



Looking forward to Christmas with...

# Paul Cookson



**H**ello again. It doesn't seem long since term started and here we are thinking about Christmas. By the time you read this I'll have visited around 80 schools this term, so that's more than 80 performances, more than 300 workshops and probably more than 16,000 children seen ...

As well as being the Poet-in-residence for *Literacy Time PLUS*, I've been 'adopted' by the Literacy Centre in Redcar and Cleveland as their Poet-in-residence for the National Year of Reading. So I've had many happy days in the north-east and now know the A1 and A19 very well!

I'm still the Poet-in-residence for the National Football Museum in Preston (which is a fantastic place to visit – you can commentate on *Match of The Day* and take three actual penalties against a computerised goalie in a full-size goal ... hours of fun!).

Talking of football, one of my highlights of the term was being invited to a dinner at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool in honour of an Everton legend from the 1960s – Alex Young, nicknamed 'The Golden Vision'. Other players from that era were there and I was asked

to write a poem about him. The response to the poem was one of the most exciting I've ever had – almost like scoring a goal!

## Christmas thoughts

Here we are then, getting towards the end of a busy term and starting to think about Christmas.

I thought I'd give you a couple of Christmas poems to read out loud. They are from *Funny Poems For Christmas* (Scholastic, 978 04399 50497) and you can download them for FREE from the *Literacy Time PLUS* website – [www.scholastic.co.uk/literacytime](http://www.scholastic.co.uk/literacytime).

## A very special Christmas card

On the *Literacy Time PLUS* website in December will be a special Christmas Card illustrated by David Parkins featuring a poem I have started called

'Things To Find In Santa's Beard'.

Santa has been flying around the world all night, delivering presents, stopping at millions of houses and travelling really fast. What sort of things do you think could get caught in his beard? Be silly ... exaggerate ... they don't have to physically fit (think of Mary Poppins' bag).

Try to describe them in interesting ways. Pick out the best and put them in your own list poem. Are there any words that sound good when you say them out loud? Try some alliteration – eg, *red wrapping round his wrist*. Are there any words that rhyme, or can be made to rhyme without sounding forced or corny?

You could write the poem on your own, with another person or you could make a class poem choosing the best ideas and making a wall display – using plenty of cotton wool for the beard!

Why not try a similar poem on another theme – maybe listing 'Things/ People I Don't Want To Meet Under The Mistletoe'; 'The Worst Presents Grandma Gave Me' or 'The Twelve Left-overs Of' ... (based on the Twelve Days of Christmas)

See you next term.

Have a good Christmas and New Year.

## Win a copy of *Funny Poems for Christmas*

Why not email us some extra lines for the poem inside our virtual Christmas card, 'Things To Find in Santa's Beard'? If your ideas are used, we will send you a FREE copy of Paul Cookson's collection *Funny Poems for Christmas*. Send your lines of poetry to [littimefeedback@scholastic.co.uk](mailto:littimefeedback@scholastic.co.uk) – don't forget to include your name, school and school address so we can send you your prize. Good luck!

