

## 13. Wrecking Resources Jane Darke 2015

### Poetry Activities

This is the beginning of a poem by Nick called 'The Lobster', what do you learn about the lobster through this poem?

#### The Lobster

I am a lobster,  
 Monarch of the deep  
 Sovereign of the seabed,  
 Spring tide and neap.

I am a lobster,  
 Solemn, serious.  
 Single. Solitary.  
 Mysterious.

Precision  
 Prehistoric beast.  
 Feared the most,  
 Fears the least.

Crevice-dweller.  
 Loathed and feted.  
 Dainty dancer.  
 Armour-plated.

More than fish,  
 Fantastic creature.  
 Antisocial.  
 Peeved to meet you.

I am a lobster,  
 Crustacean queen.  
 Hard to catch,  
 Seldom seen.

By Nick Darke

### Questions to answer about the poem

1. Can you spot the rhyming pattern in the poem?
2. Can you find some examples of alliteration (words that start with the same letter sound) in the poem?
3. Define the meanings of these words:

Sovereign

Neap

Prehistoric

Crevice

peevish

4. Find five adjectives that describe the lobster?
5. Do you think the lobster likes to mix with other sea creatures? Use examples from the poem to explain your answer.

Now it's your turn to write a poem about your favourite sea creature. Try to use the same rhyming pattern and make sure each verse has just four lines.

Here's a list of sea creatures to get you thinking:

Jelly fish, dolphin, crab, mussel, oyster, limpet, shark, eel, mackerel, sea slug, blenny, starfish, anemone, squid.

You could fill in the rhyming word bank to help you.

Rhyming Word Bank

sea	green	splash	cold
sky	blue	night	bay
surge	fish	dive	wave
sand	shell	float	salt

## Darke Encyclopaedia : Words Nick found on the beach

**a** anglers' tackle, Americas, a palette called Eric (solid oak), Amy Johnson

**b** bottles, buoyancy, birds, building materials, bones, bamboo, boats, buffs, bongos, bodies, bicycle seats, bullet clips, beach, beach profile, bridges, bobbins, Beach of Signs, Broccoli baron

**c** coal, communication, currents, chance, collecting, competition, community, cartridge cases, cultivation, Custom & Excise, Curt Ebbesmeyer, cargoes, Carl (wreck of), cowries, culls, chaos theory

**d** drift seeds, death, Darwin, donkey's tail, dunnage, dynamite (dynies), deck, dans, dogs, dynamics, dolphins

**e** elsewhere, ecosystem, effortless, exposed, erosion, eye, extreme sports, (and the other extremes)

**f** flow, fulmars, firewood, fish, fisherman, flint, fossils, fluid, flippers, FAJ

**g** goldfish, geology, goose barnacles, gribble, gannets, guillemots, gulls, quarries, gear

**h** history, heroism, sea heart, hobnailed boots, Harry Parkin, hypodermic (needles), head (bald, white fringe, found Bedruthan) haberdashery cove

**i** idling, impermanence, interconnectedness

**j** jellyfish, junk

**k** kinetic energy



weed, warlords of St Merryn

**Y** youth

**Z** Zen

Complete this alliterative ABC of the ocean by finding *powerful* adjectives or verbs (THAT START WITH THE SAME LETTER SOUND) to put in front of the nouns. Using a dictionary will help you.

ABC OF THE OCEAN

\_\_\_\_\_ Atlantic  
 \_\_\_\_\_ bay  
 \_\_\_\_\_ cove  
 \_\_\_\_\_ dunes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ estuary  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Fishing boat  
 \_\_\_\_\_ gulls  
 \_\_\_\_\_ headland  
 \_\_\_\_\_ inlet  
 \_\_\_\_\_ jellyfish  
 \_\_\_\_\_ kelp  
 \_\_\_\_\_ lagoon  
 \_\_\_\_\_ marina  
 \_\_\_\_\_ neap tide  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ocean  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Pacific  
 \_\_\_\_\_ quay  
 \_\_\_\_\_ rock pool

\_\_\_\_\_ seaweed  
\_\_\_\_\_ tempest  
\_\_\_\_\_ undertow  
\_\_\_\_\_ vessels  
\_\_\_\_\_ whirlpool  
\_\_\_\_\_ X-ray fish  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yacht



## Extract 2 KS3 AND KS4

**This was originally written for singing by one woman with an orchestra.**

### THE LOBSTER

I am a lobster,  
Monarch of the deep  
Sovereign of the seabed,  
Spring tide and neap.

I am a lobster,  
Solemn, serious.  
Single. Solitary.  
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Precision  
Prehistoric beast.  
Feared the most,  
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Crevice-dweller.  
Loathed and feted.  
Dainty dancer.  
Armour-plated.

More than fish,  
Fantastic creature.  
Antisocial.  
Peeved to meet you.

I am a lobster,  
Crustacean queen.  
Hard to catch,  
Seldom seen.

Today in a state of high agitation.  
He's dropped his pot again.  
Predator. Him up there.

The pred. The man with the trap.  
 The breather of air. Homo erectus.  
 Most barbaric and primitive  
 Brute on the map.

Don't ask me how but he knows where I am.  
 He puts down his pot here whenever he can.  
 When the sea's not too rough or the tides off the rock  
 Right on the threshold. Down comes the pot.  
 Inviting, enticing, the neck is so wide,  
 Instinct impels me to inspect the inside  
 I know what I'm doing but can't stop the urge  
 Appetite uppermost, reason submerged!

Pity the lobster;  
 Five hundred million years since our creation,  
 Still unable to resist temptation.

Salt mackerel. The perfect lure.  
 Stale. Potent. Tantalizing.  
 The oil bleeds out through the milieu  
 And sets my receptors vibrating.  
 The gut of the fish, the succulent gut,  
 The glorious stench of decay.  
 I cannot ignore his bait.  
 It's death to go in there  
 But there's no escape.  
 My destiny is the dinner plate.

I'm his most elusive prey  
 My price is more than most can pay  
 I can't be got with net, trawl,  
 Hand, hook, I evade them all.  
 If I could control my greed  
 Stop in my hole amongst the weed,  
 Not go out, withdraw, detach,  
 Then I'd be impossible to catch.

When conditions are bad  
 I don't go outside,

More often than not  
A conger eel slides  
Before me into the pot.  
Inter-species co-habitation  
Might occur in the air  
But I am the queen of crustaceans.  
I don't share.

Safe in my hide  
I sit by the door  
And witness  
Lesser species ride  
Out the storm.

Dogfish tossed  
From rock to rock,  
Bass bashed  
Black bream bruised,  
Mullet buffeted, Cod confused.

Flounder floundered,  
Flatfish folded round,  
Round fish flattened flat.

Crabs crushed, dabs dashed,  
Catfish crashed,  
Wrasse wrapped in bladder wrack,  
And rockling ravaged.

Seaweed by the acre stripped  
Like tissue paper off the slate  
Sand picked and shifted by the ton  
Sucked and spewed across the shore  
Boulders big as mountains  
Marble down the ocean corridor

When it's over  
The pot's still there.

He's not the only carnal savage,

The predator,  
 To indulge in bestial acts.  
 There's the guzzler,  
 Less intelligent, but fat.  
 Wealthy. Arrogant. Full of hot air  
 Dines at fancy restaurants in Mayfair.  
 Corpulent bipeds straining their seats  
 Slaver at the prospect of biting my meat.  
 I top the menu at wedding feasts  
 For monarchs and moguls  
 I'm a rare treat  
 Best taken simple.  
 Cold with a squeeze of lemon,  
 New potatoes, fresh or sautéed  
 And washed down with Haut Brion,  
 Chateau d'Yquem or a Montrachet.  
 In haute cuisine I'm given a name,  
 Thermidor, Newburg, Américaine.  
 Grilled with fines herbs is a popular dish  
 Or baked in a flan with inferior fish.  
 Covered in sauce laced with cheap liquor,  
 They reckon it's chic, I call it murder.

Who should I despise most completely,  
 The predator who catches  
 Or the guzzler who eats me?  
 Each is dependent on the other,  
 If the latter didn't crave my flesh  
 The former wouldn't bother.

I bear neither any grudge.  
 I wish them both the best of health  
 She has no time to judge  
 Who reserves all loathing for herself.

Pity the lobster;  
 Five hundred million years since our creation,  
 Still unable to resist temptation.

Supreme crustacean!

Spectacular carapace!  
 Eight limbs to dance with!  
 Four to feed!  
 A claw to crush  
 And one to saw!  
 Mighty abdominal muscle  
 For backward propulsion!  
 Exo-skeleton defies destruction!  
 Self-amputation! Re-generation!  
 Five hundred million years  
 In the making!  
 All gone for nothing!  
 There for the taking!

A predator drowned.  
 I picked him clean.  
 Fell off his boat, tumbled down  
 Through the sunlit zone.  
 Settled here  
 Outside the crevice I call home.  
 I chomped through his external organs  
 Then feasted on the stomach  
 And when his heart was stinking rotten  
 I devoured that.  
 The bicep on his upper arm,  
 The pot hauler,  
 Tasted particularly sweet.  
 O yes I've partaken of pred flesh  
 But don't tar me with the same brush.  
 I didn't lure him here,  
 Set a trap with bait,  
 Sell him to a merchant  
 Go back and catch his mate.  
 He came of his own accord  
 And made his own mistake.  
 No lobster looks a gift horse in the mouth.

So let the guzzler who melts  
 My muscle with his saliva  
 Dwell on this:

I have banqueted on bloated cadaver  
 Since I was half this size.  
 I've ecdysed twice, sloughed off two shells  
 Digested nowt but predmeat.  
 He who swallows me swallows his brother.  
 It's called getting your own back.

The flesh is pure white firm not flaky like cod nor tough as a gastropod the  
 taste is so subtle sweet but not too sweet and nothing is wasted all can be  
 eaten even the bones in time believe me there's no fish mammal mollusc so  
 noble so sublime.

Except mackerel.

Salt mackerel. The perfect lure.  
 Stale. Potent. Tantalizing.  
 The oil bleeds out through the milieu  
 And sets my receptors vibrating.  
 The gut of the fish, the succulent gut,  
 The glorious stench of decay.  
 I cannot ignore his bait.  
 It's death to go in there  
 But there's no escape.  
 My destiny is the dinner plate.

It's time.  
 Take bait.  
 Bite flesh.

See Parlour.  
 Home. Safe.  
 No! Trap!  
 Work muscle!  
 Thrust back!  
 No response.  
 Paralysed by desire.  
 Rigid with greed.  
 Tail first,  
 Dance through gap  
 And feed.

Here I sit in the predator's chamber  
Nothing to do now but wait  
For the tug on the rope, lift-off  
And the long ascent through  
Endless mid-water.

Let the suffering begin.  
Auctioned, sold, handled, frozen,  
Wrapped in hostile air.  
Shell shattered, beaten, wacked.  
Cooked, eaten, discarded,  
Picked over by rats.

Judgement time.  
Hear the crime:  
A minor lapse of self-restraint.  
Now the sentence:  
Execution!

Lobster!  
Queen of crustatea  
Miracle of nature!  
After five hundred million  
Years of evolution  
You still cannot resist  
A bit of stinking bait.  
You will be taken from this ocean,  
Plunged into a steaming vat  
And boiled till you're pink as a cardinal's hat.