

English and literacy skills

Moving from primary school to
Diss High School...



Have you got any ideas why there are skyscrapers on the front of this booklet? Jot down your comments here:

Name:

Primary School:

In September, when you begin attending Diss High School, you might well feel a little bit....., or even.....
(Fill in the blanks with your ideas)



Hopefully, you will soon settle in. You will find your way around, get to know your form tutor and meet some students from other schools. Of course, you will study some new subjects and perhaps you will find that you will study some familiar subjects in new ways.

In English lessons you will study non-fiction and media texts, read a novel as a class, broaden your extended writing skills, read a variety of poems, study drama (including Shakespeare) and take part in lots of reading activities in our fabulous library, including Readathon and Reading Challenges.

We want you to be ready to start High School. There are certain things that you can do to prepare for English lessons here:

- 1) Work hard at your primary school;
- 2) Read, read and read some more;
- 3) Complete the 'passport' in this booklet or your 'dream jar' and give it to your teacher to send to us and...
- 4) Read, read and read some more (fiction, non-fiction, poetry.... the choice is yours!)



Diss High School Passport



My name is:

I like to be known as:

Photograph of me:

Information about my family:

Information about my hobbies and interests:

What I might like to do when I'm older:

Things I have enjoyed at my primary school:

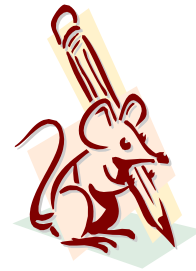
At your primary school I am sure that you have studied lots of different poems. Read the following poem by American poet, Billy Collins.

Introduction to Poetry.

I ask them to take a poem
and hold it up to the light
like a colour slide

or press an ear against its hive.

I say drop a mouse into a poem
and watch him probe his way out,



or walk inside the poem's room
and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want them to water-ski
across the surface of a poem
waving at the author's name on the shore.

But all they want to do
is tie the poem to a chair with rope
and torture a confession out of it.

They begin beating it with a hose
to find out what it really means.

Now try to answer these questions:

1) Billy Collins suggests that a poem is like six other things. What are they? Can you find a quotation for each of the six things?

2) Who is the 'I' in the poem? Who is 'They'?

3) What do you think that the voice in the poem wants us to do?

Now, read this poem by Eve Merriam.



How to Eat a Poem.

Don't be polite.
Bite in.

Pick it up with your fingers and lick the juice that
May run down your chin.
It is ready and ripe now, whenever you are.

You do not need a knife or fork or spoon
Or plate or napkin or tablecloth.

For there is no core
Or stem
Or rind
Or pit
Or seed
Or skin
To throw away.

Now try to answer these questions:

- 1) To what does Eve Merriam compare a poem? Provide some evidence to support your idea.
- 2) What does she mean by "Don't be polite. Bite in"?
- 3) Which of these two poems do you prefer? Give reasons for your answer.
- 4) What differences do you notice when you read these two poems?
- 5) What do the poems have in common?

Thank you for completing this booklet. We look forward to seeing you in September.

The English teachers at Diss High School.