

John Agard Sort

Union Jack and Union Jill

Union Jack
and Union Jill
went up the hill
for a patriotic fling.

Tongue

Small flame
under the roof
of a mouth.

A Hello from Cello

Stroke
me
high
Stroke
me
low

Sentimental
poems

Pragmatic
poems

Humorous
poems

Cynical poems

Optimistic
poems

Depressing
poems

Excuse me
standing on one leg
I'm half-caste....

Rainbow
When you see
de rainbow
you know
God know
wha he doing -

John Agard Sort

This activity extends the work of our Poetry Sort activity to help and encourage students to make judgements about all the John Agard poems in his anthology "Half-caste" published by Hodder Murray (ISBN 0-340-92585-X). Many of the poems can be found online and there are several videos on the net too. This activity contains a set of cards each with a poem title and the first two or three lines plus a set of statements which relate sometimes to one or two or sometimes to several poems.

Since there are forty five poems you may well want to divide them into sets (you could do this best by printing each page in a different colour) and give smaller sets to different groups which could then jigsaw. All the statements, however, will need to go to each group. We have also provided a couple of sorting boards and a blank sorting board to stimulate classroom discussion; the aim being for every group to discuss together and respond to the rest of the class or to another group.

The webaddress for this activity is:

<<http://www.collaborativelearning.org/johnagard.pdf>>

This activity was last updated on 3rd July 2020

Basic principles behind our talk for learning activities:

Oracy in curriculum contexts!

Build on children's own prior knowledge.

Move from concrete to abstract.

Ensure everyone works with everyone else.

Extend social language towards curriculum language.

Provide motivating ways to go over the same knowledge more than once.

Good for all pupils!
Vital for EAL pupils!

It's empowering to talk an idea through before you write about it!

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING PROJECT

Project Director: Stuart Scott

We support a network of teaching professionals to develop and disseminate accessible talk-for-learning activities in all subject areas and for all ages.

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John Agard Sort Instructions

You have poems from the anthology *Half-caste* by John Agard, a set of titles and first lines and a set of comments.

Look at the comments and discover which ones you think fit the poems on your cards.

Many statements fit more than one poem and many poems have more than one statement that fits. If you think of more statements add them in. We have provided blanks for this

When you have got to know the poems better, try fitting them on the sorting board and making sorting boards of your own.

John Agard Sorting Board 1

Sentimental poems

Pragmatic
poems

Humorous poems

Cynical poems

Optimistic poems

Depressing poems

John Agard Sorting Board 2

Angry poems

Sad poems

Poems that make
you think a lot

Poems that use
exciting metaphors.

Poems that are like
a conversation.

Poems that
describe something
perfectly.

John Agard Blank Sorting Board

John Agard Poems from Half-caste

And All was Good

If I were maker of the human race
I'd give each one a rainbow face.

My Move Your Move

Blacks have their castles.
Whites have their castles.

Union Jack and Union Jill

Union Jack
and Union Jill
went up the hill
for a patriotic fling.

Half-caste

Excuse me
standing on one leg
I'm half-caste....

Rainbow

When you see
de rainbow
you know
God know
wha he doing -

Tongue

Small flame
under the roof
of a mouth.

A Word
can turn
a key
in a door
or....

Message from your Mobile

I am the message bringer
who leans against yr cheek.

Right-On Mr Left

Keep on searching for Mr Right.
Somewhere out there there's Mr Right

Smoke-Loving Girl Blues

Would like her for my girlfriend any day
Would follow if she showed the way
Would feel honoured if she be my queen
But.....

Angels for Neighbours

If you want a neighbour from hell,
try living next door to an angel.

Flag

What's that fluttering in a breeze
It's just a piece of cloth
that brings a nation to its knees.

A Vampire's Priorities

Today I want to do green things.
Eavesdrop on the gossip of leaves.

A Hello from Cello

Stroke
me
high
Stroke
me
low

John Agard Poems from Half-caste

The Hurt Boy and the Birds

The hurt boy talked to the birds
and fed them the crumbs of his heart.

Boomerang

Featherless bird
I will nest in the eye of the wind

That Mouth

That mouth
was generous with *kisses*

Behold My Pen

Behold my pen
My pen is a friend
that cries blue tears...

Punctuating the Silence

I could be a comma
and pause you
in mid-sentence

Poetry Jump-Up

Tell me if Ah seeing right
Take a look down the street

Follow That Steel Pan

Was a sledge hammer sink um down
to shape the belly of the sound

Coal's Son and Diamond's Daughter

Coal's son
and Diamond's daughter
were head over heels
in smouldering glittering love.

A Date with Spring

Got a date with Spring
Got to look me best
Of all the trees
I'll be the smartest dressed.

Vote for your Local Shadow

Shadows appointed
Shadows reshuffled
Shadows with briefcases
Shadows in high places.

Twins

To bring forth one
is to be blessed..

Quest

Go south
Go north
Go east
Go west

Clouds

Those high flying dragons
that are now here, now gone.

The Ozone Liar

The ozone liar
says all is well with
the ozone layer.

John Agard Poems from Half-caste

Cowtalk

Take a walk to the splendid morning fields of summer
check out the cows in full gleam
of their black and white hide...

Who'll Save Dying Man

Who'll save dying Man?
I, said the Baboon.

For the Record

The flea gives
the hedgehog
stimulation.

One Question from a Bullet

I want to give up being a bullet
I've been a bullet too long..

A Hand on a Forehead

You don't have to be a refugee on a bus
From Zepa to Zenica....

Not Arms

Not arms
that come
to kill
or maim...

Checking Out Me History

Dem tell me
Dem tell me
Wha dem want to tell me..

Toussaint L'Ouverture Acknowledges Wordsworth's Sonnet 'To Toussaint l'Ouverture'

I have never walked over Westminster Bridge

Windrush Child

Behind you
Windrush child
palm trees wave goodbye

Crybaby Prime Minister

I'd love to be led
By a crybaby prime minister
who'd burst into tears
whenever people bled.

Skin

Is it a window of flesh
to let in the sunlight
and look out at the world?

A Social Skeleton

I am a skeleton,
My bones are brittle white..

A Giant with a Taste for Mongrel Blood

Fee fi fo fum
I smell the mongrel blood
of the Brit nation.

Behind the Menu

Sweet and Sour
moved in next door
to Fish and Chips.

John Agard Poems from Half-caste

Salt

Once used as Roman currency,
now a common guest on your table

Coal

My body heaved to the hacking of picks
Fuelled your industry and politics,...

Marriage of Opportunities

I copper, child of Fire,
married Zinc, child of Water,...

A poem about punctuation.

A poem which plays with words that
sound the same, but mean different
things.

A poem that puts life into an
inanimate object.

A poem about black and white.

A poem that mentions an animal or
animals and draws ideas from
animals.

A poem makes the shape
of an object

A poem that asks a question or
questions.

A poem written in dialect or uses
dialect words.

A poem which is like a conversation

A poem that has a political
message.

A poem that imagines another very
different world.

John Agard Poems from Half-caste

<p>A poem that puts words, that never usually go together, together</p>	<p>A poem that teases out a lot of meaning from a single word.</p>
<p>A poem that explores ethnic and cultural diversity.</p>	<p>A poem that develops a simple concept into a more complex one.</p>
<p>A poem that asks you to know something about science.</p>	<p>A poem that deals with history or an historical event.</p>
<p>A poem that explores the relationship between two concepts.</p>	<p>A poem about love, difficult love or impossible love.</p>
<p>A poem that refers to other poets or poems.</p>	<p>A poem that shows optimism about human nature.</p>
<p>A poem about the damage we do to the environment.</p>	<p>A poem that gives animals a voice.</p>
<p>A poem about spirituality or other non-tangible things.</p>	<p>A poem that pretends to be a photograph or picture.</p>