

London Youth Poetry Challenge

VOLUME I



INTRODUCTION

Since lockdown began in March 2020, our team here at London Youth has been hearing from youth organisations, youth professionals and young people about how they are coping and adapting.

Many youth organisations have started delivering online sessions, sharing resources and setting fun challenges for young people. Many young people are using their interest in creative activities like writing, drawing, or music-making, to stay positive and help process this extraordinary experience.

In response to the current situation, we launched our first online Poetry Challenge.

We invited our member youth organisations all over London to take part by running flexible, fun and accessible poetry sessions or setting quick poetry challenges and submitting the poems their young people produce.

We were amazed by the response. Dozens of young people shared their poems with us. Some were written in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, while others were about issues that young people care about. Many were poems young people had written before the pandemic hit and the lockdown began.

It has been a powerful reminder of how important poetry and other creative pursuits are to young people's lives. Whether it's a fun challenge, a way to share what you're feeling, or how you show the world who you are, poems are a powerful way of connecting. And this collection shows how much these young people from all over London have in common.

Emily Reddon

Arts Development Manager

Jobs | Jean, 7

It's the Midwife
She saves the baby's life
Working day and night
She's very kind and bright.

It's the doctor
Can I help you sir?
Hope is very clear
I am standing near.

It's the scientist
Working in the lab
We're looking for a potion
Many, Many potions.

It's the postman
Like a lotion
Bringing you a card
We know it's very hard.

Thank you to the nurse
She's very like a purse
Helping people in her day
Come what may, hooray!

Magic of the Jamilyfit | Victor, 7

It was the season of swish-swashy
In Fishidoshi
And all the kiddburdums were preparing a
celebration
The Jamilyfit was due to blossom
And release all its lullossom
That would spray magic all over the nation

The evil Berakak was lurking
Sweezing and hurking
As he wanted the Jamilyfit for his own
Though Ladyburdum
Thought that she heard 'um
She was so busy she left him alone

When all was clear he flit
And stole the Jamilyfit
And took it to his home faraway
And Ladyburdum
Didn't want to party and didn't want to play

Back home to his village of Bardarden
He placed the plant in his garden
And waited patiently not making a sound
The Jamilyfit started buzzing
And mooping and hussing
And an explosion was seen for miles around

The lullossom rose high
Right into the sky
And rained down on the gleeful Berakak
But what he didn't know
Was the kiddyburdums saw it also
And came wumbling down to his shack

The bumffed on this door
And in three seconds or more
The Berakaka opened it wide
He said 'how bizarre
I've no clue who you are'
His manner all snoomy and snide

"We've come for our planet"

Said Ladyburdum with a chant
"It's ours, it's ours, it's ours!"
She pushed him aside
And they all ran outside
To gather the lullossom of the flower's

So the greedy Berakak
Went out with his sack
Filled it up and tied it with a bow
Then he filled up his face
Till there was no more space
And swallowed them down in one go

A moment had past
And they were finished at last
And ready to go home with their treasure
But the Berakak said "no
Just before you go
Please take my sack too – it's my pleasure"
The Ladyburdum rose
And the other ones froze
And she walked to Berakak with a smile
The lullossom you ate
Has banished your hate
You haven't felt such love for a while
"I'm so sorry for the way
I acted today
I wanted to be happy and rich
But now I realise
To my surprise
That I made an enormous glitch"

"That's quite all right"
Said Ladyburdu to his delight
Come back and celebrate as a friend
So the party went on
In the Fishidoshi kingdom
And they all lived happily together.

The end

Bus Drivers | Katie, 9

I'm out for my exercise,
jogging along,
bus driver zooms past,
humming a song.

He gives me a wave,
I wave back with glee,
I know he is helping
the workers from key.

Key's not a place
It's the hardest of work,
helping people to live
whilst the world is berserk

The next second he's gone,
quick as a flash,
into the night,
not making a crash.

So we stay up past bed time,
till eight on the dot,
ready to clap
for your work round the clock.

You help us so much,
what can we say,
to brave people like you
who are leading the way.

Doctors and Nurses! | Beth, 9

Doctors and Nurses,
Working all day.
We need to say thank you,
In some sort of way.

So, every Thursday,
At eight on the dot.
We clap and we cheer,
You help us a lot.

You help us so much,
All day and night.
Soon it will end,
We'll be out flying kites.

When all this is over,
Full of glee,
We'll smile and wave
And have a party!

Fizz Pop Bam Land | Ella, 9

Once upon a time in Fizz bop bam land
The Gnonk Gnonks were knock knock knocking
And the rainbow flower was stock stock stocking in sunshine
laying silent waiting for the ripe Rainbow fruit to bloom
when the rainbow fruit go boom it's sure to be doom.
With the shower comes true power,
pure delight from all those critters
Like the stars that glitters
If you go to fizz bob bam land,
Please be aware of the cockney snaps,
With their snap snap snapping abilities,
They can swallow you in one go,
Around the bend
It's all comes to an end.

From Ella Rose who likes to pose.

Fizz Pop Bam Land | Ishmael, 10

In the Fizz Bop Bam,
The Gnonk Gnonks sang,
Whilst the Cockneysnap banged,
And showed its big fang.

To come and save the day,
Whilst everyone said hooray,
It was Rainbow tree,
Who jumped in very free.

She came and slayed the monster,
On the hard floor,
To show the monsters pain,
He screamed aloud – roar!

To celebrate this victory,
The Fizz Pop flower sprouted out smarties,
While rainbow tree showed of her karate,
Everyone else had a party.

Butterfly | Jamie, 10

Big that is what people say when you're "fat" but they're just...

Ugly because they're jealous they don't have an amazing body like yours

Troll. They are just trolling you, just so you don't succeed in life because their...

Tangle. The reason why I say tangle is because they're a knot who won't undo

Easy. It's easy for them to hurt you and leave you with all the...

Rage you have from them hurting you, you build a lot of rage and anger

Fly. We all wish we can fly away, but we can't because the past will follow

Lie. That's a lie, you can go and have a fresh start, but that's just in movies

You. You be you and don't let anyone rain on your parade!

BE A BUTTERFLY!

Ice Cream Everyone | Dylan, 11

Ice cream everyone one!

Can you see?

Enormous range of flavours

Chocolate, vanilla and strawberry

Ready as can be

Either that or delicious lollies

A fab will do perfect

More candy floss please

Everybody needs it in their life

Videos can prove

Even if you don't think so, it's true!

Really, it does!

You tube must have it...

Oh yeah, back to the poem!

Never stop being iconic, maybe ironic but never moronic

Even when the ice cream van has GONE!

Key workers
we thank them with all our hearts
as they have been helping with their part
doctors, nurses, surgeons we cack them for
granted
they're risking their lives for the UK
so we thank them, to key workers!

Shopkeepers have customers every day they
Could be giving their lives away
Germs are spreading more and more and the
Shopkeepers have to was the gemy door

Train and the bus driver have to be cautious
Because now people are travelling every day and
Now public transport is not the way
Because it gets crowded in buses and you
Need to keep two meters apart

The police has to catch those dirty criminals
And the car is way too tight but they have to
Stay aaway with all their mighty might

The fire fighters have to save the people in
danger and the cats from up the trees and
they are working hard together

so key workers what we are trying to say
is that you're always there to save the day so
thank you from all of us and if you need us we're at the rainbow

Friends | Anais, 12

I miss you more than you can imagine
Why did all of this have to happen?

I miss the jokes you used to tell
And how you helped me up when I fell
I miss the way you made me smile
And when you'd stay at my house for a while
I feel bored without you here
But soon you shall be near
I'll go to the park with you,
And we'll buy some new clothes too!

The cinema we shan't forget,
And all the happy places that we've met
This message is from me to you,
And I hope that I shall see you soon!

Friends we will forever be,
Even when we are set free!

My Letter | Billie

Dear Amy-May
There's no need to blame yourself
For something that happened unexpectedly
You have a loving and caring family to help you when you might need it the most
You have your nan, sister Emily and mum and Darren living in your house
Including the dog Leo, and your uncle Elliot.
You also have the rest of your family,
Who are probably willing to help you get through the hard and difficult day.
Or not difficult days. They're always there for you.

Untitled | Lila, 14

COVID-19 why so mighty
All the key workers the happy smirks.
Who laugh at the people
Who say we can't do this.
Waffle on they say,
Because we do what we may.

Heroes come in many times and places,
On the frontline, or on a normal day,
Because they don't just lay, they say,
Hey we can do this,
We can make this fly like a plane!

To Crave the touch of someone you love | Amelie, 14

A wonderful thing
touch.

We take advantage
of touch
Because it is one
of the most important things
a human needs
to survive.

But this pandemic
took away just that.
To stop a spread
of a virus.

So when we can
we can't take
advantage of
a beautiful thing
touch...

To My Future Children | Iris, 14

I'll show them pictures of people wearing masks.
I'll show them all the two meter stayers and the supermarket runs.
I'll show them Somers Town.

I'll tell them of the tree cutters and cats hiding under cars.
I might even, with a teary face, tell them how the NHS's funding was deprived.
I'll tell them how PPE was scarce, but we got through it all, with online learning, zoom meetings and chats.

I'll tell them of the rows and the moments we came together.
I'll tell them of the people we now remember to thank.
The key workers and front line helpers.

I'll tell them of lock down history and Somers Town's past.

I hope I'll be able to show them the lunettes and plaques. The finials and pubs.
I'll tell them of the lock down runs, birthdays, the things I learnt and the amount of movies I watched.

They might ask me what was normal life before this or how it was in lock down state.
They'll ask me things I do not know.

I'll say it was an uncertain time.

Threads | Alma, 15

we should not stitch in ourselves,
but open our tools to the
pattern of others. ready to delight,
joining first together not within
what use is a patchwork
with only one patch
to greater understanding

Untitled | Alma, 15

tempting me with the clatter
wool and wood
like the hat; I liked to laugh
could I?
curiously shook it
and I smiled as the sun