

Key Stage 1-2

A MESSAGE TO THE FUTURE

Tomorrow Has Your Name on It

Tomorrow has your name on it
It's written up there in the sky
As you set out on a journey
In search of the How? And the Why?

Oh the people you'll meet
The bright and the mad
The sights to be seen
The fun to be had.

Oh the dreams that you'll dream
The chances you'll take
The prizes you'll win
The hands that you'll shake.

But don't let your dreams
Get too big for their boots
Don't hanker after the flimflam of fame
If you hunger for mere celebrity
You'll be drawn like a moth to the flame.

For having dreams is not enough;
You must get down and do your stuff.
Take the ready with the rough.
Ride the punches, and my hunch is
You'll succeed when life gets tough.

And it will!
(That's also written in the sky
In a cobwebby corner of the Milky Way
A squillion zillion miles away).

Bullies will want to bully you
For that's what bullies do
And you'll feel small and miserable
(Don't worry, I would too).

Even Big Bad wolves have nightmares,
One of the reasons they howl at the moon.
Being scared is Nature's medicine.
Not nice, but it's over soon.

There'll be days you're made to feel foolish
When your head seems made out of wood
When you blush, mumble and shuffle
Feel embarrassed and misunderstood.

Things will get lost or stolen
Life doesn't turn out as you'd planned
You get sick and then you get better –
What's gone wrong? You can't understand.

Take your time.
Sing your own songs and laugh out loud.
Weep, if you need to
But away from the crowd.

Disappointments will ebb and flow
Like the tide upon the shore
But an angry storm will quickly go
And the sun will rise up once more.

Oh the dreams that you'll dream,
May the good ones come true.
Being young is an adventure
How I wish I were you.

Today is the tomorrow we worried about
Yesterday and all last night.
And as days go, as days they do.
It seemed to go all right.

So dream your dreams and journey
Be tomorrow foul or fine
So you can say at the end of it
'Amazing! Today was mine.'

by Roger McGough

Read the poem aloud or watch Roger McGough perform the poem himself on the CLPE's poetryline website:

www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poets/mcgough-roger

Who do you think the poet has written the poem for?

Why?

What messages is he giving?

How does the poem make you feel when you hear it?

Look at copies of the poem in pairs or groups.

Are there parts of the poem which resonate with you or that you can make personal connections with already?

Think about an important event that might be coming up for a younger person or group of people that the class know.

Think back to your own memories of being younger.

What lessons have you learned from life that you would want to pass on as a message to someone younger to help them look to the future?

Collect responses around the class on strips of paper.

Discuss these around the class and individually, or in groups, draft ideas for these in a verse.

At first, don't worry about the verse having to follow the ABCB rhyme structure of the original poem.

When you have a clear idea of what you'd like to say, have a go at redrafting the poem to follow an ABCB rhyme structure.

Rhyming dictionaries may be useful at this point.

Collect the verses together and decide how they might fit together as a whole poem.

You might look at how to make small edits to help with cohesion.

Perform the poem to the younger children and/or write it up and illustrate it to present to them.

A longer teaching sequence of classroom activities around Roger McGough's *Poetry Pie* can be found at: www.clpe.org.uk/poetryline/resources/teaching-sequences