

## “Let's do a poem together”

In early November 2009, Michael Rosen spent a morning with Year 6 pupils at Tidemill Primary School in Deptford, south east London. This is the lesson plan he used to encourage the children to write and perform their own poetry.

The theme of the poem was leaving somewhere in a hurry and taking things with you. He asked the class to imagine that they had to leave their home suddenly and with only a few seconds to gather things together so they would have to leave many things behind. They could only take things that were important and essential.

The children were asked to choose five things that they would take with them – objects, words or feelings – and write a sentence about each. Each sentence would then be linked by a repeated rhythmic chorus.

The following is the five key areas he asked them to write about with some of the prompts he used to help them focus.

### A memory

- A personal memory which you will never forget

### Something that someone has said to you that has stuck in your mind

- Perhaps a piece of advice from a family member
- Something funny or happy
- Something sad or serious

### A wish or a hope for the future

- Something you really hope for

### Say one thing about yourself

- What's your identity?
- What's the story behind your name?

### Take one object

- Something from your home which you will miss
- Imagine you are describing its importance to someone else

The session then moved on to constructing the poem

### The chorus

- Make it easy to remember, to hold in your head
- Make it rhythmic, almost like a chant

### Switching things around

- Experiment
- Play with the order of the five sentences