



Plastic Fantastic

Poems Written and Spoken by Levi Tafari

Classroom Activities

Notes for the Teacher

Introduction

Levi Tafari is an oral poet in the urban griot tradition. That is, he takes his message from place to place, engaging young minds in his rhythmic performance and direct manner of communicating.

In this CD you can listen to 16 of Levi's poems, spoken by him. You can just pop the CD into the CD player and leave it at that. Many of those who have made up his audience over the years have asked for this CD to be made, some have even pleaded with Levi to make it. Well, here it is. Enjoy.

If, on the other hand, you also want to explore the poetry as an educational learning tool then the audio is supplemented by a series of activity sheets for use in school. The activity sheets were originally designed to be used with learners of the English language by using contemporary language and issues as a focus. They can also be used by any teacher who wants to explore the topics around which Levi writes his poetry, frequently the big issues of the day.

Each poem has two activity sheets to accompany it. The first is a pre-listening activity sheet which, as the name implies, should be done to introduce the student to the concept and the language encountered in the poem before the poem is heard. The other activity sheet simply allows the teacher and the student to follow up what they have heard and add their own voices to Levi's.

A word of caution. Don't plough through the poems and activities one after the other. Flit, butterfly-like, from one to another, pick and choose the style and the mood. While the poems and the activities set out to communicate, they also set out to entertain. Be guided by that twin aim and you won't go far wrong.

We would love to hear what exciting ideas you and your students come up with. If you want to share them with us, you can contact us through www.britlitworld.com and if we like your ideas we'll put them on our website to share with others.

Have fun.

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All the activity sheets on this CDROM are copyright © Fitch O'Connell. You may photocopy the activity sheets for use with students.



1. Reach for the Stars

Pre-listening Activities

For the first 4 questions, students are asked to express their own knowledge. It isn't until question 5 that they are asked to measure what they have noted against other criteria – and this after listening. The types of books mentioned in the poem are:

Poetry; sports; fact; magic; picture; autobiography; fiction; horror; for blind readers; romantic; fashion; war; dictionaries; science fiction; 'how to' books

Follow Up Activities

Fiction books	Factual books
Poetry	Sports
Girls	Girls
Boys	Boys
Sound effects	Sound effects
Animals	Animal
Religion	Religion
Inspiration	Inspiration
Witches	Witches
Scratch and smell	No words
No words	Autobiography
Horror	Braille
Braille	Famous
Romance	War
Outer space	Outer space
	People
	Cook
	Books on books



2. School Runnings Pre-listening Activity

Column A	Column B
1 Catch the bus to school	Avoids paying the bus fare
2 Registration	Arrives late to school Says has stomach ache Gets given detention
3 First set of lessons	Has argument with the teacher about learning about 'dead men'
4 Lunch break	Chatting up the girls Student smoke cigarettes Dennis the Menace bullies another boy
5 Final set of lessons	Takes a school, exam
6 Catch the bus home	Exhilaration at being free again

Follow up Activity

See him, yes,
The mafia, the gangster,
Rude boys rule
Dennis the Menace.
The cock of the school.
He goes up to a boy
And asks him to give him money
The boy laughs at Dennis
But Dennis doesn't think that's funny
Dennis grabs him
The boy starts to sweat
He says
'I frightened you but you haven't seen nothing yet
"Wait till four o'clock and I'm going to break your neck"
Well the atmosphere is violent
There's going to be a fight
Dennis the Menace
Is going to do it tonight.



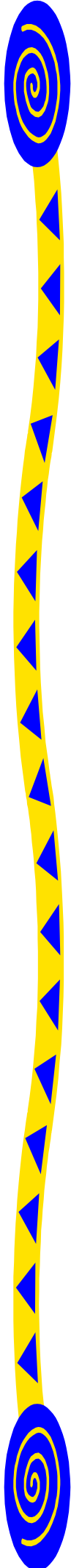
3. Bullying

Pre-listening Activity

Individual speculation. It is likely that the bank manager is going to get revenge, but just how he might do that can be the focus of a short discussion. On the other hand, some might counsel forgiveness and kindness.

Follow up Activity

1. The irony is of the bully asking for understanding for his condition – which seems to be portrayed as a condition that he can't help. Look at the badge he is wearing.
2. There is some useful information to develop this theme on <http://www.bullying.org/public/frameset.cfm>



4. Echoes of Adventure

Pre-Listening Activity

Students are being asked to imagine non-verbal sounds and to find ways of reproducing them using invented words/vowel : consonant compositions. Clearly the noises made by (maximum 9 year old?) children can be imitated easily enough, but what about the sound of skin sliding on a plastic tube, for example? Creativity is the order of the day, here.

Follow Up Activity

Students can design whatever they like for younger children, but they must be able to explain to the class how the children will exercise their limbs as well as their imaginations. It is suggested that students work in small groups and do class presentations.



5. Melanin

Pre-Listening Activity

The missing word in each space is 'Melanin'

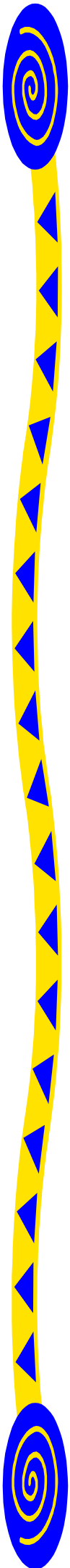
Melanin (pronounced /ˈmɛlənɪn/ [melanin](#) (help·info)) is a class of compounds found in the [plant](#), [animal](#), and [protista kingdoms](#), where it serves predominantly as a [pigment](#). The class of pigments are derivatives of the amino acid [tyrosine](#). The most common form of [biological melanin](#) is eumelanin, a brown-black [polymer](#) of dihydroxyindole, dihydroxyindole [carboxylic acid](#), and their reduced forms. Another common form of melanin is pheomelanin, a red-brown [polymer](#) of [benzothiazine](#) units largely responsible for red hair and freckles. The presence of melanin in the [archaea](#) and [bacteria](#) kingdoms is an issue of ongoing debate amongst researchers in the field. The increased production of melanin in human skin is called [melanogenesis](#). It is stimulated by the DNA damages that are caused by UVB-radiation,^[1] and it leads to a delayed development of a tan. This melanogenesis-based tan takes more time to develop, but it is long lasting.^[2]

The photochemical properties of melanin make it an excellent [photoprotectant](#). It absorbs harmful UV-radiation and transforms the energy into harmless amounts of heat through a process called "ultrafast [internal conversion](#)". This property enables melanin to dissipate more than 99.9% of the absorbed UV radiation as heat^[3] and it keeps the generation of free radicals at a minimum (see [photoprotection](#)). This prevents the [indirect DNA damage](#) which is responsible for the formation of malignant melanoma.

Wikipedia

Follow Up Activity

Students can comment on the poem – a well known poem written by an African student.



6. The First Woman in My Life

Pre-Listening Activity

1. One's mother
2. Personal preference
3. Personal preference – make sure that individual student's privacy is guarded here.

Follow Up Activity

Description of Levi's mother	Adjectives for your mother (optional)
Worked fingers to the bone ...does everything Brought (Levi) up properly Solved problems Gave everything (she had?) Loving Supported (Levi's) heritage Educated Survival Loved by Levi	



7. The Blessing in my Wife

Pre-Listening Activity

Positive:

A piece of cake (*easy*)
The apple of my eye (*beautiful; adored*)
The cream of the crop (*the best of everything*)
The icing on the cake (*better than good – even more than expected*)
The Lily of the valley (*the most beautiful thing around*)
The Rose of Sharon (*ditto*)
The sunshine in the morning (*makes you happy*)

Negative:

Let the cat out of the bag (*give away a secret*)
Lost your head (*panic*)
The straw that broke the camel's back (*the final problem that caused destruction*)

Both:

Butterflies in my stomach (*nervousness, but could be in pleasant or unpleasant anticipation*)

Follow up activity

If the template is followed, students will produce a decent statement of someone they like, love or admire. They should be invited, but not forced, to share their poems.



8. Crazy Love

Pre-listening Activity

Box A

Big nose
Didn't like
Dog
Fat
Frog
Hates
Irate
Mind control
offends

Rat
Rude names
(Silly games)
(Tiny feet)
Unkind

Box B

Adorable
Beautiful
Charming
Excites
Fun
Honey
Lovable
Pussy cat
(Silly games)

Soul mate
Sweet
(Tiny feet)

What kind of situations are they when someone who really loves someone else uses the words in Box B to describe the person they love?

While the 'love song' is actually one of family love between a brother and a sister, students are unlikely to guess this before hearing the poem. Any expression of problems in a relationship is acceptable ('had an argument'; 'embarrassed' etc)

Follow Up Activity

Sibling Rivalry

TRUE or FALSE

1. A more immature child is less likely to fight than a more mature one. F
2. A child who feels they are being ignored by a parent is more likely to have a fight with a sibling. T
3. Conflict between siblings can arise when one of them wants to display their individuality. T
4. Children are less likely to fight if their families lead separate, independent lives. F
5. Children are more likely to fight if conflict is a way of life in the family. T
6. Children who fight might not know better ways of attracting attention. T



9. A Match Made in Heaven

Pre-Listening Activity

When Father Time **met** Mother Earth
he **gave** her a great big juicy kiss
Mother Earth's temperature **began** to rise
now her life is **filled** with bliss

Father Time **said** to Mother Earth
"I **will love** you twenty-four hours a day"
to which Mother Earth **replied** "OOH! La La!"
then they **began** to play

Mother Earth then **span** with joy
that **made** Father Time tick
they **were destined** to be together
their encounter **did** the trick

Now Mother Earth **is wrapped** in Father Time
as he **embraces** her 24/7
eternally they **are joined** together
a match **made** in heaven.

Not used:

glued meets

Follow Up Activity

The Earth is a constantly changing planet. Its crust is continually being created, modified, and destroyed. As a result, rocks that record its earliest history have not been found and probably no longer exist. Nevertheless, there is substantial evidence that the Earth and the other bodies of the Solar System are **4.5 - 4.6 billion** years old, and that the Milky Way Galaxy and the Universe are older still. The principal evidence for the antiquity of Earth and its cosmic surroundings is:

The oldest rocks on Earth, found in western Greenland, have been dated by four independent radiometric dating methods at **3.7 - 3.8 billion** years. Slightly younger rocks, **3.4 - 3.6 billion** years in age, have been found in southern Africa, western Australia, and the Great Lakes region of North America. These oldest rocks are metamorphic rocks but they originated as lava flows and sedimentary rocks. The debris from which the sedimentary rocks formed must have come from even older crustal rocks. The oldest dated minerals at **4.0 - 4.2 billion** years are older than the rocks and are tiny zircon crystals found in sedimentary rocks in western Australia.

The oldest Moon rocks are from the lunar highlands and were formed when the early lunar crust was partially or entirely molten. These rocks, of which only a few were returned by the Apollo missions, have been dated by two methods at between **4.4 - 4.5 billion** years in age, so older than any rocks on earth.

The majority of the **70** well-dated meteorites are more or less the same age as the moon and have ages of **4.4 - 4.6 billion** years. These meteorites, which are fragments of asteroids and represent some of the most primitive material in the solar system, have been dated by **5** independent radiometric dating methods.

The "best" age for the Earth is based on the time required for the lead isotopes in four very old lead ores (galena) to have evolved from the composition of lead at the time the Solar System formed, as recorded in the Canyon Diablo iron meteorite. This "model lead age" is **4.54 billion** years. Happy Birthday, Mother Earth!



10. Streets of Hope

Pre-Listening Activity

Get the students to put away the information sheets before seeing how much they can remember.

1. b) sleepy fishing village
2. b) Scousers
3. False
4. a) entertainment
5. a) False
6. b) north west coast of England
7. False (raw materials were sent to Liverpool)
8. Roger McGough – a poet; the others are comedians
9. river

Follow Up Activity

This is best done as a class activity to brainstorm the positive and negative qualities of where the students live. Make sure that the place chosen is somewhere that can conceivably be 'claimed' by everyone in the group.

11. Weather Report

Pre-Listening Activity

	Example in Portuguese
Hurricane	neve
Sleet	aguaceiro
Snow	furacão
Shower	nevoeiro
Fog	geada
Frost	saraiva ou neve que cai misturada com chuva

Which combinations of weather are a) normal b) unusual, but possible c) impossible?

1. sunny with clouds ✓
2. clear skies with rainx
3. showers and sun ✓
4. fog and hurricanesx
5. frost and fog ✓
6. sunny, with clouds and snow ✓
7. hot and frostyx
8. heavy rain with low humidityx
9. snow and rain together ✓
10. snow, rain, frost and fog altogether ✓ *improbable*

4 Some more vocabulary

REPORT	In harmony
RAPPORT	Music (type)
RAP	Information
WRAP UP	Finish

WEATHER	Crazy
WHETHER	If
FREAK	Go up quickly
SOAR	Climate

Note use of homophones: whether/weather; report/rapport; (w)raps up

Follow Up Activity

1. F
2. T
3. F
4. T
5. T



12. Ozone Friendly Poem

Pre-Listening Activity

Allow students to speculate on the questions. Note that some products are manufactured with the label 'Ozone Friendly'.

The item on 'What is Ozone' is simply for information and does not have an additional activity attached.

Follow Up Activity

1. Lies, propaganda, slander, bad language etc
2. Get students to think about the effect of seemingly innocuous activities like switching on a light, forgetting to turn it off, leaving the tap running while cleaning teeth, throwing plastic bags away, buying things with lots of packaging etc.



13. The Liquid of Life

Pre-Listening Activity

a)

Positive	Negative	Neutral
abundance cheaper clean green environmentally friendly natural pleasure pure treasure	abuse contaminate destruction murky pollute toxic	green element lead thirst

b) clean; green; pleasure; treasure; murky; thirsty (half rhyme)

c) Students should speculate. They will no doubt guess that the poet will extol us to fight against pollution!

Follow Up Activities

Students should be given large pieces of paper and cards to write their slogans, once they have thought about them and come to some agreement in small groups.



14. Plastic Fantastic

Pre-Listening Activity

1. Could be made of plastic:

Bags, bombs, bullets, carpets, combs, credit cards, guns, heart valves, implants, keyboards, phones, picture frames, plates, rubbish bags, shoes, spoons, stereos, video, vinyl records (some might claim that music, chicken and pizza can also be plastic!)

2. Work in small groups to complete this list. Remind students that these are household items.
3. See end of 1) above
4. Protest?

Follow Up Activity

All these lists will be dependent on what the student identifies as their own personal list. As such they should do question 1 themselves, but may work in groups to answer questions 2 and 3. Allow a reporting back session at the end.



15. Nursery Crimes

Pre-Listening Activity

Animals are mentioned in Hickory Dickory, Humpty Dumpty, Old Mother Hubbard, Bo Peep, Mary and her Lamb and Hey diddle diddle is full of them.

Children in Old woman in a shoe, Jack and Jill and probably Little Bo Peep, Georgy Porgy and Mary.

The task which asks for students to imagine crimes committed by any of the characters (preferably in a contemporary urban setting) is ripe for adolescent imaginations – let it spill out.

Follow Up Activity

The success of this activity will depend on the student being familiar with their own heritage of children's tales or the teacher either supplying suitable texts for adaptation. Share the results – they will be fun!



16. Dubmic Rap

Pre-Listening Activity & Follow up Activity

Both of these sections require the students to be able to imagine a scenario where all disputes are resolved through the use of words only, and where physical violence is never resorted to. Some may find this almost impossible to imagine, and others will see it as a silly, idealistic dream – others not.

Points to consider:

Would the loudest voices always win?
Would the most articulate always win?
Are the loudest or most articulate always right?

How could quieter, less extrovert people get their voices heard?

Archive Text of Poems

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You may NOT photocopy the poems attached or duplicate them in any other form including electronic means but you may use them to prepare lessons and for reference purposes

A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN

When Father Time met Mother Earth
he gave her a great big juicy kiss
Mother Earth's temperature began to rise
now her life is filled with bliss

Father Time said to Mother Earth
"I will love you twenty-four hours a day"
to which Mother Earth replied "OOH! La La!"
then they began to play

Mother Earth then span with joy
that made Father Time tick
they were destined to be together
their encounter did the trick

Now Mother Earth wrapped in Father Time
as he embraces her twenty four, seven
eternally they are joined together
a match made in heaven.

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November 2001.

CRAZY LOVE

He thought she looked like a rat
She saw him as a dog

He said she was fat
She said he looked like a frog

She didn't like his clothes
He didn't like her teeth

She said he's got a big nose
He said she has tiny feet

She called him very rude names
He tried to control her mind

She said he played silly games
He said she was very unkind

He didn't like her friends
She hated his mates

She said he offends
He said she was too irate

He didn't want her for a sister
She didn't want him for a brother

They were both playing silly games
because they really love each other.

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November 2001.

THE DUBMIC RAP

What goes around comes around
Again and again and again
So here I am the Dubmic rapper
Your Dubmic rapping friend
Now I come here to rap things up
With this overflowing lyric cup
People call me the dub organiser
The man that come to make you wiser
So listen people carefully
You'll know I am from SIRIUS B
You see there we live holistically
Yes everyone for everybody
Now it started out long ago
In a place vibrant like the ghetto
You see through the planet the vibes did flow
Just check them out they're electro
Now I could rap about politics
But you might just get in a fix
So instead I will rap about music
And hope you will appreciate it
You see on my planet SIRIUS B
We solve things with poetry
Check the rhythm check the lyrics
Because when they meet they're electric
That reminds me of a war long ago
It was negative it was leggo
So we decided not to use the gun
Instead we would use our tongues
Yeah it worked out really good
You see no one died in the neighbourhood
Although people got insulted verbally
But they still lived to tell the story
So here I am live and direct
DUBMIC RAPPING in the discotheque
Things on earth don't seem so good
The people ain't living like they should
The food of love it is music
If you don't believe I can prove it
When music hits you, you feel no pain
Just the vibrations in your veins
So get up stand up shuffle your feet
Move your body to the beat
If you don't want to stand just stay in your seat
So long as you're rocking that's DUBMIC neat
Now I met my friend the COSMIC RAPPER
On a neutral planet the name I can't remember
He said "DUBMIC lets get together
And show the earth a piece of our culture"

DUBMIC or COSMIC

You can't refuse it

ZAPPING, RAPPING

You will love it

A tradition from another star

We don't need no drums or a guitar

Because with our tongues we will go far

We know our place we know who we are

So with this vibe I'd like to leave you

Now do what you're suppose to do

The next time there's a war on this planet

Boogie on down solve it with music

Do like we do on SIRIUS B

Sort it out DUBMICALLY

Sort it out COSMICALLY

Sort it out RHYTHMICALLY

JUST SOLVE IT QUICKLY

Levi Tafari ©January 1987

ECHOES OF ADVENTURE

Echoes travel through a concrete tunnel
Mysteriously to adventure

Rainbow colours with many shapes
And sizes invite excitement

Crunch, Crunch, Crunch
Sings the ground
Carpeted with wood chippings

Rickety, Rackety, Rackety, Rickety
The bridge disappears to the other side

Clunk, Clunk, Clunk
Climbing way up high
Swoosh down the silver slippery slide

Timbeeeeer creates the adventure
Metal stands strong and firm
Twisted ropes links the magic together

The swinging ropes swaaaaaaay
This way and that way
Falling, landing,
Boom, Boom on the rubber pods
Ducks and frogs squeak like mice
We holler like laughter
Surrounded by ECHOES OF ADVENTURE

© Levi Tafari

April 20000

MELANIN

Melanin I love you
you mean so much to me
Oh! Melanin your beauty
is far richer than the eye can see
my Melanin embraces me
from my head to my toes
Oh! Melanin I would never forsake
this I want you to know.

You lie with me
when I sleep at night
you guide me
through the day
you take me to
a higher height
I love to watch you play

I often face heavy abuse
when you're out with me
some people haven't got my Melanin
so they show their jealousy
but no matter what they say or do
it won't stop me from loving you
my Melanin
precious Melanin
the pigmentation of my skin.

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July 1991.

NURSERY CRIMES

**TRICKERY, TRICKERY DOCK
LIFE CAN BE A SHOCK
IN SPACE AND TIME
I CREATE A RHYME
THIS IS WHAT WE'VE GOT**

There was a young woman
who lived in a shoe
she was homeless with children
what else could she do?
she marched on Downing Street
with ten thousand women and men
to evict those vampires at number ten

**GET UP! STAND UP!
STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS!
DON'T GIVE UP THE FIGHT!**

Mean while...

Humpty Grumpty was doing so well
until a gunman shot him and Humpty fell
gang warfare what a dread situation
protection rackets and extortion
wheeling and dealing in illegal props
gangsters terrorise pursued by cops
paralysed from the neck down in a wheelchair
the community celebrates as he had them living in fear

And still....

John and Jane cruised down the Lane
to score themselves some crack cocaine
on their way there they got a scare
a police helicopter scoped them from the air
so they took two E's and went to a rave
now they're pushing up daisies from their grave

Now checkout....

Old Mother Hubbard
hid drink in her cupboard
she was always liquored to the bone

referred to a clinic
as an alcoholic
a celebrity her face was well known
along with media success
came adversity and stress
her career was trickling down the drain
seduced by the drink
drove her to the brink
a recluse she was never seen again

Just like....

Little Jo Weep
didn't lose her sheep
she hid them and claimed compensation
but the sheep were found
in her brother's compound
now the two are facing prosecution-
they could even go to prison

Ask yourself if this is a crime????

Georgie Georgie why oh! Why
did you kiss the girl and make her cry?
Georgie Georgie didn't have a reply
Well try man! Georgie, try man! Try!
So Georgie Georgie thought for a while
Then he turned to me with a sinister smile
he told me whilst he was making love to Emma
he accidentally called her Gemma
Gemma turn out to be her sister
now all three are staring on Jerry Springer

Just as....

Mary had a little lamb
which freaked the mid-wife out
genetic engineering Mary?
Yes! Without a doubt
laboratories in modernity
is this futuristic maternity?
This monstrosity appeared on my television
he was sporting a suit he's a politician
like an android he operates without a soul
this is the one who will take control

Finally....

Hey diddle, diddle
some are caught in the middle
trying to figure life out
talk of a god in the sky
watching from way up high
and to him we should be devout
stand and face your judgement
if you're disobedient
damnation dwelling in hell
but as far as I can see
society has placed hell around me
and they wonder why I rebel!
Yes they wonder why we rebel!

**TRICKERY, TRICKERY, DOCK
ARE YOU RECOVERING FROM THE SHOCK?**

OZONE FRIENDLY POEM

It won't damage the EARTH
Or pollute the sea
It won't psych your mind
Neither poison your body
These words have power
When used properly
Because
This poem is OZONE FRIENDLY

Words can sound creative
Words can sound great
We can use words instruct
And to communicate
These words are not destructive
Violating a tree
Because
This poem is OZONE FRIENDLY

My words take shape
They are organised
They won't burn the EARTH'S skin
Like pesticides
They're not manufactured using CFC's
Because
This poem is OZONE FRIENDLY

Digest these words
Feel positive
Don't panic get stressed

They're free from additives
You won't regurgitate them
Like smoke from a factory
Because
This poem is OZONE FRIENDLY

These words are SAFE
I can testify
They won't destroy the OZONE
LAYER
Beyond the sky
You can analyse this poem
In a laboratory
You'll find
This poem is OZONE FRIENDLY

Recycle, regenerate
Don't waste energy
Conservation of the EARTH
Is just apart of the Key
And I'll keep using these words
Well naturally
You see
This poem is OZONE FRIENDLY

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August 1991

PLASTIC FANTASTIC

**PLASTIC, PLASTIC
IT'S FANTASTIC
MANMADE CHEMICALS
JUST LIKE MAGIC
ANY WAY YOU LIKE IT**

THEY TAKE IT THEY MAKE IT

**PLASTIC'S FANTASTIC
SO PLEASE DON'T BREAK IT**

***BAM, BAM, BAM (CALL)
DON'T BREAK IT (RESPONSE)
BAM, BAM, BAM (CALL)
DON'T BREAK IT (RESPONSE)***

Anything you want can be made out of plastic
it's versatile it's really fantastic
laboratory tested it's scientific
I wrote this in an attic to make it poetic

Some plastics are soft some plastics are hard
people out shopping with their plastic cards
buying plastic plates and plastic spoons
vinyl records with plastic pop tunes
plastic combs and plastic phones
plastic bins to put more plastic in
leather trainers with plastic tags
sold to you in plastic bags
plastic stereos and video games
arty pictures in plastic frames
I went to the shops to buy some plastic shoes
There were so many styles which ones should I choose?

**PLASTIC, PLASTIC
IT'S FANTASTIC
MANMADE CHEMICALS
JUST LIKE MAGIC
ANY WAY YOU LIKE IT**

THEY TAKE IT THEY MAKE IT

**PLASTIC'S FANTASTIC
SO PLEASE DON'T BREAK IT**

***BAM, BAM, BAM (CALL)
DON'T BREAK IT (RESPONSE)
BAM, BAM, BAM (CALL)
DON'T BREAK IT (RESPONSE)***

A father gave his daughter a birthday gift
he was a plastic surgeon he gave her a facelift
he gave her a plastic nose
to match her plastic clothes
he gave her plastic BOOBS
from a silicone tube
her name was Cindy she had plastic skin
plastic all over down to her colouring
now she thought she was trendy
because she was bendy
but don't believe the hype
it was all plastic surgery

**PLASTIC, PLASTIC
IT'S FANTASTIC
MANMADE CHEMICALS
JUST LIKE MAGIC
ANY WAY YOU LIKE IT**

THEY TAKE IT THEY MAKE IT

**PLASTIC'S FANTASTIC
SO PLEASE DON'T BREAK IT**

***BAM, BAM, BAM (CALL)
DON'T BREAK IT (RESPONSE)
BAM, BAM, BAM (CALL)
DON'T BREAK IT (RESPONSE)***

Now big men acting like little boys
having lots of fun with their plastic toys
soldiers playing with their plastic guns
plastic bullets and their plastic bombs
the war on the streets is synthetic drugs
the police infiltrate with their plastic bugs
while the government acts all lardy-dardy
running this country like a Tupperware Party
their legislation tears the people apart
if stress creeps in get a plastic heart
people are not remote control, automatic
we're skin, flesh, blood and bones
we're not made of plastic

**PLASTIC, PLASTIC
IT'S FANTASTIC
MANMADE CHEMICALS
JUST LIKE MAGIC
ANY WAY YOU LIKE IT**

THEY TAKE IT THEY MAKE IT

PLASTICS' FANTASTIC

SO PLEASE DON'T BREAK IT

BAM, BAM, BAM (CALL)
DON'T BREAK IT (RESPONSE)
BAM, BAM, BAM (CALL)
DON'T BREAK IT (RESPONSE)

DON'T BELIEVE THE HYPE!!!

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October 1995.

REACH FOR THE STARS

BOOKS ARE COOL
BOOKS ARE FUN (CALL)
BOOKS SHOULD BE READ
BY EVERYONE (RESPONSE)

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It's time to visit
your library
there you can borrow
BOOKS for free
BOOKS for the young
BOOKS for the old
in BOOKSHOPS
BOOKS are bought and sold

BOOKS on poetry
BOOKS about sports
BOOKS that are long
BOOKS that are short
BOOKS for girls
BOOKS for boys
with sounds effects
that make lots of noise

BOOKS about ships
BOOKS on planes
BOOKS about cars
BOOKS on trains
BOOKS on animals
BOOKS on religion
BOOKS that give you
INSPIRATION!

BOOKS with Witches
casting spells
BOOKS that you can
scratch and smell
picture BOOKS
that have no words
BOOKS on insects
BOOKS about birds

Autobiographical BOOKS
Portraying someone's life
Fictional BOOKS
Putting you on the edge of a knife

Horror BOOKS
With a sting in the tale
BOOKS for people
Who read in Braille

BOOKS on romance
BOOKS with passion
BOOKS on the famous
BOOKS on fashion
BOOKS on war and outer space
BOOKS about the people
of the human race

BOOKS that teach
You how to cook
You can even get
BOOKS about BOOKS
Text BOOKS are used
in education
they are filled
with information

If you really want
to succeed
choose the right BOOK
and start to read

REACH FOR THE STARS

And you'll discover
Now digest that BOOK
FROM COVER TO COVER

Because.....

BOOKS ARE COOL	
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BOOKS ARE COOL	
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SCHOOL RUNNINGS

TING-A-LING-A-LING

de school bell ring

TING-A-LING-A-LING

wi a guh learn sinting

Had to guh to school
dat's de government rule
a comprehensive school
inna Liverpool

Dem teachin
Art, TD
Domestic Science, PE
History and Geography,
Biology and Chemistry,
Mathematics, French,
English and Physics
All these tings we use to learn
Inna English school

Mi use to skip
de bus te reach a school
mi never pay de fare
cause I man cool
ten pass nine mi jus a reach de gate
"Wha-appen Papa T. it look like wi late2
reach de class
about quarter pass
and registration dun
de teacha ask mi
is why me late fe registration?
"Sir I have a good explanation
stomach trouble, I tink it's constipation"
Him seh
"Too bad son. Yuh deh pon detention"
Mi she
"Chu man"
him she
"What did you say"
Mi seh
"Nuttin teacha nuh feel nuh way

TING-A-LING-A-LING

Another bell ring

Dis is de ting dat dem teachin

Christopher Columbus

Sir Francis Drake
and Henry de Eighth
"But wait"
A nuh de man dat did dead from disease
Den is wha type a ting dat dem teachin mi
"Wi want Haile Selassie
Marcus Garvey
Mary Seacole
Yes people like dat
Dr Martin Luther King
and Malcolm X
"Shut up!!"
de teacha she mi too outa order
and get well vex

TING-A-LING-A-LING

De break bell ring

TING-A-LING-A-LING

Wi a guh play sinting

Playground madness

MAD BAD MAD!!!

Roamin round de playground
like a hooligan
wi play a game wi pull a skank
guh check out a gal
"Hail sista. Is a long time mi a check te de daughta"
"You wan deal wid I man?"
De gal look pon mi and call mi a dutty little villan."
"Chu Susan give I a chance
te tek yuh to de school dance
and show yuh how mi stay"
De gal suck her teeth
and jus walk away
"I wonda weh Yvonne a she?"

guh behind de shed fi sight up
see some man jus stand up
smoking cigarettes
one she him want te rub Paulette
others playin football
some playin marbles
some playin wid demselves
some playin jingles
jingle jangle dem a gamble
and de teacha nuh like it
de gal dem pon de other side a chat
some thin some fat
dem occupy de walls

playin two balls
playin hop scotch
pon a small patch
girls play!

See him yah
De mafia de gangsta
rude bwoys rule
Dennis de menace
de cock of de school
Him guh up to one bwoy
and ask him te him money
de bwoy laugh after Dennis
but Dennis never tink dat funny
Dennis grab him
de bwoy start te sweat
Him seh
"A fret yuh de fret an yuh nuh get nuttin yet."
"Wait till four o clock a gwan bruck you neck"
well de atmosphere is violent
there's goin to be a fight
Dennis de menace
A guh do it tonight

TING-A-LING-A-LING

inna de afternoon
after wi dinner
is back to de classroom

Wi guh inna de class
te tek a exam
wi hafte do good
te get wi qualification
whether CSE of GCE
A-levels or BSc
Dat's de one te me
I don't want te end up
livin inna poverty
I want something betta
te tek I little further
suh teacha teacha teach mi
I she te teach I of reality
I don't want no fantasy
Cause dat is no good for me

Well

TING-A-LING-A-LING

De last bell ring
TING-A-LING-A-LING
School endin

De vibe is exciting
De youths dem leavin
And yuh jus get a little
A DE SCHOOL RUNNINGS

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June 1983

STREETS OF HOPE

Stereotypes
media hypes
the victim Liverpool

They painted a picture
of a criminal culture
uncouth and very, very cruel

In vibrant times
poets created rhymes
and comedians carried the swing

There was MERSEYBEAT
the vibe out on the street
Yeah! Everybody wanted to sing

"You'll Never Walk Alone
In my Liverpool home"
L.F.C. wore the colours of success

They would beat teams up
while retaining the cup
teams who visited left distressed

Checkout the TV Soap
visit the Street of Hope
with two Cathedrals shrouded in
fame

Newspapers from the gutter
distorted the disaster
Liverpool was back in the frame

I know people love the accent
but then some pass judgement
they say Scousers are always on
the rob

"Well there is a Scouser in town
so screw everything down."
if you're a Scouser, it's hard work
getting a job.

Some visit the Albert Docks
close to the Liver Clocks
and sail the Ferry across the
Mersey

Checking out the famous skyline
which is recognised every time
with an image that is Oh! So chirpy

Well! She is known worldwide
this daughter of Merseyside
with a passion that burns like fire

So the reason I write
is to shed forth some light
and Liverpool you never fail to
INSPIRE.

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November 1998.

THE BLESSING IN MY WIFE

You are...

The icing on my cake

You are...

The cream of the crop

You are...

My sunshine in the morning

You are...

My love to the very last drop

You are...

The stars that shine so brightly

on a warm Caribbean night

You are...

The gracefulness of the hummingbird

You always fill me with delight.

You are...

The solution to my problems

Whenever push comes to shove

You are...

The beat that pulsates my heart

The rhythm of my love

You are...

The melody I yearn for

You are...

The lips I love to kiss

You are...

The butterflies in my stomach

You are...

My rainbow coloured bliss.

You are...

The Lily of my valley

You are...

My Rose of Sharon

You are...

My Queen Nefertiti

You are...

My Every Woman

You are...

The mother of our children

You are...

My one and only wife

You are...

Heaven sent from Jah Jah

You are...

The blessing in my life

THE FIRST WOMAN IN MY LIFE

A woman's work is never done

If you don't believe me ask my mum
She worked her fingers to the bone
To provide us with a decent home
If she lived in Ancient Rome
She could of built that city on her own
She cooks, she cleans
She does everything
She irons decorates and does the shopping

She chastised us when we were rude
But never sent us to bed with out food
Everyday she would change our clothes
If we had colds she would wipe our nose
Or if we went to mum with a problem
Mum would always help us solve them
We didn't want for anything
We got the greatest gift mum's loving
You can have ten aunties and scores of lovers
But remember you only have one mother
I remember when someone pointed the finger
Mum said I was Black, beautiful and I had a culture

She always made sure we went to school
Because in this life you can't be a fool
You see people will ride you like a mule
It was mum who taught me to be cool
So mother there's something I want you to know
I love you mum, I love you so
You taught me to survive in the ghetto
You can have my last **ROLO**

If it was not for you then I would not exist
So here it comes for you a kiss
Yes you was the first woman in my life
But one day I will take a wife
Then hopefully she'll become a mum
A woman's work is never done.

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March 1983.

THE LIQUID OF LIFE

**Now a days the water
don't taste like it oughta
we have polluted the seas
contaminated the rivers
I really think it's vital
for human survival
to keep water pure and clean
in a state that is natural**

A gift from JAH this element
is something we should treasure
but man destroys everything
destruction brings him pleasure
drink thereof and quench your thirst
for humans this is natural
but men abuse the water ways
and this is suicidal
Factories dump toxic waste
and this is far from clever
whenever they are confronted
they will tell you that they never
pipes are made of lead
bringing domesticated water
lead enters your body
lead is a polluter
this creates a problem
and puts you in a trap
you cannot drink the water
straight from the tap
you have to buy bottles
or use a water filter
but if we cleaned up our act

this would be much cheaper
A family took a bath last week
their skins turned bright green
and all that they were doing
is trying to stay clean
they all grew very angry
which is easy to overstand
being environmentally friendly is
one thing
but turning green is out of hand
Cases like this are happening
all over the land
polluting water is crazy
acts like this should be banned
because I turned my tap on today
the water was really murky
and in the abundance of water
we could all go thirsty

Because.....

**Now a days the water
don't taste like it oughta
we have polluted the seas
contaminated the rivers
I really think it's vital
for human survival
to keep water pure and clean
in a state that is natural**

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August 1991

WEATHER RAPPOR

Sorry we can't bring you
The WEATHER RAPPOR
Because the weather ain't
Gonna be what you thought
What will happen
from week to week?
I don't know because the weather is doing the FREAK!

We don't know WHETHER
The sun will shine
We don't know WHETHER
There'll be a hurricane
We don't know WHETHER
We'll get sleet or snow
We don't know WHETHER
There'll be a shower of rain
We don't know WHETHER
Fog will show its face
We don't know WHETHER
The frost will take a hold
We don't know WHETHER
Temperatures will soar
We don't know WHETHER
It will just stay cold

The snow starts to fall
Through the sunshine
The rain begins to dance
At the same time
The wind starts to blow
Creating a song
A confused state of affairs
The WEATHER has gone wrong
Then man plays his part
And makes things worse
All because he wants
To fatten his purse
And that RAPS up
Our RAPPOR for this week
The outlook is
the WEATHER'S still doing the FREAK!

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August 1991

WHO'S BULLYING WHOM?

Sweat dripping
Lip tripping
He was very afraid

Pants wetting
He was fretting
He was gonna get paid

Tears falling
He was bawling
His life was cruel and grim

You see he was once a bully
But now a bigger badda bully
Is bullying him.

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