

SECOND LEVEL

LEARNING RESOURCES

THIRD LEVEL

Scottish
BookTrust
inspiring readers and writers

CREATIVE

SCOT
LAND

Scottish
Friendly
ASSURANCE

Michael Rosen



Resource created by Cathrin Howells

The following resource suggests English, literacy and cross-curricular activities based on four of Michael Rosen's poems.

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Michael Rosen biography

Michael Rosen (b. 1946) says he became a children's poet by accident - "I thought I was being an ironic adult poet but children's literature 'claimed' me". He has since become a very well-known poet, for adults as well as children, and also writes plays; he has worked in television and radio too, in programmes from Home Truths to Playschool. He is a winner of the Eleanor Farjeon Award for Children's Literature and the National Literacy WOW Award, has received an honorary doctorate from the Open University, and has been involved in one way or another with more than a hundred books. He was Children's Laureate from 2007 to 2009.

A good deal of Michael Rosen's poems are about his life between the ages of about 2 and 12, and are available in books such as:

- *The Hypnotiser* (Michael's son Joe filmed him performing all the poems from this book. You can watch them all on the official Michael Rosen website): www.michaelrosen.co.uk/hypnotiser.html
- *Quick, Let's Get Out of Here* (Puffin, www.amazon.co.uk/Quick-Lets-Here-Puffin-Books/dp/0140317848/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1263821996&sr=8-1)
- *You Wait Till I'm Older Than You* (Puffin, www.amazon.co.uk/Wait-Till-Older-Puffin-Poetry/dp/0140380140/ref=pd_sim_b_1)
- *Mustard, Custard, Grumble Belly and Gravy* (Bloomsbury, www.amazon.co.uk/Mustard-Custard-Grumble-Bloomsbury-Paperbacks/dp/0747587388/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1263822144&sr=1-1)

A couple of books about Michael's life are also available for children:

- *Michael Rosen's Scrapbook* – (in the Treetops series, for the Oxford Reading Tree, www.amazon.co.uk/Oxford-Reading-Tree-Non-Fiction-Scrapbook/dp/0199179417/ref=sr_1_66?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1263822322&sr=1-66)

- *All About Me* (Collins Educational, www.amazon.co.uk/Michael-Rosen-About-Sapphire-Collins/dp/000723127X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=book&qid=1263811843&sr=1-1)

Today Michael's time is taken up doing the following:

- writing books
- writing articles for newspapers and magazines
- coming to schools, libraries and theatres and performing the poems in my books
- helping children write poems and stories
- making radio programmes, mostly about words, language or books
- appearing on TV, either reading books, or talking about books
- teaching at universities about children's literature
- running workshops for teachers about poetry

For a more detailed biography written by Michael Rosen please visit:

- www.michaelrosen.co.uk/about.html

'Boogy Woogy Buggy' Activities – Level 2

PERFORMANCE

This is a very rhythmic poem. Explore in small groups how you might read it aloud, maybe with some claves or a tabor to set up a beat to keep you together. Decide how you want to perform it (Making music – below), then rehearse and perform it for the class.

Reading explore the text to identify performance potential

Listening and talking discuss the poem, plan and deliver a group performance

Technical tip – Michael Rosen uses assonance (repeated vowel sounds) to create internal rhyme in this poem, e.g. “glide” and “ride”, “feet” and “meet”, and he plays with sounds to create half-rhymes that are also internal: “streak down the street” and “easy, speedy baby”. These rhymes and half-rhymes come very close together, which, combined with the use of one and two syllable words, create a clipped, staccato effect that is pleasing to read aloud. (Literacy and English experiences: I enjoy exploring and discussing word patterns and text structures)

Literacy –
Listening and
Talking –
LIT 2-04a
LIT 2-07a
LIT 2-09a,
Reading
LIT 2-16a

EVERYDAY INVENTIONS

In pairs make a list of everyday inventions. For each one, think what special things it allows you to do, what special qualities it has, what life would be like without it – make lists of these special features to go with each invention.

Listening and talking consider everyday inventions and their qualities, purposes, benefits

Writing make annotated lists of the above

EVERYDAY STORIES

Michael Rosen has imagined an everyday story around many of the inventions that inspired poems in Centrally Heated Knickers. What adventures could you imagine happening in connection with your favourite everyday invention? Turn it into a poem or story.

Writing create a poem or story to relate an adventure based around an everyday invention

MARKETING MARVELS 1

Look in magazines for the claims that advertisers make about products. Collect these phrases and comments. Do you have any favourites? Share these with the class and try to say why.

Reading identify the language used in product advertising; make a collection of favourite promotional words and phrases

Listening and talking discuss the language used in adverts

MARKETING MARVELS 2

Choose an invention and develop a marketing campaign to sell your favoured product to the class.

Reading identify the language used in product advertising

Writing create promotional text to market your product

MAKING MUSIC

Find out about jive and boogie-woogie and see if you can track down some music to listen to. There is also something called hand jiving. Find out about it – can you make up a hand jive to go with Boogy Woogy Buggy?

CfE

Literacy –
Listening and
Talking
LIT 2-09a,
Writing
LIT 2-22a
LIT 2-23a
LIT 2-24a
LIT 2-28a

Literacy –
Writing
ENG 2-30a
LIT 2-22a
LIT 2-23a
LIT 2-24a

Literacy –
Listening and
Talking –
2-09a,
Reading –
2-16a

Literacy –
Listening and
Talking – 2-
09a, Reading –
2-16a, 2-18a,
Writing ENG 2-
27a, LIT 2-29a

Expressive Arts
– Music – EXA
2-18a

BUGGY-MAKING

Design and make a buggy with a motor and gears that can carry an Easter egg (or object of choice).

BUGGY-TESTING

Make a buggy and then test it to see how far it will roll down a given slope with varying surfaces.



HOMEWORK SUGGESTIONS

Mad inventions

Design your own invention for an everyday machine. Label and annotate it to show the main parts, how it works, what it does. Give it a good name too!

Advertising campaigns

Cut out and collect/display some favourite adverts from magazines which use words as well as images to promote a product. Decide how these words and images are being used to influence you.

Exaggerated claims

Choose an everyday item and try writing some 'over-the-top' claims for what it can do. Imagine you were trying to sell the last one at a market stall at the end of a Saturday – what would you say to tempt people to buy? Practice your patter!

CfE

Technologies –
TCH 2-12a
TCH 2-13a
TCH 2-14a
TCH 2-14

Technologies –
TCH 2-12a
TCH 2-13a
TCH 2-14a
TCH 2-14b

Technologies –
TCH 2-15a,
TCH 2-15b;
Literacy –
Writing –
LIT 2-28a
LIT 2-24a
LIT 2-26a

Reading
LIT 2-16a
LIT 2-18a

Literacy –
Writing
ENG 2-27a
Literacy
LIT – 2-26a

Technical tip – in the last four lines, Michael is playing about with the rules of grammar and spelling and the sounds of the “wh” words and how they blend together. The “wh” words appear in not-quite-expected places, and the “who I wiz” blurs word and letter boundaries beautifully, cleverly adding the word “why” as they run together. The effect is one of jumbled fun and “almost” sense that is surprisingly meaningful – it echoes the puzzlement of the subjects in the poem who have been struggling alone in a jumbled and complex world. (Literacy and English experiences: I enjoy exploring and discussing word patterns and text structures)

IMPOSSIBLE FEELINGS

How do you think it would feel to be each of these objects? Can you think of some words/phrases that might describe such feelings – e.g. “mixed in”, “jumbled about”...

Listening and talking inference; consider the feelings of the inanimate objects in the poem

SENDING A MESSAGE: WHO AM I??

If Michael Rosen has a message in this poem, what do you think he could be trying to get us to think about? (Do you ever feel lost, misunderstood, even that you don't understand yourself? Does everyone have a right to be understood? How can we bring that about?)

Listening and talking consider possible messages the poem may convey, and how they make you feel, about yourself, about others

Reading inference; identify relevant aspects of the poem linked to points raised in discussion

ADDING IMAGES: SOMETHING SMALL AND LOST...

In pairs, try creating some images of your own, based on the pattern Michael has used of something small lost inside something bigger: I'm an apple in a pie; I'm a note in a flute's tune; I'm the whisper in the breeze; I'm a star in the Milky Way... Think about how each object might feel.

Listening and talking discuss your own ideas for similar images

Writing make lists of the above; try turning them into a poem

Literacy –
Listening and
Talking –
LIT 2-09a
LIT 3-09a

Literacy –
Listening and
Talking
LIT 2-09a
LIT 3-09a,
Reading
LIT 2-16a
LIT 3-16a

Literacy –
Writing
LIT 2-20a,
ENG 2-27a,
ENG 2-31a /
LIT 3-20a
ENG 3-27a,
ENG3-31a, ,
Listening and
Talking
LIT 2-09a
LIT 3-09a

MODEL POETRY

Use the images you have made in the activity above with Michael's poem as a model to create verses of your own.

Writing create your own poem using the ideas you have collected and Michael's poem as a model – see page 14.



HOMEWORK SUGGESTIONS

Being lost

Have you ever been lost? Where were you? What happened? How did it feel? List your top ten 'lost' feelings. Put them in order of importance. If you can, format them in WordArt to bring out the meaning of each word. If you can, use a thesaurus to look up related words.

Top ten things you like

What are the ten things you like most (not just food items!). What does each of these tell the rest of the world about you as a person? Make a table, with each word on the left and an explanation of what it tells the world about you on the right. You might want to illustrate each item, too.

Impossible images and feelings

Add to your lists of impossible ideas modelled on Michael's approach in this poem that you did in class. Illustrate them – or maybe use PowerPoint or other software and present them on-screen.

“Ask me who I am” (1)

Michael Rosen's line might suggest making a riddle to hide the identity of a famous person or someone the rest of the class would know. You could make a list of “I am....” statements about the person, in the style of the poem, and see if anyone can guess their identity.

“Ask me who I am” (2)

Conduct an interview with yourself; record it as a podcast, or set it out as a magazine interview. Remember to make a list of questions first, and think about interesting answers that will engage your audience

CfE

Literacy –
Writing
ENG 2-27a
ENG 2-31a
ENG 3-27a
ENG 3-31a

Literacy –
Writing
LIT 2-24a
LIT 2-26a
ENG 2-30a
LIT 3-24a
LIT 3-26a
Technologies –
TCH 2-04a
TCH 2-04b
Health and
Wellbeing –
HWB 0-01a
HWB 1-01a
HWB 2-01a
HWB 3-01a

Literacy –
Writing
LIT 2-26a
LIT 2-28a
ENG 2-30a
LIT 3-26a
LIT 3-28a
ENG 3- 30a

Literacy –
Writing
LIT 2-24a
LIT 3-24a
Technologies –
TCH 2-04a
TCH 2-04b

Literacy –
Writing
LIT 2-26a
LIT 3-26a

Literacy –
Writing
LIT 2-26a
ENG 2-27a
LIT 2-26a
ENG 3-27a

'Don't' Activities Level 2

PERFORM



This is a wonderfully rhythmic poem that cries out for a performance, or at least to be read aloud. View Michael's video poetry book *The Hypnotiser* (www.michaelrosen.co.uk/hypnotiser.html) for ideas if you are not sure how you might set about it! And why not see if you can learn it off by heart?

Listening and talking: plan and give a performance or reading with a partner

Reading consider how you read/perform each verse or section

DON'T DO THAT!

What do you get told off for doing? Discuss with a partner the sorts of things grownups tell you not to do. Then think about a list of daft things you might be told not to do. See if you can use internal rhyme (or half-rhyme) in your silly list in the way Michael Rosen has done, e.g. don't stick chips on your hips. And don't forget something especially silly to end the list.

Listening and talking discuss your "don'ts" and experiment with rhyme for the silly ones

Writing: create a list of silly "don'ts", with internal rhyme if possible

THINKING ABOUT RULES

Why do we have rules? Who makes them? Who breaks them? Why, when, how? If children were to make the rules, what would they be?

Listening and talking discuss the role of rules; make up a set of rules that you would like the world to live by

Writing write down your rules, with an explanation for each

THINKING ABOUT RIGHTS



Find out about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child www.unicef.org/voy/explore/rights/explore_155.html.

Literacy –
Reading
ENG 2-19a
Expressive Arts
– Performance
and
Presentation
EXA 2-01a

Literacy –
Listening
& Talking
LIT 2-09a
LIT 2-06a,
Literacy –
Writing
ENG 2-27a

Social Studies
– People in
society,
economy and
business
SOC 2-17a
Literacy –
Listening and
talking
LIT 2-09a
Writing
LIT 2-28a
LIT 2-29a

Social Studies
– People in
society,
economy and
business
SOC 2-17a



HOMEWORK SUGGESTIONS

Literacy experiences: I enjoy exploring and discussing word patterns and text structures

Rhyme time

Collect sets of rhyming words; you could try sorting each group alphabetically too!

Breaking the rules

Which rules would you most like to break, and why? Create a table of 'Rules and Reasons' to show your list.

Consequences

What might be the punishment for putting mustard in the custard or toffee in the coffee or other silly crimes? Make a table to show your list of Crimes and Consequences.

Literacy – Writing
LIT 2-28a
LIT 2-29a

Literacy – Writing
LIT 2-28a
LIT 2-29a

'Washing Up' or 'Chocolate Cake' Activities Level 2

STILL IMAGE 1: POETRY MOMENT

Choose a favourite moment from one of these poems and create a still image. If you are on your own, you can then team up with a partner who can advise as a director; then you can swap roles to help create their still image. Show your images to the class and see if they can quote the exact line/s from the poem that you are trying to show. Add sticky notes to say what your character is saying, thinking, feeling, and share these with the class too, or take a digital photo and annotate it/add speech and thought bubbles; quote a relevant line from the poem below the image and print it out.

Listening and talking identify a favourite part of the poem and develop the still image

Reading identify chosen part of poem as basis for still image (and quotation)

Writing add a quotation or annotations to still image/photograph

Literacy – Listening & Talking
LIT 2-04a
LIT 2-06a
LIT 2-09a
Literacy – Reading
LIT 2-16a
ENG 2-19a,
Literacy – Writing
LIT 2-26a
LIT 2-28a
Expressive Arts – Drama
EXA 2-14a

STILL IMAGE 2: POETRY PROMENADE

Chunk the poem and create a series of still images (one per group) to depict the whole poem in sequence. Present them in turn to accompany a reading of the poem.

Reading explore chosen part of poem as basis for still image

Listening and talking agree content of still image based on text of poem

Reading practise a reading to accompany the image

FAIRY SQUAREY, HARD CHEESE

(Literacy experiences: I enjoy exploring and discussing word patterns and text structures)

Do you have any favourite expressions like these in *Washing Up*? “Eaksy-peaksy” is one of mine. Why not collect some, with their meanings.

Reading identify phrases and sayings through reading

ONOMATOPOEIA

Literacy experiences: I enjoy exploring and discussing word patterns and text structures

Collect the onomatopoeic words in *Washing Up*, with their context. Look for onomatopoeic words in other texts, too.

Reading identify and collect onomatopoeic words

CELEBRATING THE ORDINARY

Washing Up: what chores do you have to do at home, and how do you try to get round them, make them more fun? What is your relationship with your siblings? How do you get on when doing chores together? Who is in charge? What happens? Has there ever been a time when you have got into big trouble doing the chores? Have you ever played a trick on a sibling? *Chocolate Cake*: have you ever had a similar food incident? Or been naughty and then been caught out like Michael was with the cake?

Listening and talking discuss the ordinary events and relationships in your life

ATTENTION TO DETAIL: THE MEMORY TELESCOPE

Pick a moment from the above discussion of memories; think about it really carefully and see what details you can add – where, when, what, how, who, why. Keep homing in closer and closer on the incident, as if you had a memory telescope. Try to think about what you could see, hear, smell and feel. Did anyone say anything? What, and how was it said, and to whom? Tell these details to a partner, or jot them down.

Listening and talking discuss a memory in detail

Writing jot down details of chosen memory

CfE

Literacy –
Reading
LIT 2-16a
ENG 2-19a,
Literacy – L&T
LIT 2-04a,
Expressive Arts
– Drama
EXA 2-14a

Literacy –
Reading
ENG 2-19a

Literacy –
Listening and
Talking
LIT 2-09a

Literacy –
Listening and
Talking
LIT 2-09a
LIT 2-07a
LIT 2-05a

STILL IMAGE 3: MEMORY MOMENT

Use the moment you have chosen in the two previous activities to create a still image with members of your group. Then add sticky notes to each person – what are they saying, what are they thinking, how do they feel? Now create the moment before; then the moment after; now run them together in a slow-motion action replay of the event. Take photos of each stage of your memory, print and annotate them.

Listening and talking develop a still image of your memory with your group

Writing add annotations to still image/photograph

STORYBOARD: A MEMORABLE MEMORY

Create a storyboard of your memory/incident. Add words, phrases, text to each shot to bring the incident to life. If available, use comic strip software to produce a comic strip of your memory on the computer.

Writing create a storyboard of a detailed memory

WRITE INSTRUCTIONS

Write a set of instructions for washing up successfully, or for making your favourite dish – or try creating some rules for lying successfully!

Writing write a set of instructions or rules

WRITE AN EVERYDAY STORY POEM

Use any or all of the information gathered in the memory activities above to write a poem of an incident. Like Michael Rosen, “talk to the page”, tell it as if you were telling it to a friend, and add in speech and sound effects to bring it to life. Don’t worry about making it rhyme, but look at the way Michael breaks his poems up into chunks, and the way he sometimes repeats words and phrases to create a pattern or an emphasis.

Reading explore the form and structure of Rosen’s poem

Writing create a non-rhyming story poem of a detailed memory

ONE-UP-MAN-SHIP

The situation in *Washing Up* escalates (try plotting the events to see how this happens). Think of how an incident between two people could start small then get more and more out of hand as each one tries to outdo the other. Could you make a poem or a drama or a storyboard out of this?

Listening and talking develop a drama about an escalating incident

Writing write a poem or make a storyboard of an escalating incident



HOMEWORK SUGGESTIONS

Playing tricks

What tricks do you play on friends or family? What tricks have been played on you? Make a list. What revenge did you take, or what revenge would you like to take? Jot down some notes and be prepared to come back and talk about tricks and revenge.

Guilty secrets

Have you ever been found out? What had you done? Why? Who found out and how? Were there any consequences? Write a short account, or create a storyboard.

CfE

Literacy –
Listening and
Talking
2-09a
Writing
ENG 2-31a
LIT 2-28a

Literacy –
Writing
LIT 2-25a

Literacy –
Writing
LIT 2-28a

Poems

BOOGY WOOGY BUGGY

I glide as I ride
in my boogy woogy buggy
take the corners wide
just see me drive
I'm an easy speedy baby
doing the baby buggy jive

I'm in and out the shops
I'm the one that never stops
I'm the one that feels
the beat of the wheels
all that air
in my hair
I streak down the street
between the feet that I meet.

No one can catch
my boogy woogy buggy
no one's got the pace
I rule this place

I'm a baby who knows
I'm a baby who goes, baby, goes.

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DO I KNOW YOU?

I'm lost
I'm lost
I don't know where I am
I'm a sock in a washing machine
A strawberry in some jam
I'm a letter in a book
I'm the bubble in some fizz
I'm a pebble on a beach
I'm a question in a quiz
I don't know where you are
You don't know where you are
You don't know when I is
I don't know how you was
You don't know who I wiz.

So find me
Find me
Ask me who I am
Get me out the washing machine
Fish me out the jam
Open up the book
Let out all the fizz
Let's walk on the beach
And I'll answer your quiz
Then I'll know where you are
You'll know when I is
I'll know how you was
And you'll know who I wiz.

This poem was especially written for Michael Rosen's appearance on the Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour in 2008. © Michael Rosen, 2008

DON'T

Don't do,
Don't do,
Don't do that.
Don't pull faces,
Don't tease the cat.

Don't pick your ears,
Don't be rude at school.
Who do they think I am?

Some kind of fool?

One day
They'll say
Don't put toffee in my coffee
don't pour gravy on the baby
don't put beer in his ear
don't stick your toes up his nose.

Don't put confetti on the spaghetti
and don't squash peas on your knees.

Don't put ants in your pants
don't put mustard in the custard

don't chuck jelly at the telly

and don't throw fruit at a computer
don't throw fruit at a computer.

Don't what?
Don't throw fruit at a computer.
Don't what?
Don't throw fruit at a computer.
Who do they think I am?
Some kind of fool?

Don't taken from Mustard, Custard, Grumble Belly and Gravy by Michael Rosen and illustrated by Quentin Blake. (Andre Deutsch 1985, Bloomsbury 2006). Text copyright © Michael Rosen, 1985.

WASHING UP

On Sundays,
my mum and dad said,
'Right, we've cooked the dinner,
you two can wash it up,'
and then they went off to the front room.

So then we began.
First there was the row about who
was to wash and who was to dry.
My brother said, 'You're too slow at washing,
I have to hang about waiting for you,'
so I said,
'You always wash, it's not fair.'

'Hard cheese,' he says,
'I'm doing it.'
So that was that.

'Whoever dries has to stack the dishes,'
he says,
so that's me stacking the dishes
while he's getting the water ready.

Now,
quite often we used to have mustard
with our Sunday dinner
and we didn't have it out of a tube,
one of us used to make it with the powder
in an eggcup
and there was nearly always
some left over.

Anyway,
my brother
he'd be washing up by now
and he's standing there at the sink
his hands in the water,
I'm drying up,
And suddenly he goes,
'Quick, quick quick
come over here
quick, you'll miss it
quick, you'll miss it.'
'What?' I say, 'What?'
'Quick, quick. In here,
in the water.'
I say,

'What? What?'
'Give us your hand,' he says
and he grabs my hand
then my finger,
'What?' I say,
'That,' he says,
and he pulls my finger under the water
and stuffs it into the eggcup
with left-over blobs of old mustard
stuck to the bottom.
It's all slimey
'Oh Horrible.'

I was an idiot to have believed him.

So I go on drying up.

Suddenly
I feel a little speck of water on my neck.
I look up at the ceiling.
Where'd that come from?

I look at my brother
he's grinning all over his big face.

'Oy, cut that out,'
He grins again
sticks his finger under the water
in the bowl and
flicks.
Plip.
'Oy, that got me right on my face.'
'Did it? did it? did it?'
He's well pleased.

So now it's my turn
I've got the drying up cloth, haven't I?
And I've been practising for ages
on the kitchen door handle.
Now he's got his back to me
washing up
and
out goes the cloth, like a whip, it goes
right on the –
'Ow – that hurt. I didn't hurt you.'
Now it's me grinning.

So he goes,
'All right, let's call it quits.'
'OK,' I say, 'one-all. Fairy squarey.'

So, I go on drying up.
What I don't know it that
he's got the Fairy Liquid bottle under the
water
boop boop boop boop boop boop
it's filling up
with dirty soapy water
and next thing it's out of the water
and he's gone sqeeesh
and squirted it right in my face.

'Got you in the mush,' he goes.

'Right, that it,' I say,
'I've had enough.'
And I go upstairs and get
this old bicycle cape I've got,
one of those capes you can wear when you ride a bicycle in the rain.

So I come down in that
and I say,
'O K I'm ready for anything you've got now.
You can't get me now, can you?'

So next thing he's got the little
washing-up brush
and it's got little bits of meat fat
and squashed peas stuck in it
and he's come up to me
and he's in, up, under the cape with it
working it round and round
under my jumper, and under my chin.

So that makes me really wild
and I make a grab for anything that'll
hold water; dip it in the sink
and fling it at him.

What I don't know is that
while I went upstairs to get the cape
he's got a secret weapon ready.

It's his bicycle pump,
He's loaded it with the dirty washing-up water

By sucking it all in.
He picks it up,
and it's squirt again.
All over my hair.

Suddenly the door opens.
'Have you finished the ...?'
It's Mum AND Dad.

'Just look at this.
Look at the pair of them.'

And there's water all over the floor
all over the table
and all we've washed up is
two plates and the mustard pot.

My dad says,
'You can't be trusted to do anything you're asked,
can you.'

He always says that.

Mind you, the floor was pretty clean
After we had mopped it all up.

Washing Up taken from Quick, Let's Get Out of Here by Michael Rosen and illustrated by
Quentin Blake (Andrew Deutsch 1983, Puffin 2006). Text © Michael Rosen, 1983. Reproduced
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CHOCOLATE CAKE

I love chocolate cake.
And when I was a boy
I loved it even more.

Sometimes we used to have it for tea
and Mum used to say,
'If there's any left over
you can have it to take to school
tomorrow to have at playtime.'
And the next day I would take it to school
wrapped in tin foil
open it up at playtime and sit in the
corner of the playground
eating it,
you know how the icing on top
is all shiny and it cracks as you
bite into it
and there's that other kind of icing in
the middle
and it sticks to your hands and you
can lick your fingers
and lick your lips
oh it's lovely.
yeah.

Anyway,
once we had this chocolate cake for tea
and later I went to bed
but while I was in bed
I found myself waking up
licking my lips
and smiling.
I woke up proper.
'The chocolate cake.'
It was the first thing
I thought of.
I could almost see it
so I thought,
what if I go downstairs
and have a little nibble, yeah?

It was all dark
everyone was in bed
so it must have been really late
but I got out of bed,
crept out of the door

there's always a creaky floorboard, isn't there?

Past Mum and Dad's room,

careful not to tread on bits of broken toys
or bits of Lego
you know what it's like treading on Lego
with your bare feet,

Yowwww
Shhhhhhh

downstairs
into the kitchen
open the cupboard
and there it is
all shining.

So I take it out of the cupboard
put it on the table
and I see that
there's a few crumbs lying about on the plate,
so I lick my finger and run my finger all over the crumbs
scooping them up
and putting them into my mouth.

ooooooooommmmmmmmm

nice.

Then
I look again
and on one side where it's been cut,
it's all crumbly.
So I take a knife
I think I'll just tidy that up a bit,
cut off the crumbly bits
scoop them all up
and into the mouth

oooooommm mmmm
nice.

Look at the cake again.

That looks a bit funny now,
one side doesn't match the other
I'll just even it up a bit, eh?

Take the knife
and slice.
This time the knife makes a little cracky noise
as it goes through that hard icing on the top.

A whole slice this time,

into the mouth.

Oh the icing on top
and the icing in the middle
ohhhhhh oooo mmmmmm.

But now
I can't stop myself.
Knife –
I just take any old slice at it
and I've got this great big chunk
and I'm cramming it in
what a greedy pig
but it's so nice,

and there's another
and another and I'm squealing and I'm smacking my lips
and I'm stuffing myself with it
and
before I know
I've eaten the lot.

The whole lot.
I look at the place.
It's all gone.

Oh no
they're bound to notice, aren't they,
a whole chocolate cake doesn't just disappear
does it?

What shall I do?

I know. I'll wash the plate up,
and the knife

and put them away and maybe no one
will notice, eh?

So I do that

and creep creep creep
back to bed
into bed
doze off
licking my lips
with a lovely feeling in my belly.
Mmmmmmmmmmm.

In the morning I get up,
downstairs,
have breakfast,
Mum's saying,
'Have you got your dinner money?'
and I say,
'Yes.'
'And don't forget to take some chocolate cake with you.'
I stopped breathing.

'What's the matter,' she says,
'you normally jump at chocolate cake?'

I'm still not breathing,
and she's looking at me very closely now.

She's looking at me just below my mouth.
'What's that?' she says.
'What's what?' I say.
'What's that there?'
'Where?'
'There,' she says, pointing at my chin.
'I don't know,' I say.
'It looks like chocolate,' she says.
'It's not chocolate cake is it?'
No answer.
'Is it?'
'I don't know.'
She goes to the cupboard
looks in, up, top, middle, bottom,
turns back to me.
'It's gone.
It's gone.
You haven't eaten it, have you?'
'I don't know.'
'You don't know? You don't know if you've eaten a whole
chocolate cake or not?
When? When did you eat it?'

So I told her,

and she said
well what could she say?
'That;s the last time I give you any cake to take
to school.
Now go. Get out
no wait
not before you've washed your dirty sticky face.'
I went upstairs
looked in the mirror
and there it was,
just below my mouth,
a chocolate smudge.
The give-away.
Maybe she'll forget about it by next week.

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