

Introduction

You can listen to a recording of this poem at:
<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/poems/blind-boy>

This support pack contains the following materials:

- a pre-reading vocabulary activity
- the poem that you can listen to
- a comprehension activity

Before you read

Activity 1

Match the words and phrases at the top to their definitions.

a. bear	b. blessings
c. cheer of mind	d. hapless
e. mourn	f. ne'er
g. sighs	h. thus
i. 'twere	j. woe

1. express great sadness
2. feeling happy
3. good things
4. great troubles
5. in this way
6. it would be
7. never
8. slow noisy breaths
9. tolerate something unpleasant
10. unlucky and unhappy

Read the poem

The Blind Boy

by Colley Cibber

O say what is that thing call'd Light,
 Which I must ne'er enjoy;
 What are the blessings of the sight,
 O tell your poor blind boy!

You talk of wondrous things you see;
 You say the sun shines bright:
 I feel him warm, but how can he
 Or make it day or night?

My day or night myself I make
 Whene'er I sleep or play;
 And could I ever keep awake
 With me 'twere always day.

With heavy sighs I often hear
You mourn my hapless woe;
But sure with patience I can bear
A loss I ne'er can know.

Then let not what I cannot have
My cheer of mind destroy;
Whilst thus I sing, I am a king,
Although a poor blind boy.

After you read

Activity 2

Decide if each of the following 10 statements about the poem is True or False.

1. The blind boy can enjoy light.
2. The boy wants to be told about sight.
3. The boy doesn't know what the warmth of the sun feels like.
4. The boy doesn't understand how the sun makes it day or night.
5. The boy plays at night and sleeps during the day.
6. The boy knows it's day if he's awake.
7. The boy knows that others feel sorry for him.
8. The boy has never known what it is to see.
9. The boy's blindness destroys his mind.
10. The boy is a king.

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Answers

Activity 1: 1. e; 2. c; 3. b; 4. j; 5. h; 6. i; 7. f; 8. g; 9. a; 10. d

Activity 2: 1. False (F); 2. True (T); 3. F; 4. T; 5. F; 6. T; 7. T; 8. T; 9. F; 10. F