

The
Nooker Prize
Anthology
2019

TRUTH

***'Truth is a question left unanswered,
A debate that always has one more side'***

from *Similarities & Differences* by Esther Armstrong

Nooker Prize Reading at Stannington Library

Thursday 28th November 2019

Introduction

A warm welcome to the 2019 Nooker Prize Poetry Reading, and to Stannington Library, a building, like poetry, built upon words. This is the second year the library has hosted us and we are so grateful to the staff for allowing us to sprinkle a few more words over the millions which already grace its shelves. Thank you for finding a temporary resting place for our poems in this house of words.

A great poet was asked what made poetry different to other forms of writing and replied that poets used 'the best words, in the best order'. Another said that poetry should be 'memorable speech'. I hope you agree that the poets in this anthology have chosen the very best words to craft some highly memorable poems.

It is always pleasure to introduce the Nooker Prize-winning poems. This year the poems deal with the thorny subject of 'truth' in their own ingenious ways. It is clear from reading them that our young poets have weighed and valued every word so carefully in order to produce such witty, elegant, musical and deeply thoughtful poems. They reveal what you can achieve when you really take notice in the world.

At Nook Lane School we encourage creativity. There is nothing more satisfying than watching a child's thoughts develop from a few phrases and notes, to first drafts and eventually a fully realised poem. How, for example a showery autumn morning in a field by a stream is transformed into a series of striking images:

'A flaming oak tree/Ivy winds up the grooved bark/Leaves turn into dust'

Or how the high hopes of war are contrasted with its brutal 'truth' via some startling contrasts:

'United uniforms rustling in unison/...The rustle of a leaf could sweep our injured away'

A number of this year's poems show a remarkable maturity of thought and expression:

'Truth is a question left unanswered,/A debate that always has one more side'

is itself a 'truth' so grown up it seems impossible to believe it came from the pen of a writer so young.

It is immensely reassuring to know that your children value the joy but also the importance of words, can make music with them as well as think deeply through them, can conjure with them to produce magic, can dance across a page with them, can scatter them before us and stop us in our tracks.

Phil Walsh

Haiku

Birds fly gracefully

Leaves change from day to night

long long long shadows

鳥が優雅に飛ぶ

葉は昼から夜に変わります

長い長い長い影

Olivia Davies

AUTUMN

A combine harvester cutting the wheat.

Umbrellas getting wet

Thoughtful children giving out chocolate

Up in the sky fireworks twirling

Marshmallows burning on the fire

Now snuggle up as your autumn begins

Lewis Ellin Y3LB

World War Two Poem

Off to war we go,
With smiling faces of excitement, eyes are creased with laughter,
Flags flapping high up in the sky,
Ear piercing screams of laughter as they cheer each other on,
Cigarette smoke fills the air and boot polish penetrates noses,
Reassuring us that we will win the war,
Butterflies inside as we march on with pride,
United we stand victorious.

Defeated we stand alone,
Flies buzz in our stomachs as we march with sorrow,
Not reassuring us that we will win the war,
There is no smell of cigarette smoke or boot polish,
Ear piercing screams of laughter turns to moans and groans,
Torn flags lay submerged in the ruins,
With scared faces of fear, eyes blinded by the smoke of the bombs,
Off to war we go.

George Chidlaw Y6BH

A Lie or a Truth?

A lie is a heavy weight on your shoulder
Weighing you down like a rock boulder
Gradually making you colder
A lie will eat you from the inside out
Making you certainly doubt
That it will ever go away
To the shore of another day
Of a lonely world.

The truth is a weight being taken off your shoulder
Just like a fake, paper boulder
Making you warmer not colder
It will turn you the right way out
Definitely not making you doubt
That one day it'll go away
Wash to the shore of another mindful bay
Of the happiest world.

By Elliot Mustill Y5MC

Orange Pumpkins

Orange pumpkins growing

In the farmer's field

Conkers fall on the ground.

Hedge hogs crunch through leaves

Marshmallows melting in

The tasty hot chocolate

Children skipping in the crunchy

Amber and golden leaves

Sunshine shining through the fiery trees

Lily-Mae Y3BP

Tanka

A flaming oak tree

Ivy winds up the grooved bark

Leaves turn into dust

Sun peeps through the crooked branches

Blackbirds whistle gorgeously

Lily Harrison Y4WL

On to war we march

On to war we march,
A crisp new uniform protecting us,
An air of power around us,
The flag raised high,
People parting before you,
Footsteps in unison,
The heartbeat of our country,
A highly polished rifle,
Held tall in our strong arms,
Now we feel complete,
With this honour bestowed upon us,
We are as tall as the sky

We are as small as flies,
With this terror weighed upon us,
We are all torn apart,
Sagging in our arms,
A dusty battered rifle,
That weighs on country's soul,
We plod out of order,
People dying before us,
The flag sags to the ground,
An air of despair hangs around us,
A torn ragged uniform weakens us,
On to war we go,

Mia Wang-Cowham Y6DC

Magic

A freshly baked cookie on a baker's day

That's magic!

A beautiful pot made of clay

That's magic!

A tabby cat that wants to play

Watching a scary movie on a Saturday

When you roll in the soft fresh hay

That's magic!

Sprite fizzing in your tongue

That's magic!

Drinking hot chocolate in a mug

Discovering a new interesting bug

Giving everybody a warm hug

That's magic!

A dolphin splashing in the deep blue sea

That's magic!

A sting from a bee

That's ... tragic!

Playing in the dark

An ice cream in the park

A puppy learning to bark

That's magic!

Lilly Harrison-Clarke Y5SW

Tanka

Crows fly, wind blows hard

Beaut leaves lie down in patterns

Oak trees grow in sun

Small branch lies on the big ground

Daisies stand in bright sun

短歌 カラスが飛ぶ、風が激しく吹く

美しい葉がパターンで横たわる

の木は太陽の下で成長します

小さな枝は大きな地面にあります

ヒナギクは明るい太陽のコービンヒルに立つ

Korben Hill Y4WL

Autumn Acrostic

Ants crawling around

Umbrella swirling back and forth in the wind

Trees leaves orange and red

Underneath the ground worms wriggling all around

Magpies swooping

Nature crawling around.

Magnus Cuff Y3BP

The truth about war

We shall fight for our country, our children.
British flags dancing free in the wind, egging us on
The local brass band bellow their encouragement
Bravely parading with helmets gleaming proudly
An air of confidence, adventure
Grins plastered on each face, arms linked, we are determined
Our shatterproof morale will never give way
Step by step we're on our way to victory, to glory, to power
An ocean of jolly faces soon to become undefeated champions.

Lost and scattered, exhausted and injured, defeated
Trudge by trudge, we cannot take another step, no victory to glory, no heroism
Our supposedly shatterproof morale is something of the past
Furrowed brows shared all round, holding each other up
Doubt chokes the air, this is no longer a great adventure
Stumbling, scared
The foul beat of our machine guns drive us away from our triumph
British flags trampled with mud, lost forever
We have failed to protect our land, our children.
Off to war we go.

Bethany Rowson Y6DC

Autumn

Autumn leaves falling down

Umber leaves falling to the ground,

Tiny hedgehogs crawling all around,

Under the grass,

Micro ants crawling round,

Nice flames calming down.

Heidi Mander Y3LB

Haiku

Leaves fall on the ground

Sun shines down from cloudless sky

Bird song fills the air

Madeleine McCaffrey

Truth and Lies

Truth is like a pastel pink

A lie is like a clouded black

Truth is like the rising sun

A lie is like a misty day

Truth is as yummy as strawberries and cream

A lie is as bitter as burnt toast

Truth dances like an elegant ballerina

A lie dances like the DEVIL

Truth is free and full of joy

A lie is trapped, contained, concealed and hidden

Truth is a nagging voice taken off your shoulders

A lie is a claw dragging you down deeper and deeper.

Ava Dibben

Oh, What a Lovely War

Oh, What a Lovely War

Doris, Mavis, Gladys and Co

Hankies held high, waving good bye.

Whoo Whoo! peep peep! the steam engine cheers.

Sweet chestnuts and perfume, the aroma of beers,

Determined, focused, heroic, naïve...

Our united strength it had us believe.

Believe me, no one would.

Weak willed; distracted; cowardly, experienced....

Burnt flesh and hair and the aroma of chloride

Dropped by the droning harpies of war.

Hankies now wiping the tears off

Doris; Mavis, Gladys and Co

Oh, what a lovely war.

Joe Cuff Y6BH

Similarities and differences

Both lies and truths,
An angel and a demon
Both a tornado,
Both a question.
The truth is a volcano saving and killing,
A lie is a cave
Filled to the brim with darkness.
Truth is a question left unanswered,
A debate that always has one more side.
Nor lies, nor truth are omniscient.

Esther Armstrong Y5SW

Tanka

Muddy grass squelching
Red autumn leaves falling down
Clouds move slowly west
Grey squirrels hunting for food
Gorgeous blackbirds chirp in trees

Ella Darrington Y4WL

The truth about magic

A robin on a winter's day
That's magic,
Staying on the beach's bay,
That's magic,
The first grateful day of our lives,
King Henry and his seven wives
Inside an old Greek archive
That's magic
The thought of not creating any waste
That's magic,
The sight of a hare running with great haste
That's magic,
The sound of Mozart beginning to play
A steaming breakfast on a tray
The pound of a deer running astray
That's magic.

Kit Virgo-Cox Y5SW

Magic

A wonderful place high above the earth

That's magic

A sweet, creamy chocolatey taste

That's magic

A pet in tiny cot

An elephant with a giant spot

A glorious giraffe going hop hop hop

A hat's magic

Your cute, little dog playing rugby

That's magic

A tiger getting as bad as it can get

That's magic

A baby with a sharp knife

A seatbelt that's really tight

Someone blowing away on a massive kite

That's magic

A piece of bark in the middle of the road

That's magic

An ant acting like an anteater

That's magic

A really kind refusing to pay

Everyone going outside on a Monday

A rubber duck floating away

That's magic

Oliver Palmer Y5MC

Off to war we go

Soldiers in smart kit with bravery in their eyes,
Excitement bursting through bodies,
Marching towards victory,
Shoulder to shoulder searching for freedom,
We try and find peace.

Conflict has found them,
Holding each other feeling defeated,
Crawling into sorrow,
Depression oozing from their veins,
Uniform ripped with fear on their faces,
Off to war we go.

Kaitlin Rice Y6BH

Don't Get Your Hopes Up, Lads

Into the heat of battle

Polished buttons glimmer on green-ballooned chests

Grins shining like the power-inducing sun

Homely houses left without hesitation

Women's wonderful prizes showered upon loved ones

Morale-raising babble of victorious talk

Heroic boots beating in time with the booming brass band

Newly greased boots forging the aroma of optimism

Brilliant freshly baked bread leading us forwards

Aura of power lightening my helmet

United uniforms rustling in unison

Anticipated adrenaline powering an air of confidence

Onwards to pride, to glory, to honour

Buried far away from pride, from glory, from honour

Adrenaline gone, the stifling air itself seems volatile

The rustle of a leaf could sweep our injured away

An aura of fear weighing down on us

Stale mushrooms sneering at our empty stomachs

Caked with mud, our boots bear the most pessimistic stench

Marching now a nightmare of dreary voices and aching feet

Songs could never raise our morale

Stowed away treasure a consolidation- mostly our homes are safe

None willing to face eternal homesickness

Frowns painted as the ever overcast sky

Not a glint of light on deflated chests

Into the heat of the battle.

Amelie Surridge Y6 DC

AND WHERE IS THE BOY WHO LOOKS AFTER THE SHEEP?

Little Miss Muffet sat on the wall
Along came Peter, along came Paul,
All the King's horses and Little Jack Horner
Couldn't fit on, so they sat in the corner.

This poem's very silly
This poem's all askew
This poem makes no sense at all
This poem isn't true.

Mary, Mary, quite contrary
She had ten thousand men
She marched them up to the top of the hill
And she marched them down again
And when they were up they were up
And when they were down they were down
And when they were only half way up
She cut of their tails with a carving knife.

This poem's very silly
This poem's all askew
This poem makes no sense at all
This poem isn't true.

Hey diddle diddle the king's on the fiddle
counting all his money: one-a-penny,
two-a-penny, three bags full!
Yes sir, Yes sir: he found a crooked sixpence
and five farthings by the bells of St Martin's,
and he took some honey and plenty of money
wrapped up in a nine bob note.

This poem's very silly
This poem's all askew
This poem makes no sense at all
This poem isn't true.

Old Mother Hubbard
Went to the cupboard
With rings on her fingers and bells on her toes
Along came a spider
Who sat down beside her
Then down came a blackbird
And pecked off her nose!

This poem's very silly
This poem's all askew
This poem makes no sense at all
This poem isn't true.

Mary had a little lamb
And Little Bo Peep has lost her sheep
Wasn't that a dainty dish to set before
Gorgie Porgie, pudding AND pie
Who'd tricked the girls and made them cry!

This poem's very silly
This poem's all askew
This poem makes no sense at all
This poem isn't true.

There was a crooked man
And he walked a crooked mile
He wrote a crooked poem
In a crooked style
He bought a crooked notebook
The crooked little louse
Where all his crooked poems
Found a crooked little house.

This poem's very silly
This poem's all askew
This poem makes no sense at all
This poem isn't true.

Mr Walsh

