



## Key Stage 3-5

# A NOTE CAN BE A POEM

Imagine coming down one morning  
and finding this:

### **This Is Just To Say**

I have eaten  
the plums  
that were in  
the icebox

and which  
you were probably  
saving  
for breakfast

Forgive me  
they were delicious  
so sweet  
and so cold

by *William Carlos Williams*



An activity by the Poetry School. The Poetry School is a national organisation running classes and projects to teach poetry.

[www.poetryschool.com](http://www.poetryschool.com)





**Would you forgive the writer of the note?**

Why do you say that?

**How could the person who ate the plums  
earn your forgiveness?**

Might writing you a poem be enough?

**Have you ever taken or eaten anything you  
shouldn't have?**

Did you apologise? If so, how?

**Could you make *This Is Just To Say* into a  
comic strip?**

How many panels would you use?

Would you include people?

What colours would you use?

Would you use all the words or none?

**Draw that comic strip.**

**William Carlos Williams (1883 – 1963) worked  
as a doctor and drafted some of his poems  
on prescription pads. Maybe that's why *This  
Is Just To Say* is so small and short – just 28  
words long. Perhaps it had to fit on a tiny  
piece of paper.**

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**What poem would a supermarket checkout  
worker write on a long thin till roll?**

What about someone who worked in a fish and  
chip shop, with access to those massive sheets of  
paper used to wrap up fish and chips?

What about someone selling cinema tickets?

**Write those poems.**