

Young Anti-Racist Voices of Scotland poems and reflections

A collection of poems written by young people reflecting on their experiences and insights.

The price of difference by Harini, S3

Why must we walk the streets with care,
For those provoked with a stare,
A glance too long could spark a flame,
As we're made to walk and carry shame.
A darker hue, a lighter face,
Why must we fight to claim our place?
Discrimination blinds the eye,
It twists the truth, it feeds the lie.
Yet we fight with hearts so bold,
For how much longer, it's getting old.
For it is not the skin we wear,
It's the love we hold and strength we share.
If the apple doesn't fall too far,
Tell me what separates who we are?

Proud to be me by Salma, S1

You walk down the streets,
You walk down the roads,
You see it everywhere,
At the shops,
At your job,
And at your school,
It's the hijab.

You see women and girls of all ages in their veil:
Some of the head scarves are plain,
Some are colourful,
Some are patterned with beautiful flowers,
Some with stripes,
Some with vines,
And the list goes on forever...

You will find people that will point at you, making fun of who you are,
They laugh, they comment, they shout out words that shatter you from the inside.
Another group that will try to get to you will join in and say,
Why wear the hijab now you're just at the 10th year of your age;
You're too young for this. Wait until you're older.
People talk nonsense:
Those poor women are enslaved by the head scarf.
We should 'liberate' them from this torture.
They don't stop their thoughtless talk but they continue on...
We shall ban the hijab in different places and that's what they deserve.

Let me make this clear... those who see us enslaved are the ones who have enslaved themselves willingly and are trying to deny...

Let me explain:

The hijab is a way of freedom!

I know it might sound weird, but this is the truth that everyone is trying to ignore.

As women we go out covered, not afraid that someone will judge us by our beauty, instead they will judge us by our character and personality.

The fact that the hijab liberates us from being seen as an object but as a human,
That is the true hijab.

Some things I like about my hijab: it's soft, smooth on skin, comfy and warm, not to mention
that it's stylish.

It keeps me warm in the winter and makes me bloom in the summer.

It became a friend of mine the minute I put it on.

It walks with me everywhere and anywhere I go.

It's with me in my up days and down ones as well.

It knows all my secrets,

It knows me as a person,

For it is a good friend and it will always be.

When I take it off it's as if I say goodbye to my friend,

Although I know it's temporary.

It's just until I go out or pray and then I say hi to my friend again.

My hijab is my character and my personality,

It's who I am,

It's my identity.

I walk down the streets,

I walk down the roads,

Proud to be an Arab, honoured to be a Muslim.

And that is who I am.

Proud to be me by Hepzibah, S5

Can I touch it? they said over and over,
I told my teacher she said I should wear you a little lower,
I filled you with chemicals, I forced you to relax,
You were thick you were beauty,
You were too much for them to bear,
You left them gasping for air,
You were coily and peculiar,
Type 3 and type 4,
You were my crown,
You are my crown,
You will not be suppressed,
I will no longer be ashamed,
I will wear you with pride,
Till the day that I die.

“It is a reminder to embrace your hair and not to be ashamed because it is your heritage. Every hairstyle is a story of beauty, perseverance, determination, and survival. Your hair is an important part of you, and you should be brave enough to carry your unique hairstyle without worrying about what people may think. I am proud to be black, African and I am proud of my hair.”

We have dreams to pursue by Maya, S1

They judge you for your skin colour.

They think dark skin is something you should hide.

They think they make the rules which you have to abide.

"We are superior." They think in their heads.

But that's not true.

We have dreams to pursue.

They think dark skin isn't beautiful.

That's a lie.

We know it is, so we won't cry.

They used to keep us segregated, separated.

They used to put up signs that said coloured only.

They used to make us feel lonely.

They thought they could crush us.

But we have a voice too.

We have a choice too.

We will fight to the very end.

They thought they could silence us.

Keep us away from them on the bus.

People think we have finished fighting.

They think the journey has ended.

They think racism has been mended.

But we know the truth.

This battle is far from done.

We won't run.

We will fight this.

Racism is still very common.

They think it's stopped. They think that we are merry.

Adults experience racism, even children!

Whether the scale is big or small.

I vote to stop it all.

I don't just wish for an anti-racist Scotland.

I wish for an anti-racist Earth.

I wish children should be taught from birth.

That their skin and all skin is beautiful.

SAY NO TO RACISM!

My Anti-Racism Room by Muizza, P7

I stand in front of my anti-racism room.

I feel nervous and curious

of what changes this room could

do to me and my surroundings.

As soon as my foot

steps in, I experience

a mixed feeling of...

Clean air, positivity, kindness,

and best of all...

No racist feelings!

I feel purified! As I begin

to close my eyes thinking

of times when I wasn't treated

fairly by how I look or my skin colour.

I begin to wonder: "what if there

was no more racism?"

Then suddenly it was time to leave

my Anti-Racism Room! I feel disappointed

as I am leaving, but I know

things will now change

because I have now experienced my purifying.

Anti-Racism Room!

Equality bop song lyrics by Valerie and Grace, P7

10 seconds 'mmm'

It's a thing we have to stop,
or this world won't rock!

Everyone has their differences
so let's embrace our happiness.

The world can always change,
that means we can rearrange.

We can always look back at the choices
that we made in the past.

Chorus

Life is always better with kindness,
until we realise this it's all blindness. X 2
This is not a bop. It certainly has to stop!
This is big, and it's crazy!
Everybody's acting hazy.
I can't believe my eyes,
just witnessed lots of crimes.
Everyone is acting lazy,
cares as small as daisies.

Chorus

Life is always better with kindness!
Until we realize this it's all blindness. X 2
This really needs to stop!
Racism has to drop.
So were raising up our voices,
and changing mistaken choices

Chorus

Life is always better with kindness!
Until we realise this it's all blindness. X 2

Anti-racist poem by Ciaran

All should be able to have equal opportunities as the rest of us.

More should be done to help those suffering pain and torment.

Being unique does not allow others to harm you.

It's ok to get help when you need it most.

Times have changed and we should differentiate right from wrong.

Include yourself to help change the world.

Others should be kind to all, not harmful to uniqueness.

No matter who you are and what you are, where you come from or where you're going, we should all be kind and equal to all.

The power o the voice

A scots anti-racism poem by primary 6/7, Underbank Primary

The power of the voice is incredibly strang,

The power of the voice it cannae lie,

Ye hae a voice that's braw and true,

The words we speak, they stick like glue.

Wi' eyes that see beyond the skin.

Sae speak wi love, speak wi kindess

Sae speak up and staun up for what is true

What's sent out, comes back to you.

Sticks and stanes, may break yer banes,

But insults, they never leave ye.

Sae shout for fairness, shout for justice,

We're aw the same, under the sky

You hae the choice – be hate or kind?

Doon in bonnie wee Glescae by Ismail, P7

Created to celebrate 850 years of Glasgow.

O doon in bonnie wee Glescae, whaur kelts ur worn by th' descendants o cealts,

It kin be gey rainy bit th' folk sure are brainy,

Sae inclusive, even tae Johanna 'n' Yusuf,

O howfur bonnie is the Clyde, just watch out for the incoming tide.

Sadly we hae an ill history bit whit those they whaur thinking is quite a mystery.

Haggis might be quite bad and the weather might make you sad but everyone is welcoming,

even this wee lad.

Someone Else by Jesudarasimi, S3

I wished to be her.

She had long, thin, luscious hair

That reached her waist

Hair she could run a brush through,

Without it pulling back and breaking off

She had pale, subtle, fair skin,

That could tan and change colours,

A face that could harbour beautiful features,

Like blue eyes, or little dark freckles

She had small, mysterious facial features

That couldn't be seen from a mile away,

Thin lips, a small nose

She was from a race that was never enslaved,

She never had to fight and crawl to the top,

Just to be recognised, to be respected

She had cuisine that looked normal,

And tasted normal,

With normal spices, vegetables, and meat

I spent all my time wishing to be her,

I didn't notice how many people wished to be like me.

Rich, dark, sunburnt skin,

Spotted with scars

Filled with melanin

Curly, kinky, stubborn hair

Growing upwards, defying gravity

Plump features,

That could be seen from across the room,
Filled lips, a button nose
Astonishing, amazing ancestors
Who fought for everything they had,
And paved the way for me
Savoury, flavourful cuisine,
Crafted with uncharted spices and unheard-of ingredients,
Above all,
Above the secret desire to one day wake up and be
someone else,
Someone with an easier, simpler life (if those exist).
Above all,
I'm glad I am me.

No place for hate by Emmanuel, age 16

No place for hate, no room for fear,

We're all the same—let's make that clear

The colour of skin is not a game,

Our hearts all beat just the same.

A pass, a goal, a team so tight,

The joy of sport, the shared delight.

Yet sometimes fear still clouds the game

A shadow cast, a whispered name.

But hand in hand, we choose to stand,

With kindness leading every hand.

With voices warm, our message true

Respect and love for me and you.

P4's slam poems

Poem 1

We are allies
We grow and hope
We shout as loudly as a rainstorm
We shout, we smile, we learn
Full of joy and love
We will not stay quiet
Will you stand up for what is right?

Poem 2

We are collaborators and friends
We work together to help everyone be happy
We scream out loud, as loud as thunder of the sky, out..out...
We are full of joy, friendship, beliefs and unity
It is not even enough to shout
Hear us
Where do you stand?
What will you do?
Will you be a change maker?

Poem 3

Together we scream out loud
We don't stand by
It's time to rise, for we are fearless
For everyone out there, let's stand up together
Let's be true to ourselves
Because we are amazing

Poem 4

We are friends
We smile, we hope
We shout as loudly as a firework exploding
It is not enough just to be
We learn, we change, we speak
Full of love, hope and dreams
What will you do?
We listen, we write, we shout!

Poem 5

We are allies, collaborators together
We have hope and speak – we listen
We shout like thunder growling at sea
It is not enough just to be quiet and say nothing
Hear me speak!
We change and we grow
Full of dreams, joy and faith.
I am not a bystander.

Challenge racism

I always thought there was something wrong with me.

That's just etched into my brain.

I suppose, too white to hang out with the black kids
and too black to hang out with... I don't fit in with you all.

You're gonna deal with it your entire life

Toughen up

They're joking

They're laughing

You'll grow out of it

Be more empathetic

If anyone says you're a monkey, just beat them up

Just be ok

They wouldn't understand.

All I wanted to do was rot in my bed all day

I don't cry... not cried in ages actually.

What's the point of even bothering to tell... What are they gonna do about it?

What is a half-hearted 'I'm sorry' going to do?

Oh, is she adopted?

You think my skin colour is beautiful?

It's getting a bit boring at this point

Who's the problem?

Are they the problem?

Am I the problem?

How could I possibly be more African?

Am I really that mean?

I'm terrible.

It's not called blackism...

Not whiteism...

It's racism.

I think I've got everything out. That was a bit all over the place.

Gourock against racism

In Gourock's heart, five schools unite,
against racism's dark shadow, we fight.
With voices strong, we take a stand,
to spread respect across the land.
With open minds and warm hearts bright,
anti-racism, our guiding light.
For every soul, a valued space,
in Gourock's warm and welcoming embrace.
With kindness we erase the line
that separates your heart from mine.
Our message clear, our banner unfurled,
inclusion reigns, in this shared world.
In Gourock's schools, let it be known,
respect for all shall truly be shown.
So let us join, hand in hand,
and spread our message across the land.

Our diverse class

In our class, it is clear
Kids from places, far and near
A rainbow of faces, with different names
But in our hearts, we're all the same

From Spain and Algeria, across the sea
To Bosnia and Syria, standing tall and free
From Bangladesh and Nigeria, far and wide
To Yemen and Sudan, strength and pride

Zimbabwe and Romania are half a world apart
But in our class, we share one heart
Venezuelan and Somalian stand side by side
Diverse cultures, together tied

We are all unique in different ways
All of us stars here to amaze
Throughout our class you will see
Our diverse little selves, you and me

A change is gonna come P4 work

Learning intentions:

- starts sentences in a variety of ways
- links sentences using common conjunctions
- uses accurate punctuation

We listened to the song “A Change is Gonna Come” by Sam Cooke and learned about his work to campaign for equality for Black people in the USA. We used the picture book based on the song to write about what we had heard and seen.

Child writing 1

Looking out, I saw homeless people on the streets.

Hopeful, my thoughts changed.

In the city, they would be mean.

Turning away, you would have to run.

Together, our people helped another.

United we will change our life.

I believe something good will happen to the Black people.

Child writing 2

United we will rise.

Hopeful my mum will follow me even if it's hard.

In the city they say “get out” or else we would keep on being racist.

Looking out, I sat by the sea.

Together our relationship would be harder to break.

Child writing 3

Looking out I saw a small boat floating on the sea.

Hopeful my mum didn't die, so I worried.

In the city they put posters up saying only white.

Turning away you said don't shoot please!

Believed that I can get help.

Child writing 4

Looking out, I saw rushing waves rising.

So I ran as fast as a cheetah to get away from the waves!

Hopeful my mind says that a change will come.

In the country they knew a change is going to come.

Throwing away, you said that I was being nice to you.

Together our people know a change is going to come.

United we make a good team.

I believe a change is definitely going to come.

Child writing 5

In the city I will stop this feeling in the depths of the darkness.

Hopeful, my parents will come in the afterlife to be beside me.

Together our planet will not rise in terrorism; it will rise in respect and no one will be hurt ever again.

In this broken world there will be change.

This will change so to make me President.