

Class 9T: writing poems

Martin Alexander

'Maximum of thirty lines,' says Aisling aloud,
bustling with authority.
And now she's blank-faced
like her page: waiting for words.

Vicky points and stabs her pen
into the unresisting air. She talks
to her paper, and,
tickling another word,
makes her partner giggle.

Neil tussles with his rhymes: 'floor' – 'galore';
writes words wide-eyed awake across the page
and scratches their lids back shut,
dissatisfied.

Cameron's pen dawdles itself
into the margin
and doodles in a corner where
no one else can see.

Chris bites his page, crouches over it,
gnawing at his words.
His eyes squash closed,
both hands squabbling over his writing
as words slide out of his fist and
under his fingers.

Kripa's poem's out already, neat
and copied fair, spooled in loops of blue.
She plays it back
and watches pictures rising from the page.
She smiles and nods and writes it out again.

Outside, boys dart in sunshine
intent on science
dangling contraptions over the walkways.

Above, a black kite soars
a curve against the blue
high over the busy city,
humming
out of sight.

Inside, we're all oblivious:
digging into paper with pens
for poems.