Owais

The peaceful forest that I walk through every day,
Always reminds me of nature
The tall trees circle me
The smell of the fresh grass invades my nose
The sun always shines above my head on sunny mornings
One day I went to go pick fruit
I realised that all of the trees had disappeared
The forest was not the same and from that day I did not visit that forest.

Trees are more than just trees

by Chloe

Trees are witnesses to human conflict and suffering,
They could be vibrant and happy,
Or dull and dark,
Just choose,
Trees can take an earthy approach,
Silently observing their surroundings,
Succeeding generations,
Trees can provide reflections of personal journeys,
All trees are different,
No trees are the same,
It's like humans,
No one is the same,
So just be yourself.

MORAL: Be yourself and don't judge a book by its cover

The Kindness of This World

by Aliza A

In a world full of cruelty,
I stand here.
People with no sense of kindness walk past me.
I am filled with anger; how can someone be so cruel and lack a sense of humanity?
I look around.
I see many things,
But I see no one.
Nobody seems to stand up for it.
Forests burning,
Ice caps melting,
Animals dying are all quiet news.
How can people be so cruel?
I stand here.
The choice in my hand.
The choice between sanity and silence.

The Forest and the Sea

by Blake

Always in the forest roaming around
Towards the sea making the waves go up in happiness
Making me run around in the waves
Climbing the palm trees
Grabbing coconuts from up the palm trees
Cracking them open with a straw
Drinking coconut juice at the shore of the gigantic, blue, beautiful ocean
I find myself back in a forest roaming around
Seeing leaves everywhere
I go
I notice the ground isn't muddy anymore
I can run freely
The trees letting me through
The wind blowing in my hair as I run through the great green forest
Seeing deer and other animals around me
Some even running with me
Making us feel the wind
They feel it on their fur
I'm feeling it in my hair
Nature is making me and the animals feel brilliant.

Make you smile

by Amelia

For once,
my mind felt at peace,
And my body felt at home,
Not when I am alone,
But with people I know,
The laughter,
The chatter,
They all add up in one special memory,
I love my family,
friends,
and my mates,
And I love to see a smile on their face

The Viewpoint

by Aroush

Through the dusty,
bright paths of the viewpoint,
the girl is surrounded by tall,
beautiful greenery and big,
blue, sparkling rivers.
The girl found this as her enjoyment; the higher you get, the colder you get.
That's how nature works, she said.
The viewpoint brought peace to her mind and rest to her soul.

“Nuha demonstrated great adaptability, patience, and creativity in her approach and built a really positive rapport with the students, even in challenging circumstances. I am really grateful for the opportunity to be part of such a meaningful project and am incredibly proud of the students and what they have achieved.”

Samina Akhtar, Teacher

A Sea of Memories

by Hetvi

The beach
The one where my cousin and I dug a hole in
Bloop, blop, blop
The place where my dad picked me up when we walked through a sea of jellyfishes

The beach
The one where beautiful shell enhanced the sand
The one where my sandwich was literally a sandy witch

The beach
The one where the seagulls tried to steal our food, the one where my friends and I rolled around in
memories
Swish, Swash, Swush
The sound of the waves clashing against my shins
The beach...

An Escape

by Ishrat

I walk around in circles trying to get out,
I run around and about,
Same trees rustling and bustling,
I'm confused,
my head hurts,
It's dark, cold, and deserted,
Every step I take,
I can never find my way,
I don't know what to do,
I need to go to the loo,
All I want to do is find my way out of here,
And that's when everything went bright...

Alone

by Maryam

I ran
until everything fell quiet.
Now I am somewhere unfamiliar—
an island,
though it doesn't feel like one.
I am not sure where to go,
or if there is a way back.

Thoughts come in waves—
of home,
of voices I can't quite reach.
The air feels heavy here,
and time stretches.

I wonder
how I came this far,
and why
I am here alone.

The End

by Hassan

Across the sea,
I must achieve,
To see somebody,
Yet that is an impossible feat.

I make it across the sea,
I make it past tidal waves that try to kill me,
I make it across seas that try to devour me,
I see nobody,
no houses,
no cars,

Everything went away.
The trees are gone,
the buildings are gone,
Everything disappeared.

The Crime Scene

by Ben

The cars slow,
the people pause.
Something has happened—
a red car,
too fast, too late.

No one says it,
but the silence knows.
The story reaches me
in fragments—
a voice,
a break in the sentence.
Somewhere,
a life has changed—
or ended—
I cannot tell.

And though I wasn't there,
the image stays,
not quite real,
but not gone.

"The project made me realise the importance of such projects, especially in schools where there are not many opportunities for creativity. It allowed my students to gain confidence in speaking aloud and having faith in their own ideas and opinions, as well as learning to verbalise and contextualise their emotions."

Nuha Chaudry, Poet

Nightmare

by Zaria

I was walking through the beautiful, narrow roads with cherry blossom trees
the chilling sunset with birds flying,
people walking, and cars passing by.
Suddenly, heavy rain started to fall,
and evening turned into night,
no people, no cars, no animals,
just dullness and sadness

The rain got heavier, and the beautiful trees faded away.
I was standing there all alone in the dark.
All my thoughts and feelings got lost,
Something was slowly approaching me.
I got all anxious and tried to run,
but I couldn't,
It was like my feet were stuck to the ground,
and all of a sudden,
I woke up and realised it was all just a nightmare.

MISTAKE

by Isra

The world is so unique and extraordinary,
Mistakes are naturally made,
Like what is a mouth with no teeth,
Or a person with no feet,
Maybe grass with no colour,
And the moon with no light,
These are not a mistake,
All those mean comments are just fake,
They are all normal,
Can't you see
Do you understand me?

Hell

by Uswa

At night, the stars shine bright
Shadows of death,
When you see me coming,
You see me running
A dark Abyss,
Where nothing exists
It ripped out my heart
Giving my soul a fresh start
My body felt paralysed,
My mind in another paradise
At last,
I had peace
Not being chased by a terrifying beast

The Winter Memory

by Jack

The snow falls,
I can smell winter,
and people outside are complaining about the ice on their cars.
I'm getting myself a nice hot chocolate,
unable to keep warm because I'm still covered in snow.
But I think life might be against me.
I'm thinking about the worst moment of my life,
stuck at a party in a house without windows.
I'm hearing the loud music that's giving me flashbacks about the worst moment of my life.
What I keep forgetting is that I'm having the time of my life in the snow.

The Remembered Times

by Thomas

The forest behind the walls,
the cloud that stays forever, the rusty shed that has been overtaken by mice,
I imagine as I lie in bed.
The pit I dug when I was 5,
the patch of grass that I put my tent up on while pretending I was camping,
but it's fine as I lie here in my comfortable bed.
The seesaw and swings where my friends would play.
My trampoline,
which the mice dug through with their teeth,
I hate those mice

The Fog Crawler

by Mohammed H

One day, a storyteller came and asked would you like to hear a story about a mythical beast called
the fog crawler?
I did not know what to expect so I said yes,
he started his story by telling me about a time when it was a foggy day,
and,
a man was hunting in the forest,
unfortunately,
he was devoured by a mysterious beast
when the people found out
they called that forest the forbidden forest
and some researchers went and found the beast
The beast comes and kills people only in the fog because he is the fog crawler and,
he will prey on anyone alone or a group,
it will leave you traumatised,
these traumas will live in through your lineage as a curse

The Dark Side of Dreams

by Ahad

I wake—
but something isn't right.
The room holds me
in a way it shouldn't,
as if I never really left.
I try to move,
to leave—
but the edges of the dream
won't open.

There is a presence here.

Not clear,
not fully seen—
just a shape
that draws closer
when I notice it.

I think there is a way out,
something just beyond reach—
but every step towards it
feels slower
than the last.
Then—
stillness.

I am alone again,
or so it seems.

Only the feeling remains,
quiet,
unsettling—
as if something
is still waiting
for me
to wake.

Slenderman

by Ianis

A year ago,
I walked through the woods—
and something felt wrong.

Not seen,
but sensed—
like the air had shifted.

Between the trees,
a figure—
too tall,
too still.

I couldn't make it out,
only the shape of it,
watching
without moving.

I left quickly.

But sometimes,
even now,
I feel it—
just behind me.

The Legend...Concorde

by Raheem

At the age of 10, I went to Manchester airport to see an old legend that we lost just before the 2000's.

The Concorde a white rocket in the sky,

flying through the skies

Heathrow to John F. Kennedy international airport in 3 hours is CRAZY.

It was the fastest commercial plane at the time.

Reaching over 1000 kts.

Inside,

the flight deck,

the yoke is shaped as an M.

**"Poetry can be anything in any way.
You can write whatever you want"**

Pupil

Endings

by Ayyub

For once,
my mind feels quiet.

My body rests
as if it belongs
to this moment.

There is a stillness here—
wide,

unfamiliar—

stretching out
in every direction.

I am somewhere
between places,
not quite here,
not quite gone.

The world feels distant,
like something

I am slowly
letting go of.

I think of home—
of the people
who shaped me—
and hold that thought
a little longer.

There is a sense
of something ahead,
though I cannot see it—
only feel

that I am moving
towards it.

And in this quiet,

I wonder
if I have been enough.

Peace

by Mrs Samina Bibi Akhtar

At the edge of things—
where light thins
and the world loosens its hold—
I stand,
not where I was,
not yet where I will be,
and still—
I am held.

Let me rest here,
among the oak trees—
grateful for their stillness,
for roots that reach deeper
than I have ever needed to fall.

Take the burdens this world
so carelessly placed in my hands—
and let them scatter gently,
like leaves that have finished
their turning.

Allow me this moment
within the quiet threshold,
where the air is still and tranquil,
and time,
for once,
is kind.

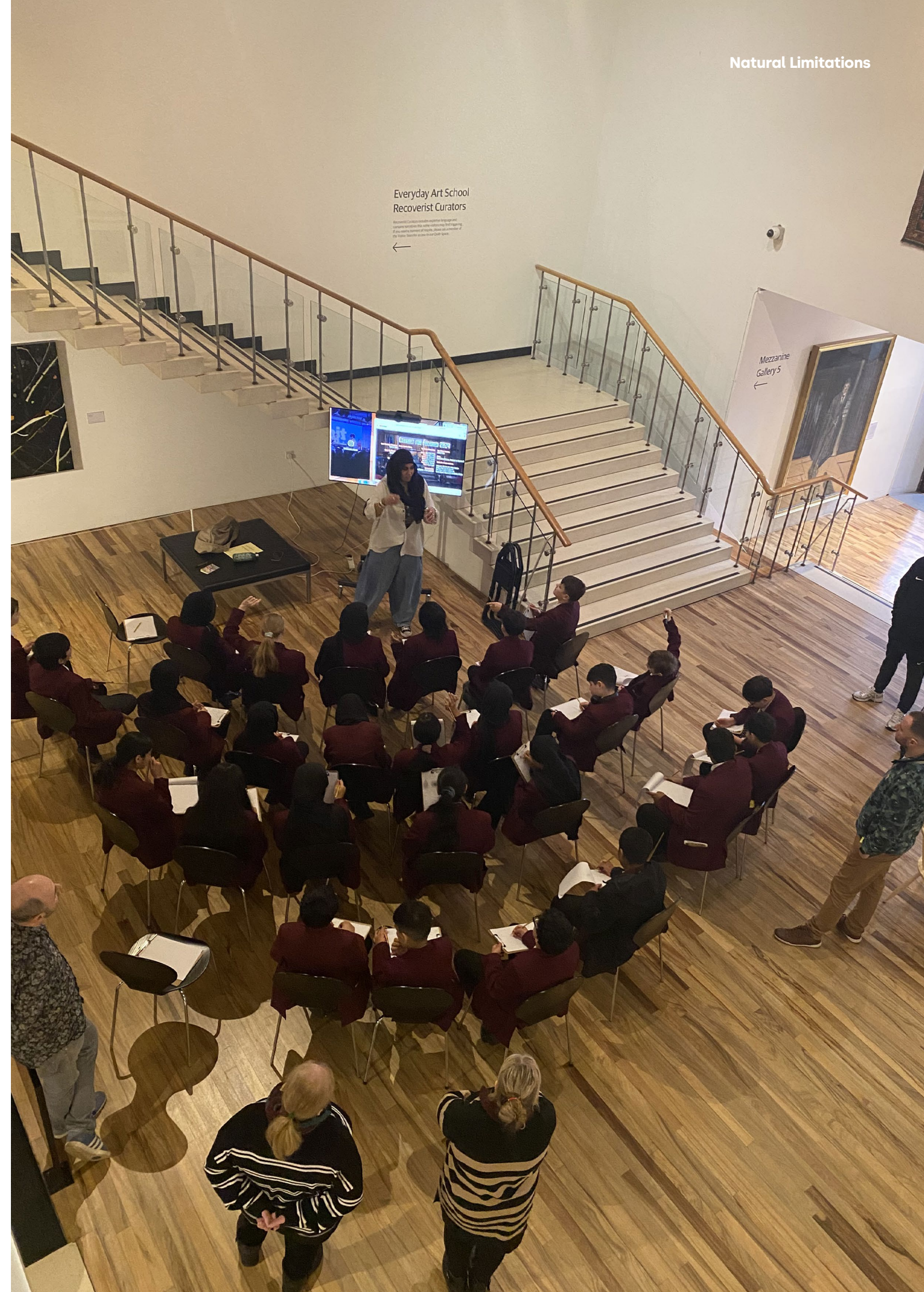
The trees ask nothing of me.
They do not rush.
They do not measure.
They simply stand—
and in their patience,
I am learning
how to stay.

Carry away the troubles
I was never meant to keep—
let them sink into the earth,
transformed,
made lighter than before.

Take from me the darkness
that waits at the edges—
not with force,
but with the quiet grace
of something that knows
how to heal.

And here,
in this in-between—
where one life softens
and another begins,

I will continue my journey
to root,
to rise,
to make space
for
others
to
grow.



Ladybridge High School

In partnership with the Science and Industry Museum and John Greenwood

Now is the Place

Poet **John Greenwood** worked with a year 7 citizenship and RE class at **Ladybridge High School** to create a project that would play with ideas of time and what might be found in liminal spaces, in the gaps between, the silence before speaking.

In early school sessions, students created their own poetry names and read 'The Sound Collector' by Roger McGough, before imagining what they'd hear in Bolton town centre and using this to create sound poems. In a subsequent workshop, the idea of inbetween spaces was introduced with conversations around what happens in the pauses, the times when you're in transit with all the potential for growth and imagination in these seemingly empty moments. This led to the creation of a collaborative poem, with each pupil writing a line on a card before all the cards were joined together, forming a tapestry of liminality.

During their visit to the **Science and Industry Museum**, students were fascinated by the mill clock exhibited in the textile gallery and the demonstration of it in action, the way it would have stopped when the machines needed repairing or the production line started running behind. The contrast between 'real time' and 'mill time' led to many discussions about concepts of time and power and who owns time, conversations that fed into many of the poems created. A session on object handling provided

further inspiration, where pupils had to use their imaginations to infer what an object might be used for.

Back in the classroom, the group continued their writing using the museum's framework of seeing, linking and wondering to think about historical objects, considering questions such as what they reminded them of, who they might have belonged to and how it felt to touch them. The idea of telling stories through poetry was demonstrated with the use of a poem entitled 'Child Labour' by Paul Lyalls, animating students to create their own stories. In a later session on editing, pupils reflected on how the layout of their work might have its own story to tell, with poet John Greenwood sharing a contrapuntal poem which could be read in three different ways, reflecting the way his brain works.

The final collection of work is a testament to the inspiration that students have taken from each stage of the project with poems on a huge variety of themes from the sounds of summer in the city to the importance of not racing through life.

"I learnt that making poems isn't always hard and you can just write what's in your mind"

Pupil



Outside

by Amelia

I'm staring out the window
Looking at the trees that
Blow with a breeze

As I hear the whistling
Of the wind the flapping
Of the birds wings and the
Swaying of the grass

The opening of the doors
Of the people going on walks
The mowing of the lawn mowers
And the shimmering of the shiny
Clean cars and people on
Days having fun outside with
Family and friends

the nice blue sky with small white
fluffy clouds moving slowly and the
nice pretty colourful rainbows
Shimmering with all of its might

The splashing of the fountains in
town and the beaming of the sun
Shining on the floor making
everything around them warm

the scraping of the skateboards
and the squeaking of the shoes
and the laughing of children
on the playground and running

My Poemmm

by Amran

As I slumped down in my seat
I lifted my pen wishing I could have a treat
My alarm still ringing in my head
And I prayed I was still in bed
While the air con screamed above
And I stared at a dove

I stared down on the empty sheet of paper
And I told myself I'd do it later
The rain poured on the window
While I stared at my fav willow
The teacher called at me to pay attention
But I felt like my expression

A Poem about Suicide

by Amara

"What to do? I can't do this anymore"
I whispered to the girl in the mirror.
"It takes time to heal" she whispered back to me.
But I didn't believe her because I had given it time,
lots of time.
But it only got worse.
I looked at the pill bottle on my nightstand. And I walked towards it.
I slowly picked it up. I peeled the cap lid off.
Trying to keep myself alive shouldn't be this hard.
I could hear my parents screaming at each other. I would be okay if they got along for once.
I pour about five pills into my hands.
Tears running down my face as I stare at the girl in the mirror.
Why should I fight for my life? When I don't even want it.
My letters were all written.
The hard part was over.
Now I just got to take the pills and it would all be over.
I was scared.
Do my parents really deserve to lose their daughter?
The pills were gone...
The next morning my mother didn't scream my name before they carried me out in a body bag.
She screamed my name asking if we could go to the mall together and spend some quality time with
each other so I did.
Because she deserved that and not her at her daughter's grave telling her about the mall I could not
attend.

"I have loved having the opportunity to work with such an enthusiastic group of young poets. Time and time again, I was blown away by their creative insight - a testament to both their raw talent and the brilliant foundation laid by their teacher."

John Greenwood, Poet

A Tokyo Glare

by Ameena

Big screens,
Busy streets,
A concrete mask for a history
Of “beauty-is-pain” misery.

Decades gone—
A brutal, beautiful design,
Young girls offered at the shrine,
To live as a ghost,
A royal Concubine.

Worthless,
Alone.

Shikomi scrub the Kyoto floors,
Dreaming of Geiko’s paper doors;
While in Kawasaki’s heavy air,
Geisha unbind their midnight hair,
Perfecting the shakuhachi’s breath—
A song of life, a song of death.

Japan now, is an archipelago:
Futuristic sidewalks,
Intriguing onigiri.
But look beneath the chrome and light:
Freedom was a ghost
In the Kyoto night.

Summer

by Boluwatife

A bright sun, as its rays hit the ground,
Water balloons thrown around,
Kids playing, having fun,
As they dance in the bright sun,

Summer is approaching, get ready for the fun,
don’t want summer to be done,
Sweat coming down our faces can’t wait to see
What will come next for you and me

Having a kick-around, we stay out till dark,
Dogs being free, beginning to bark

Walking Through The Street

by Faaran

I open the door,
Step onto the floor,
Drift down the corridor.

I spot my friend—
Bent like the wind—
We laugh and walk some more.

We stop by the store,
I buy a book,
Didn’t know what I was looking for.

We head to the cook,
Inside I see
A tiny flea
Breaking free.

A train engine roars,
The rain finally stops,
Running down the drains in drops.

Outside, a Ferrari
SF90
Parked beside a Bugatti—
A strange little party.

I head back home,
Open up Chrome,
Sit quietly, alone.

I climb into bed,
Thoughts in my head—
This is the end.
Let’s be friends
Before the night sends us again.

The magic yellow card who turns in a lime

by Farhaan

Hello fellow friend I’m a guy with a yellow card
But make sure this card doesn’t hit a shard
Because this yellow card will be shallow my friend
Yellow card please be a good message to send
All you have to do is click it three times
To make it into a lime.

**“It was a really cool
experience that let us
explore our imagination by
writing poetry to become
a published poet”**

Pupil

Steam Train

by George

Steam train riding in the rain,
Day After day
it takes you on your way
to Bombay and Green Bay

The girl and the days

by Leah

There once was a girl with a heart full of light,
Who danced in the morning and dreamed through the night.
She laughed with the wind and she sang to the rain,
She carried her joy and she carried her pain.
She wandered through meadows where sunflowers grew,
Her hopes were as bright as the sky's endless blue,
When clouds tried to cover her bright, shining way,
She whispered, "the sun will come back one day"
She learned that life's gentle, yet as wild as the sea,
It changes, it sways, it just wants to be free.
So she walked with a smile through each turn and bend,
For she knew every chapter would welcome its end.
Now time softly hums its unspoken tune,
The stars nod above and they promise her soon:
That life, though uncertain, is perfectly spun-
A dance to be lived not a race to be won.

The horror

by Maayra

I woke up to fountains splashing.
Clocks ticking.
Cars beeping.
Then a silence, not even a breath.
Stairs creaking.
Sun shining.
People screaming.
What was going on?
Then slow dripping of water droplets.
Complete darkness...
Then you woke up
in an abandoned house.

Everyday

by Mahir

Everyday,
I watch people succeed, Some of my
Friends encourage me
to become a footballer.
I work very hard everyday
just to make my
Family proud.

The Dog That Left.

by Olivia

They don't know what's going on
Except from when you're gone
We didn't know what was wrong
Until we found out

I started to cry
You might have done a bad deed
But the sky will gleam

That one dog you love
Will suddenly be in the heaven above
The sky looks prettier
But the world looks uglier

You're lying stiff
We thought you were asleep
Until we went to the vets
And found out you're dead

Untitled

by Riaz

As you entered the town center you heard the roads raging
the ticking of the clock
the whistling of the wind
the rustling of the trees,
and the buzzing of the bees.
I left the shop with a slush and saw a m3 competition across the street playing a sick beat.

Untitled

by Rayhaan

The ticking of the bell
The honking of the cars
The squeaking of the noise
The scraping of the trainers
The creaking of the stairs
The screaming of the kids
The drumming of the raindrops
The ringing of the bell

"I have seen students grow in confidence and express themselves with clarity and passion. Many of them spoke of how much they valued the encouragement and knowledge that John brought and I could see some of them really begin to blossom under the praise and enthusiasm he showed them"

Lisa Holt, Year 7 Teacher

THANK YOU...

by Sophia

When the thank you came after the meal
I was worried
because he has never said thank you before
To me he was never nice to me
at the point I was playing it in my mind over
And over again
The thank you hits hard

The light blue sky got dimmer and darker
Minutes felt like hours
I went to my bedroom
I didn't realise that I was crying
I was tired after the crying
I fell asleep...

When I woke up at 11:00am
I went downstairs
But I didn't see him...
HE...WAS...GONE...

After a while I was panicking
But he came back
I asked him where he had been
But he just went to his room
Normally he tells me everything about his day
At that point I knew that something
Was wrong ...

I went to his room
But he wasn't there
I went to find him
Minutes felt like hours trying to find him
But I had no luck
I just went home, no luck, no brother...

I started to cry again
I just forgot everything
Except my brother

Time

by Amna

The clock is ticking,
The time is moving,
All I can hear is pens scratching,
Pages flipping,
Brain isn't working,
People outside laughing.

Poem

by Ayesha

I climb a ladder and see down below.
What is there down below? I say.
I see the trees swishing through.
Down there I see more down below.
The magnificent moon shining down below.
Up there with the stars above.
I look at the sky and wander below.
Orange light shining above a fire I see down below.
I wake up from above. I guess a dream is a lot from above.
I stretch my arms and get up high just a dream I say looking down from the ladder below.

What Am I?

by Emmanuel

What am I
When I think
I remember the lies they told
About where I was from
In world
My children ask
Where were you born
I can't think of an answer
About where I was from.

Starts with the clicking of a pen

by Hadi

The clicking of the pen
And the ticking of the clock echoes
Around this block.
The spikey thorns in the bush and the parents
Telling their children to shush.
Everyone enjoying their summer whilst drinking a slush.
I saw a Ferrari SF90 driving through the streets as people put their thumbs up
And said righty righty.
The roaring of the engine the sound of the gear shifts amazing the people as quick as a staple,
Going through paper.

The Amazing Digital Circus.

by Lexi

I put on the headset and what do I see?
A colourful world full of cartoons with teeth.
But there's one thing I need to know.
HOW DO I LEAVE?
Is any of this real.
What's going to happen to me?
All these people keep staring.
The ringmaster keeps glaring!
Is this all a hallucination??
We go to visit an old friend but what do we see?
He's gone absolutely crazy!

I'm fine
I won't lose my mind
I don't need your dumb distractions.
I'm no ABSTRACTION!
I'm fine.
I won't lose my MIND
I don't need your dumb DISTRACTIONS
I'M NO ABSTRACTION!

Bus

by Muhammad Ha

I was spicking
door cricking
was a person behind me
the bus hissing
scarlet body scraping across the road

Life Madness

by Muhammad Hu

Life gets faster gets faster everyday,
No time to think no time to play,
Hurry, chaos lots of stress,
Tension leads to sleeplessness.
When will all this madness go,
Lots of free time and days not to stress,
So go outside and play some sports,
Before it is too late to do that again,
So think, pause and stop before you start your day again.

Poem about poems

by Musa

Haiku poems have 3 lines,
They are about imagery, nature and are very precise,
Villanelles aren't so evil,
Nor are they somewhat medieval,
Ghazal and sonnets are quite similar,
They are both about love that's secular,
Epic poems are quite sick,
And you know what else is,
Limericks

Porsche

by Muhammad A

I was walking past the Porsche dealership and went inside for a look
they had a Porsche book
there was someone there that had a hat like a cook.
I looked at a Porsche 911
GT3 the black stripe livery on
which made the car look mean
I looked to my left and a car looked like a green bean.
I walked out with a slush and saw
a M4 competition across the street playing a sick beat.
The Porsche dealership had a fleet of Porsche.

Traffic Jam

by Lisa Holt, Year 7 teacher

The sun is shining as I crawl
Traffic, nose to tail
Engines buzz but go nowhere
Slowly.
I check the clock
20 minutes to make it
Is this my lane?
Too late to switch?
Tension rises
No man's land
The space between,
where I was and where I should be.
What's the holdup?
I can't see...
Powerless.
Until
The sun catches the window
My mood lifts
Hard to be angry when spring comes
Daffodils dance at the side of the road
The breeze rustles newly budding leaves
Trees come back to life
After the long lonely winter.

I wouldn't notice,
if I wasn't still.
A moment of peace
Enforced retreat
I must sit
And wait
Quiet
Calm
Still

Mill Clock

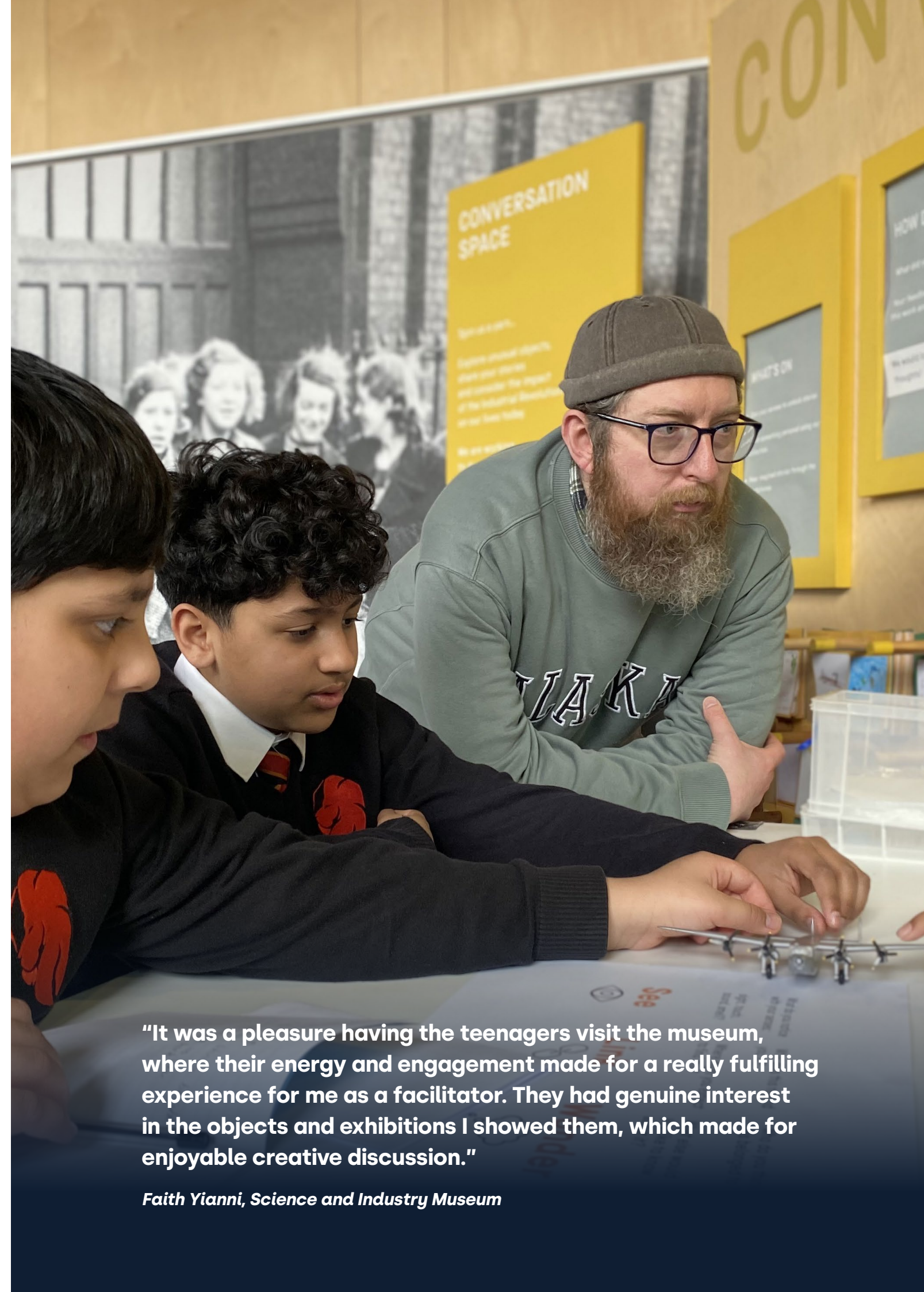
by John Greenwood, Comino Poet in Residence.

In a class close to thirty, clocks click out of time.
Dextrous digits double-tap over two-timed two-faced
tools for screening. It gives me cause to pause a beat and wonder why
only insidious inaccuracies seem to keep pace.

I've watched the switch from textiles to tech-giants
that use still children's nimble fingers to program
algorithms. Hosting hate sewed by holed-up tyrants
that creeps up posts and feeds on old man-

gled ideas of glory. But indulge me, please. Listen.
Not to me, but to what's brandished with glee by a youth
that craves to be un-herded, un-coupled, and to glisten
and to shine in our unspeakable truth;

They are the new key-holding, cog-turning transformers,
who refuse to be contained by our time-honoured borders.



"It was a pleasure having the teenagers visit the museum, where their energy and engagement made for a really fulfilling experience for me as a facilitator. They had genuine interest in the objects and exhibitions I showed them, which made for enjoyable creative discussion."

Faith Yianni, Science and Industry Museum



Pioneer House High School

In partnership with The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah RACE Centre and Poet Joseph Conway

Concrete Poetry

Continuing from the launch of last year's project, this year's began in a similar way, with poet **Joseph Conway** leading an assembly at **Pioneer House High School**, which lead to a competition to decide which class would participate this year.

Working with the lucky winners, Joseph's goal was to increase their knowledge of and interest in poetry through the use of concrete poetry and its inherent playfulness, particularly when combined with multisensorial explorations of the various ways poetry can be created.

Early school sessions began with observations of the environment outside of the classroom window, before students went outside to their forest school to gather materials such as leaves and twigs in order to create their own collages. In subsequent workshops, the group used haikus to take them in new directions, adding words to the collages they had created, and considering carefully where to place them.

At **The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah RACE Centre**, pupils enjoyed investigating the archives, in particular the Elouise Edwards Collection with its focus on the celebration of local cultures and communities. They later used zines to look for things that sparked their interest and built a word bank around them, giving them a useful resource to take back to the classroom.

Manchester Poetry Library provided further inspiration, with students exploring the library in pairs, each focusing on a different area and then coming back to report back to the rest of their group. Taking inspiration from the collection, and a poem written specifically for the session by their poet in resident, pupils collaborated to select lines and create a group poem which each student could contribute to.

The project concluded with a celebratory presentation of students work in the school, where pupils showed off their work with a huge sense of pride.

"The students seemed to really enjoy the visit to the library and the look at some of the archival items. It was a great prompt for their poetry writing, and for exploring local histories in a tangible way"

Tania Stein,
Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust

Moon walk

by Heidi



moon
walk

Luna only goes out when the moon shines bright

Trampoline
reaching for the sky I fly with a bird

she walks the dark long streets

all she does is lingers under the street light

Black and White

by Tilly



Black
and
White

Brown

Glued

thing away,
like sand

Stuck

Big

Long

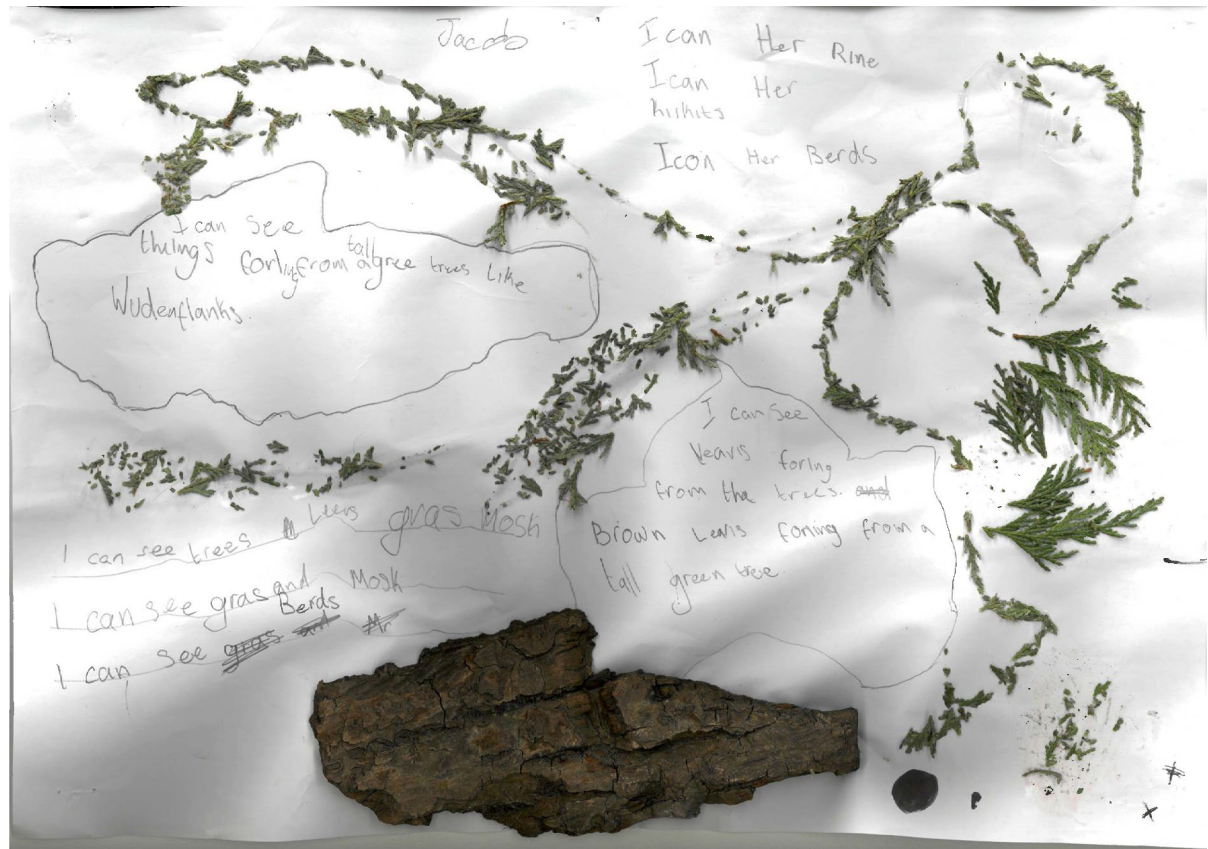
The leaves

look dead and stuck some pieces are long and short small

The wind blows very hard and blows every dead

I can hear

by Jacob



I can see
things falling from a tall green tree like
Wooden planks

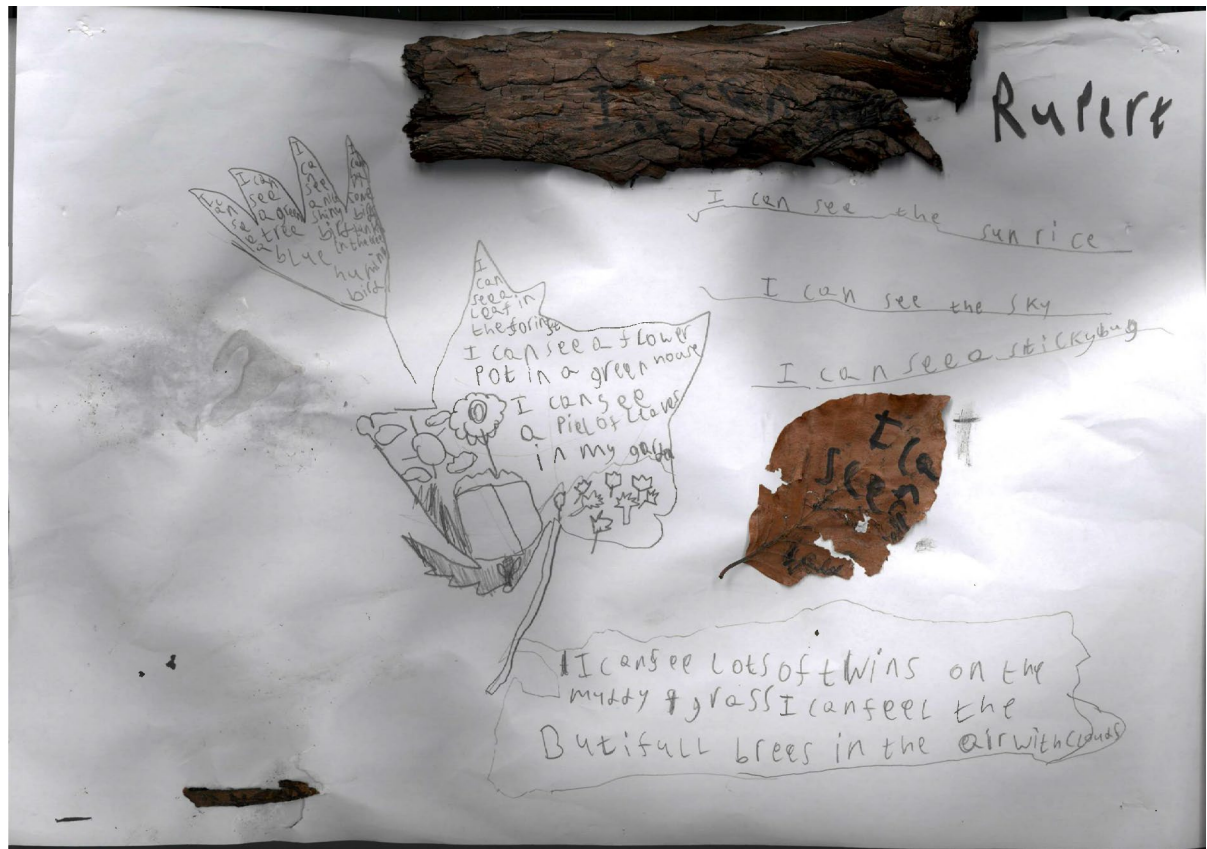
I can hear rain
I can hear
crickets
I can hear birds

I can see
leaves falling
from the trees.
Brown leaves falling from a
tall green tree.

I can see trees leaves grass moss
I can see grass and moss
I can see birds

I can see

by Rupert



I can see the
sun rise
I can see the sky
I can see a sticky bug

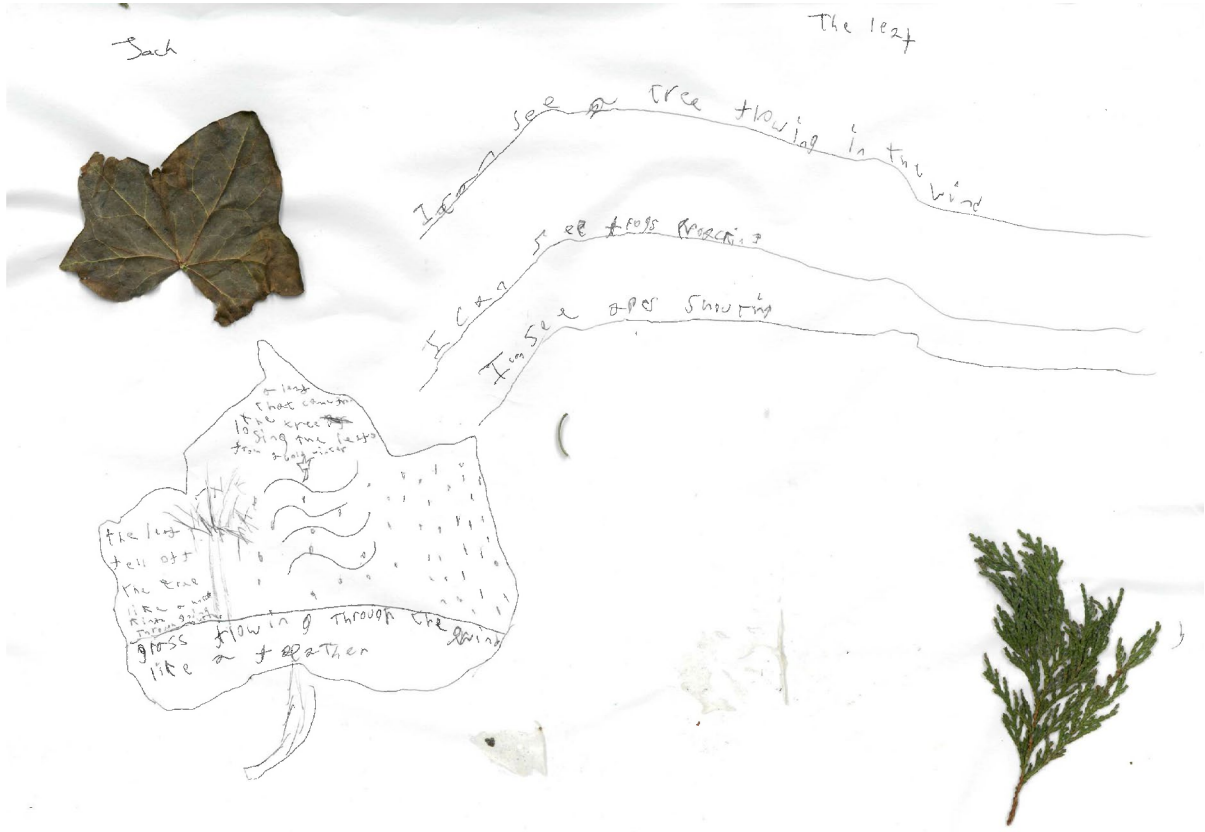
I can
see a
flower
Pot in a green house
I can see
a Pile of leaves
in my garden

I can
see n
atu
re
I can see lots of twins on the
muddy grass I can feel the
Beautiful breeze in the air with clouds

I
c
a
s
e
a
l
u
e
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g
b
i
r
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I
c
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I
c
a
n
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o
m
e
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a
l
k

The leaf

by Jack



The Leaf

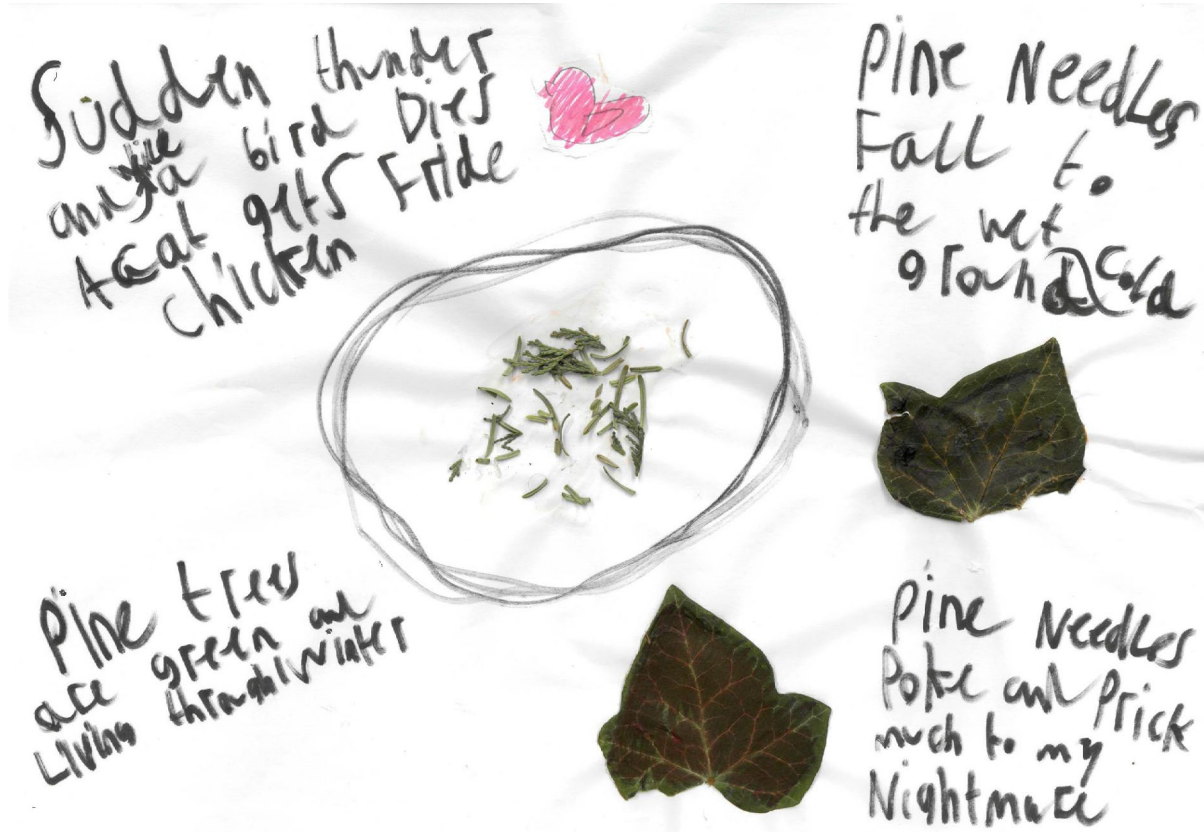
a leaf
that came from
the tree
losing the leaves
from a cold winter

the leaf
fell off
the tree
like a hot
knife going
through butter
grass flowing through the ground
like a feather

I can see a tree flowing in the wind
I can see frogs croaking
I can see apes shouting

Sudden thunder

by Lorelei



Sudden thunder
and a bird Dies
A cat gets fried
chicken

Pine Trees
are green and
Living through winter

Pine Needles
Fall to
the wet cold
ground

Pine Needles
Poke and Prick
much to my
Nightmare

It is so windy
by Alex



"The poet showed me new poems and helped me find new words"

Pupil

it is so windy
and so
cloudy
it is so windy
luxury car as parrow's quiet thump the
engine roars
wind
wind
wind
leaves
a leaf
it's green
orange
brown
They can fall,
stick
sticks are very
large
y
I love
leaves
It's
so windy
wind
windy
windy

A man

by Joe



"This project gave students a place where, rather than doing something to be marked and judged, they could simply be free on the page, adapting it to what they would like it to be. They shared resources, equipment, ideas and thoughts regularly, laughing with each other and offering support"

Joseph Conway, Poet

"I enjoyed going on trips to different libraries"

Pupil

A man waters
the tree looking
 for golden
trees, finding the best

Do you like trees?

by Kaiden



luxurycar
smells like bubblegum
it drives like a sport car

1 bird: do you like trees and can you-
why do you like seeds
2 bird
what's your fave place to go
why do you like it

The Stick is brown
and muddy

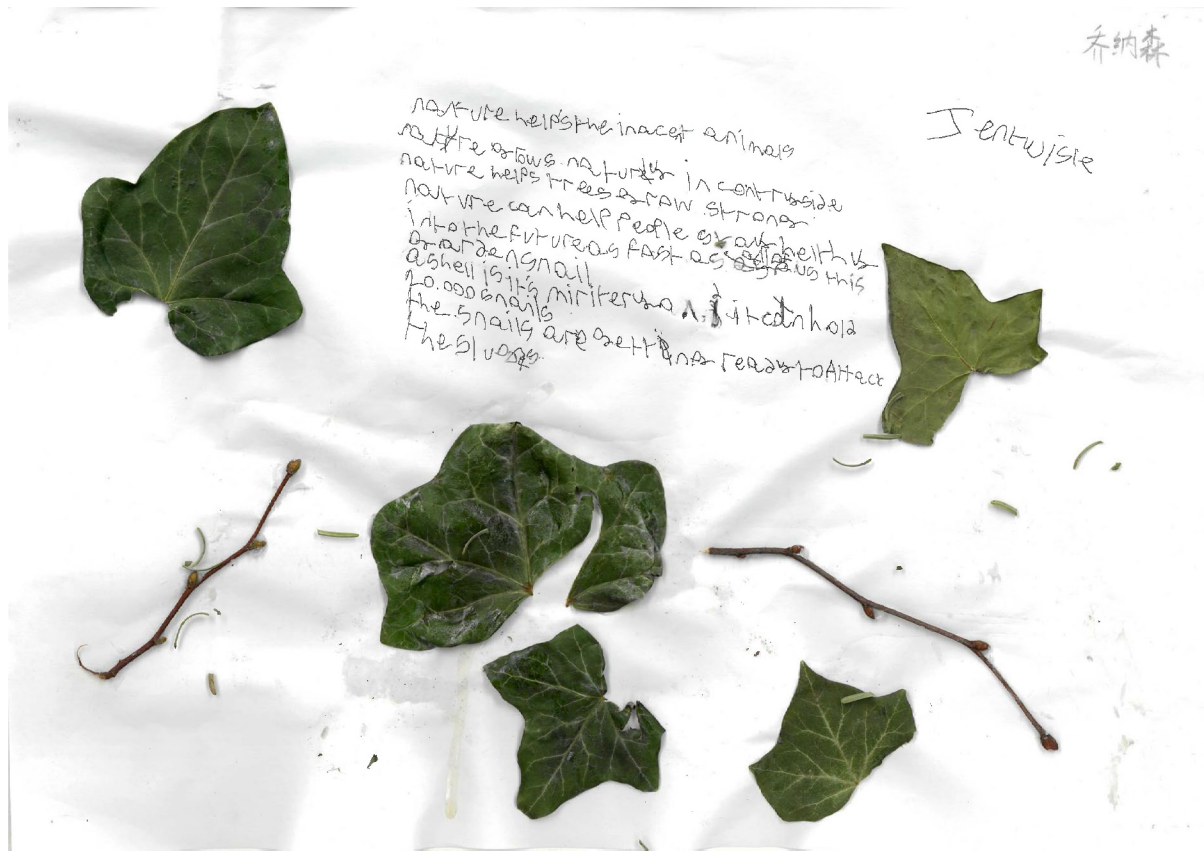
green
and not
dead

is brown
and dirt
and mouldy

is brown
and thin

Nature

by Jonathan



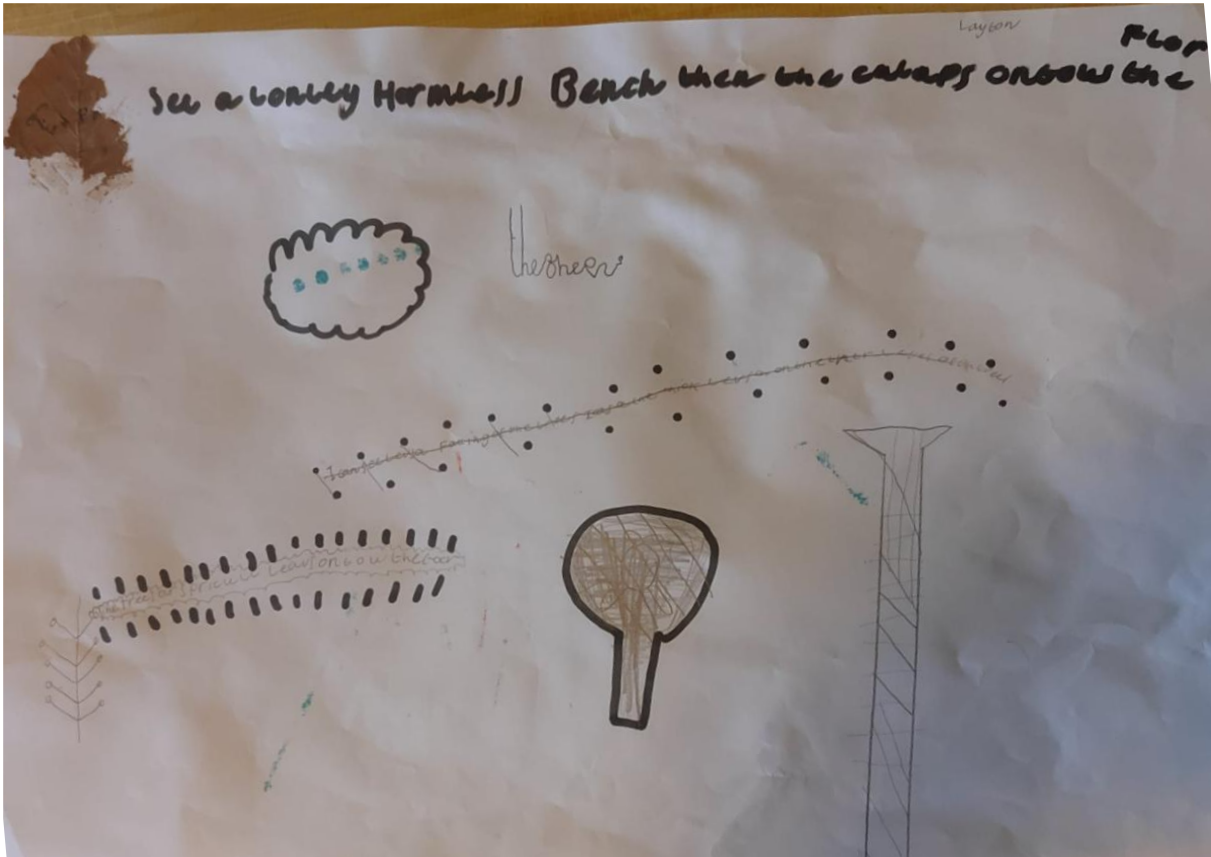
nature helps the innocent animals
nature grows naturally in countryside
nature helps trees grow stronger
nature can help people stay healthy
into the future as fast as all of us this
a garden snail
a shell is its military and stronghold
20,000 snails
the snails are getting ready to attack
the slugs

"I want to thank Joe for the
engaging workshops"

Pupil

See a lonely harmless bench

by Layton



floor
see a lonely harmless Bench then the cat jumps onto the
..... the one

I can see leaves falling on the trees I can see the thick leaves on the trees

the trees are spiralling leaves on to the floor



"The biggest benefit for pupils was confidence. Many of them felt poetry was not for them at the start, but the scheme made it feel accessible and safe. Pupils were able to express ideas, feelings and experiences in a way that didn't rely on getting things right. Having a poet working with them made the experience feel special. Pupils listened more closely, took more risks and felt proud to share their work."

Bradley Morgan, Teacher

St Gabriel's RC High School

In partnership with Manchester Central Library and Theo Langdale

Hero's Journey

The aim of this project with **Manchester Central Library**, poet **Theo Langdale** and a year 7 group at **St Gabriel's RC High School** was to present poetry as both possibility and play, challenging preconceived notions of it being inaccessible or archaic and instead, offering students the chance to create poems that were relevant to their own lives and the heroes within them.

The cultural visit to Manchester Central Library started with a tour of the incredible variety of resources and services available before moving into the archives, discovering everything from Victorian fairy tale books to texts in Esperanto. All of this provided material for the individual zines each student had been given to build a personal bank of ideas and words.

In Manchester Poetry Library, the group enjoyed working in teams to explore the library and report back to each other on their findings before choosing a book based only on its cover. These were then used as a way for students to select lines and create writing inspired by them, eventually working in small groups to cut up the lines they'd written and mix them with lines from Mary Oliver's 'Wild Geese'. The experience of using found poetry and editing with others gave pupils an opportunity to produce new work in an interactive and fun way.

In school sessions, students read 'Boys in the Hood' by Caleb Femi as an introduction to how figurative language and layout can be used in the creation of an evocative poem about a hero's journey. Brainstorming ideas for their own poems led to discussions on what defines a hero, what attributes and features they might have and who they might choose to write about. Throughout the drafting and editing process, pupils were keen to share their ideas and work with their poet in residence and each other to develop and polish their creations. The resulting poems are a tribute to all their hard work and how much of themselves the students gave to this project.

"It was really lovely to meet the students and see them approach our archives with such curiosity. They had lots of questions about the objects and the library, which was wonderful to see"

Alessia Benedetti,
Manchester Central Library

Life in Action

by William

Our life is a map,
Finding ways isn't simple,
Choose your directions,
Life is a journey,
It's like a rollercoaster,
You choose your journey,
You choose your life's paths.

The School Match

by Fletcher

Running round the pitch,
noise fills my ears,
loud pants around
feet keep kicking the ground,
hearing people cheer
they imagine a win is near,
but...
Little did both teams know,
there's quite some time to go.
Soon the game's end is near,
the match grows tense
and then the ball gets kicked over the fence.

My Younger Self

by Amelia

When I was a young girl I thought
everyone was different just not me
that I was the odd one out. When I was
younger I thought everyone lived forever
and that I was the girl who thought
we lived forever and that I had to
cover up my feelings until I met
my long lasting friends who are still
with me now and I have met new ones
that I know will be also long lasting
too. I wish that I could go back to my
younger self and tell her that everything
would be ok once you find the friends
that you need just open up and you
will find what friends you deserve and
that you would love your new life that
is waiting for you just trust and believe
and it will come true. Just wait and it
will come.

Harry's Hero Hamilton

by Harry

Winning is his best mate. Sir Lewis
Hamilton is as courageous as a lion.
From Karting to Formula 1, Lewis was a
monster and still is today. But when
he was young, he didn't have money
to pay.

I have always seen him as motivational
and when he was at Mercedes,
he was sensational. He is considered
the best racer in history yet is
so humble. When he joined Ferrari,
his career took a tumble.

If hard-working was a person, they would
be called Lewis Hamilton. From the West
Indies to England, talent crossed the
ocean. When he started Karting, he was
causing a commotion.

Knighted by the Queen, he had to
get down on one knee. Afterwards,
had a cup of tea.

With his first Ferrari podium yesterday
morning, it might be a warning.
With 7 championships that could be 8,
winning is his best mate.

**"I was touched by the
students' willingness to
engage with the material. This
project has given me hope
that the future of poetry is in
good hands!"**

Theo Langdale, Poet

My Amazing Sister

by Max

My sister had two roads,
laid out ahead,
she could go money machine,
or student maker,
but both have flaws,
work was afraid of change,
and school was too busy to care,
so she picked neither,
because she picked family.

That's one of the reasons she is the best, now please let me tell you the rest.

Somehow she does work, school, and family

she buys me things,
she inspires me,

I talk to her so much,
almost every day,

she brings out the
best even in me

someday I hope and pray
I can give this gift back some day

Heroes, Heroes, Saving the Day

by Jett

As powerful as Thor

As fierce as Black-Panther

We all live on the same

≧ PLANET ≦

As brave as Anakin Skywalker

As heroic as Captain America

We all live on the same

≧ PLANET ≦

As fast as the Flash ⚡

As funny as Spider-Man

We all live on the same

spinning ≧ BALL ≦

As mysterious as Doctor Strange

As stealthy as Batman

We all have something

WE'RE ≧ GOOD ≦ AT

As loyal as our friends

As caring as our parents

We all have a

≧ HERO ≦
So don't think it's
≧ OVER ≦

“Theo has been really fun and creative and I have a deeper understanding about poetry”

Pupil

My Kitten!

by Minahil

My kitten the one named...Luna. This kitten made me feel at home. It brought a spark of light through the darkness. One day I found her, miserable and lonely.

Then...we adopted her.

We nicknamed her our energy fur-ball. She brought happiness wherever she went. Never left my side.

But then...she was found with a sickness.

The day my life started is the day hers ended. After leaving me astray, I wish her a good afterlife.

Lucky's Journey

by Lucky

Poem for any age

My parents are the best. My dad is very brave. They make me laugh. Works for every body Every day, all they want. And brings loads of Isto to make me happy. Joy and happiness, That's why I love them. Into our family,

My mum is like a dinner. She brings everyone together.

My big brother is talented, he plays for a team.

But I'm a bit talented, matter of fact I play piano, and drums. I'm really good at it.

But I love games so my parents think I'm addicted.

I've been to loads of continents and Schools but I hate travelling.

Because I always have to leave my best friend.

And the worst thing about it is that I have to leave them and I've never been able to say

goodbye

Sleep

by Zac

I want to go home
in my bed and watch TV
and go to sleep because I'm bored
and very very tired
I could fall asleep at this moment.
When I go home
I would play with my dog Hugo, he
is cute and soft, also lively and
I would play on my Xbox and play
Rocket League or Rivals. I would
eat snacks like chocolate and my tea
then I would go in my bed. My
bed is as fluffy as a sheep
my bed is grey. Then I would
go to SLEEP!!! z

z
z
z
z
z
z
z

Haiku

by Luke

With trepidation
I stepped upon the cheeseball
One giant leap for man

My Hero!
Freddie Flintoff

by Charlie

Ever since I started playing cricket,
I always looked up to Freddie Flintoff.
He is like the God of cricket to me,
he WHACKS the ball as if it was a bee

Once he had his accident at top-gear
he overcame his fear
without shedding a tear,
and yet he kept on playing

From balls passing boundaries over and over,
he strikes the ball all the way to Dover.
And when he bowls fastly,
wickets go flying drastically,
and yet he kept on playing.

Over 80,000 fans watching with excitement,
Freddie hits the ball with enlightenment.
The crowd went wild,
the stadium erupted like a newborn child
and yet he kept on playing.

Where his cricket career ends,
his legacy never bends,
and he kept on making new friends,
a lifetime of cricket which he lends.

My Mother

by Adalia

Mother, mother whose voice is as soft
as a feather. Mother, mother whose choices
are always better.

Mother, mother who's the greater cook, makes
the greatest African recipes like jollof rice
and okra soup!

Mother, mother she is the life-giver.
Mother, mother she is the joy-maker.
Mother, mother she makes solutions as fast
as a cheetah.

Mother, mother helping me fly
into the unknown with the
help of Jesus and God.

Always there for me never absent.
Mother, mother I love all the time we spend.
All the dishes we've invented
and jokes we've made.

Mother, mother she's like a
library of books. Makes me learn
from my mistakes and always
try again.

Mother, mother a lion protecting her cubs.
Mother, mother the pilot of my life journey.
Helping me fly over all the obstacles
I may find challenging.

Mum

by Lola

My mum, she helps people
even if she is the one who
needs the help.

Even if we are both sick she
chooses me over herself. Mum
you work in a school, got
your degrees, have a home
and a family.

I ask what your favourite
colour is so I don't forget. I ask
what your favourite food is
so I can cook it for you.

You sacrifice everything for
anyone, you are the best.
I Love You.

My Dad

by Alan

A son, an uncle, a dad, a cousin, a brother,

Suffering from an eternal nighttime eye, soon
having eye surgery maybe even now. Brave as a
lion, confident like prey escaping a predator.
Right now can see like a worm through his left
eye, soon like an eagle. Happened after my
mum had to fly high.

Brand new eyes seeing a brand new life,
having to see lies to seeing the truth.

The Journey of Red Lights

by Thandy

Rattle! Shook the car as the keys jiggled
in the lock. Like getting upon a stallion we
climbed into the car, seat belts clicking, radio singing
this is the journey of red lights. The car
danced its way through Chehery, cars weaving
through the traffic like stitching in a dress.
Oh how beautiful is it dancing through the journey
of red lights

My First Game

by Daisy

It was my first time
going to watch Manchester
City against Luton town.

We
won
5-0!

The wind drifted past my
face colder than an ice
cube.

When City scored I was
full of joy. I was so
thankful he took me.

The noise of people chanting
echoed around the stadium
keeping it warm.

The taste of warm hot
chocolate takes me back
to that warm memory.
I will hold forever in
my heart forever.

And the fact I saw my
favourite player live. When me
and my dad got home
we discussed about how much
fun we had. I had more
fun than a monkey swinging
from vine to vine.
From then on we go every
week.

He
always
puts
a
smile
on
my
face

My Hero(s)

by Eleanor

England Lionesses.
Europe champions back to back.
goal after goal
save after save.
Inspiring children day in and day out.
As cool as cucumbers they rule about.
As they demand the ball, the
opposition begin to freak out!
The roar of the crowd, as they
become history makers.
Singing Sweet Caroline as we
won just in time.
Seeing us lift the cup, as we won
2-1 up.
Football is my passion as they
won in fashion.
I love football, all because of
England Lionesses.

Spooder's Adventure

by Seb & Romelo

Spooderman Spooderman
swinging through
the streets as fast as a
cheetah he eats sweets

Where could you be
Spooderman Spooderman
I just want you to
be here with me

Spooderman Spooderman
saving the day
trying to keep
Batman away

Spooderman Spooderman
racing through the air
I wish you could be here

Batman Batman
causing havoc through
the streets destroying
cars without a thought

Spuderman Spuderman
meets Spooderman
together they
beat Batman

Katseye & K-Pop

by Ellie

K...K...K...K...K Katseye K-pop Katseye K-pop

Nothing beats music from my 2
fav groups Katseye & K-pop

We're goin' up up up it's my mom-

(La) (LA) (LA) (La) (LA)

Rumi, Rumi, Rumi...What a voice
like bells ringing in my ears

Lara, Lara, Lara...Vocals as delightful
as a piano echoing in my mind.

"The magic was definitely in the pupils' vulnerability when sharing their poetry. There was laughter, tears, and many proud smiles. It has made many of them feel capable of achieving their goals in writing"

Megan West, Teacher

My Hero is...But What is Yours?

by Niamh

Your passion can be anything,
your life can be anything
and you can have the
life and
passion about anything. Your
imagination wants because
your imagination
is endless. It is full of life and
stories that are endless and you
and your talents never STOP
Telling
and
Telling
and you can be anything.
Mine was
Irish Dancing!

Before my nan died she
gave to me a passion but not
just any passion a life. And a
life that you can cherish forever.

She was like a flower
everlasting
that never stopped blooming and
growing. As she spread her
joy, happiness, and life down to
me and spread her wings and
passed down passion and life
to thee. If you believe you can
achieve. Everyone has a

life
and passion but
what is yours, your imagination
and determination could lead
you anywhere and anything can
be
possible
NOT
impossible.
No matter who you are,
or where you come
from or who you become
if you love your life
you will love a life
full of LOVE.

The Final

by George

Running round the pitch
noise fills my ears,

Ball gets played in,
I shoot for top bins

The teams filled with smiles,
victory is near

We lift the trophy once again,
scoring goals like a number 10.

Scanning round everywhere
to see if defenders are near

The ball goes in,
the crowd is filled with cheers

The score's now 2-1
and the game is done

“Working with a poet really helped
me to build confidence”

Pupil

Untitled

by Esmae

My sister my hero I follow where she goes.
 She's inspiring and kind and she helps me
 learn, she cares for me until it's my turn to help her
 when she needs me but it's not that easy, since
 I was a kid we've had our fallouts but I know
 it's all out of love. I was sat in class feeling
 sick but my sister came quite quick.

My Babies

by Graciella

Let's go back to October 26th
 the day my puppies were born. I
 was so excited, I was just cuddling
 them every day. They were so cute
 and they still are, I still
 remember them being so soft and
 fitting in my palm.
 I went every day after school
 but if it was the weekend I would
 be there all day, and all
 night. The next day when
 I woke up, I cuddled them, especially
 Darby, and when they all went
 I had to say goodbye
 but then they told me we
 could meet up with the pups
 at the park or something
 so that made me happier.

So now it is just me
 Annie, my biggest dog
 the mum of the puppies, and Daisy.
 At my nanny and granddad's
 they are so happy together
 and they love playing with each
 other, but every time I go over
 they wag their tails so hard with
 the biggest smile on their face

4,214 Miles

by Ms. Megan West,
 Year 7 Teacher

Canada: Our true North, strong and free.
 A land of 'oop- sorry!' and 'Here, let me get that for you'
 cocooned in a glistening white chrysalis.
 No- I'm not American. No, not 'pretty much.'
 The frozen valleys and Blue Sky City beam ear to ear.
 People desperate to escape but bound by
 something. Something no one can pinpoint.
 Yes- it's home. Yes, like, 'really cold'.
 England: God Save The Queen King.
 A land of 'Yeah, sound mate' and 'Hiya, y'alright?'
 nestled in a sea of salt water and cloud.
 No- they're not really asking. No, not 'Good, you?'
 The rolling moors and buzzing bees nod politely.
 People desperate to know what brought you here-
 why? Why not, really. I was searching.
 Yes- I do miss it. Yes, moose are 'really big'.

Work in Progress

by Theo Langdale,
 Comino Poet in Residence

Here I am in the driveway,
 seventeen and scared witless.
 Crouching like a cornered animal,
 my life divided into what will fit
 in the orange duffel bag
 and what will not.
 Sweat stains my sleeve
 like damp crescent moons,
 my fingers prickle with
 anticipation—
 Tomorrow, I will sleep in a strange bed
 in a strange house in a strange town
 and everything will be made new.
 Today, I have nothing to my name
 but a duffel bag and a dream.
 I'll miss the bee-sting desert wind,
 the lizards sunning their small bodies
 on brick, but having nothing
 means the future stretches out before
 you
 like a tablecloth, wide and clean
 and inviting you to fill it
 with every kind of goodness
 under the sun.

St Patrick's RC High School

In partnership with The Whitworth and Millie Davidson

Performing Trees and Our Roots

This project grew from the combination of the year 10 group's passion for social justice and the communities and cultures they are part of, coupled with the idea of trees being things that wilt, grow and change. Students have been encouraged to pay homage to their lived environments, considering all the people and places that have been part of their evolution.

At **Manchester Poetry Library**, pupils had the chance to delve into everything from vinyl to poetry in other languages, three students being delighted to find poetry in their respective mother tongues. In a workshop space, the group separated poetic lines into past, present and future, which linked into the themes of identity and growth as well as sparking new lines and repeated refrains, culminating in a fantastic group poem.

Time at **the Whitworth** provided further inspiration when exploring their exhibition 'Performing Trees', where a guided meditation on using visual stimuli to create ideas led to each student choosing artwork that spoke to them personally. It also provided the idea of using images of trees in the final presentation.

Sessions in school helped to break down the idea of poetry being intimidating, with plenty of time to experiment with words using magnetic poetry and blackout poetry. Both were met with much enthusiasm and creativity. In later workshops, students played with language, sound and structure while editing their work, supporting each other along the way. The opportunity to share their final poems at the end of the project was a real highlight, with poets feeling a real sense of accomplishment.

"This project has given me the confidence to do what I have always strived to, which is make connections with people through the gorgeous art of creative writing and poetry."

Millie Davidson, Poet



The smile I will always remember

by Ashley

A memory that shines,
A voice, a tear, a reassuring 'fine',
A sense of humour now 'absent'.
You could hear her before you'd see her,
Recalling the wind and water which we could only explore at night,
It's as brilliant as her smile was.

A memory, with hope of never fading,
A feeling never worth trading,
An empty space protected by her presence.
I'm getting older, I think I'm aging well,
I wish someone had told me,
I would be doing this by myself.

Today I still recall the wind and water,
Which we used to only explore at night,
Now we explore the wind and water,
At day and night.

I'm getting older,
I've got more on my shoulders,
I'm getting better at admitting,
I'm happier than ever,
That's my endeavour to keep myself together.

Between Then and Now

by Daniella

Some parts of me will never be known,
I'll find myself, a nest ready to be flown.
Change is scary but change is growth
I'm still learning,
I still fall,
I still find myself drowning in my thoughts.
Wrapped up in my own head,
I wished to be anywhere else.
I'm getting older
And some things aren't worth the time anymore.
Priorities change
Friendships change
Everyone shifts.
I've learned that growing up
Takes pain, time and strength
And sometimes it just takes time.
It doesn't happen quickly,
but I know I'm getting bolder.
Choices will be made, risks will be taken
And somewhere in the chaos I'll find who I am.

"This has sparked my love for English, and I want to pursue it in the future"

Pupil

God and Science

by David

The trees bloomed like early spring flowers. The petals looked like God's fingers reaching out to everybody to tell us He loves us and we are his best creation. Above the clouds, I see God smiling at me as pure as an innocent little sunflower.

I hugged God and he felt scorching, soft and sultry. "La ciencia investiga, la religión interpreta y ambas nos dan conocimiento y otra sabiduría."

Fitted high pixel camera, with hope. I will have to learn to cope in this hard environment. I want to live in God's Light and presence. I want to shine in God's Light like a bright golden star at the very tiptop of a Christmas tree. I see God in my Dad and Mum in their holy and obeying eyes, their faith cannot be described with words.

Pain itself, an image of love

by Grace HA

We were once a normal family,
now split up by love and desire,
My dad was called a Liar.

Pain itself is the image of love

When I first met her, I thought "what a leech"
I would look at my dad with hatred
and struggle to find my speech.
Now I look at her eyes and try to see the sparkle,
I guess my dad just loves to mingle.
Sometimes I wish I could leave this place,
But now I know my mum needs me safe.
We are moving house because my dad is atrocious,
I am nervous, anxious and worried about readiness.
I know it's for the best, but my dad doesn't let her rest
She is constantly stressed and for her, I don't want anything but the best.

90 Minutes of Almost

by Grace HO

I feel free when the ball moves,
My face lights up when the goal is smooth,
I am braver than most,
I am stronger than most,
And I have the strength.
A circular sphere with all the power,
lit up faces, winners grow tall as a tower.
I am braver than most,
I am stronger than most,
And I have the strength.
The pitch remembers my footsteps,
Even before I touch the ball,
The sound of studs clinking in the hall.
I am braver than most,
I am stronger than most,
And I have the strength.
It seems impossible,
Until it's done,
But nothing's impossible,
Unless you try.
They said I couldn't play football because I'm a girl,
But I ended up proving them wrong.

I'm a fighter, not a quitter.

Porcelain Skin

by Kacey-Ann

The space between where I have been,
The here and now and all I have seen.
Porcelain skin made in patches,
beauty is an illusion wanting to be spotted.
Bad days turn into overcoming setbacks,
Driving to a journey of the unknown
I know I won't face it alone.
I didn't, he was there stood by my side,
All my imperfections not needed to hide.
Power in a hand to hold,
Fingers laced stories told.
Sewn together by a thread,
Futures told, wrote in bold.
Me and you never alone,
We'll always have each other to hold.
There's now no longer space in between
you and me for eternity.

Reaching out of love

by Khaye Angela

Fearing love, yet feeling it all
I lock up my heart, behind a wall.
My heart is like a glass toy in the hands of a kid,
Why do I need my heart to live?

I believe in love like a blind man taught to believe in the sun,
But when it is my chance, all I want to do is run.
I build up walls between myself,
But why do I see my flaws in such depth?

I think about someone else's company more than my own,
But falling out of love is truly prone.
I yearned to find what was missing in the space between,
But all I needed was to find the real me.

The space between us now

by Mia Rae

As soon as I walked back into that house,
The silence was so loud,
A sense of humour now absent,
A void that can't be filled.
Cascading back to a simple time when:
We used to go to St Anne's a few times a year.
Them memories will never leave me.

And yet there is so much space between us.

Reading books with me,
Spending quality time together,
Nicknames like 'my best mate',
I thought you'd live forever,
Taking me to the park.
Playing games with me, like the polar express in a washing basket.
Those were the good old days

And yet still there is so much space between us.

Flipping through the channels,
The memories of us, so many, too many to talk about
A piece of my heart missing.
Making food with him,
Going to their house every Thursday,
Gosh how I miss that.
Even if I still go to see my nana,
It feels so quiet, so empty, so lonely without my 'best mate'.

And yet still, there is so much space in-between us
A love longed for, that could never be replaced
I see him everywhere;
In Pablo's chippy in Blackpool, that familiar smell.
In Blackpool illuminations,
In the boats and lake at St Anne's
In my room,
In the sky
In 'forget me nots'
In everything in my life
Well, good things don't last, and life moves so fast.
And yet there is so much space between us.
He'll never see me get married,
He'll never meet my children.
A love, a loss, your beautiful face, a calming tone, slowing the pace.
A necklace that stays with me, forever, a 'forget me not'
I will forget you not,
My 'best mate' Bob.

A Bird Which Stays Within Its Nest

by Reah

My blood is ruby, thick and healthy,
It hums a silent heartbeat.
It reminds me of the sting of a scraped knee,
And the flush of my face whilst I run home.

But to grow up feels green on the first leaf of spring,
Afresh and new, a quick bright snap.
It's the cool moss under bare feet,
the snapping of a twig,
a bird which stays within its nest.

A sting of nettles, sharp and keen,
Tears the sound of the quiet scene.

When the dawn of opportunity comes,
A pale yellow blinds me.
I plant my hopes like seeds in the sun's warm gaze behind me.
I see the yellow behind the clouds,
And everything feels much clearer now.
Like a bird which stays within its nest,
I remember the warmth of childhood in my chest.

A world with life and love and wondering what's above

by Rhona

My nan lives up in the sky, but when I look up it seems too high, when I look down the ground feels so hollow, this feeling influences my sorrow. I wish I could hold your hand, or even just walk with you in the sand, the field I'm standing in is green, I wish this is where you could have been. I wonder what you're doing, whilst the birds around me are cuckooing, the clouds above me are grey, they make me think about you each day. The sun above me always seems to be so bright, like when you decided to take your final flight. I wish to see you again our queen, to see you sitting on your Throne, looking over me knowing I'm not alone. Sitting down with family and friends. I will never forget you nan, you will always stay in my heart till the end. I will see you nan even if I have to jump over the moon, I will walk through the sand and the dunes, just to hear you singing and dancing to your tunes. Everyone down here misses you and is screaming I love you too, wait till we have another round of bingo and I will scream with you b-b-b-ingo. The gates to heaven are slowly closing but I know you're stood up there posing. I love you lots nan, my biggest fan, sleep tight and don't worry. We're not in a rush, we're not in a hurry.

**"The enthusiasm I've seen in the students is unbelievable;
our kids adore Millie and the project"**

Holly Mainwaring, Teacher

The Boy With a Dream

by Sidi

Curling it top bins, all the replays,
It's that golden brown kid in the sun.
Crossbar challenge; a mental pun,
Structure discipline and wealth of history.
Where will these continue to guide me?
Well, that is a mystery
Which I will go find out.

So run and leap and tackle hard,
but keep your wits, protect your guard.
For football is more than strength and speed,
it's a mental prowess, a vital need.

But sometimes legs grow weak and slow
Doubts starts to creep in
But the little kid's heart never changes.

Then look inside, find strength unseen,
a quiet power strong and keen.
Helps you rise to standards unseen
Help you rise when you fail and
Whispers you can do it in the darkest of times.

"Poetry doesn't have to be scary, it can be whatever you want it to be"

Pupil

One Last Piece

by Taylor

Why can't I remember,
The sun so bright,
And grass so green,

Why can't I imagine,
The place of joy,
Like my mind's wiped clean,

Is it so hard,
To form a thought with everything so loud,
I'm just trying to find myself,
But I'm stuck in this massive crowd,

I don't really like my life,
I don't like anything at all,
But I think I remember now,
The time when I had it all,

I think I'm happy now,
I think that's the last piece,
I think I've found myself,
I think I've finally found me.

The Crisis of a Boy

by Aiden

I used to think of what I could do,
now all I do is see blue.
I used to think sky was the only,
high but time just flies by.
It's crazy what I can do now,
compared to once upon a time.
Success isn't linear,
but it's the only thing I experience now.
Margins set in my life,
All now just leaps and bounds.

Past setbacks set in my life,
Now I just fly by.
Dilemmas all around in my life,
Nothing I stand by.
I have to get out this routine,
memories surrounding all my dreams.
The blue I see is now around me,
The tide so wide,
Engulfing me and everything near,
I'm back.
All my problems flowing near,
all that confusion mixed with fear.
Yet there is still so much space
Between now and me winning.

Wishes and wonders for the things that may never be true

by Lexi-louise

I lie, I please, I ache, I laugh.
I wish I could hold his hand,
whist walking with him in the sand.
But he lives miles away,
I think about him every day.
I lie, I please, I ache, I laugh.
Every time I hear his voice,
my stomach flutters,
like butterflies in his eyes.
I lie, I please, I ache, I laugh.
When he talks to me in that kind way,
Makes me want to think about him every day,
I love him I really do,
But this is a dream,
Which may never come true.
I lie, I please, I ache, I laugh.
Surrounded by emotion and fear,
The unknown and the result of a tear,
My heart bleeding and his heart deceiving.
What if he likes someone else?
And I end up all by myself.
I lie, I please, I ache, I laugh.
What if the love is true,
But he's too afraid to make a move.
What if he thinks of me,
But is too scared to think of what could be.
Maybe he thinks the same as me.
And maybe this love could be.

I lie, I please, I ache, I laugh.

Pathway

by Lucas

To know who you are is a gift, most people are still trying to figure
what it is that they have to deliver.
Whether it's wealth, coins or just simple rhymes,
Be grateful you have this time.

See it's not about wealth,
It's about drive and the happiness you feel on the inside.
To give is to get,
To study is to learn,
To have drive is to see where you'll stand in this world.
Just remember to hurt is to learn,
to fail is to succeed but to give up is to lose your head,
Trust me you'll see.

Sometimes life gets hard,
But look how far along you are.
Parents say if you blink
You'll miss it but I never knew what that meant
until I really missed it.
It got me feeling so old
Yet I'm still a lost soul trying to find
Where I'll stand on this world.

But it's okay because I know I'm not alone
On this old road
Yes, it's hard to be a young soul
Trying to find where he'll go,
But I'm not alone on this
Path, I call hope.

Late night thoughts

by Aimee

I used to drown; now I float
The curves, corners, tucks, turns, roads, rivers and everything in-between,
all the downsides of being a teen.
Sick with sadness happy with hope
Not linear yet not sinister
Dreams of more, dreams of calm,
The past hurts maybe the future won't.
The tattoo of sadness etched into my skin,
it will never go away.
Late-night regrets lead to early morning remorse
Sometimes I wish we never met,
Hiding emotions in lust and love.
One after another go and come
The end of a chapter reopens a healed wound
She has gone never coming back
Don't you yet; it's not your time
I wish you were still mine.
Happiness hurts sometimes
Sadness soothes
Memorise the moment
Don't let go
It will be gone soon.
A lost recording of you haunts me in my peripheral view
I hope they see me different now,
I know that I am different now.

Lyrical Graffiti

by Sean

Sitting in a window with God,
Even though he's perfect and I'm flawed.
"Sean George"
Voice so loud
It'll shake your floorboards,
I spray bars that strain my vocal cords.

My lines are hot like jollof rice
Sugar, spice
and nothing nice

The space in-between,
What does that even mean?
Is it the space in the seams,
Is it the way we reach for our dreams?

The space in-between,
My mind is like a machine
Slowly running on fumes and steam
my lines are big but unseen
Whatever that's meant to mean.

Apologies,
I'm sounding boasty.
Need to look back on my life more closely,
I'm humble mostly.

Ambition to be free,
I try to keep my integrity
Face my demons
That are stopping me.
Because that set me free
That's the most important thing for me
Other than family, that's the key
To beginning to let your mind free,
And if freedom is actually free
That freedom begins to reflect me.
My mother is the person that made me
Raised me, praised me
So, in a way freedom reflects us.
Trust it,
Family is the closest thing to me
That's what people struggle to see
That's the thing they don't show on TV.
You should be you
And I should be me
We can all work together as a team.
Despite low self-esteem,
We can all achieve a dream.

Perfection is the killer of joy
And it's stalking me,
Hawking me.
Even when I'm sat in the corner writing,
It's watching me
I'm done with it stopping me
I keep on performing
Even if it's mocking me.

First steps

by Millie Davidson, Comino Poet in Residence

In the blue waters of a brook
You discover your fin is your pen.
A tender trial to walking on water,
babbling bubbles of A, B's and C's.
A freshwater effort to clean beginnings,
Clean linen waves washed away.
Clean lined words waned away.
Through the fine fleck of azure,
verse breathes through the lips of a gill.
Today is the day you learn to swim.

Through the veiled eye of the valley,
Poetry twists a vine around your calf.
An umbilical cord back to shy earth,
Pulling a page from the pink of your skin.
Muddy a gospel your grandmother taught
Dissect a tongue to map an atlas
Dare to give your writing a green thumbled gash
Use the words teathed on song and soul
And never forget who taught you to swim,
Today is the day you learn to write.



"Millie's enthusiasm is infectious and the positive energy she radiates helped influence and steer the students to give them an enjoyable, upbeat and insightful experience when visiting our 'Performing Trees' exhibition"

Steven Roper, The Whitworth

The Derby High School

In partnership with HOME and Shauna Jackman

Journeys between home and each other

During initial discussions between **Shauna Jackman, The Derby High School** and **HOME**, ideas of the concept of home, and what that might mean began to emerge, with associated questions of how students could step out into the world and make a place for themselves. It being a year 9 drama group, the aim was to make the project performance driven, with the cinema room at HOME offering a perfect location for students to perform their poems at the end of the project.

On a visit to HOME, students were encouraged to find the poetry in everything before going into the 'Roots in the Sky' exhibition for a session inspired by paintings, covering themes of culture, community and home. Pupils were then guided through a free writing exercise in response to their favourite picture, where beautifully poetic lines began to emerge.

Back in the classroom, students participated in a storytelling game before challenging the rules of language, swapping words and definitions before looking at the poem 'Home' by Warsan Shire. In a subsequent session, pupils experimented with different ways of delivering poetry, altering volume, speed and emotion, which helped break down the fear of performance. Through Shauna's guidance, they then began working on poems which imagined a favourite object leaving home with many students choosing to share their work

at the end of the session, one even rapping their partner's work. In the final school session, pupils focused on editing, swapping lines around, cutting words and thinking about line breaks, demonstrating a huge level of pride in their work as they did so.

The final poems will be celebrated in a performance at HOME, an event that is eagerly anticipated by all involved as the culmination of a project full of creativity and growth.

"On Derby High School's trip to HOME, the students were exceptional, responding to our 'roots in the sky' exhibit through free writing. HOME would like to thank Comino Poet in Residence for the wonderful work they do organising and facilitating this project, opening up young people to the arts through poetry"

Bronwyn Lane, HOME



Companionship

by Harry and Daniel

Journey is community,
love is lasting life through friends,
companionship, a transported vehicle on rails-
just like wheels, we all need support.
Different routes take us through
different paths and directions.
Rails decay, friendships too,
memories everlasting.

Recognisable

by Scarlet and Brooklyn

I didn't think leaving would be a good idea.
I haven't left home for ages.
I walk back, for miles and miles.
Every step, every breath, a recognisable face but different streets.
The air stiff, the houses passing by with every cut and corner.
I walk in. Instantly, I'm back home. The room
Familiar, like I usually saw it. It was amazing.

Football!!!!

by San

slowly became brighter each second. The whitening line
The wet grass on the astro was being stabbed by my studs, the ball going
through the game was getting damaged, muddy,
making the astro pitch look even more
clear than before. Suddenly, the game was over, the sun was shining, my
team were celebrating and, for a second,
the ball realised all the pain it endured
was all worth it. We won the world cup.

Withering away

by Armaan

Withering away...
His home...
His life...
But it had to be done...
Starting from new beginnings...
Travelling to greater places,
in search of a better life,
meet his maker,
and find out the truth of his existence.
Step by step,
breath by breath,
the football conquered the highest cliffs,
the deepest oceans, and the roughest terrain.

Love is forever

by Daniyal

Cool is the people in your life
Love is forever
Bangladesh is loving
Caring is fascinating
Harry Potter is nature

Fish

by Adrian

The sea above me,
swimming free,
gliding through the sea,
if not guessed,
well I'm a fish,
fish through the sea
seeing more and more,
big community, all gliding
through the sea.

"I enjoyed seeing how
emotions collide in poetry"

Pupil

At peace

by Reta

From its home
in my little jewellery cupboard,
its true resting place
lies with its owner,
at my grandfather’s grave.

It finally rests in the dry deserts of Jordan,
finally back home...
Their calm heart flowing with the wind
knowing its future,
an almost sublime feeling
of calm unthought, planned by fate
allowing it to finally be
at peace...

Fish

by Aidan

The fish looks
Around. To find
Friends. He continues
to look over the
horizon but has
no luck. The
only friend he
has is himself.
Fish...

People

by Ebad

People are transport,
you move around like a rollercoaster or a tram
evolving spots
every time you feel uncomfortable.
My teammates are nurture,
kindness is a wizard,
where I live is prison

Ribbon in the wind

by_Rossette

Rolling in the wind
the ribbon on my head
flapping in the verdant green.

I smoothed out my wrinkles,
I stretched like an elastic band.
My nerves relaxed
as the sweet, blue jaybirds sang,
the sun beamed onto my body.

The aroma of wet grass
floated into my pores.
Nostalgia rushed through my mind.
The happy indoor rainy days
where I would lie on the radiator
cozy and warm.

Exploring the grandeur,
I stumbled upon
a bush of aqua flower.
I squeezed between the branches
and this is when I knew
here is where I belong.

Broken mirror

by Abigail

From my pocket, to my bag,
to my coat, to my hand.
But one day it wasn’t there,
wasn’t in my pocket, my bag,
my coat, my hand.
Maybe it’s somewhere I love to be.
Maybe somewhere I hate.
Will I find it?
Will I find where it went?
Could it be at home? Or in school?
My best friend’s house? Or is it outside?
The tree went from green
to brown
to no leaves left at all.
Still didn’t see it
so what if I don’t need it anymore?
What if it wants to be
free?

From my pocket, to my bag,
to my coat, to my hand,
one day it’s there
the other, it is gone.

Dubai

by Laban

My spoon gets gripped and held. Before getting put in my pocket as I go to Dubai. All it can see is the everlasting void of my pocket but it can feel the approaching heat pending down on it. Once we arrive it can feel every singular grain of sand. It can feel the oil drill digging up the thick beach but it can also feel the city filled with wealthy cars and the land.

Between every sense all it can feel is the overwhelming, bubbling, overflowing sense, urge of excitement to be in this majestic city. It can feel the rich rare unique architecture towering above its head.

The Atlantic Ocean

by Aaliyah

It is excited to go to the shop where it belongs.
They are going to swim
in the sea to see their pookies
who are the fish swimming around waiting for them.
Now that I am returning to my pookies
my nerves feel shaky,
my excitement is turning into nerves
and fear water splashes into me.
It is bringing back flashbacks
to the places I belong.

I am lost

by Lacy

When I was little, I had a teddy bear that
was a donkey I left outside, so my mum threw it away.

The crunch of plastic,
the sound of metal wasting away. Sadness,
sorrow,
misery. I want to leave-
something is stopping me. I feel my feet but I can't
sense them. Every breath
is stopping me.
I am lost with words. I don't know what
I'm saying.
I am lost.

Simple meaning

by Arwa

Magic is people who support you.
Friendship makes you happy,
family is helping,
community is learning,
nurture teaches us,
my mum's laugh is where I don't feel alone.

My wonderful pillow

by Amir

My pillow is my life,

always love the smell of it. Whenever I think of home, I think of my

pillow as my future.

My object is my pillow. I can always rely on it to make me fall asleep, and

whenever I fall asleep,

I always can rely on it.

Pillow. I've always wanted to sleep on a pillow made in Spain. Pillows are the essence of comfortability.

"As a first-time facilitator, this project has been really helpful to develop my leadership skills and learn what to consider when planning workshops so that each stage builds on the session before. I loved how incredibly creative these students were and was also struck by the pride and ownership students took in their work, which speaks to the effort they put into their poems"

Shauna Jackman, Poet

Home from home

by Trinity

What is the place actually like?

The air is light

but stiff, the heat affecting some people

but not me.

I have heard her speaking about her home country

but I can't really tell how it is.

Everything is dark

but my eyes

are not shut.

When you're in a dark room all you can see is a little light on your face.

Hands pull me out of the bag,

my heart racing,

not from fright,

but from excitement. The air smells fresh

like a daisy

but a hint of food

I don't recognise,

nothing like she ate at home,

something nice,

different.

Sunlight shining in from the window,

lighting up the whole room.

The bed I was on had a lot of clothes on it

but was comfortable, like sleeping on a bunch of clouds.

I hear a familiar voice

I have heard before,

normally someone from the other side of the phone.

Trin's mum walks in, carrying one of her bags.

She picks me up from the bit of the bed I was on,

stuffs me right in between two pillows

so you can see me, just enough support so I don't fall over.

Not leaving home

by Brooklyn

I want to go back home and fly across the rugby pitch but for some reason I am sat almost just doing nothing in an unfamiliar place. I am just here with no use having no entertainment. All I can hear is people shouting banging downstairs and everything else is moving except me. The floor beneath me makes me feel numb, I am stuck til' I finally get moved down to my favourite pitch. Everyone else's world is moving except mine.

New beginnings

by Lily

My wired earphones have travelled away
to the backseat of my mom's car, where it can listen to music
along the motorway, on a warm night in June.

It can hear the faint sound of the radio playing, and smell the strong, citrus air freshener.

The sound of wind crashing against the car window is deafening.

They're nervous to leave,
having to turn their music off.

They feel out of place,
everyone has wireless earphones.

It feels like it doesn't belong.
Suddenly, no one appreciates wired earphones.

It begins its new journey, knowing that the music will always be there.

Baby's tropical day

by Hollie

It is excited to go to Carlisle Bay.
It looks out of the plane window at the crystal blue Caribbean sea.

It smiles as it sits
in the top pocket of a random person. The scorching hot sun
beams onto the ocean.

As the plane descends,
the tropical atmosphere becomes more present.
The old airport floors
turn into soft sand,
glistening in the sun.

As the warm sea meets its feet,
it knows it is in the right place,
its plastic feet floating along the water.

Exotic fish and sea turtles glide along the bottom,
the sandy toes and salty kisses
as it soaks in the sun.

Reggae buses zoom down the road,
as they blast Caribbean anthems.

Dubai

by Adam

The charger gets out of the shelf and goes on a private jet to Dubai. It arrives at the airport after getting dropped off by the Indian taxi driver asking for tips. In the airport it tries to find its way back but can't. It ends up in the airplane confused by the area. It arrives in Dubai and hears lamborghinis and RS3s in the back and makes its way to a desert in a bugatti. It gets lost in the desert hoping to be found by a camel.

Met his family

by Mohammed

My object went missing...
He found the sea...
His home...
His life...
He soared across the ocean,
variety of fish...
Swimming away like an award,
excited and flopping.
swimming through the ocean like a homeless
man begging for change.
He made it...
Bangladesh.
Met his family.

The Space Between

by Moazam

The space between isn't empty.
The space between is filled

with atoms,
floating softly
in the air.

The space between is filled with
microplastics,
waiting quietly
to connect with a host.

The space between is filled
with the smell
of something mysterious,
lingering ...
drawing us closer.

The space between isn't
so empty now.

The space between is scattered
with sound,
with clattering echoes.

The space between is filled
with life...
just like we are.

“It was interesting to see how
others express themselves
and their feelings through
poetry”

Pupil

The Space Between

by Freya

Before me stands a wall—
a wall that is quite old.
And by “old,” I mean five years
this structure's had to hold.

And found within its corner
is a crack that's only small,
but every day it lingers
it stretches through the wall,

soon causing it to crumble,
revealing just a gap—
a gap that's wide enough
to glimpse beyond the crack.

On the other side, someone waits,
not hidden, but unseen,
biding time for the perfect day,
a day they won't be forbidden.

Now as the walls close in
and the space is growing smaller,
the person begs for freedom—
to live a life that feels like theirs.

So I'm sure by now you've realised
the wall was never real,
but a metaphor describing
exactly how I feel.

For the life I live is toxic,
Degrading - and it's fake,
and living in the space between
was my greatest mistake.

The space between what's real and not,
the space that makes me cry,
the space that hides who I truly am,
the space I've lived inside.

But that space is fading now—
no longer where I stay.

For My Grandad

by Isaac

To the Grandad I loved and cared for,
who always showed us love -
I only wish I'd seen you more,
before you rose above,
now in the sky, a gentle dove.

The distance started years ago,
and I didn't truly know
just how deep that love could grow -
now it wraps around me tightly,
like something I can't let go.

Now that space has closed between us,
and the thought of you not here
brings a flood of quiet tears.

But I will never forget
all the things that you have done,
all the memories we shared,
all the times we laughed in fun.

Though it's time to move forward,
and slowly to accept,
that you are gone—
your love is something
I will always keep.

Silent.

by Niamh

Pressuring.

Alone.

Cold.

Eerie.

Silent.

Breaking.

Evolving.

Travelling.

Withering.

Exit.

End.

No more space.

These words
make up the spaces between.

These words are not just words,
but what needs to be heard -

about those who are tired of living,
tired from living
in the spaces between.

Childhood landscapes

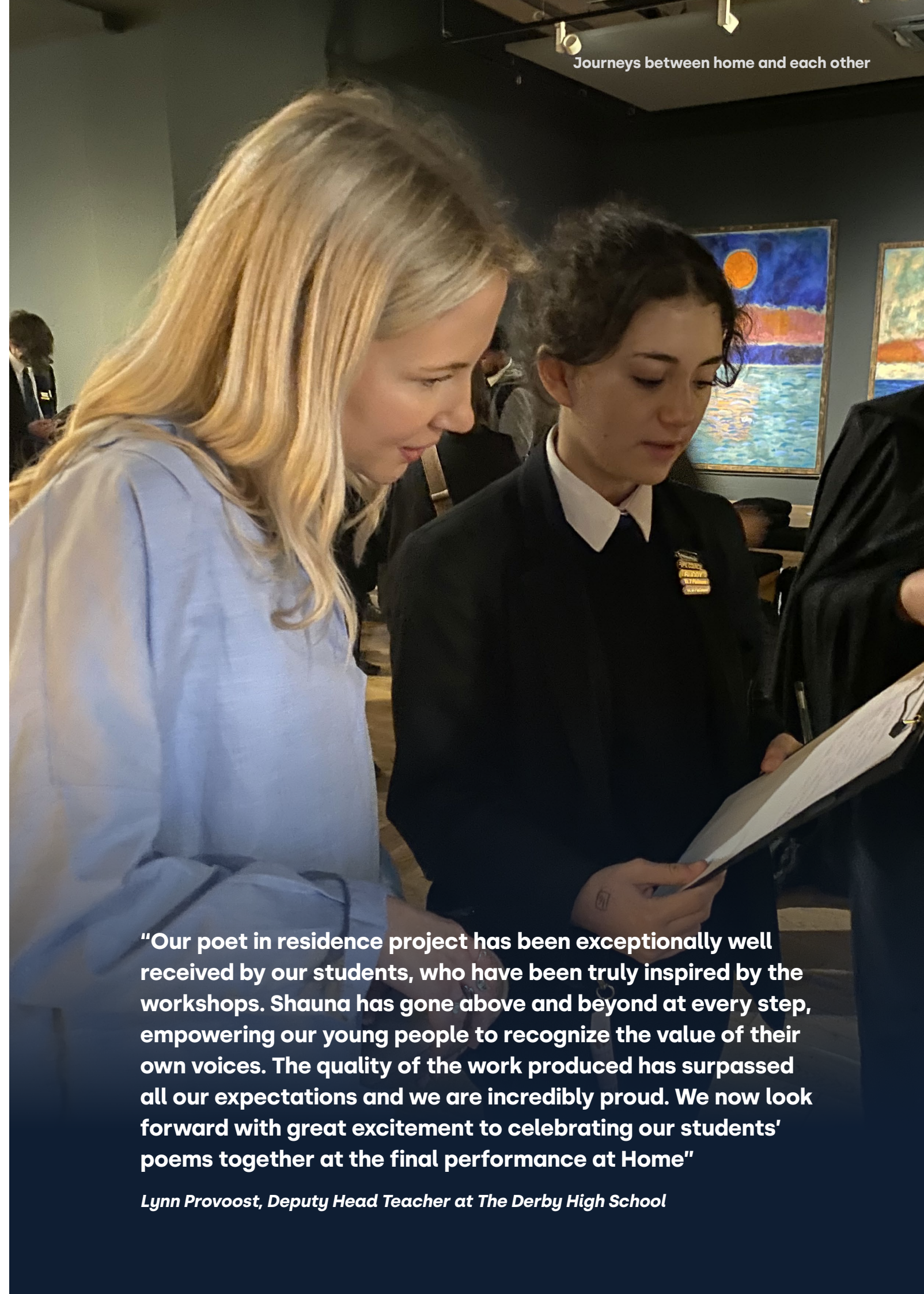
by Shauna Jackman, Poet

The air is lighter here.
I smell the grass and think
it is my favourite smell and, God,
the sky! It is so tall, so far away;
how mad to be in a place with no ceiling.

I shuffle through the cat flap and it's
strange. Like I have jumped
into a mirror and
everything is
backwards.

Her parents sit on a familiar couch
but they're sinking into it now,
skin clinging around
their bones like
old curtains.

Is this what happens to our childhood
landscapes? Do they wither
and wrinkle when we
abandon them?



"Our poet in residence project has been exceptionally well received by our students, who have been truly inspired by the workshops. Shauna has gone above and beyond at every step, empowering our young people to recognize the value of their own voices. The quality of the work produced has surpassed all our expectations and we are incredibly proud. We now look forward with great excitement to celebrating our students' poems together at the final performance at Home"

Lynn Provoost, Deputy Head Teacher at The Derby High School

The East Manchester Academy

In partnership with Chetham's Library, poet Aqeel Parvez and Poet Mentor Becky May

Dreams

Initial discussions about Henry Chetham's dream of opening a library led to a clear focus on the idea of dreams and the multiplicity of ways in which this theme might be interpreted, from the contrast between aspirations and reality to the difference between daydreams and nightmares.

At **Chetham's Library**, the year 9 students learnt more about Henry Chetham's dream to help families in poverty by setting up a school and subsequently creating a library. They were given a tour of the different spaces, enthralled by their peculiarities, the mysterious hoof mark on a table, the small holes at the bottom of the doors that allowed cats to go in and out.

Manchester Poetry Library offered them a chance to explore the collection before moving into a workshop space with **Aqeel Parvez**, who led a session on zine making, using them as a resource to brainstorm sensory details one might encounter while in a dream state, from faint jazz music to seeing your reflection in a mirror.

In school sessions at **The East Manchester Academy**, students took inspiration from a 'dream palace' of phrases, created from the zines they'd made on the trip. This served both as a

word bank and a starting point for an exercise in which pupils imagined themselves inside a dream, answering a series of questions to help them make notes before beginning the drafting process for the poems. A workshop on editing helped polish this work, with attention paid to punctuation, clarity and word choice, pupils working together to feed back to each other.

In the last session in school, students were given the opportunity to perform their work, developing their presentation skills and their confidence as well as celebrate the achievements they had made.

"It was lovely working with a poet and seeing them inspired by the Library. The students were engaged with the tour and the theme for the project"

Sián-Louise Mason, Chetham's Library

The Burning Of The Banquet

by Alfie

Walking down the street, smoke filled musty air,
 I know what I want.
 a trail of hope leaks
 my spark is lit
 BOOM!
 debris of dreams everywhere,
 knocked out cold. A bump on my head,
 Vision still blurry, time slowed.
 Then I came to, finding consciousness in a hospital bed.

The Odds

by Ruben

The odds of us
 The odds of the universe
 The odds of you alone.
 Life is a gift,
 It matters the most.
 Live the life you were given,
 It may be the only one you are handed.
 Like a star dying,
 Even at the end of its life, it is remembered
 As a star that kept on shining.

“Doing this project has made me feel like I would like to write a book in the future”

Pupil

Crimson Sky

by Memuna

Darkness envelops me, vision blurring.
 An old swing creaks, I am no longer in my bed.
 My eyes sweep over my new surroundings:
 Overgrown vines run over benches.
 However, the sky looks wrong,
 Dripping like a crimson canopy lit on fire.

The atmosphere is filled with a metallic scent, almost tasting of iron.
 A blood-curdling shriek rings out,
 The canopy oozes out onto the ground, staining it,
 It's thick, though somehow comforting when I glance at it once more.
 Hushed voices echo out,
 I look up, faceless heads: Unnaturally void.
 I can somehow remember their faces, but it's all jumbled up in my mind now.
 Doesn't matter anyway, nothing does

Their bodies are covered in the substance of the sky...
 This substance, it reminds me of my hunger.
 Multiple pairs of cold hands reach to me, they're covered in the stuff
 covered in the crimson sky.
 It feels disgusting. Where's the shower? Where's my room?
 The air seems to grow thicker,
 My breathing stammers.
 One of the creatures latches to my leg,
 I remember the expression it wore, absent of happiness
 Sheer lunacy, hungry for revenge.
 Despite my thoughts, it succeeds.
 This feels too real; didn't I fall asleep?
 Why can't I wake up?
 Before I know it, my eyes close and they don't seem to open.
 Perhaps this nightmare has no end.

Sea Of The Evernight Veil

by Allen

I Tread through the 'Sea',
The 'Ocean' Lapping against Me,
The 'Moon' Hanging above Me,
The 'Stars' Peering Down at Me,
Accompanied by a Melody flowing against the 'Waters',
Sung by Someone but Nobody was in Sight,
I Look down at Myself,
Witnessing a Distorted 'Creature',
Obscured By The 'Evernight Veil'.

Candy Land

by Amira

I woke up in a realm where sugar took over in different forms,
The clouds were pink and light levitating me in the air,
I leaped down and was greeted by a landscape of frosting with wafer-paved ways,
The river ran thick with a rich cocoa flow; I was pulled into a sweet, owned dream.

The sun kissed everything in its path,
Lollipop sticks lit up like streetlights
This was my childhood nostalgia, a dream now made true
The sweetness was so lush, I could almost feel it.

Reality fades as I race through the lime,
Adrenaline pumping through my body in a steady beat
A kingdom where I would love to stay,
It was soon to fade away.

The Hand In The Shadows

by Bruna

I step through the open doors
Into the eerie darkness.
A clock ticking like a bomb about to go off,
As I take a step on the creaking floors.
The music plays, the lights flicker
I twist and turn even though it's faster,
A hand rotten with deep composition reaches out for my soul.

The Alleyway

by Christopher

I walk down the street
Children screaming, babies crying.
Smoke fills the air, I lose focus.
Sirens fill the air, people scream, high pitch screaming.
My vision blurs, I feel lightheaded.
The calming reflection of the moon shines into my eyes as I slowly fade away.
Light shines into my eyes as I take my last breath
I have accomplished what I have dreamed.

Football

by Dimitar

When I step on the pitch,
The ground becomes mine,
My place, my field, my domain,
Adrenaline fills the air,
Football is my life,
The ball glides like scissors through paper.

Mind Games

by Eliana

I wake up and I sit up
It is 3 in the morning, and I heard a car going by
My head processing my surroundings as my mind charges up
I hear footsteps, loud and heavy which drag on the floor
I thought it was mother or father
But it didn't sound like something human...
The sound of 10 feet stomping on the ground
Whatever that thing was, it is something you couldn't describe on paper.
It locked eyes with me as soon as it got to my door.
The only thing you could see in its eyes was death.
Not a single spark, no emotion, nothing.

Boy Who Sleeps

by Esther & Scarlett

Behind those desperate eyes.
The boy who sleeps.
Behind those cotton clouds
Hallucinations can haunt anyone
But not
The who boy who sleeps
You wake up, your mum crying.
Why?
She's looking at a picture.
Your picture.
Nursing the image in her warm embrace.
You speak, but nothing comes out.

The Forsaken

by Gracie & Breanna

I walked towards the bando,
There lay a freshly dead corpse,
This bando was abandoned for 20 years now,
All I can smell is blood,
I had to grab my jacket and breathed in the hood,
I heard a bang as I said, "that can't be good",
Shivering with fear,
I felt a presence nearby,
It wasn't a cat, it wasn't a deer
It was...cold,
damp mould,
I saw a document,
The time of death was written in BOLD!
Reading this made my stomach fold.

Monsters Of The Mind

by Great

The endless void calls to me
The nightmares caught me
The nightmares? My nightmares?
Does it matter anymore... will anyone care
well, I guess it does.
How did it come to this
Why did it come to this
I'm just a boy with a bright dream
I would want to be a pilot
And fly around the world
Now when I open my eyes
They surround me.
The funny thing is
It all started with a birthday
My father disappeared
My mother disappeared
I knew I was suffering from
Schizophrenia.

EVERY NIGHT, EVERY HOUR
JUST TO BE HAUNTED BY NIGHTMARES THAT DON'T EXIST

The First Whistle

by Lexi

I stepped onto the pitch,
crowds were cheering widely,
my body quivered with trepidation,
my nerves grew larger.
The first whistle blew,
the game had started,
I ran aiming to score straight away.
I fell, a sharp scream pierced everyone's ears,
The alarm sounded next to me,
It read 6:07am
I stood up but fell to the ground.
I screamed, there was no answer,
I was hopeless.

Solitary

by Mercy

looking around I see nothing but,
thick fog, musty air and dim lights,
not a soul in sight,

I feel lightheaded, but I keep on walking,
desperate to find someone, desperate to not be alone,
and then suddenly, I see nothing,
as darkness swallows me whole.

After The Storm

by Michelle

After the storm, everyone left
Just me and the lonesome oak trees
Da-dum the unknown footsteps getting louder
Each step shaking the ground beneath me
From afar I could see my old dystopian life
But behind it were giant mythical creatures
Vapour trails along like waves to water
Roses, blood-flowers, droop and die
They're coming, in what felt like hours
They were as clear as day, the monsters
I can see gigantic chickens without eyes
I can touch their feathers covered in chocolate
The end times are near
Their voices echoed in a croaky unison
"There is no one to save you now"
Their claws came down to attack
But then the rain started and everything paused
In the storm a door appeared
As I ran closer it creaked open leading to my bedroom
I sprinted through the door and ended up in my bed
It was just a dream.

"Working in collaboration with our poets and Chetham's Library has been a real privilege for 9X1 over the course of this academic year. Students have developed skills in not only writing their own poems but also building on their ability to workshop and edit the work they have produced."

Luca Howson, Teacher

Summons

by Oyeleke

I smell it, the sweat, the desperation for victory
Suddenly, I hear it all, the crowd chanting my name
The heavy breaths, the coach screaming
I see it all, my feet cruising through the slick grass
The pearl raindrops on my face
I breathed a sigh of relief
I never felt so alive
A feeling of unease washed over me
I felt a heavy weight on my shoulders
Bearing me down
I strived to keep my head above the surface
But the force was far greater than I could withstand
The responsibility overwhelmed me and the
Darkness enveloped my mind, and corrupted my soul
I felt a strange sensation coursing through my veins
I was reborn, I regained my once youthful energy
But this was my mind playing tricks on me
I confused reality with my imagination
I longed to go back to the green land
The place I call home, this warmth shrouded me
As I waited for my calling to eternal rest.

Gas Leak

by By Thomas & Mohammed

Waking up, gas filling the room
My head shot up, starting to zoom
Screeches from the walls. Engulfed echoes.
Foggy clouds, permeated
My vision blurry - couldn't see
It would all seem so endless to me
Eternal halls, running for years on end
A pale oak door standing in front of me
Wind bursts. SLAM. Knocked out cold
Gaining back consciousness,
Woke up in an endless field
Of long, fresh, wet grass.

Nightmares

by Troie

An endless void of white is where I am,
I hear nothing,
My heart is racing, adrenaline pumping,
I try to pinch myself, but nothing happens
Looks like I'm stuck
My eyes catch a slender, black figure staring at me
Its aura pours out and shakes me to my core
"Move! Move!" I try to urge myself but that thing in front of me
Has rendered me immobile
"What's this?", I ask myself
I gain my hearing back and hear glass shattering
I look to my right and there it is
A crack in space time, my exit.
I run. It chases me. I'm close to the exit
But he is close to me
I make it out and hear it screeching as it fails to get me
All of a sudden, I lose my sense of sight
It goes dark for a minute and... I'm back in my room
What a weird dream, no not just a dream
That was a Nightmare.

"Students have immensely enjoyed this experience and have immersed themselves into our concept of dreams acting as 'the space between'. With poems ranging from stories of aspiration and achievement to tales of giant chocolate chickens and zombie apocalypses, students have channelled their creativity onto the page and their confidence in expression has flourished. It has been a joy to take some time away from the curriculum with my students and learn more about their passions and dreams."

Luca Howson, Teacher

Heaven Calls But I Hung Up.

by Vaishvi

Dreams,
A nonsensical escape button to reality,
Ignore the harsh looks of judgment,
Keep walking down the hallway as they stare solemnly.

Speed up - it's catching up to you,
Flames of envy, smoke and fury,
Terror for most, joy for a few,
Jump out the window and escape this loop.

You shiver in the cold, winter air - it appears to be that you're outside,
Outside the endless hotel engulfed in flames,
You re-open an old wound, where the guilt resides,
Derealisation with a hint of pain.

Police sirens oppress the 90's jazz in the background,
The silver glow of the crescent moon above ignites serenity,
Yet the worried thought lingers silently,
What have they found?

Snared

by Venus

I walk through the graveyard
Hyper fixated on my surroundings
Unaware how nor why I'm here
I need to escape this dream

I walk through the graveyard
Rushed murmurs of ghosts meet my ears
Their message engrains into my brain
I can't escape this dream...

The girl who dreamed about having good exams

by Raika

Once there was girl called Sarah
She had a bad day at school
So, she went home
She was getting ready for bed
Because she knew another day would just start tomorrow

As soon as she went to bed,
she had a dream about how she wanted to do good
To do good in school.

Dagestan

by Anas

I find myself in the daunting mountains
No, it can't be
Anyone's worst dream.
2-3 years of Dagestan.
To my side I see Ruben, my friend who has been diagnosed.
PTSD, the nightmares are running at me.
I see wrestling bears, claws of knives
Teeth tearing organs apart.
Bloodbath, it soaks their fur.
Ruben can't take it,
He runs
But it is done.
My father went the same way, and my legs lose their function.
My panic, my loss of strength.
There is no one for miles, nobody nearby.
I scream.
I shout.
I give up.
My fate is sealed; the light leaves my eyes.
But a voice brings me to.
My mother, rushing me, the alarm for school.

The Presence

by Sami & Usman

Finding my path through the eerie forest.
My keys quivering, my legs about to give out.
I felt an ominous presence.
Enclosing me.

Stage Fright

by Elif

I'm practically dead,
There's no better time to feel alive,
I'm going for it.

A microphone chills my hand.
The silence is loud – too loud.

I'm afraid to lift my head,
I can feel them,
I can hear them,
But I can't see them.

One looks up,
I shouldn't have.
Derealisation hits as hard as a brick, or a roof light.

It hurts
too much it hurts.

But I'm on the floor!
Wait-
My hand runs along my arm, it goes through.

Please! Tell me that the crowd can see me,
That you can see me!
Where is the applause?
Why am I bleeding!

Climate

by Sienna

Extinction is at its peak.
It is my job to help,
Our job to help.
I see the evolution through their eyes,
The anatomy tells me where my future lies.
I have drawn it on the pages, the pages of my life.



"I enjoyed the concept of being able to do what we wanted with the idea around dreams – it sparked a lot of creativity"

Pupil



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