



Marrickville High School, NSW, 2015 *The Disappearing*, with Zohab Zee Khan

Current Australian Poetry Slam Champion, Zohab Zee Khan, presented a full-day poetry workshop at Marrickville High School in September. With activities inspired by *The Disappearing* learning resource, Year 9 students traced memories rooted to time and place in their writing. Poems composed by Marrickville High School students will soon appear in *The Disappearing* app.

Red Room Poetry Education inspires students and teachers to create, perform and publish poetry. We enliven experiences with poetry by bringing contemporary poets into classrooms across Australia to run intensive writing workshops that awaken imaginations, support creative opportunities and curriculum outcomes.

Red Room Poetry Education at Marrickville High School, New South Wales, 2015
redroomcompany.org/education/



Group Poem

That One Tree

That one tree looks faded.
That one tree that is doomed to die.
That one tree is where I find peace.
That one tree that survived the fire.
That one tree is gonna be dead soon.
That one tree, lonely until its inevitable death.

'Where I'm From' Poems

Anonymous

Where I'm from when I wake up in the morning,
I start off by yawning. The smell of my breakfast
gets me up, there's nobody here to interrupt.
Then I eat some food that gets me in the mood.
I'm dressed and ready to go,
then I look at the time and go: oh no!
Walking outside and smelling the breeze,
out comes a big sneeze.
I get in the car quickly and drive,
get to school and now I arrive.

Eunice

O meu país é Portugal e com orgulho sou
Portuguesa,
Ou como nós dizemos, "Tuga de coração."
Raros são aqueles que acordam antes do
nascer do sol
Mas por volta das oito da manhã é quando o
dia começa
Levantar as crianças da cama para ir para a
escoto
O problema diário de escolher que roupa usar
Café matinal é nosso essencial para o dia
Acompanhado de um pastel de nata ou uma
torradinha com manteiga.
Life in there is totally different from here
Appearance is more important than a real smile
Having a great life shows you are rich
Instead of a person full of values.

Thessa

The sun shines the
units as the day begins. Chooks
next door would make noises as the day
starts. Stomping, running and noise starts
to build up as a young boy gets ready
for school. Airplanes would pass by each
5 minutes and cars would drive and
honk on the busy road in front of
me. Each of the neighbours in the unit
will leave one by one as they head
to work. People would walk
on the silent lane next to the
loud and busy road. The aroma of
oat would start to spread along
the house. During night the
wind would start to pick up
and blow the trees next to the
church as a group of choirs sing
hymns. The doors next door would always creak
as I enjoy my dinner, it's a whole another world
at night. The roof would start making
noises just like a person living there
and they are stomping. People in front of
the unit would start to grill and
the neighbour downstairs would chatter
and have a good time.

Michael

My neighbourhood, so sweet and fresh.
Babies
cry at dawn, children at dusk.
The air filled with multiple scents, some
sweet, some bitter. Asian cuisine, Greek
cuisine. During the day when the
sun is high, people flood the streets,
people walk the streets and people
run the streets. Expensive cars are
rare to see, a prize for the eye
they are indeed. Children in school left
and right, running, screaming, enjoying
their youth. A prize to see, parents
so proud, tears
stream down their cheeks,
a twinkle in their eyes at they
wipe their tears clean from
their face. Filled with pride, joy
and enthusiasm, confident that
one day, one day, one day their child
will aim high, reach up and grab
their dreams by the scruff of the
shirt and drag them down to
reality. My neighbourhood so sweet
and fresh. Babies cry at dawn and
children at dusk.
My neighbourhood, I wake
to a hot meal before getting
dressed. Once finished I look to the
rest. Smiles, laughter, is what I
see. Even more beautiful than an
everlasting view of the sea.

Fatma

My neighbourhood, my home, my life, my soul.
My country, my religion, my music, my conditions.
When I'm there I feel home, I feel the
people, I feel the song.
Beautiful moments, beautiful life,
beautiful people, beautiful air, beautiful
time. Everything seems beautiful but
life is not just beautiful.
Dark sides, dark souls, dark life, dark times.
People choose to follow the dark
path and travel into the dark side of
the world and there's the people who
judge. They judge everything you
do. Either you do something bad or
good. But hold up! Where's the humanity?
Right there. In every house there are
the good-hearted people. The ones who
believe! Believe in yourself and
stay true. The ones who teach you
how to live and how to act and
these people are your family. That's
where your home is. That's where my
home is. Next to the ones who made me
what I am today.

Michaela

My neighbourhood at 9 is like a playground in the
sky.
Cars coming & going in a circle side, & kids
screaming
"Where is mummy." At night time my neighbourhood
turns into a party time. All the kids pump their
music in the streets with all the adults smoke
& drinking just to have some fun time.
The smell you get is insane as you smell all
the perfumes around the place.
But when it's 1 o'clock everyone is ready
for the heaven time. Starting to eating souvlaki with
extra sauce or ordering pizza for the next course.
And the grandparents enjoying the feta &
olives time with the plate full of oil so you
can dive your bread like a mermaid.
But in the other side we have a group of annoying
guys drinking beers with kalamary.
The summer of my place is the best of the games.
Smelling like your house garden with all the
flowers flying around your garden's partners.

Jonathan

I come from a place where
there are many colours, patterns,
shapes and sizes. There are feathers
on dresses and dressers on dancers
celebrating
all day long with friends and family.
These dancers go on floats and dance
to the many crowds surrounding them,
watching them for entertainment.
This is Carnivale, a festival in
Portugal and I really like it.
In Portugal we celebrate a lot
of things and have a lot of food.

Tony

In the middle of sunrise,
My neighbour text me online
I did not reply,
because my neighbour is _____
which cannot be describe.
I hear arguing every day,
which can be a pain
Everyday morning I smell someone smoking,
which makes me anxious.

Ashley

In my neighbourhood
A new moon comes with arguing
Noisy in an hour but quiet in a day,
The barking of dogs is like flies
that wasn't go away
The smell of fresh baked cookies
on Monday and bbq on Sunday
My neighbourhood is like
coffee with too much sugar
My neighbourhood is where
the poor and rich live in harmony
Where everyone feels proud to
help each other
My neighbourhood feel like family
Children outside playing
every Saturday and Sunday
Difference seasons comes
with good deeds
My neighbourhood is beauty and grace
My neighbourhood inspire my desire
In my neighbourhood education
is medication
We Protect and Protest

Ivan

In the heart of dusk, he asks
me where I'm from, where I was
born and formed. So I told him this.
Where I'm from, people are filled with
heart and soul because that's how
they are.
Where I'm from, the moment I
walk out my door, I feel a sense
of warmth and kindness. A feeling
you will never get out of all the rest.
Where I'm from, the smell of
food in the air and the sight of
people decorating their gardens is all
we see.
Where I'm from, there is the aroma
of food in the air, like
the sweet strong
smell of the original sausage
sizzle when the people party the night with
barbeque sizzling away.
And before you know it you'll end up
back where you started.

Johnson

Where I'm from the smell of phở
wakes me up in the morning.
Then I dream of being good at drawing.
also I want to learn about flooring
Back to reality, I rushed out the door,
Then I fell on the floor,
Then I saw the people of my neighbourhood.
They didn't just stand stood.
They rushed over.

Randy

I grew up in a place
where there's beauty and grace
a cluster of Islands surrounded by the sea
where the rhythm of the people moves in me
A place where you can try exotic foods
with your mates and dudes
You can even try to ride a jeepney
where there's nowhere you can find in Sydney
A culture built on singing
every corner has karaoke ringing.
The smell of the ocean
gives me hope for the new generation
I'm proud of my country
cause it has my story
Let's go and eat some beans
I'm from the Philippines .

Jason

The man online asked me 'where I'm from'.
Where I'm from, students walk to school
early with coffee in their hand
Where I'm from, my neighbours are loud and
noisy. Where I'm from planes are flying
above my house. I can taste the pho my
mum makes. I can also smell the bbq my
neighbour is making.
Where I'm from, dogs are barking every day.

John

Where I'm from my dog's barking in the
morning
Waking me up from sleeping
I smell food cooking
Smells like my mum homemade cooking
Where I'm from in the middle of the quiet
No-one is acting violent
On my laptop playing games
Nobody's on well this is lame
Where I'm from at the end of the day
Everybody's home ready to play

Layla

Where I'm from you hear bunches
of families, friends slurring quick
conversations to each other, usually
spoken in arabic. At night you
see a gathering outside BBQ
bros all wanting their food, meeting
up with each other.

At night I hear my neighbours
fighting, 2 of them their marriage
is coming to an end. She
screams running to the car with
her children, 10 minutes later
the cops show up, 10 minutes
later it's all over. The next day
it's like nothing ever happened
everyone has forgotten about
the previous events.

From the front yard of my
house there's a car sale garage
after that, a bunch of trees
and at around 4.30PM you
see the sunsets beyond the trees.

If I had a choice to stay where
I am or move somewhere else
I would most likely say yes
straight away.

Anh

From where I'm from is a
place where birds are singing first
thing in the morning. I wake
up looking up in the ceiling,
dreaming that one day I could
move out of this building.
But anyways in my neighbourhood there
ain't no fresh art there's cops
everywhere. In my
neighbourhood dogs barking, doors
slamming, people arguing, stupid
noises from a car that is
speeding.

Deep

It is 6 in the afternoon
When I am entering my house
I smell sizzling bacon
The TV noise
The dog's bark
The noise of traffic on the road
And an aroma of flowers in the backyard

Tia

I live in a street in Marrickville
up the road from Banana Joe's.
When I exit my house I live near Greeks
when I enter my backyard at night
I can see the bats at night,
and me and my bro we just
stare in the sky and try to
spot batman cause he is
in love with batman.

Patrik

Cuando te levantas en la mañana
You would hear the boiling of the water
from the old kettle para un buen maté.
Cuando sales afuera puedes oler
el beautiful fresh air.
The feeling of the crazy latina
music going off in the background
from the night before.

Rajit

My neighbour are unknown by me.
They are like fire in the sea.
I barely see them or they see me
I know they're twin sis
Like two similar gold fish
When I see them I see only one
As if when I came back the other was gone.
Every night I hear a knock
I think every 9 o'clock.
I look outside
I see a man.
He's standing still with cheese and ham.
I sniff with my nose
OMG is that the smell of dominoes
I see them every day
But do I know them? No way.

Malcom

The grease on my pan,
It moves yet does not land.

Yet as the darkest fear of night;
A lonely widow is out of sight.

Swings, does the wardrobe door,
Opens, yet so much more.

As she emerges from the veil,
Stepping in the wardrobe so much revealed.

Walking through the darkness ahead,
Cold yet without a tear to shed.

Walking up the road ahead,
A cold body is left to dead.

Netatua

Where I'm from I'm 3 mins
Away from school, most nights
My neighbours are arguing and
Once they argued over petrol.
Every morning there are church bells
Ringing which is a good thing
To wake up to. Some nights I
Hear police sirens and wonder
What's happening. Even on the
Weekend our school bell goes off
And I can hear it from my house
And I get annoyed.

Philip

In my neighbourhood it's bland, it has no style
In my neighbourhood no-one talks to you,
no-one smiles.
In my neighbourhood no-one smiles at you,
is that such a delay?
In my neighbourhood people scream for you,
is that so bad?
In my neighbourhood no-one has help for you,
solving problems on your own.
In my neighbourhood people discriminate you
because you're not the same face as their own.
In my neighbourhood it's freezing cold
maybe because everyone is sad?
In my neighbourhood everything is sold
everyone has their own pad.
In my neighbourhood everyone is mean.
Maybe I should have a word with them.
In my neighbourhood everyone is angrily
steamed.
Maybe I need a backout plan, damn.
In my neighbourhood it smells normal
just like clean air.
In my neighbourhood it feels abnormal
people just like to stare.
In my neighbourhood it isn't a neighbourhood
maybe I should use that backout plan.

David

I'm from Spain, there's amazing beaches,
With awesome people
My parents came from Spain
So they're Spanish and the people that live
In Spain like to do surf. Sometimes
I think about my memories in Spain and even I
imagine that I'm there
But I'm living in Australia.

Amber

Sitting quietly on my bed in my bedroom
while the sun shine brightly in my eye
through the windows thinking about what
my mamma cooking, Bang!! My
neighbour came right crying into my room
so I ask what the issue, 'Why crying?'
She said, 'This guy keep playing hard to get.'
So I went to the guy
be like, 'You go get it boy she's a
pretty girl quit playing hard to get you
never find a better so come along with
me if you want to do it right cuz she
can show how to have a good time all night.'
So he followed me to meet my
neighbour and he said to her, 'Stand by
me girl even thou I'm a bad boy, be my
one and only, only good girl.' What?? When
back
home and what I say was a delicious
african food call cassava leaf which my mom
has made for me. Best day ever.

Danny

I'm from Vietnam I was born in
Australia but both of my parents
Are born in Vietnam, I haven't
Been to Vietnam ever since I was
Born, but I am going to go
To Vietnam when I grow up

Chào các bạn
hôm nui anh muien ke chinh
chô mai cũl banh.
Aũh tuoi

Joey

At the brink of dawn I arose
like a slumbering bear.
First thing I heard was the sound of
traffic. The people of Marrickville going
to school. Without a care. I gathered
my stuff got out the door. First
thing I smelled was the freshly
baked bread from the store. Then started to
get lured—oh, I knew
that I had somewhere to go.

Alex

I'm from Australia, Sydney,
In Bardwell Park. I was born in Australia
& my background's Greek & German,
what would you think of that?

People there in my street are quite
Varied such as some people polite, kind
Or rude, uneducated, clean or untidy.

I can't fight with anything that I
Don't agree with but I could if
I wanted to.

Stay alive, ride or die. What do you
Think of something to improve
My life. Maybe by helping the
Community of my street or even
Stick up for victims of racism
Of my own backgrounds.

So there again, stay alive, ride or die,
By doing the right thing or wrong
Thing. Hurry up and make your
Decisions before your full childhood is
Over before age 18.

Therefore, before you grow up & pick a job,
Make your life significant
And significant for other people. Make
It a beautiful world out there for
Others and make it fascinating by
Influencing and introducing yourself to new
People, such as when they come to a school.

Bilkisu

Where I'm from you can see
the sunset very beautifully from my window.
Where I'm from it is so crisp in
The winter the flowers grow
Blossoming out the house. Where I'm
From it can be so loud as
If people are in a fight and it
Can be as peaceful as sitting by the beach
quietly
With birds chirping and singing lyrical melodies.
Where I'm from the neighbours are very friendly.
Where I'm from in the morning my mum is in
the
Kitchen making breakfast so it smells like
African
Food. Where I'm from hmmm African food
the street
Smells of spices that make me jump out of bed
Cause I know it coming where I'm from
Every day the unknown lady can be
Found outside with her very
Adorable sun which I play with everytime
I see them. Where I am from on the weekend
the neighbours
Play rhythmic music which makes my
Chores more easier cause I can
Dance.
I love my sweet sweet
Neighbourhood sometimes it doesn't
Make me miss home, home sweet
Home where I'm from.

Sarahle

Kurrajong Avenue,
Sounds like a ghetto name,
But it's the street you call home,
If you really understood the name.
Looks quite, clean & environmentally friendly.
I, every late evening,
Juggling with a soccer ball in the middle of the
road.
No need to be afraid but to be fearless &
Inviting.
The late sunset, feel the warmth & fresh breeze.
Every now & then,
There would be speedy sport cars like AudiR8
Roaming the streets.
Awakening & unleashing the wildness within each
& every house.
Preparin' for the crazy nights it holds.
You see. When the suns still up,
Everyone is peaceful,
Once the sun hits the ground, the vampires are
Awoken.
Hip hop music starts pumpin throughout the hood,
Imagine dancing ghost figures running down the
Empty streets.
Feelin' the bass race through your veins to your
Fingertips.
Walk the dogs around the blocks at night,
Inhale a whiff of weed growing within the gardens
Of the innocent looking houses.
Makes me wonder, do we all have something in
Common?



Zohab Zee Khan is the current Australia Poetry Slam Champion, didgeridoo player, harmonica beat-boxer and hip-hop artist. Zohab has toured Asia, the Middle East and Europe to sell-out crowds. In 2014, Zohab was a finalist in the International Poetry Slam in Madrid and was chosen to participate in an artistic residency in Dubai.

Zohab offers a unique program combining spoken-word poetry and self-development. With the incorporation of self-development techniques, spoken-word poetry becomes not just a platform for self-expression but also one to inspire change and increase productivity. Zohab has conducted his workshops throughout businesses and schools around the world.

As an 4th generation Australian of Pakistani heritage and having grown up in rural NSW, Zohab has channelled his distinct life experiences into stories with the intent to educate. Zohab confronts a range of social justice issues from racism to gender inequality and socio-economic disparities. Zohab's high energy and powerful words have left countless inspired.

2015 marks the release of *I Write*, his first collection of poetry.

About Us

The Red Room Company creates unusual and useful poetry projects that transform expectations of, and experiences with, poetry. We aspire to make poetry accessible to all, especially those who face the greatest barriers to creative opportunities.