

# ABOUT US

As part of About Us, a team of poets delivered poetry workshops in primary schools in each of the show's locations. The workshops explored some of the many ways life is connected across the universe. Each class we worked with created a collaborative poem exploring topics like cosmology, nature, identity and the climate. These poems were written by schools in Derry-Londonderry and Strabane, created with poets Abby Oliveira, Áine Ní Ghlinn, Charles Lang, Maria McManus, and Mícheál McCann.

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# ABOUT US

Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir  
poem created with Áine Ní Ghlinn

## An Duine agus an Domhan

Is mise an Domhan  
A bhí glas agus gorm  
Ach faraor anois  
Níl dath ar bith orm

Is mise an bláth  
A bhíodh glas agus buí  
Tá na plandaí ag fáil bháis  
Tá siad lag agus liath

Is mise an abhainn  
A ritheann tríd an domhan  
Tá an plaisteach ag fás  
Tá na héisc ag fáil bháis

Is mise an t-éan a d'éitil abhaile  
Chuig mo chlann sa chrann  
Ach níl aon chrann fágtha  
Níl mo chlann ann

Is mise an scamall, an scamall sa spéir  
Bím ag amharc ar na daoine go léir  
Scríosann siad an t-uisce agus an féar  
Deora fearthainne ag titim tríd an aer

Is mise an Duine atá beo ar an Domhan  
Muid ag marú na n-ainmhithe  
Muid ag gearradh na gcrann  
Caithfimid cuidiú nó ní beidh an Domhan ann

Caithfimid a bheith cúramach nó ní bheidh sé linn  
Amharc air anois – tá an Domhan tinn

# ABOUT US

Is mise an Duine atá beo ar an Domhan  
Caithfidimid a bheith cúramach nó ní bheidh sé ann

# ABOUT US

Long Tower Primary School  
poem created with Abby Oliveira

## Perfect Day Soup

/.

My brother is crazy!  
He crashes he bashes he smashes!

Mum is like the Moon,  
she holds the family together.  
We would be lost without her.  
She's strong like an army person.

My family would be  
bits of stardust  
all coming back  
together.

//.

My cousin Shea is going to the park:  
down the slide, laughing, shouting,  
swimming, football, shining Sun,  
roaring friends – too warm!  
Like gravity, it pulls me in.

Shea likes to play with his Playstation.  
He lives with his turtle  
at the International Wheelie-Bin Station.

///.

Playing in the park, I am the Sun  
in my new suit. There comes a frown  
when we lose.

Mum says I look really cute,  
her hair is curly sunshine.

When all these ingredients  
are put together it makes  
a Perfect Day Soup.

# ABOUT US

Long Tower Primary School  
poem created with Abby Oliveira

The Marvellous Moon is Mad

/.

My name is Energy Efficient Earth,  
hear my words!

Mrs Mars majestically mopped  
and mud went everywhere!  
Planets pack padlocks  
to protect their pineapples.  
Parrots eat perfect parsnips  
and the marvellous Moon is mad.

//.

The mallard told the Moon  
to wear a mask for a magic trick;  
Mallard said he was a mature magician.

Mason turned into a merman overnight.  
Moon meant to move to Mars.  
"Give me the power of gravity or  
give me five-hundred sweets!" moaned Mercury,  
whose handbag was so pretty.

///.

Silly stars slacking about  
slapping the other stars.  
Silky, spooky, bright and unique  
shining, shone, sleeping.

Uncle Jacob lost his job as a judge,  
great gravity gorged on the ghastly green goblins,  
glowing like gluten-free gelato

the Moon is in the mood  
to play in some mud.

# ABOUT US

## Model Primary School

poem created with Mícheál McCann

When I get taller,  
I could work in the Craft Village,  
I could move away, could stay,  
could rule the world, have equality.

Could live in a bright forest,  
it could be wet, be cold, be scary:  
nature. And I could eat  
berries, cherries!

When I get taller,  
I could reach the highest peaks,  
take care of sheep!  
Touch the skies...

I could stop the rainfall,  
could dance in it, could play in it.  
Lots of trees. A place within a place.  
Could stomp in the mud freely.

When...  
I'll find my family.  
There will be world peace, maybe.  
A life within a life.  
Dye my hair any colour.  
My life's still being stitched together.

# ABOUT US

Oakgrove Integrated Primary School  
poem created with Mícheál McCann

## The Turnover Tree

We were all one thing once,  
even this turnover tree  
we imagine planting  
last spring in the school garden.

Looking outside at rain  
from the kitchen sink  
thinking about land,  
soil and the winding river.

We could have Derry more  
or Derry less. The world  
is in awful danger.  
Will there still be chips?

And people to share them with?  
The turnover tree  
grows pastry fruit  
like ruby treasures,

and its branches move  
whish, whish, whish,  
like all the trees in St. Columb's.  
The best part is the quiet.

We like playing video games,  
sometimes you have to work to survive,  
sometimes you have to hide,  
sometimes you have to do the right thing.

When we get older  
what will we not have to imagine any more?  
I was somewhere, then I went home  
where all things are.

# ABOUT US

Oakgrove Integrated Primary School  
poem created with Mícheál McCann

## Manifesto: Into the Future

This big place we live in,  
a gift of rain. Big  
tall walls, the bridges,  
the trees in the parks.  
The future will be hard to imagine.

Will there be tigers? Love?  
Time? A galaxy still?  
The world is not our present.  
Tomorrow is not a promise,  
and we have no flying cars to save us yet.

In the future will we still  
be friends and speak?  
Will someone's shiny trash  
have become our only treasure?  
Let's imagine new ways to be kind.

Let's love people; our pets; home.  
May we take joy out of small things  
close to us, even imagination.  
A swimming pool full of water,  
then dreams, then Orbies, then cheese.

Is what we want in that place?  
Time coming?  
Will sickness be gone?  
No more money to war?  
Keep at it. Keep at it.

Things in this world aren't like Oreos.  
Let's take what we need

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no more. Don't forget  
what it is we need.  
We won't give up

while we have this gift  
of a slim, short pencil.

# ABOUT US

Rosemount Primary School  
poem created with Maria McManus

## In the night...

I see everything –  
people setting up their cameras...  
I roll up in a ball and go to sleep,  
I am a bridge of books, dark and silent.  
Smell the saltwater underneath me.  
I touch the Derry-side and the Waterside.

My sky can hear strong wind  
and the small birds saying good night,  
see the bright stars cloning,  
and my people below in the small town,  
dogs chasing  
my aurora like a beautiful set in the sky.  
I see fire.

My sea is an ocean wishing it could walk on land.  
Here are my jellyfish, in tastes of seawater,  
touching people, hurting them.

In the night I show my true form. I am a tree,  
the river washing my feet,  
the scent of loneliness  
roaming free through the grass  
like a wolf.  
I can smell the death of deer.  
In the night I hunt my prey, see stars  
I touch the moss, I touch cows,  
I touch ice with my freezing cold paw, see the snow.

I am a grey heron. I smell of salt water.  
I feel the air blow as we soar together  
and taste the scent of rubber car wheels,

# ABOUT US

or sit in my tree, hoping nothing finds me.

I wish I lived in a land with nothing trying to kill me.

I see the massive forest

hear the animals talking to each other

I taste of the grass and the water I flow through,  
my flock around me while we fly.

At night I see stars

red pandas, bamboo, monkeys, a dragon,

birds twitting and snakes hissing –

in the night,

wolves howling, owls hooting.

All asleep, the darkness is crawling up on me

I am traumatised. I am as still as a building.

I could move around the city, but I am stuck.

I wish I could control myself, but I can't.

Other people control me, like an aeroplane;

if I crash, I hear people running away

and abandoning me.

I wish I could stay, go for a nice fly above the clouds

taste the wet rain, with my flowers growing

and the bees coming gracefully to get my pollen

I want to find food and good water

and see the sun rising and setting every day and night.

Stop cutting trees down. Stop cutting down trees.

# ABOUT US

Rosemount Primary School  
poem created with Maria McManus

## Out of Space and the Whole World

In the morning, I see all of the stars,  
big blue fish, whales, dolphins,  
the clear sky, feel the breezy wind.  
I wake and go out to hunt.  
I wish for things I don't know.  
I wish I had more attention –  
bees, people's hands, and the wind moving me.

I'm fresh and happy, but sometimes I feel lonely.  
Outside in the dark damp puddles –  
grass on my paws, wind in my fur, or in snow,  
I am camouflaged  
and hiss when I sense danger  
from poachers and machines  
cutting down trees.

If I could walk, strong and elegant,  
I'd visit other gardens,  
get some water, nice clear water,  
feel my confidence slowly getting higher  
and swing tree to tree  
on slippery damp branches.  
I'd see the sun and the sun rise,  
speedy, brand new, doing tricks  
on wheels in the morning,  
or shining on prickly cactus.

I'd hunt other animals  
while they are still asleep –  
and find food for the cold, chilly winter.

I wish I had a nice cosy shelter.

# ABOUT US

I want people,  
amazed and excited people,  
kind people, having a great time.  
I want my own comfy bed  
and if I could stay forever, I would.

I try to escape but I fail.  
I want to leave to find somebody better  
but I cannot hear anything, and it makes me sad.

Stop destroying my home.

# ABOUT US

St Eugene's Primary School, Strabane

poem created with Maria McManus

## Awesome Universe

I am the earth, orbiting the sun.  
I am fearless and clever,  
smelling of salt and the midnight air,  
I am ducklings led across the sand  
and fish and turtles soaring through blue water.

I want my waves around the world.  
I am a deep and courageous fearless ocean,  
colourful and strong as a striker  
wearing new kit and boots –  
on the ball  
scoring to win.      I want the sun,  
more pink stars,  
in a blue galaxy, blue and perfect.

Here the aurora  
is the most beautiful light in the sky  
a rainbow at night, art in this world,  
looking at the pink and orange setting sun,  
beside Venus and Mars.

I am beautiful: as beautiful as a blue and white calf  
eating soft hay, as beautiful as the wind is rustling in the trees.  
I am wandering in the grass  
or forest, exploring,  
wild and brave and free, tired from the hunt,  
thirsty and unstoppable,  
and loved, but I am not your galaxy.  
See me shine, glow brightly.

I want to be praised and protected,

# ABOUT US

and for people to see how elegant I am.

I want everyone to see me and to be astonished when they do  
to be good enough for the shows  
to stand out – like a red, white and green tower  
reflecting off the water at night.

I want to taste the grass  
and grow big and strong  
because I am different.

I want to fly and never go to sleep.  
I want to light up.  
I want to win.

Take care of me. Work together to clean up,  
take litter home and win our eco-friendly battle.  
We need an eco-world, and a St. Brigid's Cross  
to protect our home from burning.

I am awesome.

# ABOUT US

St Oliver Plunkett Primary School  
poems created with Mícheál McCann

## The Derry Hood

Wherever your house  
or your favourite beach  
or walk through the city is,  
you're walking on history.  
When I'm here I feel so small,  
not for the whizzing fireworks,  
or the pulsing drums,  
but because the days are hotter  
and the rain warmer.

Do you want the future to come?  
The world won't be fixed  
with flat 7UP,  
just ask the spiny dinosaurs.  
Their hearts are broke;  
the oak grove we live in  
like fairies or nymphs  
bustles and grows  
as trees should, healthily and well.

There's so much I want to do  
so I draw a map to keep track,  
but I keep having to re-do it.  
I phone 999 but they can't sort  
climate anxiety or empty shops.  
What prescription do we need  
to sort out the future's problem?  
Our language is relentless  
and has saved us once before.

# ABOUT US

St Paul's Primary School  
poem created with Abby Oliveira

## The Centre of our Universe

Gunfire  
sword swings  
his brain is Planet Volcano.

Gravity  
lets her walk in life.  
Heaven; love it.

Blue seas and pretty pink sunsets  
music, dancing: our oxygen.  
Sweet like buttercups and  
dark skies  
slushies in the roaring hot sun

apple and magnolia trees  
waves crashing on the shore  
brain freeze

screaming

the centre of our universe.

# ABOUT US

Steelstown Primary School  
poem created with Charles Lang

## Our Universe

Many galaxies and black holes.  
Our blazing, glazing sun.  
A huge bright yellow ball.  
An inferno, a blaze of light.

The earth, beautiful earth.  
It's blue and green  
with animals and humans,  
all different sizes.

We're here in Derry city  
with the weather chilly.  
There are so many kinds  
of buildings and houses.

We celebrate St Patrick's Day,  
dress like leprechauns,  
and watch Derry Girls  
with our loving families.

# ABOUT US

Steelstown Primary School  
poem created with Charles Lang

## Derry City Hamster

Our universe, the Milky Way,  
with stardust, moons, planets.  
Uranus, Saturn, Venus, Jupiter  
Mars, Mercury, Neptune, Earth.

Starlight, bright night  
lightning booming in my bedroom  
with my brave hamster  
who likes to eat hamster food.

Together my family love  
yummy ice-cream,  
trips to the bowling alley,  
our dinner on Christmas day.

I love Derry city  
here we have amazing coffee,  
the best football club.  
And my hamster – she's cool!