For Naomi

I'm the kind of dad
my children don't want to be seen with
because I'm the kind of dad who

shouts in shops
says hello to babies
doesn't clean the car
eats pizzas in the street
doesn't cut his moustache
sings on buses
argues with policemen
waves to old ladies
has long hair
and
writes poems

Michael Rosen

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I Know Someone Who Can

I know someone who can
take a mouthful of custard and blow it
down their nose.
I know someone who can
make their ears wiggle.
I know someone who can
shake their cheeks so it sounds
like ducks quaking.
I know someone who can
throw peanuts in the air and catch them
in their mouth.
I know someone who can
balance a pile of 12 2p pieces on his elbow
and snatch his elbow from under them
and catch them.
I know someone who can
bend her thumb back to touch her wrist.
I know someone who can
crack his nose.
I know someone who can
say the alphabet backwards.
I know someone who can put their hands in
their armpits and blow raspberries.
I know someone who can
wiggle her little toe.
I know someone who can
lick the bottom of her chin.
I know someone who can
slide their top lip one way
and their bottom lip the other way,
and that someone is
ME.

Michael Rosen

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Talking-tubes

I believe everything my brother tells me
that's why I know about talking-tubes in old houses.

Once we went to this old house
and the guide who was taking us round
told us that there were tubes
running through the massive great thick walls
so that people in the olden days
could talk to each other.

After the guide went off
my brother explained to me
that these talking-tubes were only discovered
a short while ago.
He said they were closed up
with great big corks.

He said,
when the people who discovered them
pulled the corks out
they heard
all these old words from hundreds of years ago.
They heard knight-in-armour talking.
What they said just came tumbling out of the talking-tubes.
Amazing.

I believe everything my brother tells me
that's why I know about talking-tubes in old houses.

Michael Rosen

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The Deal

My brother once told me that
Mum and Dad have got a deal about
telling off.

He said that
if one of *them*
is telling one of *us* off
then the other parent
won't join in.
He said that they'd said
it isn't fair on a kid
if both parents have a go
at the same time.

It works like that most of the time.

My Dad gets angry about something,
like the time I stuck toothpaste in his shaving soap:
'What did you think?
I wouldn't notice?
The little fool!
He spends hours and hours in that bathroom
and we think he's washing himself!
But this is the sort of monkey business
he's getting up to.
This is my shaving soap.
Not yours.
If you want to play about with shaving soap
buy your own.'

And Mum doesn't say a word.
Not a word.

But somehow when it's Mum's turn
it doesn't work out the same way.

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She's telling me off
for not cleaning my shoes:
'How can you go out like that?
You look like a tramp.
I don't want to be seen in the street with you.
All I'm asking is that you give them a wipe.
A little wipe.
That wouldn't harm you, would it?'

And out of the corner of my eye
I can see my Dad
twitching about
itching to join in.
He's nodding and tutting
and coming in with:
'Quite!'
and
'You're right there, Connie.'

Then when Mum goes out the room
he bursts out with:
'You've pushed your mother to the edge this time.'

Never mind her,
he's well *over* the edge.

Michael Rosen

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Mr Baggs

I was walking home from school
with Mr Baggs
the teacher who took us for football
and he said:
'You see Michael, what we need in the team
is a really good centre-half,
someone who can control the game from midfield
collect the ball in the middle
distribute the ball to the front players.
A good centre-half can turn a game.
He can make all the difference.
Now who have we got playing in the middle?
-oh, my goodness it's you
I forgot
I'm sorry
I wasn't thinking
no hard feelings, OK?'

Michael Rosen

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Great Day

Can’t find the bathroom
Can’t find my socks
Can’t find the cornflakes
Can’t find the lunch-box
Can’t find the book-folder
Can’t find the front door
Can’t find school
Can’t find the class-room
Can’t find the pen
Can’t find the paper
Can’t find the lunch-box
Can’t find the pen
Can’t find the paper
Can’t find the way home
Can’t find the front door
Can’t find my plate
Can’t find the television
Ah – find bed.

Michael Rosen

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The Shop Downstairs

We live in a flat over a shop.
It's an estate agent's called Norman and Butt.
My father told me that Norman is the talkative one.
'He's full of big ideas. He rushes in
and starts gabbling away with what they're going to do,
things like:
"We could open a new shop,
we could buy new desks
we could be millionaires"
and then Mr Butt says:
"But –"
and so nothing happens.
That's them, Norman and Butt,'
says my dad.
'Is that true?' we say.
'Sure it is.'

Michael Rosen

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Sweetshop

do you think there's a sweetshop here?
are we going to the sweetshop?
when are we going to the sweetshop?
will you take me to the sweetshop?
have we got enough money for the sweetshop?
will the sweets be in jars in the sweetshop?
will they have homemade sweets in the sweetshop?
will they have those soft squashy toffees with the chocolate inside in the sweetshop?
are we going to the sweetshop?
when are we going to the sweetshop?
will you take me to the sweetshop?
have we got enough money for the sweetshop?
will you take me to the sweetshop?
when are we going to the sweetshop?
are we going to the sweetshop?
are we?

Michael Rosen

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The Torch

I nagged my mum and dad for a torch.
'Oh go on. I'd love a torch.
One of those ones with black rubber around them.
Go on. Pleeeeeeese.'
It was no good. I wasn't getting anywhere.

Then came my birthday.
On the table was a big box
in the box
a torch.
My dad took it out the box.
'You see that torch,' he says
'It's waterproof.
That is a waterproof torch.'

Waterproof. Wow!

So that night I got into the bath
and went under water swimming with it.
Breathe in,
under the water,
switch on
search for shipwrecks
and treasure.
Up, breathe
under again
exploring the ocean floor.

Then the torch went out.
I shook it and banged it but it wouldn't go.
I couldn't get it to go again.
My birthday torch.
So I got out, dried myself off
put on my pyjamas and went into the kitchen.

'The – er – torch won't work. It's broken.'
And my dad says,
'What do you mean, "it's broken"?
It couldn't have just broken.
How did it break?
'I dunno, it just went off.'

'I don't believe it. You ask him a simple question
and you never get a simple answer.
You must have been
doing something with it.'
'No. It just went off.'
'Just try telling the truth, will you?

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How
did
it
break?
‘I was underwater swimming with it.’

‘Are you mad?
When I said the torch is waterproof
I meant it keeps the rain off.
I didn’t mean you could go deep-sea diving with it.
Ruined. Completely ruined.
For weeks and weeks he nags us stupid that he wants
one of these waterproof torches
and then first thing he does is wreck it.
How long did it last?
Two minutes? Three minutes?
These things cost money, you know.
Money.’

I felt so rotten.
My birthday torch.

At the weekend, he says,
We’re going into Harrow to take the torch back.

We walk into the shop,
my dad goes up to the man at the counter
and says:
‘You see this torch.
I bought it from you a couple of weeks ago
It’s broken.’
So the man picks it up.
‘It couldn’t have just broken,’ says the man,
‘how did it break?’
And my dad says,
‘I dunno, it just went off.’
‘Surely you must have been doing something
with it.’
‘No, no, no,’ says my dad,
‘it just went off.’
‘Come on,’ says the man, ‘these torches don’t just break
down.’
So I said
‘Well actually, I was in the –’
and I got a hard kick on the ankle from my dad.
‘I was in the, you know, er kitchen and it went off.’

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So the man said that he would take it out the back
to show Len.
He came back a few minutes later and said that Len
couldn't get it to work either
so he would send it back to the makers.
'You'll have to have a new one,' he says.
'I should think so too,' says my dad.
'Thank YOU.'

Outside the shop
my dad says to me,
'What's the matter with you?
Are you crazy?
You were going to tell him all about your underwater
swimming fandango, weren't you?
Blabbermouth!'

By Michael Rosen

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Don't Tell Your Mother

When my mum goes to evening classes
my dad says,
'Don't tell your mother – let's have *matzo bray*.
She always says:
"Don't give the boys that greasy stuff.
It's bad for them."
So don't tell her, all right?'

So he breaks up the *matzos*
puts them into water to soften them up.
Then he fries them
till they're glazed and crisp.

'It tastes best like this,
fried in *hinner schmaltz*,
skimmed off the top of the chicken soup,'
he says,
'but olive oil will do.'

Then he beats up three eggs
and pours it on over the frying matzos
till it's all cooked.

It tastes brilliant.
We love it.
Then we wash everything up
absolutely everything
and we go to bed.

Next day,
Mum says to us,
'What did your father cook you last night?'

Silence.

'What did your father cook you last night?'

'Oh you know . . . stuff . . .
. . . egg on toast, I think.'

Michael Rosen

matzo bray = the Yiddish name of a dish made of matzos and egg. *Matzo* is the word for unleavened bread that tastes like water biscuits.
hinner schmaltz = the Yiddish words for chicken fat

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Stealing

Harrybo says:
'That's the best toy car you've nicked yet,
it's – '
My dad walks in behind hm.
'What did you just say, Harrybo?'

Great! He didn't hear Harrybo properly.

Harrybo turns round –
'. . . about the car – the – er . . .'
'What car?'

Oh no! The questioning.

'Whose car is it?'
Together we say:
'It's Harrybo's.' 'It's Michael's.'
'Where's it from?'
'Woollies.'
'So who paid for it?'
Together we say:
'Him.' 'Him.'
'It couldn't have been you, Michael,
you haven't got any money.
Where did you get the money from, Harrybo?'
'I didn't have the – er actually . . .'

It's all just about to blow up.

'Look, tell me if I got this wrong:
did I or did I not hear Harrybo say:
"It's the best toy car you've nicked yet"?'

There's no escape.

'Yiss.'
'What do you think Harrybo meant
when he said that?'

Play dumb.

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‘I’m not really sure.’
‘Harrybo, what did you mean
when you said:
“It’s the best toy car you’ve nicked yet”?’
Silence.
‘Do you think Michael nicked the car?’
‘Oh no. I wouldn’t think he’d do a thing like that.’

Fool, Harrybo. He’ll pounce on that.

‘See, Michael, even your best friend . . .’

My best friend!

‘. . . thinks you’re not the sort of person
who’d do a thing like that.
Aren’t you really sick of yourself?’

Course Harrybo doesn’t think that.
He’s got a Bluebird racing car
that he nicked as well
in his trouser pocket.

‘Yiss.’
‘Well, you know what you’re going to do,
don’t you?’
‘Yiss.’
‘What?’
‘Take it back.’
‘Exactly. And when you get back here
you, me and your mother
are going to have a long talk about this,
aren’t we?’

I thought we just had.

‘Aren’t we?’
‘Yiss.’

Michael Rosen

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Comparing **The Torch** and **Don't Tell Your Mother**

Similarities	**Differences**

Week 1 Tuesday Comprehension 2

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The sad poem from Michael Rosen's Sad Book

Sad is a place
that is deep and dark
like the space
under the bed

Sad is a place
that is high and light
like the sky
above my head

When it's deep and dark
I don't dare go there

When it's high and light
I want to be thin air.

Michael Rosen

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Bucket

every evening after tea
grandad would take his bucket for a walk

an empty bucket

when I asked him why
he said because it was easier to carry
than a full one

granddad had an answer for everything

Roger McGough

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Squaring up

When I was thirteen and crimping my first quiff
Dad bought me a pair of boxing-gloves
In the hope that I would aspire to the Noble Art.

But I knew my limitations from the start:
Myopia, cowardice and the will to come second.
But I feigned enthusiasm for his sake.

Straight after tea, every night for a week
We would go a few rounds in the yard.
Sleeves rolled up, collarless and gloveless

He would bob and weave and leave me helpless.
Uppercuts would tap me on the chin
Left hooks muss my hair, haymakers tickle my ear.

Without glasses, only one thing was clear:
The fact that I was hopeless. He had a son
Who wouldn't square up. So we came to blows.

Losing patience, he caught me on the nose.
I bled obligingly. A sop. A sacrifice.
Mum threw in the towel and I quit the ring.

But when the bell goes each birthday I still feel the sting
Not of pain, but of regret. You said sorry
And you were. I didn't. And I wasn't.

Roger McGough

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Global Warming

In the Antarctic, an ice-shelf
Twice the size of Norfolk
Has broken off, and is melting.

People the world over are concerned
Especially those in Suffolk
Who always get the thin end of the wedge.

Roger McGough

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a cat, a horse and the sun

a cat mistrusts the sun
keeps out of its way
only where sun and shadow meet
it moves

a horse loves the sun
it basks all day
snorts
and beats its hooves

the sun likes horses
but hates cats
that is why it makes hay
and heats tin roofs

Roger McGough

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The Fly

I'm sorry, God, I cannot love
The fly
No matter how I try.

Floaters, bloated on dead flesh
And faeces
Lovers of the stale and the excreted
A species
I wish could be deleted.

I'm sorry, God, but why oh why
Did you create
The common fly?

Spiders I can abide when they approach
At a push, not crush a scuttling roach
But the fly I hate to bits.
Brings out in me a death wish.
Its.

I'm sorry, God, I cannot lie
This morning I  fly.
And it felt good.

Roger McGough

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Crocodile in the City

The crocodile said to the cockatoo:
Cockatoo,
A croc's gotta do
What he's gotta do

The crocodile said to the chimpanzee:
Chimpanzee,
I want to be free
The jungle jangles not for me

The crocodile said to the mosquito:
Mosquito,
I must quit, oh,
I must admit, I just must go

The crocodile said to the koala bear:
Koala bear,
What are you doing up there?
You should be in Australia

The crocodile said to the parakeet:
Parakeet,
I'm stifled by this steamy heat
How I long to loll on a stone-cold street

The crocodile said to the alligator:
Alligator,
A l'heure, alligator, mate
See you at a later date

The crocodile said to the piranha:
Piranha,
I leave for London *mañana*
Disguised as a giant banana

The crocodile said to the hippopotamus:
Sharon,
Give my love to Karen,
Gary, Wayne and Darren

Dear Mother

London cold Earth hard
Buildings giant into sky

To and fro menwo scarry
as if time on fire

At great noise cars speed
trailing bad breath

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Croodile keep to gutter
where slidder undisturbed

Dear Mother

Prisons underground
for rats are many found

Cats and dogs cowed
kowtow to menwo

Birds are not radiant
nor celebrate lives in song

Are pavement-coloured
and scream

Dear Mother

During daylight sightsee See
sights for sore eyes

See eyesores soar
So far have sightseen

Buckingham Palace Tower
Bridge Houses of Parliament

Yesterday went to Madame Tussaud's
and ate lots of famous people

Dear Mother

Night is best Moonlight
become crocodile

Stars dance in scales
asa hunting go

Late home-returner
beware puddle that move

Beware reflection that salivate
Moonlight that become crocodile

Dear Mother

Arched in pain
on pavement

Throat dry
as parchment

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Parched
thirst Saharan

Water water
sting of carbreath

Dear Mother

London hard London cold
Too tired now to hunt meat

Eat coke cans McDonald's cartons
Kentucky fried chicken boxes

Water is black Like swallowing
putrid snake Cannot see

Tongue is swollen Head is burning
Tomorrow crocodile return home

Kentucky fried snake

home is cold carton

chicken is swollen water

mother is putrid meat

earth is dear

coke is hard

McDonald's is tired now

head is black box

tongue is swallowing

London is burning

crocodile cannot see

tomorrow

Roger McGough

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Bath- Avon

I have a problem with Bath.
I use the short *a*, rhyming it with *math*,
Whereas southerners put in the *r*. *Barth.*

So my living there would be a kind of hell
(Although a lovely place by all accounts).
Never have an operation you cannot spell
Or live in a town you mispronounce.

Roger McGough

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Ee Bah Gum

Spare a thought for your grandmother
who would sit me on her knee
(she had just the one), and tell ee
bah gum stories of days gone by.

'Ee bah gum, it were reet tough,'
she would say, 'workin at mill
from dawn until dusk,
and all for a measly ten shillin a week.'

The thought of clogs and cobbled streets
of matchstick men and smoking chimneys
would bring a tear to her eye,
(she had just the one), then, brightening:

'Mind you, in those days you could buy a nice house,
end-of-terrace for sixpence,
and for a fortnight in Blackpool
you got change out of a farthing.'

Spare a thought for your grandmother
who married well and wanted lots
and lots of children (she had just the one),
and so bequeathed to me, her Lowrys.

Roger McGough

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The Leader

I wanna be the leader
I wanna be the leader
Can I be the leader?
Can I? I can?
Promise? Promise?
Yippee, I'm the leader
I'm the leader

OK what shall we do?

Roger McGough

The Writer of this Poem

The writer of this poem
Is taller than a tree
As keen as the North wind
As handsome as can be

As bold as a boxing-glove
As sharp as a nib
As strong as scaffolding
As tricky as a fib

As smooth as a lolly-ice
As quick as a lick
As clean as a chemist-shop
As clever as a tick

The writer of this poem
Never ceases to amaze
He's one in a million billion
(Or so the poem says!)

Roger McGough

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Learning to Read

Learning to read during the war
wasn't easy, as books were few
and far between. But mother
made sure I didn't go to sleep
without a bedtime story.

Because of the blackout
the warm, comforting glow
of a bedside lamp was not permitted.
So Mum would pull back the curtains
and open wide the window.

And by the light of a blazing factory
or a crashed Messerschmitt,
cuddled up together, she would read
sauce bottles, jam jars, and, my
all-time favourite, a tin of Ovaltine.

So many years ago, but still
I remember her gentle guidance
as I read aloud my first sentence:
'S-p-r-i-n-k-l-e t-w-o h-e-a-p-e-d
t-e-a-s-p-o-o-n-s-f-u-l o-f . . .

Roger McGough

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A Comparison of two Poets

I don't think that Michael Rosen's poems are less grown-up than Roger McGough's because…

I think that Roger McGough's poems are written for adults rather than children because…

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Me and My Brother

Me and my brother,
we sit up in bed
doing my dad's sayings.
I go to bed first
and I'm just dozing off
and I hear a funny voice going:
'Never let me see you doing that again,'
and it's my brother
poking his finger out just like my dad
going:
'Never let me see you doing that again.'
And so I join in
and we're both going:
'Never let me see you doing that again.'
So what happens next time I get into trouble
and my dad's telling me off?
He's going:
'Never let me see you doing that again.'
So I'm looking up at my dad going.
'Sorry, Dad, sorry,'
and I suddenly catch sight of my brother's
big red face
poking out from behind my dad.
And while my dad is poking at me with his
finger in time with the words:
'Never let me see you doing that again,'
there's my brother doing just the same
behind my dad's back
just where I can see him
and he's saying the words as well
with his mouth without making a sound.

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So I start laughing
and so my dad says,
'AND IT'S NO LAUGHING MATTER.'
Of course my brother knows that one as well
and he's going with his mouth:
'And it's no laughing matter.'
But my dad's not stupid.
He knows something's going on.
So he looks round
and there's my brother
with his finger poking out
just like my dad
and I'm standing there laughing.
Oh no
then we get into
REALLY BIG TROUBLE.

Michael Rosen

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Who Started It?

When me and my brother have a fight
my mum says:
'Stoppit – someone'll get hurt.'

And we say:
'He started it.'
'I didn't. He started it.'

I say:
'Mum, who started the very first fight
between me and Brian?'

And she says:
'You.'

'Me? But I'm four years younger than him.
How could it have been me?'

And she says:
'Well, it was like this . . .

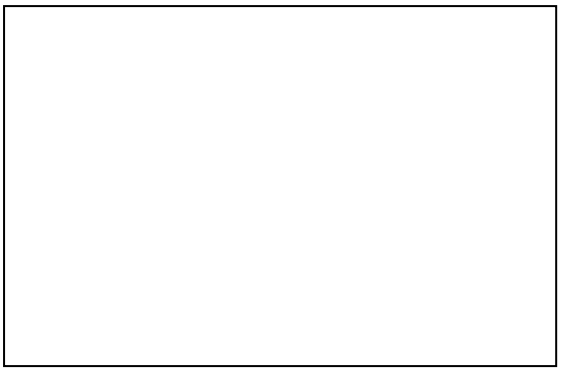
You were about two years old
and Brian was six.
You were sitting in your high chair
eating your breakfast
and Brian walked past.
You leaned forward
and banged him over the head
with your spoon.'

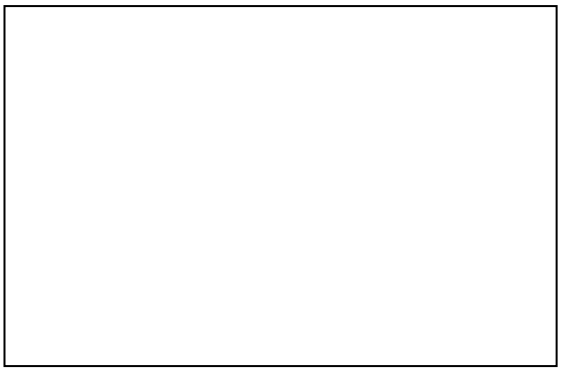
'There you are,' says my brother,
'you started it,
you started it.
I always knew you started it.'

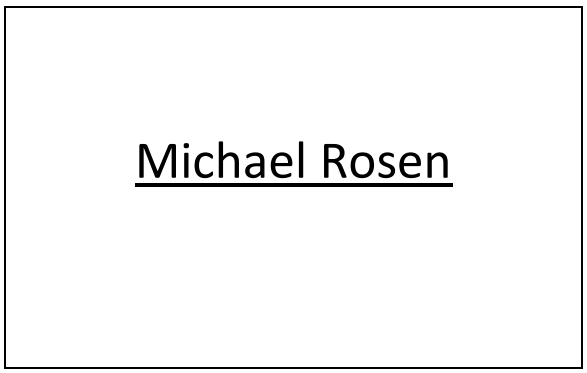
Michael Rosen

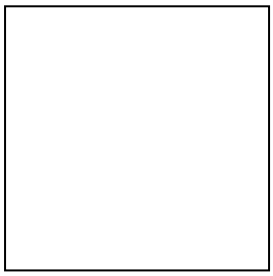
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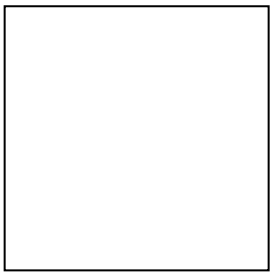
Internet Research on Michael Rosen

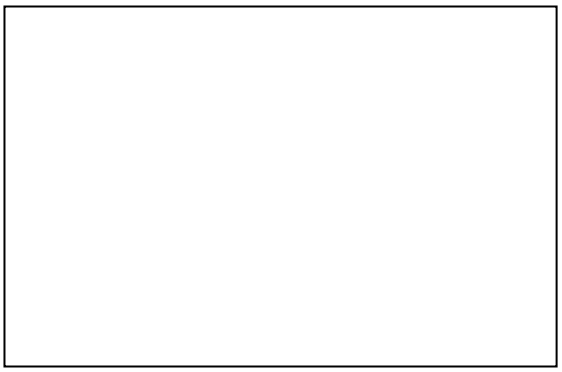


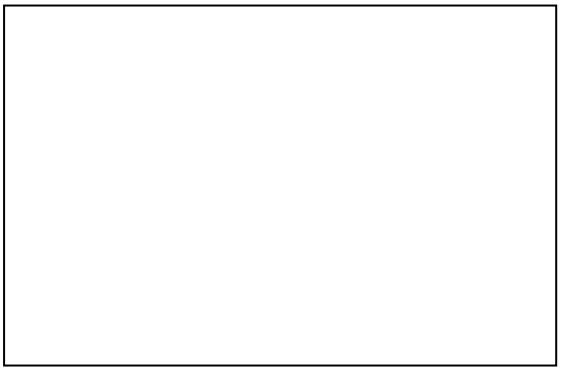












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Internet Research on Roger McGough

Roger McGough

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Researching Michael Rosen 1

About Me

I was born on May 7th 1946 in a place called Harrow, Middlesex. I was brought up by my mum and dad. When I was born, my dad was in the American Army in Germany but when he came home, he became an English teacher in secondary schools. In 1948, when I was two, my mum trained to be a primary school teacher. When they were young, my parents had been very poor - my father especially.

Some of their parents and grandparents were immigrants from Poland, Russia and Romania and these people spoke a language that some Jewish people speak, Yiddish. My parents sometimes spoke bits of Yiddish too, though after English, my father's best language was French. He could also read Latin.

My parents were very, very, very interested in education, schools, learning and books. They were very keen that my brother and I should do well at school. But at the same time, I have to say they were very funny, humorous people who loved jokes, stories and songs. My father loved to sing songs in lots of different languages as well as saying bits of poetry or plays – especially Shakespeare. This meant that my head was full of all kinds of words and expressions.

My brother is four years older than me and he was like a third parent. Anything they taught him at school, he thought he had to teach me. He was (and still is) a very funny person too. He was very good at imitating people he knew, including our mum and dad, which he liked to do in the bedroom we shared on the top floor at 6A Love Lane.

A good deal of my poems are about my life between the ages of about 2 and 12, so I won't say much more about that now.

When I was 11, I went to a school called Harrow Weald County Grammar School. My brother was there already. It was a mixed school, with a grey school uniform. While I was there, I loved doing acting and writing stories and I started to write poems. I had some very good friends, especially someone called David, who was very interested in painting and jazz. In my spare time, I loved going to an acting club called the Young Questors at the Questors Theatre in Ealing, where I learned how to act and direct plays.

When I was 17, I thought that I would quite like to be a doctor. A friend of ours who was a doctor said that I could carry on studying English, History and French, and I could start doing all the science and medical things when I went to medical school. So that's what I did.

So I went off to the Middlesex Hospital Medical School. But I wasn't happy and I hatched a plan: if I went to the same college as my brother, it would be fairly easy to change back to doing English. So I was very lucky and got into Wadham College, Oxford. I did one more year of medical things, and then changed to English Language and Literature. All the time I was at university, I spent many, many hours writing, acting and directing plays.

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This was 1965-1969. All over the world this was a time of great change. People were rising up demanding freedom and rights - whether that was African Americans in the USA, all the peoples in the old Soviet Union and all the countries nearby, or many of the countries in Africa which were still ruled from Europe. At university, I got involved in these kinds of things too. I was arrested twice: once for demonstrating against the war in Vietnam; once for demonstrating against a hairdresser in Oxford who refused to cut black people's hair.

While I was at university, I wrote a play called 'Backbone' that was put on at the Royal Court Theatre, in London. This was my first ever book.

When I finished university, I went to work for the BBC. First of all, I worked on radio plays and documentaries, then I went to work for a children's programme called 'Playschool' and after that, I worked in BBC Schools Television where I wrote a programme helping very young children to learn how to read. It was called 'Sam on Boff's Island'.

My first book for children was called *Mind Your Own Business* and it came out in 1974. Quentin Blake did wonderful line drawings for it.

Ever since then, I've been doing these things:

- 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

In any week, I might be doing all of these things! To tell the truth, I don't really know what I'm doing tomorrow, unless I look in my diary to see.

Adapted from: http://www.michaelrosen.co.uk/about.html : Retrieved 03/20/16

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Researching Michael Rosen 2

BBC Host	Hello, and welcome to tonight's Live Chat with Michael Rosen. He is from London. He was born in 1946. His books include 'Don't Put Mustard in the Custard' and 'The Hypnotiser'. He goes into schools in the UK and abroad to spread the joy of poetry!! Michael describes his poetry as 'Spoken' and 'Bitter-sweet'. He's an Arsenal fan! He teaches at a University in North London. Michael is here and we're ready to go... WOW! Here's the first question. We're off...
Rosie banks	How old were you when you started writing poetry?
Michael Rosen	16. The first thing I wrote, was a poem about a moth. It was sort of an imitation of a poem by D.H. Lawrence about a bat.
Do	What would you have done if you hadn't been a poet?
Michael Rosen	Either a teacher or an actor. I did fancy myself as a bit of the old tragedian bit, but every time I did it people laughed. I kind of mugged, pulled silly faces. When I did comedy too. It was a bit grotesque. I'm interested in clowning, and my performances in schools are stand-up comedy with poems.
Ellie	Do you ever get writers block? and if so, what tends to trigger it?
Michael Rosen	I get it when I'm in a kind of rut, writing too much of the same thing. I usually read something very different from the stuff I write, to shake me up a bit and show me other possibilities. It happens a lot to writers, for lots of different reasons.
Jo	How long does it take you to write a poem, on average?
Michael Rosen	Probably about a day. It might not be all in the same day, but it might add up to about 12 or 16 hours' work, spread over a week or two. Or I might write it in a day, scribble, go off, have a cup of tea, come back. But yes, about a day. Sometimes it comes out in one go, but rarely.
Dean	What is your favourite book that you have written?
Michael Rosen	This always changes. At the moment, it's probably *You Wait Till I'm Older Than You*. It's got a poem in it called *The Torch*, which is the best kind of thing I can write in that vein. That's to say, an event that happened to me when I was a boy, that is full of twists and turns, and the outcome is surprising.
Ben	Do you think you will ever stop writing poetry?
Michael Rosen	No. Poetry is a way of handling anything that you feel, think, say, see, touch, and so as you go through life doing those things, and once you get into the poetry habit, you can turn to it whenever it suits you. It helps you understand who you are and how you fit in with people and things in the world.
Jono	What is your ideal working place and surroundings for your inspiration?
Michael Rosen	I don't have one. I can usually write almost anywhere. I don't necessarily need quiet. I've learned how to write on the move, and sitting in the midst of other people. It doesn't necessarily make me a nice person, but I can do it! It's a bit antisocial. I'm watching an invisible telly in my head, and people think I'm rude, or withdrawn, or grumpy, but I'm just concentrating on my invisible telly!

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Gogo	Why do you like writing for kids?
Michael Rosen	It happened by accident. At first I wanted to write about my childhood, in the voice of a child, as a way of exploring who I was and where I came from. But I didn't have a child audience in mind. I imagined adults would be interested. But publishers told me they wouldn't, so the first set of poems about my childhood in the book Mind Your Own Business, ended up as a children's book. Once I was in the children's book world, I never got out. Until this year, my first book of adult poems is coming out with Penguin. That's called Carrying the Elephant.
Jane Simons	What were your mum and dad like? You mention them a lot in your poems.
Michael Rosen	My dad was much kinder than I make him out to be in the poems, and he's very reasonable to let me write about him as this grumpy old fellow. My mum, who isn't alive, was quite a surprising mixture. She was in a way unknowable. She used to pretend she was sillier than she was. Really she was very intelligent and very thoughtful, and very serious. They were both teachers. My mum at primary and my dad at secondary school. Later they both taught students how to teach.
Bryan Hancock	Did your brother really squirt you with dirty washing up water as in 'Washing Up'? What does your brother do now?
Michael Rosen	He most certainly did. Then went on to become one of the people in charge of the fossils at the Natural History Museum. We get on very well together and e-mail each other every day. He's 4 years older than me.
BBC Host	That is all we have time for. Here's Michael with a final word...
Michael Rosen	If you think poetry is difficult or hard to write, then just try speaking onto the page. If you think poetry is hard to read or understand, just try and find a book of poems that isn't. And it will probably help you, in the end, understand the other ones.

Adapted from:
http://web.archive.org/web/20070205051636/http:/www.bbc.co.uk/schools/communities/onionstreet/liveguests/interviews/michaelrosen.shtml : Retrieved 03/20/16

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Using Relative Clauses

Michael can't find the bathroom.

Michael can't find his socks.

Michael can't find the cornflakes.

Michael can't find the lunchbox.

Michael can't find the door.

Michael can't find the school.

Michael can't find the classroom.

Michael can't find the pen.

Michael can't find the paper.

Michael can't find the way home.

Michael can't find his plate.

Michael can find his bed.

Relative Pronouns/ Adverbs
who, which, where, when, whose, that

Change the name if you like!

Instructions
Extend each sentence using a **relative clause**?

Try adding the **relative clause** in different places.

Use commas for **embedded** clauses.

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Examples

Michael, who is feeling hungry, can't find the cornflakes.

Michael can't find the pen which rolled onto the floor.

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Children's Writer

John in the garden
Playing goodies and baddies

Janet in the bedroom
Playing mummies and daddies

Mummy in the kitchen
Washing and wiping

Daddy in the study
Stereotyping.

Roger McGough

Haiku

Snowman in a field
listening to the raindrops
wishing him farewell

Roger McGough

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Eddie and the Supermarket

Shopping with Eddie was a nightmare.

I lift Eddie up and squeeze him into the seat
on the shopping trolley.
'In you get, little feller.'
So he goes rigid.
He turns himself into a little fat iron bar
that can't be bent.
I can't push his legs through the spaces.
'In you get, Eddie.'
Push.
'I said,
in
you
(push)
get
Eddie
(squeeze).'

Slowly he lets his legs relax
and I unbend them and thread them
into the trolley.

And off we go.
We're wheeling past the baked beans
and he leans out and grabs a can.
'Bince. More bince.'
'No, Eddie, we don't need any more beans.'
'Bince, bince, bince, bince, bince –'
'No, we don't need any beans.'
'Bince, bince, bince, bince, bince.'
'No beans, Eddie.'

We're heading for the Kit Kats, Penguins, Topic bars
Crunchies, Milky Ways . . .
He stops shouting, 'Bince, bince, bince . . .
and he leans out of his seat
arms waving
we whizz round the corner of the
packs of chocolate wafers
and his chunky little hand grabs a packet.
'Wheeeeee – choleet – wheeee.'
'We're going to take that packet back, Eddie.
We're going to take that packet back.'
Then there's an explosion:
'My chocleet. My chocleet. My chocleet.'

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He turns into the little fat iron bar again.
In front of my eyes he becomes a screaming demon,
head flung back
face going red
eyes getting swollen
back stiff
hands punching out
body heaving to and fro.

A woman is looking at me
and saying to herself:
You're a torturer.
You're horrible to babies.

My chocleet. Bince, bince, bince, bince.'

Some people walk about pretending
nothing is going on.
But I can tell they're in pain.
The noise of Eddie is getting into their bones.

People are moving away from us.
There's a man over there
hurrying to get to the kitchen rolls.
Eddie is wrenching the bars of the trolley,
'Chocleet bince. My chocleet bince.'
I want some kitchen rolls too.
So the man who's trying
to get away from me thinks
he's being hunted by Eddie.

Then one of the shelf-stackers
tries to be friendly.
He looks at the screaming blob called Eddie
and winks, does some useless trick with his finger
and says:
'Oooh it's not that bad, little one.'

Thank you, shelf-stacker, brilliant finger move.
'She is making a fuss, isn't she?'
says our jolly shelf-stacker.
Eddie is veering about so much
the shelf-stacker can't even tell it's a boy.
'Bince, bince, bince. Chocleet, chocleet, chocleet.'

I want to yell my head off too.
I want to run round the supermarket

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waving my arms about
screaming, 'Bince, bince, bince.'
I want to sit in someone's trolley
and bend the bars
and drop baked bean cans on the floor
and grab chocolate biscuits
and drive my dad crazy.

Then the Security Men arrive.
They've come to collect the money
from the cash registers.
There's four of them.
They're huge –
in big padded blue uniforms
with crash helmets on
and truncheons in their belts.
This is my chance:
'Eddie, look who's come to get you!'

He looks
he looks
and he stops howling.

All round me people relax
they smile
they chat.
I glide through paying my bill.
We all float out into the car park.
Everything feels nice and easy.

When we get home
I find I have forgotten to get
bread, jam, toilet rolls, milk
orange juice, tuna fish and cornflakes.
'Dinner time, Eddie,' I say.
'What do you want?'
'Bince,' says Eddie.
I go to the cupboard.
He was right.
We have run out of beans.
I say:
'Eddie, I'm sorry but we've run out of beans.
No beans.'
And he says:
'Bince, bince, bince, bince, bince, bince . . .'

Michael Rosen

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