

‘Dawe’s Half Hour’: Taking inspiration from a great Irish poet



To mark the recent death of the Northern Irish poet and academic, Gerald Dawe, I have begun teaching ‘Dawe’s Half Hour’ to Upper 4 pupils. Every Tuesday, pupils will be writing their own poetry inspired by a poem of Dawe’s (see above) which also happens to link to last years’ National Poetry Day theme of ‘Refuge.’

They began this week by analysing the text after watching a video of the poet himself reading and speaking about his inspiration for the poem. It is based on a photograph he found in the Linen Hall Library in Belfast depicting an emigrant family leaving Derry in the 1930s. Pupils will then move on to writing a poem based on an inspiring photo of their own.

Gerald Dawe was one of my professors when I studied for my MPhil in Creative Writing at Trinity College Dublin. Inspiring my passion for poetry and teaching, I have decided to extend his legacy into my own classroom.

Terence Brown, a former colleague at Trinity, said to The Irish Times after hearing about Dawe’s death: “He devoted his life to poetry and his creativity found expression in his verse and in his role as a much-loved teacher.”

I hope Upper 4 are as inspired as I was.

Miss Nina Logue