

Introduction

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<http://www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish-podcasts-stories-poems.htm>

This support pack contains the following materials:

- the poem that you can listen to in the podcast
- a comprehension activity based on the poem.
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Read the poem

Online auction – A parody of a parody!
by Peter Wyllie

This poem is reproduced here with the kind permission of its author. You can see more of Peter Wyllie's poetry on his website at <http://www.proverse.co.uk/>.

*To the tune of Mozart Concerto K.495, movement III
With apologies to Flanders and Swann!*

I once had whim and I had to obey it
To bid for a bargain I found on e-Bay
I located it, and I put in my first bid
In spite of my wife who was telling me "Nay"

To make my bid
I had to ignore all her cries of "No!"
I made my bid
And hoped it would win at first go.
So carefully planned
To win the bid and
Give me cash in hand –
Make me a grand!

Oh the hours that I spent awake
Hoping that my bid they'd take

But that was yesterday
And just today
I looked at the lot that was for sale
And turned very pale
The lot was sold to another

Oh who could have bought it?
Haven't you, hasn't anyone seen my lot?
Oh who has it now?
What a blow, such demand
Now I'm broke and will never make my grand!

Who nicked my bid?
I bet you a quid some dealer did
Knowing I found a great bargain
And wanted to win it
Afraid of my buying and making a grand
From early today, to my utter dismay

They had whipped it away in the palm of their hand.

I lost my bid!
I know that I could have won yesterday
I've lost my bid – lost my bid
Found my bid – DEAD!

But there's hope of getting some more
I keep peeping in at the door
I know some traveling folk
Whose delight and joke
Is pretending they deal with antiques
But they are gone away
Was it one of them who won on the day?

Will you kindly withdraw your bid?
Who is the devil who upped that bid?
I shall tell the whole world!

I want that bid for me

I miss the profit that I should have made
Without that lot I'm like a sheep that's shorn

I found me a lot and I played a bid for it
Displaying my talent and acumen too
But then just today
To my utter dismay
It was totally stolen away
I planned out my bids and how I could extend it
But somebody took it away
I worked out my profit and wanted to spend it
But somebody took it away

My wife is asleep in her bed
But I need to get out of the red
So I'm selling my body instead – waa waa!

After reading**Exercise 1**

Below are 15 statements about the text. For each one, decide if it is True or False.

1. The poem is a copy of a copy.
2. The poem is serious.
3. The poem is meant to be sung.
4. The author thought a lot before placing his bid.
5. The author's wife wanted him to put in a bid.
6. The author did what his wife wanted.
7. The author believed he would make a lot of money.
8. The author couldn't sleep very well until he knew the outcome of the auction.
9. Someone offered more money than the author did.
10. The author was pleased when he found out that someone had beaten his bid.
11. The author would like to know who put in the winning bid.
12. The author was confident that his bid would win.
13. The author's bed is red.
14. The author owes money.
15. The author is going to sell his body to his wife.

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Answers

Exercise 1: 1. True (T); 2. False (F); 3. T; 4. F; 5. F; 6. F; 7. T; 8. T; 9. T; 10. F; 11. T; 12. T; 13. F; 14. T; 15. F