

Wester Hailes – English Department S3 Home Learning Materials

Week beginning 22nd February 2021

Please complete the tasks in the booklet over the course of the next 2 school weeks. You can answer on paper/computer/tablet.

E-mail your teacher when you are finished for marking:

Haley1.Russell@whec.edin.sch.uk



My Parents Kept Me From Children Who Were Rough

By
Stephen Spender

S3 HOME LEARNING UNIT
WHEC

POETRY UNIT

IN THIS UNIT I WILL:

Reading

- 🕒 Read the poem carefully
- 🕒 Identify poetic features such as imagery and word choice and discuss their effect

Writing

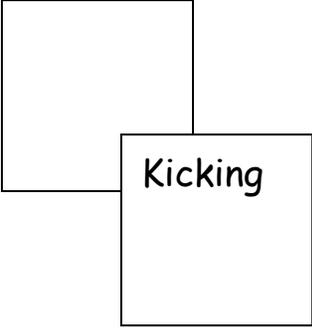
- 🕒 Organise my ideas and information using mind maps
- 🕒 Plan my Critical Essay
- 🕒 Write my own Critical Essay based on this poem

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GETTING STARTED...

ACTIVITY 1:

Think about what actions you would class as bullying behaviour and record your answers in the space below.



Kicking

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It is now time to read the poem carefully. You should re-read it a few times to make sure you understand it properly.

MY PARENTS KEPT ME FROM CHILDREN WHO WERE ROUGH

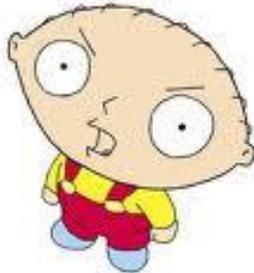
My parents kept me from children who were rough
Who threw words like stones and who wore torn clothes.
Their thighs showed through rags. They ran in the street
And climbed cliffs and striped by the country streams.

I feared more than tigers their muscles like iron
Their jerking hands and their knees tight on my arms
I feared the salt coarse pointing of those boys
Who copied my lisp behind me on the road.

They were lithe*, they sprang out behind hedges
Like dogs to bark at our world. They threw mud
And I looked the other way, pretending to smile.
I longed to forgive them, yet they never smiled.

**athletic, fit.*

Stephen Spender



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The poem deals with the main theme of BULLYING. There are different types of bullying dealt with in the poem.

Activity 2:

Find evidence from the poem to complete the table below.

PHYSICAL BULLYING - This includes bullying which hurts someone's body.

PSYCHOLOGICAL BULLYING - This includes bullying which can hurt someone's feelings.

SOCIAL BULLYING - This includes bullying which can make someone feel left out and alone.

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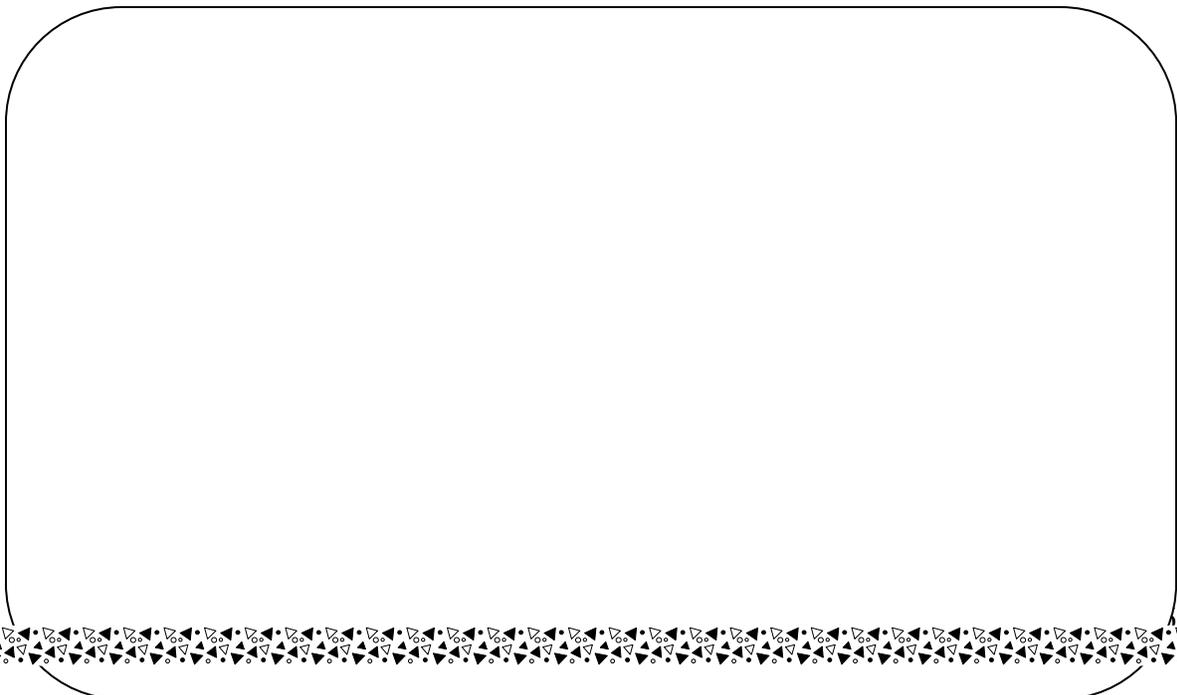
SIMILES

The poet used similes in his poem to give us a good picture of the bullies.

A Simile = when one thing is compared to another thing using the words "like" or "as".

Activity 3:

Think about what your teacher has already told you about similes and write down as many similes as you can think of.



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Activity 4:

Pick out the three similes that Spender used in his poem and record them in the table below. You should also add in what the simile tells us.

Stanza	Simile	What the simile tells us
1		
2		
3		



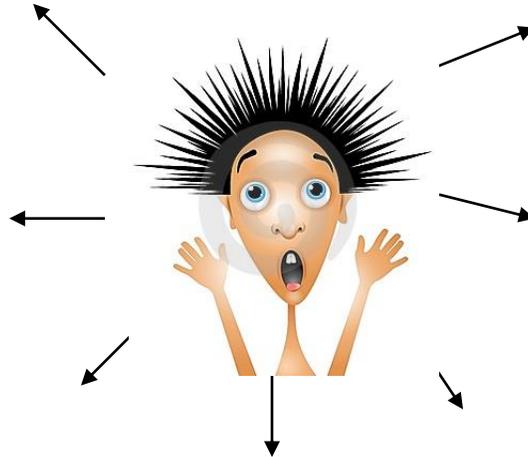
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OUR FEELINGS

By using similes in his poem, Spender not only gives us effective images in our heads, he also manipulates our feelings to make us feel certain emotions for the bully victim in the poem.

Activity 5:

Use the spider diagram below to list all of the feelings and emotions you feel for the bully victim as you read through the poem. A good idea is to try to think about how they might feel being bullied and how you would feel in their situation.



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Activity 6:

Re-Read the poem.

- 🕒 Think about the similes used in the poem and how you feel about the victim and the bullies. Complete the table below.

1. Look at stanza 1 and quote two expressions which show the boys' families were quite poor.	1. 2.
2. From stanza 1 find two harmless things the other boys did which Stephen's parents would have disapproved of.	1. 2.
3. Look at stanza 3 and quote the expression which tells us that there was a big difference between Stephen's life and the boys' lives.	
4. How does the poem and the theme of bullying make you feel?	
5. Provide two pieces of evidence from the poem to prove your previous answer.	1. 2.
6. Why do you think that Stephen wanted to forgive his bullies at the end of the poem?	

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Activity 7:

Think about and discuss what makes people bully other people.
What do you think the bullies are trying to achieve? Do you think there are reasons behind the bullying?

