

## Selections: It's a disaster, I tell you!

by Leo Kingsmill

**Activities author:** Adrian Tennant

**Level:** Movers+

**Recommended age:** Grade 3, primary (8+)

**Time needed:** Indicated for each activity

**Type of English:** American

**Note:** These activities can be done one after the other, or can be done separately. However, some activities need to be done in sequence, i.e. make sure you do Activity 3 before you do Activity 4.

### Activity 1 (10 minutes)

1. Hand out the worksheet with Activity 1.
2. Ask the children to read the lines from the poem and then let them spend half a minute thinking about what the topic of the poem might be.
3. Put the children in pairs and ask them to discuss the three questions.
4. Monitor and help where necessary.
5. Ask a few pairs to report back to the class on their discussion.

### Activity 2 (5 minutes)

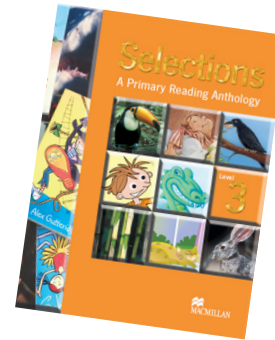
1. Ask the children to look at the phrases in the 'piece of toast' and try to match them to the words in the 'hippo'.
2. Encourage the children to work with a partner and discuss their ideas.
3. Ask the children to discuss the question: *What do you think the poem could be about?*
4. Elicit some ideas and write them up on the board.

**Key:**

1. b; 2. f; 3. e; 4. d; 5. c; 6. a

### Activity 3 (10-15 minutes)

1. Hand out the worksheet with Activity 3.
2. Ask the children to look at each verse and put the lines in the correct order by numbering each line (1-4) in the box on the left.
3. Monitor and help where necessary.
4. Put the children in pairs and get them to check together.
5. Play the recording so that the children can check their answers.



6. While the recording is playing, monitor to see if the children are managing to get the lines in the correct order.
7. If necessary play the recording again.
8. Finally, check the answers as a class.

#### Alternative procedure 1

1. Divide your class into four groups (A, B, C, D) and give each group one verse to put in the correct order.
2. Then make groups of four with each group containing one student A, one B, one C and one D and get them to read out their completed verses.
3. Monitor and help where necessary.
4. Continue from stage 5 of the original activity.

#### Alternative procedure 2

1. Cut up the poem into strips.
2. Put children in pairs and ask them to put all the strips into the correct order. If they are having difficulty you could hint that there are four verses and each verse is a different color.
3. Monitor and help where necessary.
4. Continue from stage 5 of the original activity.

### Activity 4 (10 minutes)

1. Hand out the worksheet with Activity 4.
2. Put the children into pairs.
3. Tell the children you want them to try and answer the eight questions from memory.
4. Monitor and give hints where necessary.
5. Play the recording straight through.
6. Get the pairs to check their answers.
7. Play the recording again if necessary.
8. Check the answers as a class.

**Key:**

1. a mouse
2. the wall and the door
3. (burned) toast

**Selections: It's a disaster, I tell you!**  
by Leo Kingsmill

4. *it fell out / dropped into his plate*
5. *his money*
6. *five cents*
7. *three*
8. *in his bed(room)*

**Activity 5 (10-15 minutes)**

1. Ask the children to spend a few minutes thinking about the questions on their own.
2. Put the children in pairs and have them discuss their ideas.
3. Monitor and help where necessary.
4. Ask a few pairs to report back to the class on their discussion.

**Activity 6 (15 minutes)**

1. Hand out the worksheet with Activity 6.
2. Put the children in small groups of three to five.
3. Tell them you want them to write one more verse of the poem.
4. Ask them to look closely at the rhyming scheme.
5. Give them five or six minutes to discuss their ideas.
6. Monitor and help where necessary.
7. Give the groups around five minutes to write their verse.
8. Either get a few groups to read out their verse or post them around the classroom walls.

**Selections: It's a disaster, I tell you!**  
by Leo Kingsmill

# It's a disaster, I tell you!

Written by Leo Kingsmill

Illustrated by Tom Patrick

I woke up this morning and what did I find?  
A mouse in my shoe and another behind!  
I got out of bed and fell on the floor,  
Then hit my head on the wall and the door.

**It's a disaster, I tell you, a disaster, I say!  
I just want to stay in my bed today!**

I sat down for breakfast and what did I see?  
A piece of burned toast – just staring at me!  
I chewed it real slow but then my front tooth  
Dropped into my plate and that is the truth!



**It's a disaster, I tell you, a disaster, I say!  
I just want to stay in my bed today!**

I picked up my backpack and got on the bus,  
Forgetting my money with all of the fuss.  
The ticket was eight cents but I had only five.  
The driver said 'Sorry, you walk and I'll drive.'

**It's a disaster, I tell you, a disaster, I say!  
I just want to stay in my bed today!**

I walked down the street and what did I see?  
Three hippos all dancing straight toward me!  
Today is a day when the world's upside down.  
It's a day for the bedroom and not for the town.



**It's a disaster, I tell you, a disaster, I say!  
I just want to stay in my bed today!**

**Selections: It's a disaster, I tell you!**  
by Leo Kingsmill

Before listening

Activity 1

Read the following lines from the poem and then answer the questions.

It's a disaster, I tell you, a disaster, I say!  
I just want to stay in my bed today!

1. The boy is clearly unhappy about something. What do you think happened?

---



---

2. Have you ever wanted to stay in bed all day? Why? What happened?

---



---

3. What advice would you give to the boy?

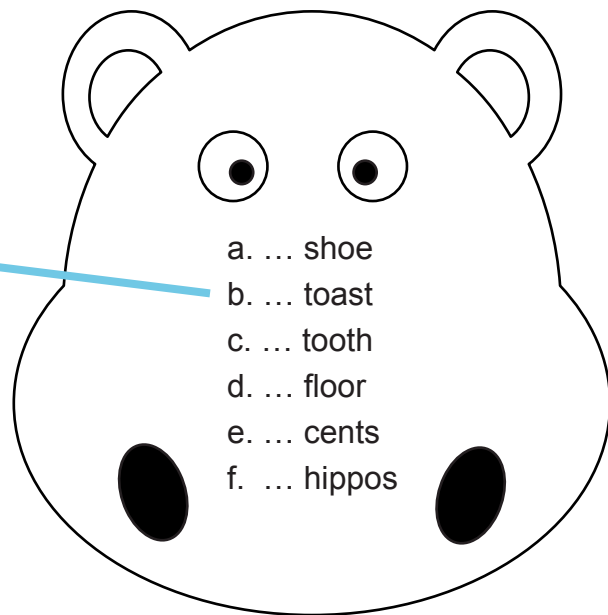
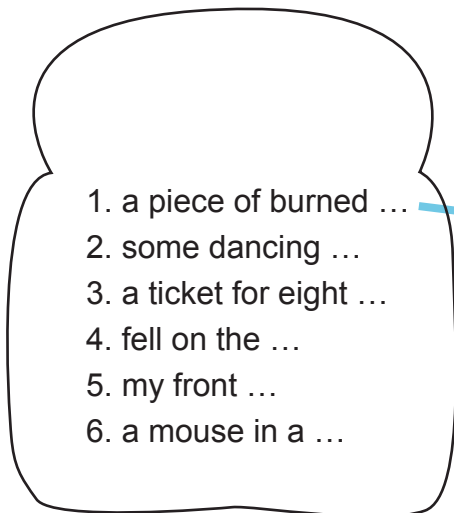
---



---

Activity 2

Match the phrases in the 'piece of toast' on the left with a word in the 'hippo' on the right.



What do you think the poem could be about?

**Selections: It's a disaster, I tell you!**  
by Leo Kingsmill

## Before listening

## Activity 3

Can you put these lines from the poem in the correct order?

- A mouse in my shoe and another behind!
- I got out of bed and fell on the floor,
- I woke up this morning and what did I find?
- Then hit my head on the wall and the door.

- A piece of burned toast – just staring at me!
- Dropped into my plate and that is the truth!
- I chewed it real slow but then my front tooth
- I sat down for breakfast and what did I see?

- Forgetting my money with all of the fuss.
- I picked up my backpack and got on the bus,
- The driver said 'Sorry, you walk and I'll drive.'
- The ticket was eight cents but I had only five.

- I walked down the street and what did I see?
- It's a day for the bedroom and not for the town.
- Three hippos all dancing straight towards me!
- Today is a day when the world's upside down.

**Selections: It's a disaster, I tell you!**  
by Leo Kingsmill

Listen

Activity 4

**Look at these questions. Can you remember what happened in the poem?**

1. What did the boy see behind his shoe? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What did he hit his head on? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What did he have for breakfast? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What happened to his tooth? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What did the boy forget? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How much money did he have? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many hippos did he see dancing in the street?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Where did he want to be? \_\_\_\_\_






**Now listen again and check your answers.**

After you listen

Activity 5

**Imagine you were the boy and discuss these questions with a partner.**

Which of the things that happened in the poem ...

-  ... frightened you? \_\_\_\_\_
-  ... was the strangest? \_\_\_\_\_
-  ... was the most annoying? \_\_\_\_\_
-  ... was your own fault? \_\_\_\_\_
-  ... hurt the most? \_\_\_\_\_

**Selections: It's a disaster, I tell you!**  
by Leo Kingsmill

Activity 6

Work in groups and write one more verse to add to the poem.

