

What to do today

IMPORTANT Parent or Carer – Read this page with your child and check that you are happy with what they have to do and any weblinks or use of internet.

1. Write about pictures

- Look closely at the set of *Images*.
- Write on *Sentences 1* and *2*, to say what could be happening in each of these pictures.
- Can you think of a story that could connect all these images? Try making it up and telling it to someone else.

2. Read and listen to a poem

- Read the poem, *The Great Realisation*.
- Highlight the poem to show your favourite lines and phrases.
- Watch the performance of the poem:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nw5KQMXDiM4&t=5s>
- Was it as you expected it to be?

3. Write about the poem

- Read *Poetry Questions* and think about your answers.
- Write some of your answers in clear sentences.

Well done. Show the film of the poem to an adult. Ask them about it using Poetry Questions. How are their answers similar/different to yours?

Try this extra challenge

- Read *Lockdown* by the poet laureate: Simon Armitage.
- Research to find out about what a yashka is and about Eyam, Emmott Sydall and Rowland Torre.
- Try to answer the *Poetry Questions* about this poem.
- This article might help you understand more about the poem
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/mar/21/lockdown-simon-armitage-writes-poem-about-coronavirus-outbreak>

Images

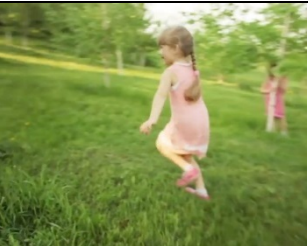


Sentences 1

What is happening? What could the story be behind this image?

Sentences 2

The Great Realisation

*Tell me the one about the virus again
Then, I'll go to bed*

But my boy you're growing weary,
sleepy thoughts about your head

*Please that one is my favourite
I promise, just once more*

Okay, snuggle down my boy
though I know you know full well
the story starts before then
in a world I once would dwell.

It was a world of waste and wonder
of poverty and plenty
back before we understood
why hindsight's 2020.

You see the people came up with
companies
to trade across all lands
but they swelled and got much bigger
than we ever could have planned.

We'd always had our wants
but now it got so quick
you could have anything you dreamed of
in a day and with a click.

We noticed families that stopped talking
that's not to say they never spoke
but the meaning must have melted
and the work-life balance broke.



And the children's eyes grew square
and every toddler had a phone,
they filtered out the imperfections
but amidst the noise; they felt alone.

and every day the skies grew thicker
till we couldn't see the stars
so we flew in planes to find them
while down below we filled our cars.

we'd drive around all day in circles
we'd forgotten how to run
we swapped the grass for tarmac
Shrunk the parks till there were none.

we filled the sea with plastic
because our waste was never capped
until each day when you went fishing
you'd pull them out already wrapped

and while we drank, smoked and
gambled
our leaders taught us why
it's best to not upset the lobbies
or convenient to die.

but then in 2020
a new virus came our way
the governments reacted
and told us all to hide away.

But while we all were hidden
amidst the fear and all the while
people dusted off their instincts
they remembered how to smile.

they started clapping to say thank you
and calling up their mums
and while the car keys gathered dust
they would look forward to their runs.

and with the skies less full of voyagers
the earth began to breathe
and the beaches bore new wildlife
that scuttled off into the seas.

some people started dancing
some were singing, some were baking
we'd grown so used to bad news
but some good news was in the making.

and so when we found the cure
and were allowed to go outside
we all preferred the world we found
to the one we'd left behind

old habits became extinct
and they made way for the new
and every simple act of kindness
was now given its due.

*but why did it take a virus
to bring the people back together?*
sometimes you've got to get sick my boy
before you start feeling better

now lie down and dream of tomorrow
and all the things that we can do
and who knows if you dream hard enough
maybe some of them will come true

we now call it the great realization
and yes since then there have been many
but that's the story of how it started
and why hindsight's 2020.

By Tom Roberts

Poetry Questions

What do you like about the poem? Is there anything that you dislike?

What does the poem make you think about? Does it remind you of things you have been thinking about? Write about some of these.

What patterns can you find in the poem?

What puzzles and questions does the poem leave?

Lockdown

And I couldn't escape the waking dream
of infected fleas

in the warp and weft of soggy cloth
by the tailor's hearth

in ye olde Eyam.
Then couldn't un-see

the Boundary Stone,
that cock-eyed dice with its six dark holes,

thimbles brimming with vinegar wine
purging the plagued coins.

Which brought to mind the sorry story
of Emmott Syddall and Rowland Torre,

star-crossed lovers on either side
of the quarantine line

whose wordless courtship spanned the river
till she came no longer.

But slept again,
and dreamt this time

of the exiled yaksha sending word
to his lost wife on a passing cloud,

a cloud that followed an earthly map
of camel trails and cattle tracks,

streams like necklaces,
fan-tailed peacocks, painted elephants,

embroidered bedspreads
of meadows and hedges,

bamboo forests and snow-hatted peaks,
waterfalls, creeks,

the hieroglyphs of wide-winged cranes
and the glistening lotus flower after rain,

the air
hypnotically see-through, rare,

the journey a ponderous one at times, long and slow
but necessarily so.

Simon Armitage