

**Learning objective:** Remind ourselves about verbs and how they can give an exact impression of movement or stillness. Consider Mina's comments on school and compare them to ideas in Blake's poetry.

**Starter:**

Discuss which animals and plants students found in the description on p.46. Look at the extract together on the IWB (attached resource). Ask students to identify all the interesting verbs that the writer has used and highlight them on the IWB. Discuss what this variety does to the text and also what sort of movement it shows happening in the garden. Point out that it shows how 'alive' the garden is.

**Introduction:**

Hand out the complete version of 'The Schoolboy' and read it through. What is the poet 'saying' in the poem? Get students to highlight in one colour all the positive words used in the poem and in a different colour highlight all the negative ones. Discuss what effect the words have on the poem.

**Development:**

Read chapter 15. Look again at 'The Schoolboy' and decide why Mina might have quoted the poem at Michael. What are children described as in the poem? What is the term for this (metaphor).

**Plenary:**

Ask students to make a list of words that they might use to describe one activity that they really enjoy in one column and write a list of words of an activity that they dislike. One column might be playing a particular sport and the other might be going to the dentist. Students should share their lists either with a partner or with the rest of the class to see the different ways we describe activities, depending on whether we enjoy them or not.

I wore a pair of old gloves. I used an old pair of scissors to cut the stems that wouldn't snap. I dug down with a trowel to get at the roots. Thistle thorns stuck in my skin. There was green sap all over me. I made a big pile of weeds and a heap of stones against the house wall. I found spiders dangling from my hair and clothes. Shiny black beetles scurried from me. Centipedes squirmed down into the loosened soil. As the morning went on I cleared a wider and wider space. Dad came out and we drank some juice together. We sat against the house wall and watched blackbirds come to where I'd been working. They dug into the soil, collected worms and insects for their young, flew over the gardens and rooftops to their nests.

## The Schoolboy

I love to rise in a summer morn,  
When the birds sing on every tree;  
The distant huntsman winds his horn,  
And the sky-lark sings with me.  
Oh! what sweet company.

But to go to school in a summer morn,  
Oh! it drives all joy away;  
Under a cruel eye outworn,  
The little ones spend the day,  
In sighing and dismay.

Ah! then at times I drooping sit,  
And spend many an anxious hour.  
Nor in my book can I take delight,  
Nor sit in learning's bower,  
Worn thro' with the dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy,  
Sit in a cage and sing.  
How can a child when fears annoy,  
But droop his tender wing,  
And forget his youthful spring.

Oh! father & mother, if buds are nip'd,  
And blossoms blown away,  
And if the tender plants are strip'd  
Of their joy in the springing day,  
By sorrow and cares dismay,

How shall the summer arise in joy.  
Or the summer fruits appear,  
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy  
Or bless the mellowing year,  
When the blasts of winter appear.