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Mother Tongue Other Tongue

This anthology contains a selection of poetry that was submitted for the 2023 North West England Mother Tongue Other Tongue competition.

Mother Tongue Other Tongue 2023

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Mother Tongue Other Tongue

*“Through the many languages
of poetry, in multiple tongues,
we can hear the truths of this
world we must learn to share.”*

Professor Carol Ann Duffy DBE
Creative Director of the Manchester Writing School

About Mother Tongue Other Tongue

Mother Tongue Other Tongue began in 2012 as a regional competition. It was part of the Manchester Children's Book Festival at Manchester Metropolitan University; devised as a Laureate Education project by Carol Ann Duffy (UK Poet Laureate 2009-2019) who says:

“Differences in languages and culture are often considered barriers to communication but the language of poetry is read all over the world and all cultures have their own poets and poetry. The young people represented here are poetry's children and the way they see our world is fresh and inspiring. In appreciating the poetry of others, or in sharing the poetry of others, these fledgling poets bring another perspective to an art form which, in turn, breaks down such perceived barriers.”

Mother Tongue Other Tongue runs annually and is co-ordinated, in the North West of England, by Manchester Poetry Library at Manchester Metropolitan University. The project is supported in the North West by Routes into Languages North West and has been adopted across England, Wales and Scotland by other regional partners.

In 2019, Manchester Metropolitan University was awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education for Mother Tongue Other Tongue and its achievement in helping to foster pride for community languages and cultures.

What other people have said...

“Mother Tongue Other Tongue gives young people a way to cross borders in the most exciting way – through language. Moving between a first language and a learned one, listening to what is shared, what is different and what happens in translation, is an act of empowerment: it changes the way students see their own lives and others, as well as how they imagine themselves in the world.”

Imtiaz Dharker (Poet, Artist and Documentary Film-Maker)

“Our cultural heritage, identity and languages are all important to us and poetry is a great way to express these. I am very inspired by the Mother Tongue Other Tongue project.”

Malala Yousafzai (Education campaigner and youngest Nobel Prize Laureate)

Foreword

You are about to read a collection of poetry, written by young people between the ages of 8-18, all of whom had their work entered by a teacher to the 2023 Mother Tongue Other Tongue competition.

This year, we received entries in 47 different languages. Almost 3500 pupils took part in Mother Tongue Other Tongue activities in 37 schools including, for the first time this year, 2 supplementary schools (the Huaxia Chinese School and the Greek School of Manchester).

Though Mother Tongue Other Tongue is a competition, our aim is to celebrate as many of the languages and cultures as we can. So, unlike other competitions that have one winner, our prize is publication in this anthology and our judges select pieces based on criteria which include creativity, passion for language and interesting topics, ideas and stories.

There are two competition categories: Mother Tongue is about encouraging young people to share poetry and songs in a heritage language (their Mother Tongue) and Other Tongue is an opportunity for students to be creative in a language that they are learning.

The poetry submitted by pupils, who enter this competition covers a huge number of languages, topics and levels of linguistic ability. The job of the judges is to find pieces that are written with passion, creativity, humour and empathy. This year the work of 94 students, writing in 30 languages was chosen to be included.

Mother Tongue Other Tongue offers an opportunity to develop conversations around language and cultures which we know will foster intercultural understanding far beyond the reach of our competition. We rely on the teachers and other group leaders who work with young people to prepare their submissions to engage with the spirit of the project. We think you will agree that the pieces shared are testament to just how well this happens.

The range of topics, emotions, stylistic choices, poetic devices, the languages shared, the cultural insight given and the passion that these young people express through their writing, is truly inspiring. We hope that you enjoy reading these pieces as much as we have.

Becky Swain (Director: Manchester Poetry Library)

Kaye Tew (Education Manager: Manchester Poetry Library)

Mother Tongue

“Mother Tongue Other Tongue is a project that celebrates all the richness of languages spoken in Britain. It feels as though it should always have existed and I wish I had something like it when I was growing up. It would have saved me all the years of stumbling over my own tongue before I learned to respect it.”

Imtiaz Dharker

Poet, Artist and Documentary Film-Maker

Students aged between 8-18 submitted poetry or songs in a language they regard as their ‘mother tongue’. Pieces are not judged on the original submission, which can be remembered or found or an original piece of work.

We don’t limit the languages that can be submitted, so our judges decide based on a commentary, written in English, that communicates what the piece is about and the reasons for sharing or writing it.

This is a selection of some of the best pieces submitted this year. They are roughly in year group order, as listed.

Name	Year	School	Language
Yannis Protopapas, Orion Damon Aretoulaki-Blackburn, Marianna Chrysa Long, Natalia Eunice Long, Spyridon Panto	3 & 4	Greek School of Manchester	Greek
Sophia Konstantinou, Chloi Boultouka, Iason Andreadakis, Dorothea Boultouka	3, 4 & 5	Greek School of Manchester	Greek
Zainab Zehra	3	Abraham Moss Community School	Urdu
Sofie Jandusova	5	Manor Park School and Nursery	Czech
Elif Zehra Iris	5	Manor Park School and Nursery	Turkish
Alessandro Albertini	6	The British School of Milan	Italian
Sophia Harvey	7	Didsbury High School	Urdu
Salih Cande	7	Abraham Moss Community School	Portuguese
Fama Coundoul	7	St Matthews RC High School	Wolof
Aseel Khalifa	7	Cooperative Academy Failsworth	Arabic
Maria-Stefania Toma	7	Hazel Grove High School	Korean
Zuzanna Zukowska	7	St Monica's R.C. High School	Polish
Aadya Arya	7	Altrincham Grammar School for Girls	Hindi
Carson Sun	7	St Monica's R.C. High School	Mandarin
Audrey Fok Shun Hei	8	All Hallows Catholic College	Chinese
Aiden Zhang	9	Wellacre Academy	Mandarin
Tianle Li	10	Huaxia Chinese School	Chinese
Yuhan Wu	8	Huaxia Chinese School	Chinese
Kaixin Dokter	8	Chetham's School of Music	Dutch
Florence Lomas	8	All Hallows Catholic College	Gaelic
Abdallah El-Hamisi	8	Hazel Grove High School	Libyan
Christina Athena Papageorgiou	8	Greek School of Manchester	Greek
Khushi Amir	8	North Halifax Grammar School	Sindhi
Aleeza Aslam	8	Oasis Academy Leesbrook	Punjabi
Aysha Sabeel	8	Archbishop Blanch C of E High School	Malayalam
Anna Wagster Konstantinidou	9	Greek School of Manchester	Greek
Lojain Gengehy	9	Lancaster Girls' Grammar School	Arabic
Jess Hufton	9	North Halifax Grammar School	Romanian
Ugochi Apeh Adonu	9	St Matthews RC High School	Igbo
Trisha Aggarwal	9	Lostock High School	Hindi
Chester Tam	10	St James' Catholic High School	Cantonese
Tahera Naureen	10	Lostock High School	Urdu
Supipi Rajapakse	10	Co op Academy Priesthorpe	Sinhala
Parnika Ganguli	10	Lancaster Girls' Grammar School	Bengali
Abi Toth	10	The Queens School	Hungarian
Aimen Zubair	10	Whalley Range High School	Urdu
Aisha Khan	12	Oldham Sixth Form College	Spanish
Aisosa Ogiemwanye (Junior)	12	Oldham Sixth Form College	Spanish
Teo Spinu	12	The Grange School	Romanian
Blessing Oladigbo	12	Archbishop Blanch C of E High School	Yoruba
Humayra Rahman Begum	13	Oldham Sixth Form College	Bengali
Nhyira Fomenya	10	Cheadle Hulme School	Akan

We thought we'd start our Mother Tongue primary section by sharing Poster Poems that were created by pupils who attend The Greek School in Manchester.

If All Children on the Earth

Yannis Protopapas, Orion Damon Aretoulaki-Blackburn, Marianna Chrysa Long, Natalia Eunice Long, Spyridon Panto (Years 3 & 4)



If All Children on the Earth

Sophia Konstantinou, Chloi Boultouka, Iason Andreadakis, Dorothea Boultouka
(Years 3, 4 & 5)



These posters are followed with poems by other, primary-age, young writers, representing 5 different languages.

Four more poems from our younger age group,
in Urdu, Czech, Turkish and Italian.

Suraj Nikla

Zainab Zehra (Year 3)

سورج نکلا

سورج نکلا مشرق سے
ایک نیا سویرا لایا ہے

پڑھنا لکھنا جس نے سیکھا
اس نے نام کمایا ہے

بات بڑوں کی مان کر چلنا
اللہ نے فرمایا ہے

پڑھنا لکھنا جس نے سیکھا
اس نے نام کمایا ہے

I chose this song because my dad used to sing it to me. I miss my dad and, when I hear this song, I think about him and how much he loved me.

Skákal Pes

Sofie Jandusová (Year 5)

Skákal pes, pres oves pres, zelenou
louku, sel za nim, myslivec, pero na
klobouku. Peisku nas, co delas, zes
tak vesel stale, rek bych vam, nevim
sam, hop a skakal dale.

It is important to celebrate every country, even if it is not like the other one. I have chosen this Czech poem because it reminds me of good memories. When I am in Czech Republic, and I am at my grandma's house, me and my dad always say this. Even if a country is more well-known, we should still celebrate others as well.

Dođa (Nature)

Elif Zehra Iris (Year 5)

Bazen sari, Bazen beyaz,
Herzaman rengarenk,
Herzaman yasam dolduracak.
Bazen guzel kokar,
Bazen yasam verit,
Herzaman yuvadir hayvanlara,
Olmazsa olmaz bu dunyada.
Herzaman koruyalim,
Sevkat ile bakalim,
Yoksa our basimiza bela,
Ahirette ve dunyada.

Sometimes yellow
Sometimes white always colourful,
It will always be filled with life.
Sometimes it smells good,
Sometimes it gives life
It is always home to animals,
It is indispensable in this world.
Let's always protect
Always look after them,
Otherwise, we will be in trouble, in
the hereafter and in the world.

I chose to write this poem about nature because I want people to know how beautiful the world is. I want people to not throw rubbish and ruin the beauty of nature.



Mattina (Morning)

Alessandro Albertini (Year 6)

M'illumino
d'immenso

I'm enlightened
By immensity

This short poem (four words) was written by Giuseppe Ungaretti while in the eastern trenches during the Great War. I can imagine him cold, in the dark of the night, waiting for the morning to arrive.

... and here the morning comes, a blaze of limitless, dazzling light.

Morning is light, an expectation of warmth, the promise of a new beginning.

To me, this poem is exactly what poetry should be, as my grandma taught me, "Poetry is the art of bringing the sea into a glass."

It reminds me of the importance and beauty of choosing the exact words whenever I speak or write. In a life of "overall abundance", it also urges me always to favour quality over quantity.

Year 7 poems were written in Urdu, Portuguese, Wolof, Arabic, Korean, Polish, Hindi and Mandarin.

Kunba

Sophia Harvey (Year 7)

Khoon ka ristha subsay
mazboot hay.
Chahay dor ho ya nazdeek
hamesha sath-sath juday
dill se.
Pyaar se.
Har mushkai mein,
takleef
dil ke durd,
parshani,
siraf kandaan apke saath hai,
sunnay ko,
dakh bai ko.
Apke apne he apse pyoor
karththay he,
hamaysha kalia.

This poem is about family and is written in my mother tongue, Urdu, which my mum's family speaks. My poem is about how through all hardships and however close or far you may be, family will always be connected and will always be there for you.

A Vida e a Morte

Salih Cande (Year 7)

O que é a vida e a morte
Aquela infernal inimiga
A vida e o sorriso
E a morte da vida a guarida
A morte tem os desgostos
A vida tem os felizes
A cova tem as tristezas
A vida tem as raízes
A vida e morte são
O sorriso lisonjeiro
E o amor tem o navio
E o navio o marinheiro

What is life and death
That infernal enemy
Life is the smile
And death is life's den.
Death has the displeasure
Life has the happy times
The pit has the sorrow
Life has the roots
Life and death are
The flattering smile
And love has the ship
And the ship has the sailor.

This poem is called 'Life and Death'. I chose this poem because I think it explains life beautifully. It talks about life's ups and downs and summarises life in a couple of phrases. This poem means a great deal to me because it is one of the things that has got me to where I am today. It motivates me by reminding me that life is not forever, so make the most of it. Florbela Espanca never explained publicly why she wrote it. From a personal view, I think she wrote it to help people with life's struggles. The time this poem helped me the most was when my grandma passed away a few months ago. Along with other things, it was a big comfort and this is why I chose this poem.



My Senegalese poem

Fama Coundoul (Year 7)

Où Toute la nourriture au Sénégal qu'il y a.
Tout est merveilleux.
Toutes les petites villes du Sénégal, au milieu des petits enfants.
Où sont tous les villageois couchés, qui ont une fois cogné les bolays?
Où sont toutes les belles femmes qui se promenaient autrefois
dans les rues?
J'avais l'habitude d'entendre les grands tambours battre au loin.
J'entendais le rugissement des lions.
Léegi mën naa wax ne mën naa gis ay jigéen yu rafet ci mbedd mi.
Léegi mën naa wax ne dégg naa baatu mbëj bu baax.
Léegi mën naa wax ne dégg naa ay xale yu ndaw di fexe ci sore.
Léegi mën naa wax ne dégg naa baatu gaynde bi.

This poem means a lot to me. My native language is not celebrated in school and writing this poem makes me feel proud and visible in a society that doesn't display enough diverse backgrounds. Seeing my poem displayed in school makes me feel seen and lets people from other cultures get to know about my native country. Senegal has conquered and experienced a whirlwind of turbulence; perhaps it feels peaceful and serene to envision the journey to freedom. Senegal means liberty, happiness and eternal blessings.

This is Damascus by Nizar Qabbani

Aseel Khalifa (Year 7)

هذي دمشق.. وهذي الكأس والراح
أنا دمشقي.. لو شرحتم جسدي
و لو فتحتم شراييني بمديتكم
زراعة القلب.. تشفي بعض من عشقوا
مأذن الشام تيكبي إذ تعانقني
..للياسمين حقوق في منازلنا
طاحونة البن جزء من طفولتنا
هذا مكان "أبي المعتز" .. منتظر
هنا جذوري.. هنا قلبي... هنا لغتي
كم من دمشقية باعت أساورها 5
أتيت يا شجر الصفصاف معتذراً
..خمسون عاماً.. وأجزائي مبعثرة
..تقاذفتني بحاراً لا ضفاف لها
أقاتل القبح في شعري وفي أدبي
ما للعروبة تبدو مثل أرملة؟
والشعر.. ماذا سيبقى من أصلته؟
وكيف نكتب والأفقال في فمنا؟
حملت شعري على ظهري فاتعبنى

إني أحب... وبعض الحب ذباح
لسال منه عناقيد.. وتفاح
سمعت في دمي أصوات من راحوا
وما لقلبي -إذا أحببت- جراح
و للمأذن.. كالأشجار.. أرواح
وقطة البيت تغفو حيث ترتاح
فكيف أنسى؟ وعطر الهيل فواح
ووجه "فائزة" حلّو و لماح
فكيف أوضح؟ هل في العشق إيضاح؟
حتى أغازلها... والشعر مفتاح
فهل تسامح هيفاء.. ووضاح؟
فوق المحيط.. وما في الأفق مصباح
وطار دنتني شياطين وأشباح
حتى يفتح نوار... وقداح
أليس في كتب التاريخ أفراح؟
إذا تولاه نصاب... ومداح؟
وكل ثانية يأتيك سفاح؟
ماذا من الشعر يبقى حين يرتاح؟

I am Aseel, I am 11 nearly 12. I am from Syria and I live in the UK. I wanted to enter this competition to say that nothing is impossible. I like poetry and I like to show where I am from. I am confident and proud of it.

The poem I have shared is by a poet called Nizar Qabbani. He is Syrian and the poem says that, wherever he goes, wherever he stays, he is Syrian. And that is the same for me. This poem is about a man from Syria and he remembers everything he suffered. He has seen war in his childhood. But he is still really proud as it says in the line "And if you opened my veins with your sword, you would hear in my blood the voices of those who left"

أنا دمشقي.. لو شرحتم جسدي/ سمعت في "دمي أصوات من راحوا

This means lots of people tried their best to keep Syria the best and the safest place but they weren't strong enough. But we can still remember them because they suffered and tried for us.

I am connected to this poem because I am Syrian like the poet and it represents our nationalities and reminds me of it. I know this poem because I can remember we learned about it and how famous it was in school in Syria. I feel that this is the best poem and it has more details about Syrians like

وقطة البيت تغفو حيث ترتاح
للياسمين حقوق في منازلنا

"Jasmine has rights in our homes.. and the house cat falls asleep wherever it rests". This means that it was really peaceful and without noises and you could feel safe before the war.

This poem presents the love to my language as it was the first language, it was the first letter, it was my first numbers, it was my first world. I will speak it for the whole of my life and will always remember it because it was my first language and it represents my country.

Switching between languages was a particular theme of this year's Mother Tongue entries, with some students choosing to create their own poems, using a combination of their Mother Tongue and English, illustrating the complexity of existing between languages.

Straciłem życie

Zuzanna Zukowska (Year 7)

Half of my heart has been ripped out
And it really hurt but I didn't shout

You may be wondering what
I'm talking about
And how it is impossible
to live without

So allow me to explain
what this means
Because from my chest
no blood bleeds

Yet instead happiness and joy
Leaks from the damaged
and upset void

Nobo wkoncu nie jestem taka nudna

Bo zczaszdym razem ja pamietam
Jak to bylo ladnie tam

Z przyjacielami I rodzinom
I jak sobie fajnie zyje
I wtedy mysle sobie dla
czego yestem smutna

Pamientam jak rzeka plywa
przes nasze pole
I jak dzieci maja chipsy I cole

Wszyscy sie dziela I
nikogo nie obchodzi
Ile mamy pieniendzy I
skont pohodzisz

I dopiero pamietam skad pochodze
Ale do prawdziego
zycia znow wchodze

And then appears a smile on my face
As yet again I find my place

Now my void begins to heal
As happy memories are what seal

Translation of the Polish to English

Because I'm not so boring after all
Because every time I remember
How nice it was there
With friends and families
And how nice they were living
And then I think to
myself why I am sad
I remember how the river flows
through our field
And how children have
chips and colas
Everyone shares and nobody cares
How much money and
discount do we have
And I only remember
where I came from
But I enter the truth of life again

I wrote this poem because I was inspired by the poem "Search for My Tongue", by Sujatta Bhatt, to write one about myself. I moved to England after one of my grandfathers died. My dad was grieving really bad so he stayed in Poland. I was four years old back then, but remember feeling half of my heart being ripped out when I was told that I would never see him or any of my friends again. The only things I remember of Poland now are his hug, and me and my small group of friends sitting in the playground we had on our land, and sharing the things that they brought with them. It was very simple back then. I loved sharing my experience of all I remember from the only memories I have from my old home.

Rivalry Between my Mother Tongue and my Second Language

Aadya Arya (Year 7)

Rivalry between my mother tongue
and second language
My two tongues knotted, when they
were created with me
Growing together they
nurtured to see
A solid foundation. To
build up my tree
Connecting together to
make my one key

But as I grew older a
conflict grew too
Together no more they
longed to be two
Between a crossfire,
which one to pursue
Both my mother
tongues, what can I do

I tortured my tongues
to make a choice
But still they went on to
fight with no voice
Crumbling both they died in my mouth,
By burden I left them to hoist

Per mujhe hai biswas wo
din bhi aayega
(But I have faith that that day
will also come)
Jab mer do zuban ek hogi aw phir
(When my two tongues will be one
again and then)
Wo vahi kahega jo sahi hoga.
(It will speak what's right)

This poem is about confusion of not only my struggle of whether my mother tongue is Hindi or English but whether I am British or Indian. As Indian being raised in England I spoke both English and Hindi when learning to talk. This poem is a reflection of how I felt as I grew up and it became more confusing to me what language was my mother tongue and what language I'd almost have to put in second place even though I grew up with it, and it grew up with me.

The first stanza of this poem shows how as a young child it didn't make a difference to me whether I had two languages and that I just learnt to speak both of them. However as the poem progresses I progress through life and speaking Hindi

at home and English at school made me think I had to choose which language came first for me and at that stage of the poem my tongues that grew and nurtured each other want to be separate. In the third stanza it's a conflict how I can't decide which tongue is mine so I simply leave my tongues to decide for me, however they can't solve anything out and because of the pain and torture I cause they both crumble away and die leaving me with no tongue.

The fourth and final stanza is about hope. Hope that one day both of my tongues grow back together and this is the point at which I realise I was born with two languages and that's the way I should keep it.

Home

Carson Sun (Year 7)

Home is where my heart rests where love and comfort are at their best. It's where the walls find amazing and cherished memories, and every corner tells an untold story.

空气中弥漫着家常
饭菜的香气和温暖。
kong qi zhong mimanzhe jia chang
fan cai de xiang qi he wen nuan.

It's where your bed welcomes you at night and soft pillow hugs you tight, where dreams are made, and thoughts are thought, home is where we can be ourselves, care free and is where we find our sense

of place and where we feel we have our space. Where the doors are open and love is forever unbroken a place where you truly belong and where heart finds its true song.

它是创造和保存记忆地地方
也是满足孩子们梦想的地方。
Ta shi chaung zao he bao cun ji yi
di di fang ye shi man zu haizimen
mengxiang di di fang.

So, cherish home, wherever it may be, for it's the place we are truly free, to be ourselves and live our best life, and where our heart can find rest.

I was inspired to add the words and descriptive language in this poem by the actual things going on in my house, including pictures hung on the walls that date back to my primary school and the smell of the food that is practically always there. You can always remember what happened the day you got something in your house, like they actually keep your memory alive every time you look at it. The pillows are used to make the poem seem very relaxing and calm, and the bed is to put away any worries.



The Moon

Audrey Fok Shun Hei (Year 8)

今晚的月亮又大又圓，
柔和的月光高高地照亮大地。
照亮大小不一的花草，照亮熟睡了的動物，
時間彷彿靜止了一樣。

今晚的月亮又大又圓，
照亮了周圍的高樓大廈。
黑夜中，黃埔船彷彿更加雄偉，
這影像一直留在我的腦海中。

雖然今晚的月亮又大又圓，
但也沒有家鄉的月亮那麼亮，那麼圓。

I wrote this poem that is about the moon. There is a saying in Cantonese that roughly translates as “Only in your hometown does the moon shine the brightest”. I love looking at the moon, as it reminds me of home. It also brings back fond memories of walks and meals outside, under the brightly shining moon. The moon is also a popular choice as inspiration for songs, and many songs throughout the eras that stand out are often about the moon.

We received three different submissions, all wanting to share this next traditional, Mandarin Chinese poem by Li Shen (Tang Dynasty). This is clearly a very important poem in Chinese culture and contains an important message for all of us.

Commiserating with the Farmer

悯农二首
(唐代) 李绅

Chūn zhǒng yī lì sù qiū shōu wàn kē zǐ.
春种一粒粟，秋收万颗子。

Sì hǎi wú xián tián nóng fū yóu è sǐ.
四海无闲田，农夫犹饿死。

Chú hé rì dāng wǔ hàn dī hé xià tǔ.
锄禾日当午，汗滴禾下土。

Shéi zhī pán zhōng cān lì lì jiē xīn kǔ.
谁知盘中餐，粒粒皆辛苦。

(Tang Dynasty) Li Shen

Tianle Li (Year 10)

I was taught this poem at a young age by my mum because she believes that I should never waste food.

I remember how when she first explained the meaning of the poem, I couldn't refrain from thinking about the harsh conditions the farmers needed to work in. Their perseverance and positive attitude towards their job deeply touched me.

I realised that in this world there's still a lot of people living in poverty and hunger. And just like how the farmers are working hard and giving something to society, we should cherish the hard work others have done and learn to give back.

Aiden Zhang (Year 9)

The moral taught in this significant poem is that you should never waste food. You may not see the hardship endured to make that food on your plates, so you should never waste it. Poor farmers grow and harvest their crops as early as 5 am, and farm under the scorching, blinding sun, sweating as they break their backs for us to eat.

This Poem is very important within my family because people

like my Grandma and Grandad had to go through a rough childhood. While other children were cheerfully skipping to school, my grandparents were on the farms growing sweet potatoes. They started at 6 am and until 4 pm, their body aching from doing it 7 days a week, sweat sticking clothes to their skin.

The gruelling labour to feed people around the city made little profit, which was only enough

to buy some rice. However, a lot is wasted because of careless individuals. Because my grandparents had no choice, they could only have rice with thrown away sweet potato skin they grew. Therefore they spent most of their childhood without education. However, they still put a smile on their face to this day. This shows me that I should never waste any food, because I know the struggles made by the things I eat.

mǐn nóng
悯农

唐·李绅

锄禾日当午，
汗滴禾下土。
谁知盘中餐，
粒粒皆辛苦。

- Mǐn nóng, a poem written by Li shen. It contains the traces of ancient Chinese through the art of poetic language. Being an incredible piece of work, it is well known amongst citizens and taught to young children from mere ages of four.

As this poem is written in ways unfamiliar to modern Mandarin, literal translations do not grant the poem justice with lack of depth and clarity.

Mǐn nóng conveys the message of many farmer's dedication. It speaks of working in the field, the long hours beneath the blazing sun resulting in the countless droplets of sweat. It highlights the question - "Where does our food come from?"

This poem enlightens us of the time and efforts spent into the growing and preparation of the food on our plates, I believe the author has flawlessly communicated the gratitude and grateful demeanor we should possess towards those providing for us.

Hoing grain in the blaze of
Moon,
Sweat drops fall - grain to
earth,
Who knows food in the
plate,
How taiful each
granule is.

吴语涵

2023

LSB

Poems about love, life, pride and acceptance,
in Dutch, Gaelic, Libyan, Greek, Sindhi, Panjabi
and Malayalam from our Year 8 entrants.

Spleen (Gloominess)

Kaixin Dokter (Year 8)

Ik zit mij voor het vensterglas
Onnoemlijk te vervelen.
Ik wou dat ik twee hondjes was,
Dan kon ik samen spelen.
by Godfried Bomans

I sit in front of the window glass
Endlessly bored.
I wish I was two dogs,
Then I could play together.

I chose this poem because my father used to say it whenever we would drive through a street in my hometown. Because of that, I think about this poem whenever I drive through that street. I'm also reminded of the poem whenever I'm bored. I'm an only child, so sometimes I wish I had siblings to play with.

Where Saint Patrick Meets

Florence Lomas (Year 8)

Ní fhaca ach bhraith
saibhreas na hÉireann
Ní le hór ach le teas
Le aoibh ghéire agus mé ag siúl tríd
an doras saor in aisce,
An áit a mbuaileann Naomh Pádraig
Agus beannaíonn na céadta daoine
Téann scéalta na sinsear ar aghaidh
ar feadh na mílte
Ní théann mórán níos faide
Ina áit sin fanacht ar feadh tamaill
Ní thagann seanscéalta
faoin stair in aois
Trotting dearg daor mar a
cheann ar an tréad
Tógann roinnt daoine eile
frantic agus tapa a gcuid ama
ach fós ag géire
Gach beagán difriúil
Ní hamháin leis na hainmhithe
Ach fós an díograis don
talamh emerald

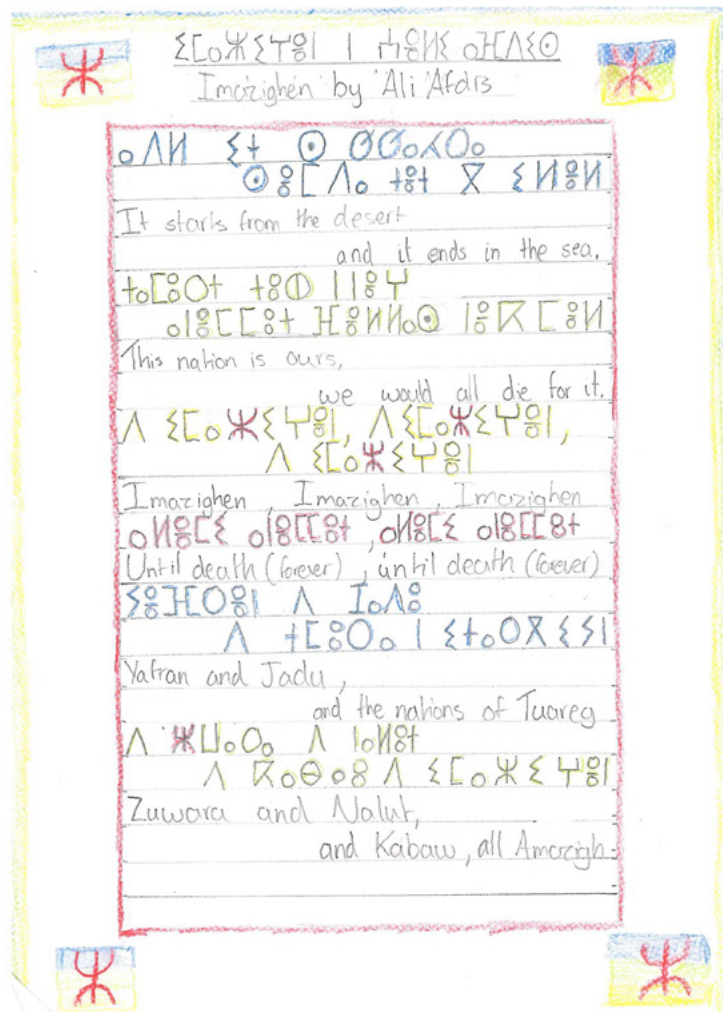
Never seen but felt
the Irish wealth
Not with gold but warmth
With smiles as I walk
through the door
Where saint Patrick meets
And hundreds of people greet
Ancestor's stories go on for miles
Not many go further
Instead stay for a while
Tales of the history never get old
Red deer trotting round like they're
head of the herd
Some frantic and fast others take
their time but still have a laugh
All a bit different
Not just with the animals
But still have the enthusiasm for
the emerald land

I wrote this poem because even though I am not fully Irish my grandma is. She has such amazing values and always stays true to herself. I think Ireland is a very welcoming place with love and history.

Imazighen

Abdallah El-Hamisi (Year 8)

I chose this song because it has a very nice meaning behind it and people in Libya sing this during any positive event (parties, gatherings, sometimes even at a wedding). I think it highlights how so many cities and countries can be united in one nation. This song also portrays Libya's beauty in a really powerful way and how it's worth "dying for".



Η αγάπη του παιδιού

Christina Athena Papageorgiou (Year 8)

Το φιλάκι της μάνας είναι η αγάπη
Η αγκαλιά του μπαμπά είναι η αγάπη
Τα λόγια της ειρήνης μεταξύ των
ανθρώπων είναι η αγάπη.

Το παιδάκι που γυρνάει απ' το σχολείο
κουρασμένο και εξαντλημένο
Αφήνει την τσάντα του και
τρέχει στην αγκαλιά
Και το προσωπάκι του ταλαιπωρημένο
Ακόμα τρέχει στην μάνα και της λέει
πως του έλειψε
Παρόλη την κούραση
Είναι η αγάπη.

Αγάπη είναι τα παιδιά στην αυλή που
παίζουν κρυφτό και κυνηγητό, και
λένε παραμύθια.

Η αγάπη είναι τα σφιγμένα
χέρια των ανθρώπων
Είναι η μυρουδιά του
φαγητού της γιαγιάς
Τα σοφά λόγια του παππού.

Μονάχα αυτό.
Τίποτ' άλλο δεν είναι η αγάπη

This poem is titled 'The Love of the Child,' and it is written by myself. I took inspiration from Yiannis Ritsos' poem: "Peace." I followed the same style, which is free verse. To me, this poem gives a strong sense of community. The fact that all 7 billion people on the planet are all united with this one small thing. Love. I wrote this poem to show that this one universal emotion can mean so many different things to different people, for example, as I wrote, "the wisdom of grandad," or "the smell of grandma's food." Even the smallest thing can mean so much to people.

The Child

Khushi Amir (Year 8)

اتي ڪڏهن هڪ عجيب ٻار هو
جنهن کي مان چوان ٿو مشڪل سان مسڪرايان
هن هڪ خلا باز هيلمت پهريل هو
سندس پسنديدو رنگ لال مخمل هو
هن کي هميشه ڏکيو ويندو آهي
اهي ماڻهو پريشان نظر ٿا اچن
اهو هڪڙو چوڪرو آهي جنهن کي ڪو به نه سمجهندو
اهي هن ڪڏهن به هٿ نه کنيو آهي
هو چاهي ٿو ته هڪ عام ٻار وانگر علاج ڪيو وڃي
ميدريز ۾ رهندڙ ماڻهن کان
هن کي ائين محسوس ٿئي ٿو جڏهن ته هن جو چهرو بيڪار آهي هن کي گڏوگڏ طور استعمال
ڪيو ويندو آهي
هو پڇي ٿو ته هو راند ڪري سگهي ٿو
پر ماڻهو رڳو پڇن ٿا
ڪڏهن شيون غلط ٿي وينديون آهن ۽ ڪڏهن ڪڏهن اهي ٿينديون
پوءِ دٻاءُ يا روئڻ نه ڪريو، بس ٿڌي
پر توهان مسڪرائڻ جي ڪوشش ڪندا آهيو پر ان جي بدران توهان هڪ سااهه ڪڍي ڇڏيو
هميشه پنهنجون اميدون بلند رکو
بس ٻيهر شروع ڪريو، مثبت سوچيو ۽ ويه
ڪجهه به ڪريو جيڪو توهان کي خوش ڪري، پر مهرباني ڪري نه ڇڏيو
مسڪرائيندا رهو ڇو ته زندگي هڪ خوبصورت شيءِ آهي
خوشي، شڪرگذار ۽ امن اهو آڻيندو آهي
زندگي سٺي ۽ خراب وقت جو دائرو ٿي سگهي ٿي
قسمت سان، ڪاميابي يا صرف وحشي ڏوهن سان
پر يقين رکو ته سٺي رستي تي آهي
۽ اسان کي هر روز خوشي آڻيندو آهي

I have written this poem to highlight the importance of how crucial it is to respect people's race, religion, skin colour or just the way they look. I want to spread the message no matter who we are, we should all be respected, loved and treated equally. We should be celebrating diverse religions and people with unique and amazing beliefs. My poem is about a little boy who feels scared to show his face in public because he thinks he is ugly. He feels like his face is 'wonky' This is my message from the poem. The language I have written this in is Sindhi.

There was once a peculiar child
Who I must say barely smiled
He wore an astronaut helmet
His favourite colour was red velvet
He always gets bullied
Those people don't appear to be worried
He is a boy who nobody understands
He has never shaken hands
He wants to be treated like a normal kid
From the people who live in Madrid
He feels like his face is wonky
He is used as a donkey
He asks if he can play
But people just run away

When things go wrong and sometimes they will
Then dont stress or weep, just chill
But you try to smile but instead you let out a sigh
Always keep your hopes high
Just start again, think positively and sit
Do anything that makes you happy, but please do not quit
Keep smiling because life is a beautiful thing
Happiness, gratitude and peace it brings
Life can be a circle of good and bad times
With luck, success or just vicious crimes
But have faith that good is on the way
And brings us pleasure every single day.

My Beloved Friends

Aleeza Aslam (Year 8)

Tur gaye yaar mohabbatan
wale written by Sufi poet
Mian Muhammad Bakhsh

Tur gaye yaar mohabbatan wale
Naly lay gaye naal e hassy
Dil nhe lagda yar Muhammad
Jaey kare paasy
Baap mare sar nanga honda
Weer mare kand khali
Mawaa baad Muhammad bakhsha
kon kerai rakhwali
Bhai bhaiyan de dard wandaanday,
bhai bhaiyan diyaan bhahwaan
Baap siraan de taj Muhammad,
Mawaan thand ivan chhawaan ,
Uchiya lambiya taliya te ghaniryan
ginahen diya chawan
Har lk chaz bazon labdi
Par nahi labdiya maawan

I have selected this poem from the Sufi tradition because it is one which holds much importance to my family. This is because it was a favourite of my late grandmother who would often listen to it being recited and would encourage her children - including my mother - to do so too.

The poem is about death of loved ones - something she could, unfortunately, relate to after losing some family back home in Pakistan.

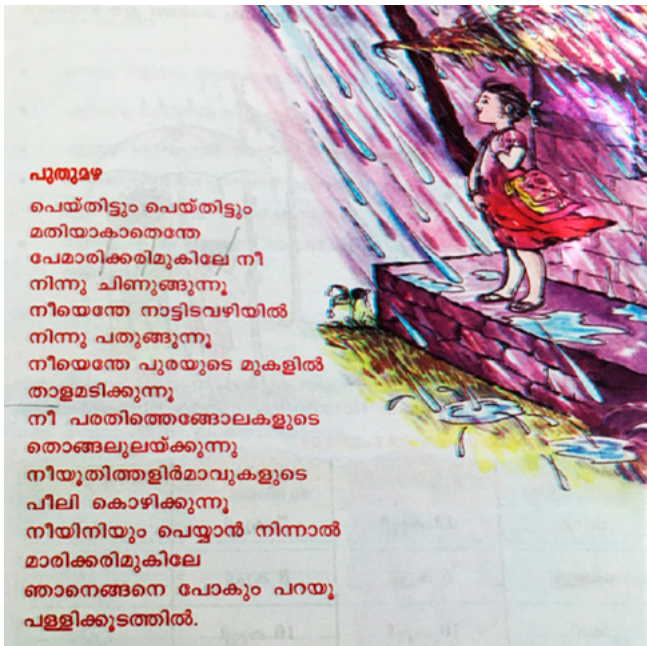
Near the time of her death, my grandmother was terribly ill, and spent much time in hospital. She would comfort herself by listening to the poem every day leading up to her passing, telling those close to her to do so as well, leading us to believe she was preparing both us and herself for the probability of her death. The poem also spurred her to hold on for that little bit longer to my mother.

While being a sad reminder of our loss, this poem is very special and dear to my family. It is a poem which, once we hear it reminds us of her and her infinite kindness and love, allowing us to never forget how much of an amazing person she was. Even though she is no longer with us the poem keeps me infinitely connected to her and my heritage, even though I live in a faraway land.

The poem was estimated to have been written in the mid-1800s and the richness of the language reflects this time. I am proud that I will possibly one day pass on this poem to my own children, keeping this dialect and language alive over 200 years later. This poem connects me to my grandmother and my past. I love this poem as I loved her, and I hope you will love it too.

New Rain (first of the year)

Aysha Sabeel (Year 8)



Having rained and rained, haven't you had enough?
Thick dark thunderclouds and torrential rain
Why are you standing there and whining ?
Why are you lurking in the alleyways of the village?
Why are you drumming on the roof of the house?
Why are you swaying the fringes of the coconut leaves?
Why are you blowing and withering blossoming mango buds?
If you keep raining like this, oh dark thunderclouds,
Tell me, how am I supposed to go to school?
(By P. Madhusudan)

I was born in the South West region of India in a state called Kerala. I speak a language called Malayalam, which is actually the only language that is a palindrome.

I actually first heard this nursery rhyme when I was about in year 5, when my mum read it to me from an Indian year 2 textbook that she collected when we last went to Kerala. She then sang it to me and told me to learn it as part of the 'Malayalam school' she would set up for us at home, one of many she used to teach us at home as part of the school roleplay where she used to switch between both a teacher and a mum, another one of the ways she used to try and make it fun for us and to inspire us to learn our mother tongue.

This nursery rhyme is about a little girl talking to the rain, which was the first rain of the year. In the monsoon season in India, the rain can get really heavy which is different from the UK, where I have only

experienced snow and light rain. You may have heard about the floods in Kerala and all around India a few years ago. Every year we go to visit India in the summer holidays and it is usually the monsoon season when we go, which is in fact great for us because the summers are way too hot! Back home, I love to sit in the verandah and watch the rain, even dance in it and listen to its music, rather than like in England, where I stay warm and cozy indoors during rain. I loved to compare the rain to the rain back here and it fascinated me how much larger the raindrops were in India.

However, you also have to be much more alert and responsible when the rain comes as it is in the countryside and you may have to bring in the clothes or the blankets full of chillies that you leave outside to dry. In this poem, the girl is talking to the rain and begging for it to go away. This reminded me of the British nursery rhyme "Rain, rain, go

away" which I used to sing when I was younger. I was excited to spot the parallels between the two songs because it showed all of the different views you can have on a simple subject, in this case, the rain.

I love this song so much because in India the monsoon season and academic year coincides so the little girl has just got her new books, uniform, bag, umbrella etc. She is moaning to the new rain because it's blocking her way and she is asking "if you keep pouring like this how am I to go to school?". She also complains about how the rain is shaking coconut trees and withering the buds of the mango trees.

As I had only experienced torrential rain while on short month-long holidays, it really fascinated me how different our viewpoints were as the girl viewed the rain as a nuisance and I viewed it as freedom.

Year 9 poems begin with a poem inspired by the Greek poet Yannis Ritsos and are followed then by poems in Arabic, Romanian, Igbo and Hindi.

Αγάπη

Anna Wagster Konstantinidou (Year 9)

Το όνειρο του παιδιού είναι η αγάπη
Το γέλιο του παιδιού είναι η αγάπη
Τα λόγια του παραμυθιού κάτω από τα δέντρα
Που πας να κρυφτείς απ' τον ήλιο
Είναι η αγάπη.

Ο πατέρας που γυρνάει τ' απόβραδο μ' ένα
φαρδύ χαμόγελο στα μάτια
Κι η μάνα που πάει το παιδί στο σχολείο
και κλαίει όταν φεύγει, όπως το νερό της
βροχής στο παράθυρο,
Αυτό είναι η αγάπη.

Αγάπη είναι ένα κρύο παγωτό σε μια ζεστή
μέρα στην παραλία
Κι ένα ζεστό γάλα για το μωρό που κλαίει.

Η αγάπη είναι τα σφιγμένα χέρια τα Χριστούγεννα
Είναι τα φαγητά και τα χαμόγελα που μοιράζεσαι
με όλον τον κόσμο.

Μονάχα αυτό.
Τίποτ' άλλο δεν είναι η αγάπη

This poem is about love. It's about this, because as you live, you find that love really is all around. And as you grow up, you realise that love stays around. Around everywhere. You feel love at the start of your life up until the end. Your mother and your father, they come home to see you. That is love. Home is love. To me, my poem means embracing the love and feeling it. It's what everyone does, and everyone survives on love.

Immigration

Lojain Gengehy (Year 9)

سين سؤال ما المقصود بكلمة هجرة ؟ عفوا لما
ترك العرب ديار الأهل و خرجوا تنترا ؟ ما هو
تاريخ الهجرة منذ البذرة حتى الشجرة؟ ما رأيك
بمجال الهجرة ”كمياه تكسر حجرا“ ؟ أعلمت
بأمر غلام من قهر الأوطان انفجر؟ و تخلى عن
مسقط رأسه و بلاده هجرها هجرا؟ ما رأيك فى
زعمه ان من يتجنس يصبح أجرا؟ أنه ليهاجر
!!! من بلده قد يدفع روحه أجرا

جيم جواب سؤالك عندى احمله معى فى جعبتى.
اسأل ما شئت عن الهجرة فالهجرة هذه لعبتى.
أكتبى أجوبتى فى سجلك و اسمعى رأىى فى
الغربة. و احسبى معى مزايا الهجرة علك

تنبهرى بحسبتى. أنا هاجرت لأنى ابحت عن
وطن يابه لحقوقى... عن وطن يحكم بالبر و ليس
كمن يحكم بعقوبى... عن وطن يثرى موهبتى لا
يستخسرها فى السوق....شمسى فى وطنى قد
غابت ،بالهجرة سأعيد شروقى.... أنا هاجرت
لامتلك جواز يدخلنى اقطارا... بجوازي السابق
ما طرت ولا حتى زرت مطار... لم ادخل حتى
للدول التى سمت نفسها جارة....يا عمى كلها
أشعار ، تصريحات ثرثرة... أنا هاجرت ليتعلم
ابنائى بمدارس محترمة....فالتعليم بمسقط راسى
هو عجز شاخ و هرم

دعنى اقاطع هنا لحظة لا بأس بقطعى لا

جرم... قل لى الا يفلتك ضياح هوية ابناك فى
الزحمة. أما بالنسبة لهوية ابنائى فهى مأخوذة من
والدهم... أنا أحملها كمظلة او خوذة....سأحرص
لابنى أخلاقه و قيمنا ستبقى محفوظة...يا ليتنى
هاجرت بعمره احسده ابن المحظوظة..... فى
أرض المهجر سأعالج بدواء يصرف للكل، فى
بلدى قد كان علاج ينتزع بأنواع الذل.... و شبابى
كدت اضيعة و ورودى كادت تذبل....سأظل
اردد لعنات لبعوض ملاريا و للسلى... أنا لا اكره
وطنى مهما تأثرت بشدة كربه . سيظل بقلبي
محفورا ،موروث فى أفخر به. و سيبقى أمل
العودة يحتل مكانا فى قلبى لوطن لا أشعر فيه
اننى مثل المغتر

This rap style Arabic poem is about immigration-and involves two speakers having an indirect dialogue - one as the interviewer (who asks the questions), while the other speaker plays the role of the father (who answers the questions) from his experience.

It begins with the interviewer asking many questions that relate to the theme of the poem, which is immigration/ emigration. The father starts answering some of the questions, overall stating the reasons and advantages of emigration and educating the interviewer, as well as us as the readers, about the reasons behind their emigration/immigration.

As someone who has immigrated a lot throughout my life, I can agree and relate to the points made in this poem considerably as I have emigrated for the main purposes of “a better lifestyle and education”.

تعليم

Another reason why I enjoy and relate to this poem, is because it mentions “not to worry about losing your identity in the crowd” which is something that I have to remind myself daily to make sure I am being me and not trying to fit in as I have my own culture and traditions to explore.

The verse that I love the most is “I do not hate my country, no matter how severely affected by its anguish. It will remain engraved in my heart, inherited in which I am proud.” This is because others assume that immigrants are people who leave their country because they do not like it. However that isn't the case, as for me I adore Egypt. I may not live there but that shouldn't mean I don't like it or support it.

In general I think people should be familiarized with poems like this - to educate them about Immigration and how the immigrants really feel.

An Elephant Swinging on a Spider's Web

Jess Hufton (Year 9)

Un elefant
Se legăna
Pe o pânză de paianjen
Și fiindcă ea
Nu se rupea
A mai chemat un elefant.

Doi elefanți
Se legănau
Pe o pânză de pajanjen
Și fiindcă pânza
Nu se rupea
Au mai chemat un elefant.

Trei, patru, cinci, șase, șapte,
opt, nouă, zece.

This is a traditional childhood song which is silly yet fun to learn. The lullaby is about an elephant that dangles on a spiderweb and because it didn't break, another elephant can join in. For kids this song is useful as it helps with counting and learning numbers in a funny way.

I wanted to share this piece because even though growing up my predominant language was English, something about this song made me want to connect with my heritage more and learn about it even further.

It was the first sound of Romania I got when I was little and has stuck with me ever since. I also wanted to share it because I think that more people ought to know about the language as it's derived from Latin and has similarities to languages learnt in school eg: French and Spanish. I have a passion for this language as my mum is Romanian but with the amount of family still in Romania decreasing it makes me want to do more to preserve this part of my ethnicity.

Ka m gwa gi maka Ugochi *(Let me tell you about Ugochi)*

Ugochi Apeh Adonu (Year 9)

Aha m

o aha mara mma ka o na-ada

jiri mkpuruokwu o buła, uđa
olu, nkwughachi

Ugo, o pụtara ugo na-arị elu

The pronunciation, aha na-
adabere n'ire gi - O na-ewetara
gi onu ma na-ewepu ihe mgbu,
na aha, di ka nke m, otu a kara aka
maka idi ukwu.

Mkpuru obi di ocha Obi juputara
n'obioma Ugochi, aha di
uko, ma mara mma

O gaghị amasi m igbanwe ya -
Queen ji amara no odu n'ocheeze ya.
ka m gwa gi maka Ugochi

My name

o name as beautiful as it sounds

with every syllable, melody, echoes

Ugo, it means the eagle soaring high

The pronunciation, the name
resting on your tongue - It brings
you joy and takes away pain,
with a name, like mine, one is
destined for greatness

A soul that's pure A heart full
of kindness Ugochi , a name so
rare, yet so lovely

I wouldn't love to change it
- a Queen gracefully sitting
on her throne.
let me tell you about Ugochi

My school hosts a Mother
Tongue club, and we did a
first name exercise, and I was
able to explore and discuss
the meaning and story behind
my Native name. I am from
Nigeria, and I speak in Igbo
I was proud and honored
to discuss the origin and
how empowering it to know
that it means soaring high
and serenity.

Those Who Try Are Not Defeated

Trisha Aggarwal (Year 9)

लहरों से डर कर नौका पार नहीं होती
कोशिश करने वालों की हार नहीं होती

नन्हीं चींटी जब दाना लेकर चलती है
चढ़ती दीवारों पर, सौ बार फिसलती है
मन का विश्वास रगों में साहस भरता है
चढ़कर गिरना, गिरकर चढ़ना न अखरता है
आखिर उसकी मेहनत बेकार नहीं होती
कोशिश करने वालों की हार नहीं होती

डुबकियां सिंधु में गोताखोर लगाता है
जा जा कर खाली हाथ लौटकर आता है
मिलते नहीं सहज ही मोती गहरे पानी में
बढ़ता दुगना उत्साह इसी है रानी में
मुट्ठी उसकी खाली हर बार नहीं होती
कोशिश करने वालों की हार नहीं होती

असफलता एक चुनौती है, स्वीकार करो
क्या कमी रह गई, देखो और सुधार करो
जब तक न सफल हो, नींद चैन को त्यागो तुम
संघर्ष का मैदान छोड़ मत भागो तुम
कुछ किये बिना ही जय जय कार नहीं होती
कोशिश करने वालों की हार नहीं होती

This poem is written in Hindi. This poem is about the people who keep trying to not fail, who then succeed at last. It has many examples to motivate people not to give up. For example, when a diver takes a dip in the Indus, many times he goes and comes back empty handed. Pearls are not easily found in deep water but those who try do not fail. I think this poem motivates us to try until we succeed. When I hear this, I feel inspired to try new things.

Two poems about friendship to start our Year 10 section, which includes poems in Cantonese, Sinhala, Bengali, Hungarian and Urdu.

Quiet Night Thought

Chester Tam (Year 10)

床前明月光，
疑是地上霜。
举头望明月，
低头思故乡。

静夜思 is my favorite poem because it expresses the lonely feelings of Li Bai perfectly. Li Bai express his thoughts by describing the white moon upon the sky. He can't sleep because he misses his family very much. He was thinking that his family and friends were also looking up at the moon, missing him equally. This matches me as I miss my friend and allies thinking, 'What are my friends doing? Do they miss me?' Furthermore the metaphor of moonlight implies the coldness of isolation that I resonate with too.

Friendship

Tahera Naureen (Year 10)

دوستی

دوستی

، اتنا سادہ سا لفظ

، اس کا ایسا مطلب ہے

کس نے سوچا تھا کہ یہ ایک نعمت ہوگی؟ میں کیسے کروں گی۔ میرے رب کا شکر ادا؟ یہ سوچتے

ہوئے سال گزر گئے۔ اس کا شکر ادا کرنے کا کوئی طریقہ نہیں ملا

، تم اسے بے وقوفی کہو گے

، لیکن صرف ایک پاگل پن ہے

میری سب سے اچھی دوست جسے میں سب سے پیاری کہتی ہوں، کون جانتا تھا؟

، وہ میری سب سے پیاری بن جائے گی، اس سے بہت دور جا رہی ہوں، لیکن دلوں میں قربت ا رہی ہوں

، کیونکہ یہ سچی دوستی ہے، جو لامحدود ہے

درد کو بھلایا نہیں جا سکتا، پیارے کو چھوڑنے کے لئے، لیکن مجھے لگتا ہے کہ یہ ٹھیک ہے،

، کیونکہ یہ زندگی ہے

! یادیں نہیں مریں گی۔

I'm an Indian and my Mother Tongue is Urdu. I wrote this song last year for my best friend before coming here from Saudi Arabia. I think the song I wrote expresses my emotions, it shows how I never expected friendship to be a blessing but I realised that it is and it is difficult not seeing her, we have such beautiful memories that will be cherished forever!

වරදට කීපෙනු සටනට වැදී ජය ලබනු

Supipi Rajapakse (Year 10)

බමුණා වුනත් දුදපනකු නම් බිම ප වෙනු
 සැප වලා වුනත් සුදපනකු නම් පුටුව පදනු
 ප ළයා වුනත් ජ පයකු නම් ර පදනු
 පදමළා වුනත් විරූපවකු නම් ගරු කරනු
 බුදු හිමි ජේසු හිමි නබි හිමි වැද පුදනු
 දැපගාත් කුල නුදුටු උන් බණ පිළි දිනු
 වැදී බණ මැදින් මුණි බණ ප රා අසනු
 වැදී බණ පදසන සඟ සන උව පිටු දකිනු
 සි සුන ඉන්ට රට දැය වෙ පනාපදනු
 වෙවා පදන එවුන් මුනට පකල ගසනු
 කසපයන් ලා හිස ලො කටු මටුනු
 ජනයා අහිමුපේ උන් නිරුවත් කරනු
 රජකුපග වුවත් වරදට කෑ පමාර ගසනු
 පමාරපදන මුපවහි ලන මී ැණි ඉව ලනු
 නිවැරදි කරනු බැරි රජු පනරො රිනු
 වරදට කීපෙනු සටනට වැදී ජය ලබනු

Fight against injustice and win
 No matter how educated, powerful or
 wealthy he is,
 if he is a miscreant,
 do treat him with no dignity or respect.
 No matter how illiterate and underprivileged he is,
 if he is noble and honest,
 do treat with a heart full of respect and dignity.
 No matter how clean blooded or how high his
 social class is,
 if he is a scoundrel,
 do attack him
 No matter how lower his social status or race is,
 if he is a hero,
 do respect with utmost curtesy.
 Worship Jesus, Lord Buddha,
 Allah and any other,
 who deserved to be worshiped by a pure heart.
 Follow the people,
 who do not follow discrimination
 and who love equality
 ...
 (a partial translation)

I am inspired by listening to the above iconic, radical and motivational masterpiece of all-time composed in my mother tongue Sinhala, voiced by an uplifting voice of a female legendary singer.

The foundation for this song was built on the Youth movement that occurred in Sri Lanka in 1990's. The government, driven mad by its power, started violating the rights of people. The whole country was embraced with a dark shadow of discrimination, injustice and corruption, that's when the youth generation raised their voices against the rulers. The protests turned in to an armed

revolt against the insolent, unfair and corrupted government. The response of the government was the assassination of thousands of educated youths in daylight and to burn their bodies on tires everywhere in towns. This song was composed to motivate younger generation against the injustice.

Times rolled and in the year 2022, again a human chain of thousands of protestors stood up in every corner of the country against the rude, corrupted and failed government. Sri Lankan government is striving to treat people in the same inhumane manner as earlier. My country once lost hundreds

of her brave children with same blood and one soul in a river of blood and tears. People lost their loved ones. Tears still pour down my cheeks reminding of the loving uncle I lost - my dad's brother. I cannot bear to see people around me becoming victims of cruel politicians who do not hesitate to swim in blood bath for power again and again.

We should not let the future of the country be to spend millions of sleepless nights due to the acts of the leaders. It is the time for these songs to wake up again and congregate people around one flag of Victory against rulers, who cannot be corrected.

Ekti Shshir Bindu

Parnika Ganguli (Year 10)

একটি শিশিরবিন্দু
বহু দিন ধ'রে বহু ক্রেশ দূরে
বহু ব্যয় করি বহু দেশ ঘুরে
দেখিতে গিয়েছি পর্বতমালা,
দেখিতে গিয়েছি সিন্ধু।
দেখা হয় নাই চক্ষু মেলিয়া
ঘর হতে শুধু দুই পা ফেলিয়া
একটি ধানের শিষের উপরে
একটি শিশিরবিন্দু

A Glistening Drop Of Dew
I travelled miles, for many a year,
Spent a lot, in lands afar,
I've gone to see the mountains, the
oceans I've been to view.
But I haven't seen with these eyes
What two steps from my home lies
On a sheaf of paddy grain, a
glistening drop of dew.

I chose this poem by famous Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore. I have been hearing this poem from my mum since my childhood and without even realising it has become an integral part of me. Though I had no clue about what it meant, the unique rhyme always seemed to echo within me.

When I got hold of the English translation of the poem it opened a new dimension for me. So simple yet so rich. The meaningful words reflect the values of the culture we grew up with. The poem starts with 'I travelled miles, for many a year, spent a lot in lands far.' It is always our dream to discover the world when we grow up. Following our dream, we want to travel far and wide to explore the world around and learn about different cultures and people. Freedom of adulthood enables us to say, 'I've gone to see the mountains, the oceans I've been to view' but in our endeavour to know the unknown and distant land, we sometimes tend to forget our own home and our own entity.


Our roots are our identity and embracing who we are in itself is an enriching experience for all of us. This resonates with the next lines "But I haven't seen with these eyes What two steps from my home lies".

Recently during the Covid lockdown, I could realise the relevance of these lines even further. Limitations in terms of travel to distant places and having ample time to explore the nature around helped me to find out the local areas like Brockholes. Walking along the Guild Wheel helped me not only to look at my neighbourhood with a fresh eye but also enjoy and celebrate my closeness to nature.

This poem also helped me to find my identity in this complex world where religion and ethnicity do play a significant role. Born to Indian parents in UK and brought up in liberal Hindu culture, it has not always been easy to strike the right balance and amalgamation between home and the outside world. In situations where I struggled and felt unsettled in

myself, as described in the last couple of lines of the poem, I looked back at my roots. Support from my loved ones and the values instilled in me provided me the strength as well as the much-needed solace.

This in turn helped me to understand myself better and at the same time embrace the outside world around me in a more meaningful way. Encouragement from my family, helped me to identify myself as a strong British Indian woman accepting the best of both worlds. As said in the concluding lines of the poem "On a sheaf of paddy grain, a glistening drop of dew" is somewhat like a treasure lying right in front of us without being discovered. This essentially reiterates the fact that without knowing who we are or our roots, our own neighbourhood and our close family and friends I believe our life can never be fulfilled and complete.



Tavaszi szél vizet áraszt

Abi Toth (Year 10)

Virágom, virágom.
Tavaszi szél vizet áraszt,
Virágom, virágom.
Minden madár társat választ,
Virágom, virágom.
Minden madár társat választ,
Virágom, virágom.
Hát én immár kit válasszak,
Virágom, virágom.
Hát én immár kit válasszak,
Virágom, virágom.
Te engemet s én tégedet,
Virágom, virágom.
Te engemet s én tégedet,
Virágom, virágom.

I chose this piece because it resonates with me and my childhood. Even though I am not Hungarian myself, I was still taught the language from when I was born as my country is bordered with Hungary so as I grew, I became more and more aware of this song. I had heard it around me so many times, I would catch myself humming it before I even knew the words.

Growing up in Britain, surrounded by British people, it was hard to embrace my culture even though I took pride in bragging that I wasn't British. However, this song found its way into my life and it is important to me because it keeps me close to my family over there without

ever leaving England. It also means so much to me to hear my language being manipulated into such a beautiful song that was even sung by Freddie Mercury with Queen at their concert in Budapest in 1986.

This song is a traditional folk love song passed down by families all over Hungary and is one of the most famous Hungarian folk songs to this day. The writer refers to their love being like the spring, blooming and new. 'Tavaszi szél vizet áraszt' is a song I can listen to in any mood and at any given time and I just love how calming and romantic it is. Finally, I love having a part of my culture in the background like a soundtrack to my life.

The Ocean

Aimen Zubair (Year 10)

سمندر

جیسے میں سمندر کے کنارے سی

دیکھتی ہوں

،چمکتا ہے جیسے یو سونا

،اس کے تقریباً طلوع ہونے کے لیے

،پنکھوں اور گلوں والی بہت سی مخلوقات

،لہریں قریب سے چھلک رہی ہیں

،جیسے کے میں سمجھتی ہوں کہ دنیا اس سے بڑی ہے جتنی کے لگتی ہے

جیسے ہی میں سمندر کو دیکھتی ہوں، سنہری روشنی میں، یہ چمکتی ہے

The reason I wanted to write and share this poem 'The Ocean' is because the ocean gives me a sense of tranquillity and hope. When things aren't good, I tend to rely on the waves coming and going so I know this feeling won't last forever, just like the waves.

The comfort of the waves is similar to the comfort of my home language and my culture. It's unique in its own way and gives better understanding of what my heart desires to convey.

Being given the opportunity to share my differences with others and express the contentment I feel in my mother tongue, whilst being proud of my background and culture, are key motifs which enable me to further shape my identity. Additionally, since this is my mother tongue, I am able to express my feelings better without having to give as much information to others or having to explain my reasoning.

Poems from our post-16 entrants in Spanish, Romanian, Yoruba and Bengali close the Mother Tongue section.

Para siempre solamente duró tres meses

Aisha Khan (Year 12)

Inesperadamente y cuando más lo necesitaba,
Entro en mi vida, y de la misma manera se fue,

Sin hola, sin adiós, sin lo siento, sin perdón
Sin cumplir su palabra, sin cumplir sus promesas

Para siempre solamente duró tres meses,

A él se le acabaron las ganas y se le saciaron los sentimientos
A mi aún no, quería más y lo quería todo

Me perdí a mi misma intentando encontrarlo a él,
Herí mis sentimientos satisfaciendo a los suyos

Un hombre de mil palabras pero que nunca las cumplía,

Un hombre de mil promesas pero vacías

Para siempre solamente duró tres meses,

2190 horas, 131400 minutos que malgasté,
Que en un instante se convirtieron en recuerdos,

El olor de su perfume, la sensación de su tacto y su voz,
Desvanecen en mis memorias con el tiempo

90 días en los cuales nada importó más que él,
Nunca nada deseé más, ni quise más

Para siempre solamente duró tres meses

I was purely inspired to write this poem by something that recently happened to me. I went through something I thought only happened in movies and something I never pictured myself going through, a break up. I met this boy at the library, from that day I experienced something amazing that helped me grow and gave me motivation. Even after everything that happened I am the one to blame, I broke my own heart by giving him more importance than myself. I was so lost in him that I didn't even care how much pain I was in, chasing after him became a second instinct, it felt like I needed him,

his presence became a necessity. It made me question whether I was good enough or not, if I was all he wanted just like he was all I ever wanted. I always knew I was going to get hurt, and I can't blame him. He promised me nothing and gave me little.

How can he be okay with the silence between us, how can he be okay with never holding me again. He made me realize that home, sometimes, is nothing but two arms holding you when you're at your lowest, or simply the presence of someone. There is something about him that is so hard for me to let go of,

something about the way he smiled, something about the way he hugged me, something about the way he looked at me, something about the way he listened to me and something about the way he was. Maybe we were never meant to be as we couldn't accept each other. Holding on to him is not allowing better people to come into my life, but I don't want better I just want him. I find myself looking for him in every individual but you can never find the same person again, not even in the same person.

El hambre

Aisosa Ogiemwanye (Junior) (Year 12)

El hambre en el mundo es un flagelo terrible, que azota a millones de personas cada día. Es una herida abierta que no cicatriza, y que duele en lo más profundo del alma. Es un grito desesperado que clama por ayuda, por un poco de comida, por un rayo de esperanza.

Es una realidad que nos afecta a todos, y que nos obliga a tomar acción. El hambre no es solo una cuestión de falta de alimentos, es también una cuestión de desigualdad, de injusticia. Es un reflejo de un sistema que privilegia a unos pocos, mientras que deja atrás a los más vulnerables.

I was inspired by the daily struggle to survive by millions of people suffering from hunger across the world. I was inspired by the need to raise awareness about this global problem, and the importance of taking important measures to help those suffering from hunger. Furthermore, I was inspired

by the hundreds of people dying of hunger in Nigeria, where I come from.

Food should be an accessible resource for everyone, not only for those with privileged families. I don't think that it is fair for people to have enough money to end poverty like Jeff Bezos or

Bill Gates and yet still choose not to do it. I believe that those suffering from hunger represent an injustice in global society and how those who are rich and powerful take advantage of those who are vulnerable. Therefore I decided to write my poem about this topic because it is something I am passionate about.

La căsuța cu povești

Teo Spinu (Year 12)

Suflă vântul când e toamnă.
Ploaia bate în ferești.
Amintirile ne duc
La căsuța cu povești.

Amintirile ne-ndeamnă
Să mai fim odată mici...
Veneam, nepoței, vreo zece.
În căsuță la bunici.

Cât ești mic mereu la joacă
Gându-ți este, dar când crești,
Îți dai seama că nespuse
Au rămas multe povești...

by Emilia Plugaru

This poem translates directly to 'At the house with stories', and is by Romanian poet, Emilia Plugaru - she is a modern poet, who writes poetry for children. I have selected the first three stanzas specifically, as I believe they bring joyful nostalgia and are relatable. When I was young, in Romania, I remember that a significant amount of my childhood was spent with my grandma - she taught me lots of what I knew, and would tell me stories each night before bed. I came to know hundreds of stories and every night I'd ask for a different one. Even now, at age 17, when I see my grandma, I sometimes ask her to tell me one of my favourite stories.

Although this poem mentions simple themes, I think it implies an important and also comforting message, from the perspective with which I see it. This poem talks about how memories bring us back to our childhood

homes, which are full of stories, told and untold. I think that, often, for people leaving their families in other countries to move to places such as the UK, it's easy to forget about home and the stories there. What I like about this poem is that it implies how we almost hold a responsibility to keep those people and places at home alive, by telling the stories. This makes me cherish all the times that my grandma told me various stories throughout my childhood, and makes me excited to pass those on, including my own, to future generations. It allows me to keep home alive in my heart, although I am elsewhere. It is for this that I appreciate the way the poem talks about stories told and untold - it reminds us that, not only should we treasure time with loved ones that live abroad when we have it, but we should carry these memories, and stories or folk-tales from our homes and take them with us,

wherever we go, to keep them alive in our hearts.

Furthermore, it's important to appreciate how folk tales and stories show details about the culture of a certain country and its development over time. They demonstrate how people act, what people think etc. Therefore, I think this poem recognises this and emphasizes the importance of stories being more than stories and being at the heart of a country and its culture.

Knowing that my grandma is growing older, I appreciate my Romanian heritage more than ever. I often am afraid that once she is gone, I will lose my link to Romania. Therefore, this poem is a reminder that it will be with me forever, even though there may no longer be people in my childhood home, and it's my job to keep my heritage and memories alive.

Idajo (Justice)

Blessing Oladigbo (Year 12)

Ó máa ní sùn lókàn àwọn aláàyè, a sì gba ọkàn òkú lówó.

Omiiran ji lati ọdọ eniyan, arakunrin miiran ti ku.

Oh bawo ni o ẹ ẹrọrun ti o dabi lati funni ni ẹbun yii fun awọn ti o ẹ alaini, sibẹsibẹ otitọ wa pe o ẹ inifura ti o wọpọ ti a ko ni.

Arakunrin mi, nitori pe o dudu, won yago fun ati gbe si egbe ti won ko wo pada.

Arabinrin mi nitori wọn ro pe o ẹ onireṣe, nigbati o de ẹṣe ẹ lati jagun.

Wọn pe ni 'obinrin dudu ti o binu' wọn si sọ ẹtọ ẹ di arugbo, 'Je ki idajo ododo yi bi odo' ni ohun ti Oluwa ati Olugbala wa palaṣe. sibẹ ki nidí tí ọrẹ mi fi ní bá a lọ láti tẹnu mọ ọn pé èmi kì í ẹ nńkan kan ju eruku lásán lọ.

Yoruba is a language filled with numerous proverbs, all of which I believe encapsulate the essence of living a prosperous life, highlighting the imperativeness of living morally, and instilling social values. I have written this poem titled Justice (Idajo) to express the oppression minorities (specifically black people) face, and how often their voices are not heard or sometimes how they are simply ignored. The idea for this poem draws upon one of my earliest experiences of racism, where I recall a woman angrily uttering under her breath 'Ugh I hate these black people, why can't they just go back to their country and leave us alone'. In this poem I empathise with the importance of Justice and illustrate how often we turn a blind eye to unjust acts and because of this we pave the way for tragic misuse of power in authority.

Where I state 'Another stolen from humanity, another brother

dead' was inspired by the tragic death of George Floyd on 25th May 2020 I purposely used the noun 'brother' as often in Nigeria (where Yoruba is spoken), the friendly nature of the Yoruba people results in addressing people in a closer way for example, calling your mother's friend Auntie.

I feel this poem acts as a reminder to me at times where I recognise discrimination or unfairness being displayed to me and others. The Bible verse I quote from Amos 5:24 which states 'But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!' inspires me to continuously help others and go out of my way to be helping others, as admittedly in the past when faced with discrimination or prejudice I often ignored it and did not correct the preparator of the hate/racism. However, now I am compelled to educate people on racism in the hope that the next person they meet who

looks like me, or looks different from them is not treated unjustly.

Parts of the poem I have derived from previous writing I have produced. For example, where I state 'Justice, It slumbers in the hearts of the living and is robbed off hearts of the dead.' I wrote this line as part of one of my drafts for my English GCSE speech which was going to be on racism, however which eventually ended up being on Independence during youth. I hope this poem inspires people to use their voices and be mindful of their actions towards others, not just in terms of racism but also in situations where people are generally not listened to.

Therefore, I urge you, let us speak for our people, as you speak for yours, as everyone's voices are heard, so comes the unity of humanity - a harmony of voices all singing one song.

Adorsho Chale (The Ideal Boy)

Humayra Rahman Begum (Year 13)

আদর্শ ছেলে
কুসুমকুমারী দাশ
আমাদের দেশে হবে সেই ছেলে কবে
কথায় না বড় হয়ে কাজে বড় হবে
মখে হাসি বকুে বল, তেজে ভরা মন
“মানষু হইতে হবে” - এই যার পণ
বিপদ আসিলে কাছে হও আশুন
নাই কি শরীরে তব রক্ত, মাংস, প্রাণ ?
হাত পা সবারই আছে, মিছে কেন ভয়?
চেতনা রয়েছে যার, সেকি পরে রয় ?

সে ছেলে কে চায় বল, কথায় কথায়
আসে যার চোখে জল, মাথা ঘুরে যাই?
সাদা প্রাণে হাসি মখে কর এই পণ,
“মানষু হইতে হবে মানষু যখন” |
কৃষকের শিশু কিংবা রাজার কুমার
সবারি রয়েছে কাজ এ বিশ্ব মাঝার,
হাতে প্রাণে খাট সবে শক্তি কর দান
তোমরা “মানষু “ হলে দেশের কল্যাণ

by Kusumkumari Das

This poem was written by Kusumkumari Das almost a century ago. Even after all these years, between then and now, society's howl for ideal boys and girls hasn't got away and there's yet a number of people who think there is no human that can be big in deeds and not in words. Even so, it's still a piece that almost every Bangladeshi learns from childhood and I still remember a few lines. I have chosen this poem because she was the first Bengali woman writer to change the way of thinking women are inferior. She says, in a very beautiful way, what the qualities of an ideal boy are and what qualities would make him not an ideal boy.

Actions prove who someone is and words prove who someone wants to be. However, it's better to talk less and show more action. Stay next to people with a bright heart, who are not afraid of danger, whose goal is to be a man. A weak-minded person is never desirable to anyone. The son of a king or the son of a farmer all take their place at the centre of the world by their own labour. No one is greater or less than anyone is. So if everyone works hard and becomes men like men, then the wellbeing of the country will be there.

Other Tongue

“In poetry we look for the unique and different stories and one of the advantages of having another language is that you have access to a whole other set of metaphors, a whole other way of thinking.”

Bohdan Piasecki
Poet

Poems in this section have been written by young people aged between 8-18, in a language that they are currently learning.

Our judges selected these pieces based on their creativity, originality and the use of language.

The poems are presented roughly by age groups and in order of the list presented in the contents list. We hope you enjoy these poems as much as we did.

Name	Year	School	Language
Khadijah Hameed, Issa Najib, Isaac Kulasi, Saira Ali	3	Abraham Moss Community School	French
Florence Hollingsbee	4	Manor Park School and Nursery	Spanish
Maisie Denham, Alita Duchesnes, Sofia Jandusova	5	Manor Park School and Nursery	Spanish
Oliver Adaway	7	Cheadle Hulme High School	Spanish
Robert Pocklington	7	Fallibroome Academy	French/ German
Aleena Khan	7	Cheadle Hulme School	French
Isabella Haddon	7	Fallibroome Academy	German
Grace Abbott	7	St Monica's R.C. High School	Spanish
Isla Brown	7	The Queen's School	Mandarin Chinese
Caoimhe Stevenson	8	All Hallows Catholic College	Spanish
Daisy Kirk	8	Poynton High School	Spanish
Theo Barber	8	All Hallows Catholic College	Dutch
Maddison Weight	8	British School Muscat	French
Louis Layton	8	Cheadle Hulme High School	French
Alfie Frame	8	Fallibroome Academy	French
Sam Bunting	8	Wellacre Academy	French
Al Ayman-Sarker	8	St Bernard's Catholic High School	French
Ayaan Nadeem Mohammed	8	St Peter's RC High School	Spanish
Leo Cunningham	8	Fallibroome Academy	German
Orla Mackintosh	8	Cheadle Hulme School	French
Rebecca Adshead	8	Hazel Grove High School	French
Tristan Usher	8	Hazel Grove High School	Spanish
Christina Idehen Junior	9	St Matthews RC High School	Spanish
Mahrosh Zeeshan	9	Abraham Moss Community School	French
Abigail Meyers	9	The Queens School	Spanish
Lara Baty	10	Poynton High School	German
Hadia Farukh Mushtaq	10	St Peter's RC High School	Spanish
Michael Flynn	10	Fallibroome Academy	French
Claudia McCullough	10	St Bernard's Catholic High School	French
Ellie O'Hare	11	Lancaster Girls' Grammar School	Spanish
Eve Bennett	12	Altrincham Grammar School for Girls	Spanish
Connie Mowforth	12	Fallibroome Academy	French
Jess Diamond	12	Fallibroome Academy	Spanish
Cate Matthew	12	Lancaster Girls' Grammar School	French
Kate Gamwell	12	Fallibroome Academy	Spanish
Rabia Chowdhury	12	Oldham Sixth Form College	Spanish
Rebecca Kent	12	Wolverhampton Grammar School	French
Maisie Greaves	12	Poynton High School	French
Emily Walker	12	The Queens School	French/ Spanish
Teddy Bland	13	Oldham Sixth Form College	Spanish
Anoushka Paymaster Thatcher	12	The Queens School	Mandarin

Here are just a few of the entries we received from primary-age pupils who are learning Spanish and French.

La Forêt Tropicale

Khadijah Hameed, Issa Najib, Isaac Kulasi, Saira Ali (Year 3)

Un, deux, trois nous allons dans la forêt tropicale.
Quatre, cinq, six cuillères de bananes.
Sept, huit, neuf dans un panier neuf.
Dix, onze, douze elles sont toutes jaunes

Tropical imagery and a great command of counting in a new language.

Problemas de Plástico

Florence Hollingsbee (Year 4)

¡La contaminación plástica no es una ilusión!
Tiramos plástico por todas partes, oh sí, lo hacemos
Puede terminar en los océanos, ¡qué triste, qué terriblemente triste!
Puede enredar peces y zorros, ¡qué triste, qué terriblemente triste!
Los pájaros pueden recogerlo y ponerlo en sus nidos, ¡qué triste,
que terriblemente triste!

Estamos matando nuestro océanos, oh sí, lo estamos
¡Salva nuestros mares!
¡Oh, por favor, salva nuestros mares!

Puede ayudar, oh sí, puedes
Necesitas reducir, reutilizar, reciclen y concienciar a más personas

¡Actúa ahora!
¡Oh, por favor, actúa ahora!

‘Oh please, save our seas!’ The judges enjoyed the repetition and the passion that emphasises the strong message of this piece.

Animales

Maisie Denham, Alita Duchesnes, Sofie Jandusová (Year 5)

Los perros son tan juguetones como los niños,
los gatos son tan felices como una sonrisa.
Los conejitos son tan esponjosos como una nube,
los leones son fieros como un caballero.
Las jirafas son tan altas como rascacielos,
las cebras son rayadas como paredes de ladrillo.
¡Los animales son una gran parte de nuestra vida!

A cheerful poem of playful similes. Who doesn't love animals!

A sense of place and what it is to be human are themes running through our Year 7 poems.

Verano

Oliver Adaway (Year 7)

árboles altos bailando en el viento,
perros felices corriendo por el río,
pájaros coloridos cantando desde las ramas,
gente caminando en el parque animado,
niños jugando en el bosque emocionante,
subiendo a los árboles y haciendo casas en los árboles,
teniendo mucha diversión!

The judges loved this cheerful poem and commented on the use of verbs here and the correct use of the gerund! It paints a good, accurate picture of summer and what we witness in the outdoors during summer.

Ich suis me

Robert Pocklington (Year 7)

Ich suis me,
niemand autre,
pas mon père,
nicht meine mutter,
not my friends,
oder meine Haustiere,
l'm pas perfekt,
but
Ich
suis
me!

A clever idea to merge English/French/German in one poem and to use this to communicate the theme so clearly. Well done, Robert, for being creative and taking a risk.

Je suis toujours un humain

Aleena Khan (Year 7)

J'habite à Cheadle en Angleterre
Je mange du poisson-frites
J'aime jouer au tennis
Je suis musulmane
Mais je suis toujours un humain

Maria habite à Venice en Italie
Elle mange de la pizza et des pâtes
Elle aime jouer au volley-ball
Elle est chrétienne
Mais elle est toujours un humain

Karan habite à Mumbai en Inde
Il mange du curry et du pain sans levain
Il aime jouer au cricket
Il est hindou
Mais il est toujours un humain

Sakura habite à Tokyo au Japon
Elle mange des sushis et du tofu
Elle aime jouer au judo
Elle est shintoïste
Mais elle est toujours un humain

Caleb habite à Sydney en Australie
Il mange du pain
Il aime jouer au rugby
Il est athée
Mais il est toujours un humain

Ellie habite à Paris en France
Elle mange des croissants
Elle aime jouer au golf
Elle est juive
Mais elle est toujours un humain

Nous avons des goûts différents
Nous aussi avons des apparences différentes
Mais nous sommes toujours humain
Nous sommes toujours pareils

A great piece with a strong message that regardless of what religion we are, we are all human first and foremost and this is what connects us. The judges enjoyed the use of food and sports to evoke the different countries mentioned and the use of repetition.

Die Drama-Königin

Isabella Haddon (Year 7)

Sie ist nicht die Art von Drama-Königin,
an die du denkst,
wenn du diese Worte hörst
Sie ist diejenige,
die jede sekunde des Tages handelt
Sie zeigt ihre wahre Gefühle nicht,
sie verbirgt sie mit einem Lächeln,
aber tief im Inneren hofft sie,
dass sie bald verschwinden
Sie ist eine einsame Puppe,
die auf einem alten Regal sitzt und darauf wartet,
dass jemand sie abholt,
aber niemand taucht auf.
Hinter ihrem bezaubernden Lächeln sehen
die Leute nicht,
wie viel sie zu bieten hat
All diese Schauspielerei kann ermüdend sein,
aber sie hört nicht auf,
sie ist doch die Drama-Königin

A clever and mature piece that uses the metaphor of a doll on the shelf and wordplay to explore the concept of the term 'drama queen' and the idea of playing a role.

El Sol

Grace Abbott (Year 7)

Deja que sol brille,
Deja que la luna brille ampliamente,
Deja que un día pase a la ves,
Deja que cada nuevo día pase,
Deja que los árboles se balanceen,
Como los pájaros vuelan,
Deja que los insectos se arrasten en una noche de día,
De Verano

The judges enjoyed the simplicity of this poem and how well it conveyed the idea of nature as a medium for the message of taking one day at a time and going with the flow of life.

My Other Tongue

Isla Brown (Year 7)

我的另一个舌头...

Wǒ de lìng yīgè shétou...

In another tongue, almost another world,
I have learned how to speak in another technique.
I have learned how to learn about others, young to old,
This tongue has apparently come from another mother's, I am told.

用另一种语言，
几乎是另一个世界，
我学会了如何了解别人，从小到大，
我学会了如何用另一种技巧说话。
有人告诉我，这种舌头显然来自另一位母亲。

Yòng líng yī zhǒng yǔyán, jīhū shì líng yīgè shìjiè,
wǒ xué huì liǎo rúhé liǎojiě biérén, cóngxiǎo dào dà,
wǒ xué huì liǎo rúhé yòng líng yī zhǒng jìqiǎo shuōhuà.
Yǒurén gàosù wǒ, zhè zhǒng shétou xiǎnrán láizì líng yī wèi mǔqīn.

The first of our Year 8 poems gives food for thought, with a consideration of what it is to have more than one language.

Do I have to choose?

Caoimhe Stevenson (Year 8)

Tengo que elegir?
Tirado y rectorcido en diferentes direcciones
Dicen que no debería elegir
Pero la gente me hace sentir como si debería

preguntas, preguntas
¿De dónde eres?
¿De dónde preferirías ser?
Esa es una pregunta que no pseudo responder
Me sentiria mal si eligiera uno sobre el otro.

A thought-provoking exploration of the struggles faced by those torn between two languages and cultures, resonating with readers who have experienced similar internal conflicts. Great use of the word "Questions" and then proceeding to ask questions.

More about what it is that makes us human, with poems about passions and preferences, again from Year 8 students.

La Natación

Daisy Kirk (Year 8)

La natación me da comodidad como ninguna otra,
Mientras vuelo a través del agua
Escucho mi corazón latir en mi pecho,
Sé que cuando estoy nadando estoy en mi mejor momento
Y mientras me deslizo por la tranquilidad con una sonrisa,
Nadando una de mis brazadas favoritas, el estilo libre

Lovely imagery and a great effort to share the passion this person clearly feels about swimming.

De Finishlijn – The Finish Line

Theo Barber (Year 8)

Zijn het de moeren en bouten
Van DNA dat me een
Behoefte aan snelheid?

Of waren het de verhalen
Van mijn vader en opa
Van hun avonturen?

Snelheidsovertredingen door bossen,
Denderend langs bomen
Alles riskeren

Voor de snelste tijd
Toen ze overstaken
De finishlijn.

A highly original submission, in Dutch and on the theme of cars and speed. The judges enjoyed the wordplay with the use of 'nuts and bolts of DNA' and how the poet used cars as a connection between family members.

Une Melodie

Maddison Weight (Year 8)

La douce brise douce
Envoie des mélodies à travers mes oreilles.
Mon corps cours au son de la musique
Je le ressens jusqu'au plus profond de moi

Ce rythme doux et régulier
Me garder sur la bonne voie
Pas à pas je marche au son de la musique

Mon esprit est rempli de merveilles
Aucune d'elles n'ont de sens
Mais tout vient de la musique
Qui peint ce merveilleux tableau

Bruyant et impétueux
Doux et calme
Étrange et intéressant
Énergisant et optimiste

Toute cette diversité
Exprimée sous une forme
La musique est belle
Et devrait être célébrée à travers le monde

Excellent connection to music through poetry that communicates the poet's passion for music through strong use of metaphors and changes in pace/cadence of language.

Ma mère

Louis Layton (Year 8)

J'adore ma mère plus que mon frère
J'adore ma mère plus que mon grandpère
J'adore ma mère plus que ma grandmère
J'adore ma mère plus que mon anniversaire
J'adore ma mère plus que la bière
Mais mon père est le parent que
je préfère

This made the judge's laugh out loud. We hope Louis' mum doesn't mind!

My Golden Retriever

Alfie Frame (Year 8)

Mon chien est stupide
Mon chien est paresseux
Il n'est qu'un doré
Parce qu'il ne retrouve pas !

S'il maintient ce comportement
S'il ose être plus grossier
Je vais devoir rétrograder mon chien
Vers l'argent puis le bronze.

Avertissement : J'aime mon chien et cette pièce est uniquement à des fins de divertissement.

Another playful poem, this time the joke is at the expense of the poet's dog! Made the judges laugh.

Manchester

Sam Bunting (Year 8)

Manchester, nous sommes solidaires
Rues remplies d'amour
Sois gentil pour toujours

La maison de Rolls Royce
et fabricants de Vimto
La voix mancunienne
Est-ce qui nous fait briller

Manchester, nous sommes solidaires
Dans nos cœurs sont 22 anges
Sois gentil pour toujours

Le football est la passion de Manchester
Old Trafford, L'Etihad
Des clubs qui ne se démodent pas
Tout en demandant « Allez, s'il vous plaît, achetez un billet papa »

Manchester nous sommes solidaires
Rues remplies d'amour
Abeille gentille pour toujours



Our Mancunian judges thought this was a lovely depiction of our city. A wise move to laud both red and blue teams, we thought!

Tout Seul

Al Ayman-Sarker (Year 8)

Quand il pleut,
Ce qu'il soit légèrement ou en abondance,
J'adore ça.
L'inondation de la terre avec splendeur.
Je dors tout seul
Car il me relaxe
Quand la pluie est présente.

Quand le temps change,
Le ciel bouge.
Les nuages dansent
Et le vent souffle.
Le soleil brille ou se cache soudain.
Il fait ni froid, ni chaud,
C'est incertain.

Quelquefois, il y a beaucoup de brouillard,
Et on ne se voit pas et je me sens seul.
Je déteste ça,
Car il ne fait pas chaud, il ne fait pas froid.
Donc, pendant qu'il fait du brouillard
Je ne sors pas
Et je dors tout seul dans le noir.

The judge's enjoyed the way this poem repeated structural choices and used a range of weather vocabulary and emotive language. The poem is successful in taking a general topic like the weather and linking it to the feelings that different weathers evoke in them. People are changeable, like the weather – the poet set out to illustrate this and did it well.

Vientos, Tormenta and Sopiaron

Ayaan Nadeem Mohammed (Year 8)

Los vientos de la tormenta soplaron,
En el campo de batalla sobre las manos injustas
En el campo de batalla corrieron,
Frio y húmedo,
Se derramon sangre,
Cayeron lágrimas,
Choque de espadas,
Flechas volando
Soldados fritando,
Los heridos lloraban,
Seres queridos muriendo,
Los caballos viajaron y pisotearon,
Los escudos estaban dañados y astillados,
No podía ser asesinado en el campo de batalla,
Y así lo mataron en oración,
Frente a su señor.

The use of language in this poem is quite complex, with vocabulary used effectively to tell a story about war and fighting. The judges were keen to know if this poem was based on a traditional story or if it had been created by the poet. Either way, this is a good poem that uses the shortness of lines for impact and is a good example of effective storytelling.

Die Wundervolle Welt

Leo Cunningham (Year 8)

Es wird eine Zeit geben,
in der sich die Wolken öffnen
und die Sonne scheint.
Aber vorerst
Fällt der Schnee
Und der Nordwind weht.

Ein Schnitt von Pflaumenblüten erhebt sich stolz im Schnee.
In der kältesten Stunde platzen seine Äste
Und erblühen.
Der Frühling nähert sich.
Schneeblätter treiben;
der Nordwind pfeift.
Die Welt ist riesig
Die Welt ist grenzenlos

The judge's thought this was a delightful ode to spring and nature, reminiscent of the works of Eichendorff. Beautifully captures the essence of the season with vivid imagery.

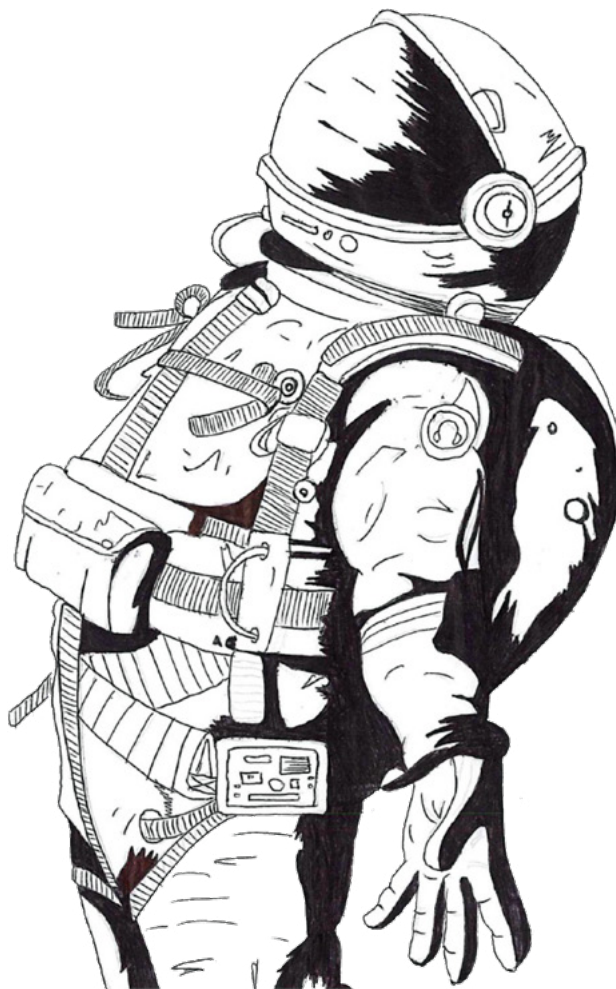
Le Tour du Monde

Orla Mackintosh (Year 8)

On aime visiter mon endroit préféré. C'est où? La France.
De temps en temps nous allons en Allemagne.
Harry était l'ami que je me suis fait à la campagne.
En Belgique on fait des bons vêtements chics -
Regarde un film au cinéma si tu vas aux Pays-Bas.

Tu vas aimer cet endroit, c'est en Écosse, c'est...
Où tu joues au lacrosse.
Un voyage au Sénégal, et tu peux monter à cheval.
Nous avons plusieurs endroits où je vais aller-
Grande Bretagne et je vais aller à la montagne
Et je vais le faire aussi en Espagne.

A two stanza poem that is very much a trip around the world, as the title suggests. The judges enjoyed the playful usage of rhythm and internal rhyme throughout. They also enjoyed the use of question within the poem.



Un Espace Vide

Rebecca Adshead (Year 8)

Chaque rêve est un voyage qui remplit votre oreiller de pensées. Chaque syllabe prononcée fait une déclaration. Chaque note jouée fait de la musique. Chaque parole, un couplet, chaque dent fait partie d'un sourire. Chaque personne fait partie du monde. Tout cela fait l'univers et l'obscurité sans fin s'est étendue au dessus de nous pour explorer. Pourtant nous n'admettons toujours pas que nous ne savons pas ce qui remplit ce vaste espace et nous ne le saurons probablement jamais.



A poem about dreams, discovery, reality and space. The message is ambiguous and leaves the reader with the impression that so much remains unknown in the universe.

Illustration by Rebecca Adshead

El Día and Los Muertos

Tristan Usher (Year 8)

El día de los muertos es una fiesta
que celebra la vida y la muerte que recuerda
a los seres queridas que se ne han ido
pero no se quidan

El día de los muertos es una ofrenda
que les brinda comida y bebida
que les muestra su amor y su respecto
que les invita a volver per un momento

El día de lo muertos es una alegría
que se expresa con flores y calavelas
que se comporte con música y poesía
que se vive con se y con esperanza.

The judges loved the repetition at the beginning of each stanza in this poem. It felt as though the writer has a connection to this fiesta as the day of the dead is explained beautifully.

Year 9 poems gave us more journeys
- both physical and emotional.

Soy una Rosa Triste

Christina Idehen Junior (Year 9)

Soy una rosa triste
Golpeado por las tormentas de mi propia emoción
Mis pétalos caen uno a uno dos a dos,
Dejándome en un estado de remordimineto
Imploro y suplico que algún dia alguien venga
Y sácame del suelo de la tierra y de mi propio engaño
Solo mirame sufrir hasta mi Muerte, pero esperará hasta la primavera
Pero por ahora soy una rosa triste

This poem uses the metaphor of a rose, beaten by storms to powerfully communicate a whirl of emotions. The judges particularly liked the message of hope promised by the Spring.

Mes Vacances

Mahrosh Zeeshan (Year 9)

Mes vacances de rêve:
Voir le paisible coucher de soleil,
Se couchant devant mes yeux fidèles,
Explorer les chaînes de montagnes,
Debout devant mes yeux hypnotisés.
Entrer dans des paysages merveilleux,
Avec des vallées et des rivières à foison.
Voir les oiseaux uniques,
Voler vers leurs nouvelles maisons.
Nager à travers les océans,
Et descendre à travers les forêts exotiques.
Ce sont mes vacances de rêve.
Passer du temps avec ma famille,
Regarder tous les films que je veux.
Visiter les monuments historiques,
Manger dans un restaurant chic
Et explorer de nouvelles villes,
Voyager autour du monde,
Et rencontrer de nouvelles personnes.
Si seulement cela pouvait arriver,
Un jour, ça pourrait,
Donc je peux dire à tout le monde,
Quelles vacances j'ai eues !

The poem paints a beautiful, vivid scene that captures the purest desire to experience new people, places and cultures; the enthusiasm to explore and appreciate what the world has to show us is infectious!

Que Soy Yo?

Abigail Meyers (Year 9)

¿Qué soy yo?
Soy amarillo y no muy pequeño,
tengo un sabor agrío,
crezco en los árboles.
Ponme en un trago,
y estoy sabroso.
Jugoso por dentro,
duro en el exterior.
Soy una fruta.
Congélame, cómeme,
cómprame, apriétame.
¿Qué soy yo?

Our judges thought this was well constructed and takes the reader on a journey. They liked how it was short, snappy and playful, and hoped that they got the answer to the riddle correct.

Year 10 and 11 poems gave us more music, rhythm,
nature and love and reflections on life.

Was ist Unsterblichkeit?

Lara Baty (Year 10)

Was ist Unsterblichkeit?
Nicht ein Körper, der
frei von Tod ist,
Nicht die Tausende von Jahren
- so schwierig
Auf die Seele.

Es ist nicht die fünfhundert
Jahre alten Bäume,
Wurzeln stark im
Boden und im Leben.
Die Natur wird sterben; und wird
sich in den langen
Winter Monaten verstecken,
Und Menschen fallen auch unter
das Naturgesetz.

Unsterblichkeit ist die Geschichte
und der Ruhm aus
großer Geister.
Künstler,
Schriftsteller,
Die mit ihrem Herzen sprechen.
Unsterblichkeit ist ein Gedicht aus
der Geschichte, ein Name -
In der Zeitung, wo in
Bleistift und Tinte,
sind die schönen Wörter einer
freieren Seele.

Diese Seelen fühlen Schmerz
und Liebe aber -
teilen mit der Welt,
keine Angst vor dem Tod.
Sie teilen, wie es ist,
für die Ewigkeit menschlich sein.

What is immortality?
Not a body free from death,
Not the thousands of years - so hard
On the soul.

It isn't the five hundred
year old trees,
roots strong in the
ground and in life.
Nature will die; and hide in the long
winter months,
and some people also fall to
the natural laws.

Immortality is the stories and the
fame of great minds,
Artists,
Writers,
who speak with their heart.
Immortality is a poem from
history, a name -
In the newspaper, where in
pencil and ink,
are beautiful words of a freer soul.

These souls feel pain and love but -
share with the world,
Not a fear of death.
They share how it is,
to be human for eternity.

The poet said that this poem was inspired by Emily Dickinson's 'Because I could not Stop for Death' and was about "the emotions, beauty of nature and life". The judges thought it was a beautiful poem, dealing creatively with profound concepts.



A mi Querida Mama

Hadia Farukh Mushtaq (Year 10)

Madre es como un diamante que nunca quieres perder
Madre es como un amor.

Madre es como una protectora para ti
Madre es muy cariñosa, todos tienen que respetar a su madre.

Madre es como un mago que hacen mágica y te dan todo lo que quieres
Madre es como un robot que hace todo para ti y nunca cansa.

Madre es como una vigilante que te vigile para todo
Madre es una princesa para sus niños.

The judges described this piece as “Flamenco all the way” in the way that the poem mimics the feet and hands of los gitanos.

La Musique est La Vie

Michael Flynn (Year 10)

La musique est la vie.
Quand je suis triste, j’écoute de la musique,
Quand je suis joyeux, j’écoute de la musique.
La musique est toutes mes émotions.
Si je suis joyeux ou triste, j’ai toujours ma musique avec moi.

Pour moi, ma guitare est une personne,
Elle peut s’exprimer avec son beau son,
Mes doigts bougent à travers les cordes,
Et c’est une œuvre d’art.

Dans un monde de tristesse et solitude,
Dans un monde de conflit et de peines d’amour,
La musique rassemble les gens,
La musique est la vie.

This piece was well written and communicated a universal message, through the poet’s passion for his music and his art. It evoked memories of people playing instruments on balconies during the first lockdowns for our judges.

Les Oiseaux et Moi

Claudia McCullough (Year 10)

Les oiseaux sont en train de voler au-dessus.
Je les regarde tous dans le ciel
Pendant qu'ils volent partout.
Je me sens calme et je souris.
Ils sont si beaux avec leurs plumes douces.
Le ciel est bleu clair, à côté du soleil orange.
Un vrai paradis de couleur!
Les oiseaux chantent ensemble
Et ils forment des cercles, des carrés et
des triangles.
Beaucoup de formes et de motifs.
Un vrai paradis mathématique.
Ils volent ensemble en face du monde.
Je m'assieds,
Je regarde,
Je prie,
Et je rêve de mon propre paradis.

The judges enjoyed the idea of a 'mathematical paradise' made of birds. Good language choices and structure, a clear theme and creative ideas.

Las Estrellas de Esperanza

Ellie O'Hare (Year 11)

Cuando finaliza su trabajo,
Se sienta en el autobús lóbrego.
Se sienta y recuerda.
Soñaba de ayudar la gente necesitada;
De convertirse en un faro de esperanza.
Pero tras años y años de descontento
Su deseo ha fundido,
Como una vela moribunda.
Los demás luchan para obtener una vida mejor.
Suelen hacer las huelgas,
y participar en las protestas.
Pero ella es demasiada cansada.
Harto del esfuerzo eterno,
De enjugar las lágrimas de sus hijos famélicos.
¿Si nadie le ayudará, cómo puede ayudar a otros?
No obstante, trabajará todavía dura,
Cada día,
Cada noche,
Por las estrellas que brillan contra el cielo oscuro
Siempre reavivarán su anhelo
de tranquilidad,
de libertad,
de un porvenir por sus niños, sus nietos,
sus bisnietos.
Y quizás un día,
Mirarán las estrellas igual que ella,
Y le agradecerán su trabajo, su esfuerzo, su vida.

A really intense topic with an overall melancholic vibe, great use of language and shorter lines for emphasis. The judges thought this was a brilliant poem with a clear story and meaning. High level language use and great vocabulary, too

And our sixth formers, as ever, didn't disappoint, with a selection of accomplished poems on a range of themes.

Olvidándote

Eve Bennett (Year 12)

Dolor y confusión,
Los segundos parecen años.
Dices que te he hecho daño, pero nunca era lo que quería.
"Significas el mundo para mí, amiga mía, y te deseo lo mejor"
Estas fueron las últimas palabras que te diría.

Soledad e ira,
Un día se convierte en una semana.
Pero estoy atrapado en el momento que me dejaste.
Cada pensamiento está lleno de ti,
Eras mi mundo, pero te has ido.
No puedo seguir sin ti.

Los primeros rayos de aceptación,
Semanas se convierten en meses.
Me duele cada vez te veo,
Creando tu nuevo mundo, mientras sigues siendo mía.
Paso a paso,
Empiezo a seguir sin ti.

Gratitud y paz,
El tiempo ya no se detiene.
Ahora veo tu vida desde la distancia,
Me quedé atrás con una sonrisa.
Y reconstruyo mi mundo;
Mi mundo que ya no gira en torno a ti.

Great flow and construction and containing real emotion. The judges felt that this poem demonstrated an understanding and appreciation for writing techniques and it reads beautifully in Spanish.

¡Quiero irme de aquí!

Jess Diamond (Year 12)

El peso de su control me asfixia
Como el aire estancado, no estoy
libre. Libre como el mar,
el agua que fluye, mueve y luce
con la fuerza de un león.
Espero que sea libre para amar
A quienquiera que quiera.
Quiero salir y viajar todo el mundo,
navegar los siete mares y no estaré
preocupada con 'el qué dirán' como ella.
Pero no, estoy aquí en un pueblo que
no me entiende y me penaliza.
Como mi abuela dijo: "¡Quiero irme de aquí!"

A great poem, telling a very clear story. The imagery is strong and you can feel the passion of the writer for the character for whom this poem is inspired. The judges particularly liked the repetition of the q sound in the line 'a quienquiera que quiera'

Les cendres

Connie Mowforth (Year 12)

Doigts verts avec des bagues bon marché
Elle se penche par la fenêtre du deuxième étage
Elle brûle de vieilles lettres
Les cendres formant un nouveau chemin
Les cloques sont des cicatrices de souvenirs

Alors que des fragments flottent dans la brise
Le poids est levé
Une certaine odeur
Un certain son
Est tout de ce qui peut lui rappeler la vie qu'elle a laissée derrière elle
Les doigts maintenant bleuis par le froid

'... leaning out of the second story window... burning old letters...'
The storytelling in this poem left the judges wanting more. The multitude of poetic devices successfully communicates quite a melancholic theme.

No Lo Sé

Kate Gamwell (Year 12)

Ya no sé si soy lo suficientemente fuerte,
no sé si puedo volver a ganar,
si puedo ganar sola.
Me quitaste las armas de los manos,
la inquietud está fuera de mi mente.
Dormí tranquila mientras dormía contigo,
y ahora ya no puedo dormir en absoluto.
Busco las armas que solían encajar tan bien en mis manos,
y no están a la vista.
Y la inquietud que me mantuvo cauteloso,
se ha apoderado de mi mente.
No hay ningún lugar seguro al que pueda recurrir,
excepto tus brazos,
y ahora están cerrados para mí.
¿Cómo puedo ganar sin mi seguridad?
¿Mi esperanza?
No sé si soy lo suficientemente fuerte sin ti.

The judges felt that this poem was emotional, mature and well written. It deals with universal feelings of losing someone and captures perfectly that moment in everyone's lives when you just don't know. It will get better, though ...

La Vie d'Une Coureuse

Cate Matthew (Year 12)

Je n'ai jamais connu une sensation
Comme celle de courir dans les montagnes,
Dans les forêts et le long des fleuves,
Dans les villes et les campagnes.
Chaque jour est une aventure,
Qui m'emmène dans un nouvel endroit,
Certains jours, je cours vingt kilomètres,
D'autres seulement trois !
Un nouveau jour, une nouvelle course,
Pour moi, mes parents, mon frère.
Après avoir couru, nous aimons
Se baigner dans une rivière.
Je trouve toujours mon chemin,
Je sais que je ne suis jamais perdue,
Parce que j'ai mes proches
Qui transforment mon cœur en fondue.
J'ai gagné beaucoup d'amis,
Au cours de mes années dans la nature.
Ils sont partout, j'aurai toujours
Un lieu de séjour sûr.
Je cours souvent avec une carte,
Et je pense que j'en aurai besoin,
Pour trouver mon chemin à l'avenir,
Sinon de mes rêves je serai loin.
J'arrive enfin au sommet,
Le vent dans les cheveux.
Comment pourrais-je
ne pas me sentir heureux ?
Je regarde dans le lointain,
Je ris dans le ciel bleu magnifique.
Mon chemin se poursuivra à l'infini -
Je ne mène pas une vie typique.

A well-structured poem with a clear direction from start to finish, presented beautifully about the life of a runner. Lovely imagery and an upbeat tone.

El Sueño

Rabia Chowdhury (Year 12)

Un mundo afuera del tiempo,
Un mundo afuera de realidad,
Solamente existe en tu mente
Ocultándose cuando llega el alba,
Te pasa lentamente...
Para salvarte de un día estresante

Cómo se acerca la noche,
Te envuelve en sus brazos,
Para que una vez venga la mañana
No quiera escapar su apretón

A short poem, leaving the judge's wanting more. A multitude of poetic devices are used to communicate a quite melancholic theme.

La Neige est en Deuil

Rebecca Kent (Year 12)

Les nuages promettent de la neige.
Sa mère la regarde avec l'espoir des flocons de bonheur,
Son sourire parfait, avec sa peau impeccable.
L'air de la jeunesse et la liberté.
Prête à quitter sa maison.

La mère sait ce qui vient ensuite.

Les petits flocons de la neige volent,
explorant leur nouveau monde.
Leur beauté et curiosité apportent une lueur de magie
dans les yeux de la fille.

Après avoir quitté la sécurité du nuage,
c'est difficile de s'adapter, mais il y a
certains qui peuvent l'aider.
La pluie peut aider le flocon à refroidir,
La consommer jusqu'à ce qu'elle tombe et devienne la neige fondue.
Elle n'est plus blafarde et belle, son visage a des rides,
avec une cœur fondue.

Alors, elle revient de sa maison, parce que
qui d'autre voudrait d'elle ?
Sa mère et elle s'assoient
ensemble.
Jusqu'à ce qu'il n'y ait plus que de l'eau.

A thoughtful and metaphorical piece likening a snowflake to a child. As the snowflake takes flight she leaves behind the safety of her cloud only to return when the snow melts. Clever use of imagery and language to reimagine the water cycle and a child's first solo venture into the world!

Qu'est-ce qu'une femme?

Une mère,
Une sœur,
Une fille,
Ou une flamme?

Une flamme de la passion brûlante,
Une envie de changement,
Un être avec lutte après lutte
Une vie qu'aucun homme ne pourrait comprendre

La maltraitance dans la rue,
<<Donnez-nous un sourire alors>>

La maltraitance au travail
<<Salut magnifique>>

Un commentaire singulier qui façonne un vie
Qui façonne une femme

Qu'est-ce qu'une femme?

Une mère,
Une sœur,
Une fille,
Ou une flamme d'un feu de l'indignation embrasée

Parce qu'une femme est une force avec laquelle il faut compter



Qu'est-ce qu'une femme?

Maisie Greaves (Year 12)

What is a woman?

A mother,
A sister,
A daughter,
Or a flame?

A flame of burning passion,
A desire for change,
A being with struggle after struggle,
A life no man could understand

Abuse in the street,
'Give us a smile then'

Abuse at work,
'Hello gorgeous'

A singular comment that shapes a life,
That shapes a woman

What is a woman?

A mother,
A sister,
A daughter,
Or a flame from a fire of blazing indignation

Because a woman is a force to be reckoned with



Mirando por los Ventanas de la Vie

Emily Walker (Year 12)

Durante el invierno los flores se esconden
Temán la luz dura de la realidad
El blanco brillante de la nieve
El frío, el hielo que atraviesa la piel
Y nos hace sentir débil, sin protección
Aislado y vulnerable contra las elementales
Pues, esperan en silencio hasta la primavera
Para que puedan olvidar
Cuando miro a través de la ventana
Todo lo que veo es los flores
Me parecen que extienden para tantas millas
No paran, no detienen
Se mueren las ganas de florecer, exponer su color al mundo
Porque, al fin y al cabo, ser admirado es la única manera de sentirse el amor
Pues, esperan en silencio hasta que reciban la atención
Para que puedan olvidar
Cuando los flores se convierten en las antagonistas
No están la culpa
Porque solo reaccionan al sufrimiento del mundo
La muerte, el dolor, la pérdida
Son las únicas cosas que todo el mundo se siente
Así que, no se debe fiarse en el mundo y esperar para un señal
Pues, esperan en silencio hasta la muerte
Para que puedan olvidar.

Les fenêtres étaient fermées mais sans taches
Donc je pouvais pénétrer la vie
Et trouver un minute d'une vie d'un autre monde.
Un verre décorée, emplisse avec le vin rouge
Qui apaise la bouche
Comme la soie pure.
Les flammes dans la cheminée dansent et aspergent
Ils apportent un certain chaleur et couleur à la salle
Ils n'arrêtent pas, ils protègent contre la froid à l'extérieur.
Je remarque une chaise qui a été coudée par la mère
Avec les dessins subtils et de bon goût
Les indications de la santé, le confort.
Mais qui fait le bonheur?
Les chaises, les petits objets, la chaleur
Une personne peut être seul
Dans une maison d'orée.

The judge's enjoyed that this was written in two languages, Spanish and French. An original, thought-provoking piece, using nature imagery to create a contrast between the beautiful world and the bleakness of reality. Looking through the windows of life. A lovely piece.

Lo que soy los domingos

Teddy Bland (Year 13)

Los domingos me vuelvo voraz
y dejo que el aire se derrita en mi lengua.
Mastico las páginas pendientes de mis deberes
y saben a la corteza de un árbol encarcelado.

Los domingos apago el piloto automático,
recupero mi conciencia y enderezo mi corbata.
Agarro con mis palmas arrugadas el acelerador,
y ansío más que lo aburrida de vivir,
mientras lo empujo a toda velocidad.
Aprieto mi propio cuello y me ahogo,
con deseo de escupir algo más que
millas continuas de azules nublados.
Con deseo de estrellarme en algún lugar fresco,
donde el sol no muerda ni la nieve pique.

Los domingos lo limpio todo,
y doy vueltas en casa sin dirección.
Luego me siento y pienso en todo lo que hay que pensar,
como un niño en un examen con un lápiz roto.
Luego me acuesto,
con la ventana abierta para respirar con el mundo.

Los domingos tengo sueño pero nunca duermo.
Golpeo mi cabeza en la almohada,
y me río mientras grito.
Los domingos estoy vivo,
pero me siento como en un sueño.

An emotional poem about the frustrations of monotony and routine that hits on Sundays before the week commences. The use of enjambment contributes to the poet's description of his chaotic thoughts.

《中国制造》

Anoushka Paymaster Thatcher (Year 12)

“中国制造”、
但我的心
总住在海边。
我记忆中有
那么多好照片、
但海边告诉我
“‘电脑’有‘电’、也有‘脑’、
他们都为你重要
因为‘电’是食、‘脑’是世。”
但如果我有两条腿、
天啊、我梦想有两条腿、
这样我就可以跑、游泳、
等等。
我想哭...
“嘿、等一下!
你要有耐心!”
海边还告诉我、
“未来会有机器人!”

I wrote this poem from the perspective of a computer that longs to have legs. It seems a silly concept at first, especially as many bad movies have used a similar storyline, but I think it innocently touches on a wide range of different topics that at heart aim to encourage individuality and creativity.

In this poem, the computer feels emotion: a longing that only the seaside can understand and influence. I think many people can relate to feeling trapped in their own mind or body, without many people to understand them, thus I wanted to touch on the importance of nature and how it can improve mental well-being, as by the sea is where I personally feel most at peace. For the computer in the poem, the seaside has a profound effect, shown by each line following a pattern of character lengths starting with 4, then 4, 5, 5, 6, 6 etc until the end, where it changes to 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 to show how the computer is little by little breaking out of its programmed pattern with the prospect of something new and exciting in the future.

I wrote this poem in Chinese, which I have been learning since Year 7, and have studied it along with French and Spanish for GCSE and with Spanish for A-Level. Although I find it is the hardest out of the 3 languages I've learnt at school, I wanted to challenge myself for this poem and use some new vocabulary as well as some that I'm well acclimated to, (however it was a challenge racking my brains for the correct synonym!) The language combined with the title 中国制造 or "Made in China" was chosen as a lot of electronics and other products are made in China, and the mention of the sea is because China has an extremely large coastline on which lies some of its biggest cities, challenging the stereotype that 'all China is a factory'.

It seems a juxtaposition somewhat to mention industry and to focus the poem around something completely man-made and then connect it to natural beauty rather than digital beauty. However, with my creative license in hand, I can firmly state that that was a well thought out decision. The poem is an impossible conversation that, when pictured, feels oddly surreal, yet the various concepts explored or at least touched on somehow fit together in my mind thus have fused together to form this poem.

Get involved

Mother Tongue Other Tongue was devised as a Laureate Education project by Professor Carol Ann Duffy DBE in 2012. It is currently led nationally by Manchester Poetry Library at Manchester Metropolitan University and different versions of the project run in regions across England, Wales and Scotland.

Where regions do not have a Mother Tongue Other Tongue offer, schools are welcome to enter their pupils' work into the North West England competition.

This anthology contains entries that were submitted to the North West England Mother Tongue Other Tongue competition in 2023.

As ever, we thank all of the teachers who take the time to encourage their pupils and who submit their pupils' work to our competition.

The 12th North West of England Mother Tongue Other Tongue competition will be launched on international Mother Languages Day in February 2024.

For details of this and also for dates of Mother Tongue Other Tongue competitions in other regions, please see: mmu.ac.uk/mothertongueothertongue

Free to download teaching resources are also available on the Mother Tongue Other Tongue website. Please sign up to the Manchester Poetry Library mailing list to be kept informed about new resources and also CPD sessions offered by the Poetry Library and Routes into Languages North West.

If you would like to discuss co-ordinating Mother Tongue Other Tongue activity in your region please email poetrylibrary@mmu.ac.uk

Sign up for the Manchester Poetry Library newsletter to be kept informed about this and other projects mmu.ac.uk/poetrylibrary

The judges

Each entry submitted to the North West England Mother Tongue Other Tongue competition is read by at least 3 judges from Manchester Metropolitan University. These are all people who have some experience themselves of being multilingual, either learning another language or having a heritage language other than English.

Asma Fatima is a student of MSC Management at Manchester Metropolitan University. She speaks English, Urdu, and Hindi.

Chin Lam Lee, Sophy, is a student of MSC Human Nutrition. She speaks English, Cantonese and Chinese.

Deb Troops is a third-year student on MA TESOL and Applied Linguistics. She speaks English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, and is learning Italian. Deb was a judge in last year's Mother Tongue Other Tongue competition and works as a volunteer with Afghan refugees teaching English.

Fiona Sutcliffe is a graduand in Spanish with QTS. She is currently finishing her final placement before qualifying as a Spanish teacher.

Georgia Hartley-Nolan is a student on BA Primary Education at Manchester Metropolitan University. She speaks English and French.

Hayley Sewell is a student on BA Primary Education. She has also supported the Mother Tongue Other Tongue competition this year as the project administrator.

Hend Mohammed is a student on Combined Honours English and Linguistics. She speaks English and Arabic.

Javier Fedrick is a poet and workshop facilitator who works at All Saints Library and the Manchester Poetry Library.

Katherine Bustin is a student on MA Creative Writing. She speaks English and German.

Melissa Gibson is a student of MA Creative Writing, specialising in fiction for children and YA. She speaks English, French, German. Melissa was also a judge in last year's Mother Tongue Other Tongue competition.

Naomi Doyle is a student on Combined Honours International Relations with Spanish. She speaks English and Spanish.

Sophie Longbottom is a student of MA Education. She speaks English, French, and is currently learning Italian and Japanese. Sophie was also a judge in last year's Mother Tongue Other Tongue competition.

The judging panel was co-ordinated by Kaye Tew, Education Manager for Manchester Poetry Library at Manchester Metropolitan University and Hayley Sewell.

What the judges said ...

“By turns hilarious and heart-breaking, these fantastic poems are testament to the curiosity and empathy of the young people who submitted them. In the hands of these talented students, language becomes a living thing, full of promise, and perhaps even revolutionary... Thank you to all who entered for making the judging process so enjoyable (and so difficult!)”

Javier Fedrick

“What fantastic submissions! This is my second year as a judge on Mother Tongue Other Tongue; it’s such an honour to read the work produced by the talented multi-lingual students. The entries teach me about different cultures and it’s great to see such fabulous creativity. Well done everyone!”

Melissa Gibson

“Mother Tongue Other Tongue is a wonderful project to be a part of. Being able to hear the various voices of the younger generations loud and clear and as passionate as ever creates hope for the future. It is so important to be your authentic self, and this competition facilitates creativity and the opportunity to explore and share; it can open eyes to a new, more compassionate point of view.”

Hayley Sewell

“This project has reminded me of why I am choosing to become a teacher - we can teach children how to write their name or how to solve equations, but we should all encourage every child to embrace their true selves and express themselves through their language and culture. While I have only ever known the English language, the entries this year have opened my mind to a number of different languages from around the world, and how it might feel to be in a place where you feel pushed to learn an ‘other tongue’. The students should be really proud of their work and their ability to use language in a creative and beautiful form.”

Sophie Longbottom

“Judging these pieces has inspired me to be more creative myself, and also when I come to teach high school aged pupils in September. The poems reminded me of a reason why I want to become a teacher, as pupils are so talented and can produce such brilliant work if given the opportunity.”

Fiona Sutcliffe

Unspoken Fluency

Nhyira Fomenya (Year 10)

With the words in my mouth, I state how I feel with ease,
precision and grace
Thriving in the language I speak at school and with friends
No thoughts in mind, just speaking.
Whether rambling with no aim or stating with importance,

My words flow like a melody,
Like a river,
Like a song,

se me dwene nsem a me pe se me ka no a,
me firi aseɛ kyere ase.
(with the thought of the words I want to say, I start to translate.)
Se me de nsem no hye m'anum a me firi aseɛ te nka se
(When I put the words in my mouth, I start to feel)
Emu aye du. Epa a emu aye den.
(Heaviness, a knot so tight)
Me bo mɔden se mekasa. Me de m'ahooden nyinaa.
(I try to speak with all my strength)
Nanso nsem no akohyehye me menemo
(But the words get stuck in my throat)

Basabasa
(A jumbled mess)

ɛte se nea me ntumi nkae nsem nketenkete
(I cannot seem to remember small words)
Ehu tumi bo ne kosi se eye a na afei m'akokoduro a me de
be kasa no ayera
(And fear hits me so hard that I lose the confidence to speak)

But I know that I can speak fluently, I can do more than just stutter.
Because if you say any word to me in Twi, I will understand.
Ask me a question, I will answer.
It is the fear of embarrassment that
holds me back.

But what if I embraced my mistakes and learned from them?
What if I let go of my fear and allowed myself to fully express my
thoughts and feelings?
Even if it meant stumbling a bit along the way.
Perhaps then, I would be able to truly speak with fluency
like a melody,
Like a river,
Like a song

When I was about 4 years old, my grandma visited us from Ghana. And the time that she lived with us, was the time that I got in touch with the Akan language. I remember that she used to say “me nti brofo” (I don’t understand English), even though she did understand just to encourage me to speak Akan with her. And it worked, we started to have long conversations in Akan, and I became fluent.

From that point on I used to speak Akan a lot with family, and I continued to be fluent but as I got into high school, I stopped speaking Akan as much because no one at school spoke it, and at home I was busy with homework and other commitments. And so, my life became dominated with the English language. Not speaking Akan for so long caused me to forget words and bits of the language and I became less and less confident. I was also disappointed in myself and embarrassed because languages are very important in my culture and losing my ability to speak fluently felt as if I had lost part of my identity.

My poem ‘Unspoken Fluency’ was my way of reflecting on how I felt and the struggles that I faced trying to speak Akan again. This poem was also me acknowledging that speaking fluently is possible and that my only obstacle in doing so is myself.