

Doing Nothing Much

I could potter for hours on a lonely beach
Picking pebbles to roll in my hand,
Wondering where will the next wave reach,
Writing my name in the sand

Near the tumbling weir, where the hawthorn's pink.
I could sit for hours in a trance
Watching the water stream to the brink
And the white foam pound and dance.

Or high on a headland find me,
While a seagull wheels and dips,
Gazing for hours out to sea
At islands and smudges of ships.

by Eric Finney,

1. **What do you like about the poem?** Is there anything you dislike? What does it remind you of? How does it make you feel?
2. **What patterns can you find?** Is there any rhyme, alliteration or assonance? Is anything repeated?
3. **What interesting words or phrases can you find?** What do they mean? Are there any metaphors or similes? Are there any vivid descriptions?

Maggie and Milly and Molly and May

Maggie and Milly and Molly and May
went down to the beach to play one day,

and Maggie discovered a shell that sang
so sweetly she couldn't remember her troubles,

and Milly befriended a stranded star
whose rays five languid fingers were,

and Molly was chased by a horrible thing
which raced sideways while blowing bubbles.

And May came home with a smooth round stone
as small as a world and as large and alone.

For whatever we lose, like a you or a me,
it's always ourselves we find in the sea.

The Black Pebble

There went three children down to the shore
Down to the shore and back;
There was skipping Susan and bright-eyed Sam
And little scowling Jack

Susan found a white cockle shell,
The prettiest ever seen,
And Sam picked up a piece of glass
Rounded and smooth and green.

But Jack found only a plain black pebble
That lay by the rolling sea,
And that was all that ever he found;
So back they went all three.

The cockle shell they put on the table,
The green glass on the shelf,
But the little pebble that Jack had found
He kept it for himself.

1. Who visits the seaside in the poem? Why do you think they went?
2. What do they find at the seaside? How do they feel about what they found?
3. What do they do when they come home?
4. Has going to the seaside changed them? How has it changed them?

