

Focus on Poetry in MILITARISM AND CHILDREN

Activity: For use when learning about the Cold War in MILITARISM AND CHILDREN

Your Attention Please

Peter Porter

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The Polar DEW has just warned that
A nuclear rocket strike of
At least one thousand megatons
Has been launched by the enemy
Directly at our major cities.
This announcement will take
Two and a quarter minutes to make,
You therefore have a further
Eight and a quarter minutes
To comply with the shelter
Requirements published in the Civil
Defence Code - section Atomic Attack.
A specially shortened Mass
Will be broadcast at the end
Of this announcement -
Protestant and Jewish services
Will begin simultaneously -
Select your wavelength immediately
According to instructions
In the Defence Code. Do not
Take well-loved pets (including birds)
Into your shelter - they will consume
Fresh air. Leave the old and bed-
ridden, you can do nothing for them.
Remember to press the sealing
Switch when everyone is in
The shelter. Set the radiation
Aerial, turn on the geiger barometer.
Turn off your Television now.
Turn off your radio immediately
The Services end. At the same time
Secure explosion plugs in the ears
Of each member of your family. Take
Down your plasma flasks. Give your children
The pills marked one and two
In the C.D green container, then put
Them to bed. Do not break
The inside airlock seals until
The radiation All Clear shows
(Watch for the cuckoo in your
perspex panel), or your District

Touring Doctor rings your bell.
If before this, your air becomes
Exhausted or if any of your family
In critically injured, administer
The capsules marked 'Valley Forge'
(Red Pocket in No. 1 Survival Kit)
For painless death. (Catholics
Will have been instructed by their priests
What to do in this eventuality).
This announcement is ending. Our President
Has already given orders for
Massive retaliation - it will be
Decisive. Some of us may die.
Remember, statistically
It is not likely to be you.
All flags are flying fully dressed
On Government buildings - the sun is shining.
Death is the least we have to fear.
We are all in the hands of God,
Whatever happens happens by His Will.
Now go quickly to your shelters.

Questions:

1. How is satire used in this poem?
2. What is the theme?

Activity: Writing a Found Poem about MILITARISM AND CHILDREN

Introduction: Found poetry is a type of poetry created by taking words, phrases, and sometimes whole passages from other sources and reframing them as poetry. It is the literary equivalent of a collage and is created by making changes in spacing and lines, or by adding or deleting text, thus imparting new meaning.

Example: Barbie Doll Goes to College

Now Barbie's a coed!
Easy-to-assemble
College
Includes
Dormitory,
Sweet Shoppe,
Stadium,
Drive-In Movie
And campus scenes
Plus exciting
furnishings and accessories.
All in sturdy,
Colourful
chipboard.
Compact, with
convenient
Carrying handle.
Folds neatly
away.

Write your own found poems, using ads and descriptions of war toys or war video games as source material.

Source: Ronald Gross, published in ed. O'Donnell, James. J. (1971) *Now Poetry Try a Haiku Dig a Gook* Kitchener, Ontario: Edu-Media Ltd.