

ACTIVITY 7

STUDYING CRICKET POETRY

Teacher Notes

Aims: to learn that cricket has been the subject of much creative literature, including different styles of poetry
to learn that poetry was a more common medium of communicating ideas and of entertainment in the days before electronic media
to learn about different rhyming patterns
to be able to identify the main ideas of poems
to be able to write a poem around a main idea

Related Skills: speaking in small groups and to an audience
listening
reading comprehension
writing poetry

Time: class based – two 70 minute lessons
cricket ground based – 45 minutes

Resources: five cricket poems

1. 'A Time Will Come' by Arnold Wall
2. 'Village Cricket' by Gerald Bullett
3. 'Epitaph' by George McWilliam
4. 'Are You Active?' by The Ladies Committee, East Lancashire Cricket Club
5. 'The Pitch at Night' by GD Martineau

five cricket poems with questions
Cricket Poetry – worksheet on rhyming patterns and main ideas
Cricket Poetry: Using Your Senses to Describe Surroundings
text book containing examples of rhyming poems

Activity 1: 1. Read through the five cricket poems as a class.

2. Set question 3 on the worksheet 'Cricket Poetry', identifying the main idea of each poem. Ask children to support each decision with one clue or piece of evidence from the poem.

Children could attempt this as individuals then discuss their answers in pairs or small groups before reporting back to the class.

3. Conduct a reporting back session, asking for clues/evidence from each poem to support the answers.



Activity 2: 1. Ask children to identify a pair of words from a poem which rhyme, then to suggest other words which rhyme with these two.

2. Teach/revise rhyming patterns using several examples from a school poetry book.
3. Set question 2 on the worksheet 'Cricket Poetry', identifying the numbers of the poems according to their rhyming patterns.

Activity 3: 1. Organise children into groups of two or three. Ensure that each group has an appointed scribe and chair/spokesperson.

2. Allocate the five poems to groups around the class. Some poems might be studied by more than one group.
Explain that groups are to:
answer questions which should help to promote a more detailed understanding of their poem
plan a short talk about the poem, particularly about elements of content and style which may not have been immediately obvious from the class's first read-through, using their answers as support
report back to the class about what they have learned.
3. Set the activity and go round to support groups. Groups which finish early could begin to study one of the other poems.
4. Chair a reporting back session. Ensure that the rest of the class have a copies of all the poems. Allow groups which have studied the same poem to report in succession.

Activity 4: Teach this activity immediately prior to the visit to the ground, and ensure that group leaders are familiar with the points covered.

1. Remind children of the content and purposes of the cricket poem

they have studied:

written at different times, in terms of decade and time of day
some describing cricketers, some concentrating more on the
cricket match

describing the cricket ground

about an issue – supporting the club by helping in various ways
persuading, reporting, giving opinions, describing, praising,
criticising

humorous, solemn, content, angry, hopeful

2. Inform children that they are to write a short poem inspired by the surroundings of the cricket ground they are going to visit. As it is likely that the poem will include description of surroundings, provide the children with the resource sheet 'Cricket Poetry: Using Your Senses to Describe Surroundings'. All of the senses, including taste to describe a 'cricket tea' – are potentially relevant.



At the ground:

3. Group leaders can:

quickly re-cap the variety of content and purpose of poems studied
remind children of their five senses and to recap the resource sheet
'Cricket Poetry: Using Your Senses to Describe Surroundings'
discuss some observations about the surroundings.
set the task of planning and drafting the poem.

At School

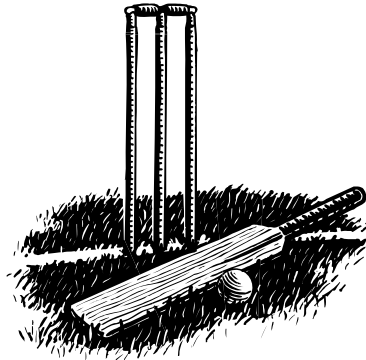
4. Children can refine their poems by re-drafting and producing a best copy of their poem, possibly typed and supported by sketches or photographs of the ground.
5. Conduct a session in which:
children read their poems out to the class
others comment positively on what they like and/or think is good
about each poem
children explain the main idea, purpose and style of their poem.

Speaking
The range should include:

8a	reading aloud.
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Listening
The range should include opportunities for pupils to listen to:

9a	live talks/readings/presentations.
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ENGLISH: En2: Reading

Knowledge, skills and understanding:

Reading strategies

To read with fluency, accuracy and understanding, pupils should be taught to use:

1d	contextual understanding.
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Understanding texts

Pupils should be taught to:

2a	use inference and deduction
2b	look for meaning beyond the literal
2c	make connections between different parts of a text (for example, how stories begin and end, what has been included and omitted in information writing).

Reading for information

Pupils should be taught to:

3a	scan texts to find information
3c	obtain specific information through detailed reading.

Literature

To develop understanding and appreciation of literary texts, pupils should be taught to:

4a	recognise the choice, use and effect of figurative language, vocabulary and patterns of language
4e	evaluate ideas and themes that broaden perspectives and extend thinking
4f	consider poetic forms and their effects

4g	express preferences and support their views by reference to texts
4h	respond imaginatively, drawing on the whole text and other reading
4i	read poems aloud.

Non-fiction and non-literary texts

To develop understanding and appreciation of non-fiction and non-literary texts, pupils should be taught to:

5c	identify words associated with reason, persuasion, argument, explanation, instruction and description
5g	engage with challenging and demanding subject matter.

Breadth of study

7	During the key stage, pupils should be taught the Knowledge, skills and understanding through the following ranges of literature and non-fiction and non-literary texts.
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Literature

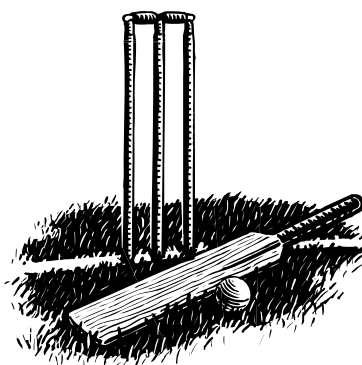
The range should include:

8c	a range of good quality modern poetry
8d	classic poetry
8e	texts drawn from a variety of cultures and traditions.

Non-fiction and non-literary texts

The range should include:

9b	print information materials (for example, textbooks).
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ENGLISH: En3: Writing

Knowledge, skills and understanding:

Composition

Pupils should be taught to:

1a	choose form and content to suit a particular purpose (for example, notes to read or organise thinking, plans for action)
1b	broaden their vocabulary and use it in inventive ways

1c	use language and style that are appropriate to the reader
1d	use and adapt the features of a form of writing, drawing on their reading
1e	use features of layout, presentation and organisation.

Planning and drafting

To develop their writing on paper and on screen, pupils should be taught to:

2a	plan – note and develop initial ideas
2b	draft – develop ideas from the plan into structured written text
2c	revise – change and improve the draft.
2d	proofread – check the draft for spelling and punctuation errors, omissions and repetition
2e	present – prepare a neat, correct and clear final copy
2f	discuss and evaluate their own and others' writing.

Handwriting and presentation

Pupils should be taught to:

5b	use different forms of handwriting for different purposes (for example, a clear, neat hand for finishes presented work, a faster script for notes).
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Breadth of study

8	During the key stage, pupils should be taught the Knowledge, skills and understanding through addressing the following range of purposes, readers and forms of writing.
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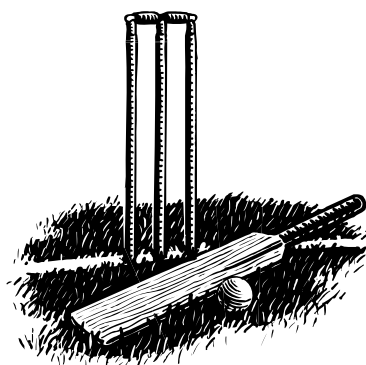
The range of purposes for writing should include:

9a	to imagine and explore feelings and ideas, focusing on creative uses of language and how to interest the reader
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10	Pupils should also be taught to use writing to help their thinking, investigating, organising and learning.
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11	The range of readers for writing should include teachers, the class, the wider community.
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12	The range of forms of writing should include poems.
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HISTORY

Knowledge, skills and understanding:

Chronological understanding

Pupils should be taught to:

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|----|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1a | place events, people and changes into correct periods of time |
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Knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past

Pupils should be taught to:

- | | |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2a | about characteristic features of the periods and societies studied, including the ideas, beliefs, attitudes and experiences of men, women and children in the past |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Historical interpretation

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|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 | Pupils should be taught to recognise that the past is represented and interpreted in different ways, and to give reasons for this. |
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Breadth of study:

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| 6 | During the key stage, pupils should be taught the Knowledge, skills and understanding through a local history study, three British history studies, a European history study and a world history study. |
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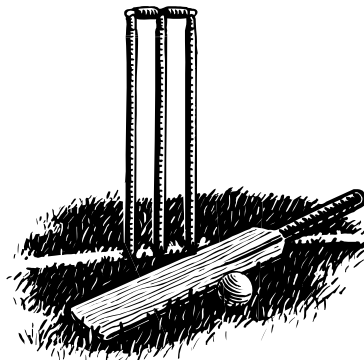
Local history study

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7 | A study investigating how an aspect in the local area has changed over a long period of time, <i>or</i> how the locality was affected by a significant national <i>or</i> local event <i>or</i> development <i>or</i> by the work of a significant individual. |
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Victorian Britain or Britain since 1930

Teachers can choose between a study of Victorian Britain *or* Britain since 1930.

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|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11a | Victorian Britain: A study of the impact of significant individuals, events and changes in work and transport on the lives of men, women and children from different sections of society. |
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Questions

1. Study the rhyming patterns of the first four lines of each poem.
2. From the first four lines, write the number(s) of:
 - a. the three poems which have the rhyming pattern
A, B, A, B ___ ___ ___
 - b. the poem which has the rhyming pattern A, A, B, C ___
 - c. the three poems which have the rhyming pattern
A, B, C, B ___ ___ ___
3. Think about the main idea in each poem. Write the number of the poem which is about:
 - a. a dead cricketer ___
 - b. looking forward to a time when people can watch cricket ___
 - c. different members of the local community playing cricket ___
 - d. stillness at a cricket ground ___
 - e. questioning members' commitment to help their club ___

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1. A Time Will Come by Arnold Wall

A time will come,
A time will come,
When the people sit with a peaceful heart,
Watching the beautiful, beautiful game,
That is battle, and service, and sport, and art.

1. What clues are there in the first three lines that the poem was written in wartime?

2. How does the poet emphasise his love of cricket in line 4?

3. The words 'battle', 'service', 'sport' and 'art' are used to describe cricket in the last line. Which two of these could also relate to war?

4. How does the order of these four words help to suggest the passage of time from war to peace for which the poet is longing?

5. Members of the armed forces – the army, navy and RAF serve their country. Who could cricketers be said to 'serve'?

6. Write down one action in or aspect of a game of cricket which might be described as 'art'.

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STUDYING CRICKET

POETRY

2. **Village Cricket** by Gerald Bullet

Flowing together by devious channels
From farm and brickyard, forest and dene,
Thirteen men in glittering flannels
Move to their stations out on the green.

Long-limbed Waggoner, stern, unbudging,
Stands like a rock behind the bails.
Dairyman umpire, gravely judging,
Spares no thought for his milking pails.

Bricklayer bowls, a perfect length.
Grocery snicks and sneaks a run.
Law, swiping with all his strength,
Is caught by Chemist at mid-on.

Two to the boundary, a four and a six,
Put the spectators in fear of their lives:
Shepherd the slogger is up to his tricks,
Blithely unwary of weans and wives.

Lord of the manor makes thirty-four.
Parson contributes, smooth and trim,
A cautious twelve to the mounting score:
Leg-before wicket disposes of him.

Patient, dramatic, serious, genial,
From over to over the game goes on,
Weaving a pattern of hardy perennial
Civilization under the sun.



Vocabulary

V1: devious: winding, twisting

V2: long-limbed: long arms and legs

V4: Blithely: carelessly or casually

V4: weans: young children

V6: genial: kindly, cheerful, friendly, sociable

V6: perennial: lasting a long time, usually used in reference to plants

2. Village Cricket by Gerald Bullet

1. What are the cricketers doing in the first two lines?

2. In verse 1, which words mean:

- a. country lanes _____
- b. cricketers' trousers _____
- c. positions _____
- d. cricket field? _____

3. From verse 2 to verse 5, how many cricketers are identified by their positions in local life?



4. What are the occupations of the:

- a. wicketkeeper _____
- b. umpire _____
- c. fielder at mid-on _____
- d. batsman who was lbw for 12? _____

5. In verse 4, why are the 'weans and wives' in danger?

6. From reading the last verse, do you think the poet likes village cricket? Give one reason why you think this.

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POETRY

3. Epitaph by George McWilliam

As in life so in death lies a bat of renown,
Slain by a lorry (three ton);
His innings is over, his bat is laid down:
To the end a poor judge of a run.

Vocabulary

renown: fame or high reputation



1. Use your dictionary to look up the word 'epitaph'. What does it mean?

2. Where would you expect to find an epitaph?

3. Was the cricketer who is the subject of the poem a batsman or a bowler?

4. How did he die?

5. What is the meaning of the line: 'His innings is over, his bat is laid down'?

6. The poet has identified a cricketing weakness which might have been apparent in the dead man's attempt to cross the road. What aspect of batting was his weakness?

7. Write down a list of similarities between crossing the road and running between the wickets – there are at least four.

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POETRY



4. **Are You Active?** by The Ladies Committee, East Lancashire C.C.

Are you an active member
The kind that would be missed,
Or are you just content to say
Your name is on the list?

Do you attend the meetings
And mingle with the crowd,
Or would you rather stay at home
Complaining long and loud?

Do you give up a little time
And help to make things tick,
Or leave the work to just a few
And talk about the "Clique"?

There's quite a programme scheduled
Which means success if done,
And it can be accomplished
With the help of everyone.

So come to all the functions
And help with hand and heart,
Don't be just a number
But take an active part.

Think it over member
Are you right or wrong?
Are you an active member
Or do you just belong?

Vocabulary

V2: mingle: mix

V3: Clique: small group of people who exclude others, sometimes favouring themselves over others in opinions expressed and decisions taken

V4: functions: events, usually those organised to raise money

4. Are You Active? by The Ladies Committee, East Lancashire C.C.

1. This poem appeared in the programme for the East Lancashire v Todmorden match in 1991. To whom is the poem written?

2. What type of sentence is used in verses 1, 2, 3 and 6 to make the readers think?

3. Two types of event which active members might attend are mentioned in the poem. What are they?



4. Read the last line. What would the writers say is the difference between belonging to a cricket club and being part of a cricket club?

5. Name two other organisations which need active volunteers to run them.

6. What are your thoughts and feelings about the main ideas in this poem?

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POETRY

5. The Pitch at Night by G.D. Martineau

The sunset brings the twilight chill
That steals, all noiseless, on the air.
The wind-freed world is standing still,
The smoothed, worn ground looks strangely bare.

The bowler's run has blurred the crease,
Which glints, a dim and spectral white,
Half sad, half comforting, this peace
That settled o'er the ground at night.

Steps give a faintly eerie hiss
On less tried turf towards the rough
(was I too hard on Jones's miss,
Or was I not quite hard enough?)

Here is an ancient, useless pad.
The score-board stares, a square of ink.
Some of this outfield's rather bad. . . .
It's colder now; to bed, I think.

Vocabulary

V2: spectral: ghostlike

V2: o'er: over

V3: eerie: gloomy and strange or frightening

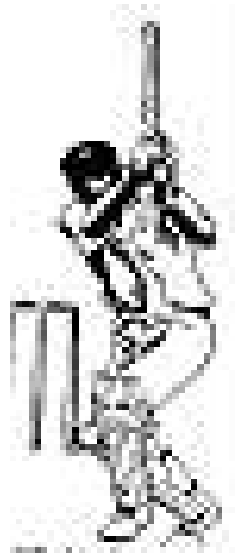


5. The Pitch at Night by G.D. Martineau

1. Write down one adjective of your own which describes the cricket ground in this poem.

2. Why are the white lines of the crease 'blurred'?

3. Which word in verse 3 describes the sound of footsteps on the grass?



4. Who dropped a catch?

5. What are the shape and colour of the score-board?

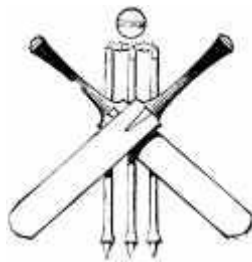
6. Which two words, one in the first line and one in the last line, link the same idea?

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POETRY

Using Your Senses to Describe Your Surroundings



The following checklist is useful when describing surroundings. It can help to ensure that you consider all aspects which you experience through your senses. You can use the sheet to list describing words which you think of.

Your senses are: sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste.

Sight

size _____

shape _____

colour _____

shade (light, dark) _____

movement _____

Hearing

volume (loud/quiet)_____

pitch (high/low)_____

length of sound_____

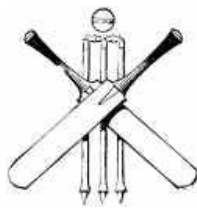
timbre/quality of sound (e.g. smooth, rumbling)_____

Touch

texture (rough/smooth)_____

pressure (hard/soft)_____

temperature (hot/cold)_____



Smell – best described by making comparisons e.g. smelled minty, and by strength/weakness of smell

Taste – best described by making comparisons e.g. tasted salty, and by strength/weakness of taste

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Answers

Rhyming Patterns and Main Ideas

2a 2, 3, 5

b 2, 3, 5

c 4,

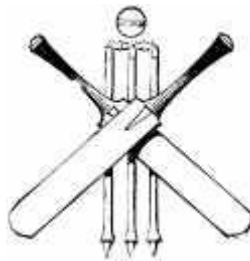
3a 3

b 1

c 2

d 5

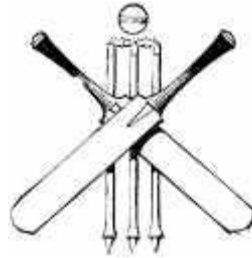
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1. A Time Will Come

1. The poem looks forward to a time when people can 'sit with a peaceful heart' to watch cricket – by inference they cannot do that at the time the poem was written.
2. The poet's love of cricket is emphasised by repetition of the word 'beautiful'.
3. The words 'battle' and 'service' link the themes of cricket and war.
4. The ideas suggested by the words battle, service, sport and art become less militaristic and combative and more peaceful as the line progresses. They move away from the themes of army and war to more peaceful activities. They also move from duty to leisure. (they also suggest some of the contrasting aspects of cricket which make the game attractive)
5. Cricketers could be said to serve their clubs.
6. Any of cricket's graceful actions – a fluid bowling action, a batsman's graceful drive or an athletic piece of fielding – or any action performed with finesse – a batsman's delicate deflection, an accurately flighted or spinning delivery, or a reflex

stumping by the wicketkeeper – might be described as ‘art’. Many cricket grounds are very beautiful and their picturesque settings could be described as ‘art’, as could white flannelled players against the backcloth of the green sward.



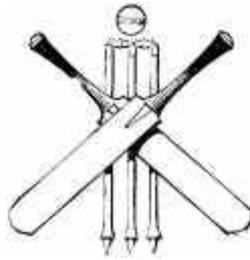
2. Village Cricket

1. The cricketers are travelling to the ground along country lanes and paths in the first two lines.
- 2a. channels means country lanes
- b. flannels are cricketers trousers
- c. stations means positions
- d. green means cricket field
3. Nine cricketers are identified by their positions in local life. (waggoner and dairyman in verse 2; bricklayer, grocer, ‘law’ and chemist in verse 3; shepherd in verse 4; lord of the manor and parson in verse 5)
- 4a. waggoner is the wicketkeeper
- b. dairyman is the umpire
- c. chemist is the fielder at mid-on
- d. parson was lbw for 12
5. The ‘weans and wives’ are in danger of being hit by the ball which the shepherd is slogging around the ground.
6. The poet likes village cricket. He lists two pairs of adjectives, the first contrasting with the second but both positive about the game – ‘patient, dramatic’ and ‘serious, genial’. The last line, ‘Civilization under the sun’, suggests the whole of life is there enjoying itself. This reinforces the many different people who have come together to play and the many contrasting moods/qualities hinted at in the first line of this verse which they display and experience during the game.

3. Epitaph

1. An epitaph is words written in memory of someone who is dead.
2. Epitaphs are usually found on gravestones.
3. The cricketer was a batsman.
4. He died when he was knocked down by a lorry.
5. The line ‘His innings is over, his bat is laid down’ means he is dead.
6. Running between the wickets was his cricketing weakness; he was a ‘poor judge of a run’.
7. Similarities between running between the wickets and crossing the road include:
 - deciding when it is safe to go
 - not being safe until you have reached the other side

the kerb being like the crease, marking the beginning and end of the journey –
once you have left to set off you are unsafe and once you have crossed to
complete the journey you are safe again
sometimes having lots of time to saunter across and sometimes having little
time and having to hurry
both involving judgment of time speed and distance
both requiring travel in a straight line as the shortest route



4. Are You Active?

1. The poem is written to the members of the East Lancashire Cricket Club, particularly those who do not work for the club or support its activities.
2. Questions are used in verses 1, 2, 3 and 6 to make the readers think.
3. Meetings and functions are events which members might attend.
4. Members who are part of a cricket club work for the club and join in activities; members who belong to a cricket club do not work for the club or join in the activities.
5. Open – children might suggest:
sports, music or dramatic societies
other community groups such as Needy Sick or the Citizens Advice Bureau
charities such as Cancer Research.
6. Open – children may agree that it is better to join in if you are a member of a club, and certainly not complain about those who work for the club. Those in charge should, though, make less regular attendees welcome. Some people might not have the time or the physical capacity to join in and feel alienated by this poem because they are doing all they can by paying their membership fee.

5. The Pitch at Night

1. Open – children might choose an adjective to suggest any of the following:
stillness, quiet, calm, peace
darkness, shadows, dimness
ghostliness, spookiness
coolness
2. The white lines have been blurred by the footmarks of the bowler.
3. 'Hiss' describes the sound of footsteps on the grass.
4. Jones dropped a catch.
5. The score-board is square and black.
6. 'Chill' and 'colder' link the same idea in the first and last lines.