

Lament for a Lost Dinner Ticket by Margaret Hamilton

See ma mammy
See ma dinner ticket
A pititnma
Pokit an she pititny
Washnmaschine.

See thon burnt
Up wherra firewiz
Ma mammy says
Am no tellynagain

No'y playnit.
A jist wen'y eatma
Pokacrisps furma dinner
Nabigwoffldoon.

The wummin sed Aver near
Clapsd
Jistur heednur
Wee wellies sticknoot.

They sed Wot heppind?
Nme'nma belly
Na bedna hospital.
A sed A pititnma
Pokit an she pititny
Washnmaschine.

They sed Ees thees chaild eb slootly
Non verbal?
A sed MA BUMSAIR
Nwen'y sleep.

Learning Resources

Reading

'Lament for a Lost Dinner Ticket' can provide an enjoyable and accessible introduction to poetry in Scots. Because it is a dramatic monologue it lends itself to reading aloud and role-playing activities. The effect of the poem is probably greater if pupils are left to 'decipher' it by themselves rather than listening to it or the teacher reading it first.

Read the poem and listen to the audio file.

If there are unfamiliar words, try to work out what they mean according to their context, or look them up using a Scots dictionary – you can use an online Scots dictionary at www.dsl.ac.uk.

Understanding

1. What is a 'dinner ticket'?
2. Who is talking to us in this poem, telling the story?
3. What happens in the poem?
4. Apart from the narrator, who else is speaking in the poem?
How does the other person's voice differ from the narrator's?
5. Some of the words in the poem are like two or more words run together (eg 'pititnma'). Try to find some more examples of this in the poem. Why do you think the writer made these into one word?
6. Look at the spelling used in the poem. Pick out some words which are spelled differently from the way you might expect. Why has the writer spelled them this way?

Creating

Choose one of the following tasks:

- A. Practise saying the poem out loud till you can do it really well, then recite it in front of your class or group. You could maybe have different voices for the different characters in the poem.
- B. In your own version of Scots (or your own dialect) write a lament for something you have lost, eg Lament for a lost football; Lament for a lost dog; lament for a lost fiver; lament for a lost smartphone.
- C. Write a script based on one of the following scenarios. Use as much Scots vocabulary as you can.
 - The nurse or doctor from the hospital speaks to the child's mother or carer to tell them about the situation.
 - A reporter from the local paper comes to speak to the child to ask them about the dangerous state of the wall.
 - The child's teacher asks them about the accident.