

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
<b><u>CHORAL SPEAKING 2020</u></b>		
<b>472</b>	<b>18 Years and Under</b>	
	a} Journey of the Magi – T.S. Eliot.	<b>3.</b>
<b>473</b>	<b>15 Years and Under</b>	
	a} The Late Passenger – C.S. Lewis.	<b>4.</b>
<b>474</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Class</b>	
	a} The Evacuee – Shirley Tomlinson.	<b>5.</b>
<b>475</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Class</b>	
	a} The Sound Collector – Roger McGough.	<b>6.</b>
<b>476</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Class</b>	
	a} Allie –Robert Graves.	<b>7.</b>
<b>477</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Class</b>	
	a} My Dog Spot – Richard Rodney Bennett.	<b>8.</b>

**Please read Regulations for Choral Speaking as in Syllabus, 2020**

- (d) Movement and gesture must be **LIMITED and RESTRICTED** and not detract from the form of the verse pattern and the quality of the speaking.
- (e) The verse shape and pattern must not be distorted by addition of external words, song or music.
- (f) A large percentage of the work must be choral.
- (h) Class is for Boys, Girls or mixed groups

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
<b><u>ACTION VERSE 2020</u></b>		
<b>482</b>	<b>18 Years and Under</b>	
	a} Who is my Neighbour? – David Harmer.	<b>9.</b>
<b>483</b>	<b>15 Years and Under</b>	
	a} The Dinosaur Rap – John Foster.	<b>10.</b>
<b>484</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Class</b>	
	a} First Day at School – Roger McGough.	<b>12.</b>
<b>485</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Class</b>	
	a} Valerie Malory & Sue Hu Nu – Trevor Millum.	<b>13.</b>
<b>486</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Class – Mixed</b>	
	a} The Rules that Rule the School – John Foster.	<b>14.</b>
<b>487</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Class – Mixed</b>	
	a} Oh, Ozzie! – Richard Edwards.	<b>15.</b>
<b>492</b>	<b>8 Years and Under</b>	
	a} Poor Horace – June Rodgers.	<b>16.</b>
	b} The Dragon Hunt – Daphne Lister.	<b>17.</b>
	c} The Morning Rush – John Foster.	<b>18.</b>
	d} Magic Cat – Peter Dixon.	<b>19.</b>

**Please read Regulations for Action Verse as in Syllabus, 2020**

- (c) Movement and gesture are permissible and RECOMMENDED.*
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“The Presentation Brothers’ Perpetual Cup”Choral Speaking 18 Years and Under

a}

JOURNEY OF THE MAGI

A cold coming we had of it,  
 Just the worst time of the year  
 For a journey, and such a long journey:  
 The ways deep and the weather sharp,  
 The very dead of winter.  
 And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,  
 Lying down in the melting snow.  
 There were times we regretted  
 The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,  
 And the silken girls bringing sherbet.  
 Then the camel men cursing and grumbling  
 And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,  
 And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,  
 And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly  
 And the villages dirty and charging high prices:  
 A hard time we had of it.  
 At the end we preferred to travel all night,  
 Sleeping in snatches,  
 With the voices singing in our ears, saying  
 That this was all folly.  
 Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,  
 Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;  
 With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,  
 And three trees on the low sky,  
 And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.  
 Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,  
 Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,  
 And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.  
 But there was no information, and so we continued  
 And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon  
 Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.  
  
 All this was a long time ago, I remember,  
 And I would do it again, but set down  
 This set down  
 This: were we led all that way for  
 Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,  
 We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,  
 But had thought they were different; this Birth was  
 Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.  
 We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,  
 But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,  
 With an alien people clutching their gods.  
 I should be glad of another death.

T.S. Eliot.

b}

Own Choice.

**Year of Birth:****2001 and later.**

Choral Speaking 15 Years and Under

a}

THE LATE PASSENGER

The sky was low, the sounding rain was falling dense and dark  
And Noah’s sons were standing at the window of the Ark.

The beasts were in, but Japhet said, “I see one creature more  
Belated and unmated there come knocking at the door.”

“Well let him knock,” said Ham, “Or let him drown or learn to swim.  
We’re overcrowded as it is; we’ve got no room for him.”

“And yet he knocks, how terribly he knocks,” said Shem, “It’s feet  
Are hard as horn – but oh the air that comes from it is sweet.”

“Now hush,” said Ham, “You’ll waken Dad, and once he comes to see  
What’s at the door, it’s sure to mean more work for you and me.”

Noah’s voice came roaring from the darkness down below,  
“Some animal is knocking. Take it in before we go.”

Ham shouted back, and savagely he nudged the other two,  
“That’s only Japhet knocking down a brad-nail in his shoe.”

Said Noah, “Boys, I hear a noise that’s like a horse’s hoof.”  
Said Ham, “Why, that’s the dreadful rain that drums upon the roof.”

Noah tumbled up on deck and out he put his head;  
His face went grey, his knees were loosed, he tore his beard and said,

“Look, look! It would not wait. It turns away. It takes its flight.  
Fine work you’ve made of it, my sons, between you all tonight!”

“Even if I could outrun it now, it would not turn again  
- Not now. Our great discourtesy has earned its high disdain.

“Oh noble and unmated beast, my sons were all unkind;  
In such a night what stable and what manger will you find?

“Oh golden hoofs, oh cataracts of mane, oh nostrils wide  
With indignation! Oh the neck wave-arched, the lovely pride!

“Oh long shall be the furrows ploughed across the hearts of men  
Before it comes to stable and to manger once again,

“And dark and crooked all the ways in which our race shall walk,  
And shrivelled all their manhood like a flower with a broken stalk,

“And all the world, oh Ham, may curse the hour when you were born;  
Because of you the Ark must sail without the Unicorn.”

C.S. Lewis.

b} Own Choice.

**Year of Birth: 2004 and later.**

“The Junior Perpetual Cup”

Choral Speaking 6<sup>th</sup> Class

a}

THE EVACUEE

With a label on my blazer  
And a suitcase in my hand,  
My gas mask slung across me,  
Very frightened here I stand.

I can hear come children crying,  
Others laughing, but not I,  
For I’m waiting very quietly,  
And feeling small and shy.

We’ve travelled on a chugging train,  
We’ve travelled on a bus,  
And now we’re lined up in the street,  
And told we mustn’t fuss.

And the teacher study names on lists,  
And knock upon each door,  
“Did you say you’d have one little girl?”  
And “Could you have one more?”

I haven’t got a sister,  
And I haven’t got a brother,  
And that is why they take me out  
The first of any other.

But at tea-time Billy Brown’s still there,  
The twins are at his side,  
They’ve got very dirty faces,  
Where the tears have streaked and dried.

And I have the strangest feeling,  
When I’m grown up, I’ll remember,  
This year of 1939,  
The sad month of September.

And I’ll think about the night-time,  
When my mum was far away.  
And hope that other children  
Never know so long a day.

Shirley Tomlinson.

b}

Own Choice.

Choral Speaking 5<sup>th</sup> Class

a}

THE SOUND COLLECTOR

A stranger called this morning  
Dressed all in black and grey  
Put every sound into a bag  
And carried them away

The whistling of the kettle  
The turning of the lock  
The purring of the kitten  
The ticking of the clock

The popping of the toaster  
The crunching of the flakes  
When you spread the marmalade  
The scraping noise it makes

The hissing of the frying-pan  
The ticking of the grill  
The bubbling of the bathtub  
As it starts to fill

The drumming of the raindrops  
On the window-pane  
When you do the washing-up  
The gurgle of the drain

The crying of the baby  
The squeaking of the chair  
The swishing of the curtain  
The creaking of the stair

A stranger called this morning  
He didn't leave his name  
Left us only silence  
Life will never be the same.

Roger McGough.

b}

Own Choice.

Choral Speaking 4<sup>th</sup> Class

a}

ALLIE

“Allie, call the birds in,  
The birds from the sky.”  
Allie calls, Allie sings,  
Down they all fly.  
First there came  
Two white doves,  
Then a sparrow from his nest,  
Then a clucking bantam hen,  
Then a robin red-breast.

“Allie, call the beasts in,  
The beasts, every one.”  
Allie calls, Allie sings,  
In they all run,  
First there came  
Two black lambs,  
Then a grunting Berkshire sow,  
Thea a dog without a tail,  
Then a red and white cow.

“Allie, call the fish up,  
The fish from the stream.”  
Allie calls, Allie sings,  
Up they all swim.  
First there came  
Two gold fish,  
A minnow and a miller’s thumb,  
Then a pair of loving trout  
Then the twisting ells come.

“Allie, call the children  
Children from the green.”  
Allie calls, Allie sings,  
Soon they run in.  
First there came  
Tom and Madge  
Kate and I who’ll not forget  
How we played by the water’s edge  
Till the April sun set.

Robert Graves.

b}

Own Choice.

Choral Speaking 3<sup>rd</sup> Class

a}

MY DOG SPOT

I have a white dog  
Whose name is Spot,  
And he’s sometimes white  
And he’s sometimes not.  
But whether he’s white  
Or whether he’s not,  
There’s a patch on his ear  
That makes him Spot.

He has a tongue  
That is long and pink,  
And he lolls it out  
When he wants to think,  
He seems to think most  
When the weather is hot.  
He’s a wise sort of dog,  
Is my dog Spot.

He likes a bone  
And he likes a ball,  
But he doesn’t care  
For a cat at all.  
He waggles his tail  
And he knows what’s what,  
So I’m glad that he’s my dog,  
My dog, Spot.

Richard Rodney Bennett.

b}

Own Choice.

Action Verse 18 Years and Under

a}

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR

From Jerusalem to Jericho  
the road was lonely, narrow, slow.

A man came walking down the track  
as thieves crept up behind his back.

They knocked him down and beat his  
head  
stripped him, robbed him, left for dead.

He lay there bleeding in the dirt  
moaning, groaning, badly hurt.

The sun burned down, his throat ran dry  
but then a priest came passing by.

“Water please,” cried out the man  
“Priest, help me any way you can.”

No help came, he was denied  
the priest walked by on the other side.

A second priest ignored his plight  
just walked away and out of sight.

As a Samaritan drew near  
he shouted out in pain and fear,

“My wife and children will grieve for me  
I am in the hands of my enemy.”

But with those hands his wounds were  
bathed  
they raised him up and he was saved.

Carried as a donkey’s load  
to an inn along the road.

Washed and bandaged, laid to sleep  
two silver coins left for his keep.

“Take care of him,” said his new friend  
“I’ll pay whatever else you spend

And when he wakes let him know  
I was his neighbour not his foe.”

David Harmer.

b} Own Choice.

**Year of Birth: 2001 and later.**

**“The Weston Perpetual Cup”**

**Action Verse 15 Years and Under**

a}

**THE DINOSAUR RAP**

Come on, everybody, shake a claw.  
Let’s hear you bellow, let’s hear you roar.  
Let’s hear you thump and clump and clap.  
Come and join in. Do the dinosaur rap.

There’s a young T-rex over by the door  
Who’s already stamped a hole in the floor.

There’s a whirling, twirling Apatosaurus  
Encouraging everyone to join in the chorus.

Come on, everybody, shake a claw.  
Let’s hear you bellow, let’s hear you roar.  
Let’s hear you thump and clump and clap.  
Come and join in. Do the dinosaur rap.

There’s a Stegosaurus rattling his spines  
And an Iguanodon making thumbs-up signs.

There’s an Allosaurus giving a shout  
As he thrashes and lashes his tail about.

Come on, everybody, shake a claw.  
Let’s hear you bellow, let’s hear you roar.  
Let’s hear you thump and clump and clap.  
Come and join in. Do the dinosaur rap.

There’s a Triceratops who can’t stop giggling  
At the way her partner’s writhing and wriggling.

There’s an Ankylosaurus swaying to the beat,  
Clomping and clumping and stomping his feet.

There are dinosaurs here. There are dinosaurs there.  
There are dinosaurs dancing everywhere.  
So swing your tails and shake your claws.  
Join in the rapping with the dinosaurs.

John Foster.

b}

Own Choice.

**Year of Birth:**

**2004 and later.**

Please note the **difference** between  
**CHORAL SPEAKING and ACTION VERSE**

**Choral Speaking**

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**Action Verse**

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Action Verse 6<sup>th</sup> Class

a}

FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

A millionbillionwillion miles from home  
Waiting for the bell to go. (To go where?)  
Why are they all so big, other children?  
So noisy? So much at home they  
must have been born in uniform.  
Lived all their lives in playgrounds.  
Spent the years inventing games  
That don't let me in. Games  
that are rough, that swallow you up.

And the railings.  
All around, the railings.  
Are they to keep out wolves and monsters?  
Things that carry off and eat children?  
Things you don't take sweets from?  
Perhaps they're to stop us getting out.  
Running away from the lessins. Lessin.  
What does a lessin look like?  
Sounds small and slimy.  
They keep them in classrooms.  
Whole rooms made out of glass. Imagine.

I wish I could remember my name.  
Mummy said it would come in useful.  
Like wellies. When there's puddles.  
Yellowwellies. I wish she was here.  
I think my name is sewn on somewhere.  
Perhaps the teacher will read it for me.  
Tea'cher. The one who makes the tea.

Roger McGough.

b}

Own Choice.

Action Verse 5<sup>th</sup> Class

a}

VALERIER MALORY & SUE HU NU

Valerie Malory and Sue Hu Nu  
Went to school on a kangaroo  
Half way there and half way back  
They met a duck with half a quack.

Valerie Malory and Sue Hu Nu  
Arrived at school with a kangaroo  
Half way there and half way in  
They met a cat with half a grin.

Valerie Malory and Sue Hu Nu  
Came home from school on a kangaroo  
Half way here and half way there  
They met a clown with half a chair.

Valerie Malory and Sue Hu Nu  
Went upstairs on a kangaroo  
Half way up and half way down  
They met a king with half a crown.

Valerie Malory and Sue Hu Nu  
Went to bed with a kangaroo  
Half asleep and half awake  
They dreamt of a... duck and a quack  
and a grin and a cat  
and a king and a clown  
and a chair and a crown  
and a kangaroo  
with half a shoe.

Trevor Millum.

b}

Own Choice.

Action Verse 4<sup>th</sup> Class

a}

THE RULES THAT RULE THE SCHOOL

Only speak when you are spoken to.  
Don’t stand and grin like a fool.  
Pay attention or risk a detention.  
We’re the rules that rule the school.

Hands must not be in pockets  
When addressing a member of staff.  
Though smiling is sometimes permitted,  
You need permission to laugh.

Boys must stand to attention  
And salute when they pass the Head.  
Girls are expected to curtsy  
And lower their eyes instead.

So sit up straight. Do as you’re told,  
If you want to come top of the class.  
Bribes must be paid in cash  
If you want to be sure to pass.

Don’t breathe too loud in lessons.  
Don’t sweat too much in games.  
Remember that teachers are human.  
Don’t *ever* call them names.

Only speak when you are spoken to.  
Don’t stand and grin like a fool.  
Pay attention or risk a detention.  
We’re the rules that rule the school.

John Foster.

b}

Own Choice.

Action Verse 3<sup>rd</sup> Class

a}

OH, OZZIE!

“Polar bear in the garden!” yelled Ozzie;  
And we all rushed out to see,  
But of course it wasn’t a bear at all –  
Just a marmalade cat who’s jumped over the wall.  
Oh, Ozzie!

“Mountain lion in the garden!” yelled Ozzie,  
And we all rushed out to see,  
But of course it wasn’t a lion with a roar –  
Just the scruffy black dog who’d dug in from next door.  
Oh, Ozzie!

“Kangaroo in the garden!” yelled Ozzie,  
And we all stayed in and smiled,  
And of course it wasn’t a kangaroo  
But a man eating tiger escaped from the zoo.

Poor Ozzie.

Richard Edwards.

b}

Own Choice.

Action Verse – 8 Years and Under

a}

POOR HORACE

Horace loves haunting a  
Castle or house,  
But one thing scares Horace,  
The squeal of a mouse.

Horace makes noises and  
Bumps in the night  
And people say, “Gracious!  
That gave me a fright!”

But just let bold Horace hear  
One tiny squeak  
And his boldness is gone –  
He becomes very meek.

For though he will haunt  
Any castle or house,  
Poor Horace – the ghost –  
Is afraid of a mouse.

June Rodgers

b}

## THE DRAGON HUNT

“Let’s hunt for dragons,” Rachel said,  
“Tonight, before we go to bed,”  
So each of us, quiet as a mouse,  
Hunted and searched around the house.  
We looked under tables,  
We looked under chairs,  
We looked behind curtains  
And under the stairs,  
We looked in the corners  
Of all of the rooms,  
We peeped in the cupboard  
Behind all the brooms.  
We looked in the wardrobe and under the bed,  
“No, not a dragon in sight,” Rachel said.

But even so, when I curled up that night,  
I felt a bit twitchy and tingly with fright,  
For though we had looked simply *everywhere*,  
I was sure a dragon was hiding *somewhere*.

Daphne Lister.

**Year of Birth: 2011 and later.**

c}

## THE MORNING RUSH

Into the bathroom,  
Turn on the tap.  
Wash away the sleepiness –  
Splish! Splosh! Splash!

Into the bedroom,  
Pull on your vest.  
Quickly! Quickly!  
Get yourself dressed.

Down to the kitchen.  
No time to lose.  
Gobble up your breakfast.  
Out on your shoes.

Back to the bathroom.  
Squeeze out the paste.  
Brush, brush, brush your teeth.  
No time to waste.

Look in the mirror.  
Comb your hair.  
Hurry, scurry, hurry, scurry  
Down the stairs.

Pick your school bag  
Up off the floor.  
Grab your coat  
And out through the door.

John Foster.

**Year of Birth: 2011 and later.**

d}

## MAGIC CAT

My mum while walking through the door  
Spilt some magic on the floor.  
Blobs of this  
And splotches of that  
But most of it upon the cat.

Our cat turned magic, straight away  
And in the garden went to play  
Where it grew two massive wings  
And flew around in fancy rings.  
“Oh look!” cried Mother, pointing high,  
“I didn’t know our cat could fly.”  
Then with a dash of Tibby’s tail  
She turned my mum into a snail!

So now she lives beneath a stone  
And dusts around a different home.  
And I’m an ant  
And Dad’s a mouse  
And Tibby’s living in our house.

Peter Dixon.

**Year of Birth: 2011 and later.**