



## AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR

**Matt Goodfellow** is a full-time poet and former primary school teacher from Manchester. He visits schools around the UK, inspiring children and adults to get involved with poetry. Matt has published eight books of poetry and has been shortlisted three times in the CLIPPA annual poetry competition.

**Joe Todd-Stanton** is a writer and illustrator. He grew up in Brighton, received a first-class degree in illustration and now lives in London. He won the Shadowers' Choice Medal for the 2023 Yoto Carnegie Medal for illustration for *The Comet*.

## WEBSITE

<https://www.mattgoodfellowpoet.com/>

## LINKS

Matt introduces the book and reads the first poem. (1.35 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UdplW1cf6bo>

National Poetry Day resource pack

[https://nationalpoetryday.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/NPD\\_Primary-Resources\\_5.-At-the-End-of-the-Day.pdf](https://nationalpoetryday.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/NPD_Primary-Resources_5.-At-the-End-of-the-Day.pdf)



# THE FINAL YEAR

Older Readers Shortlist 2024

## INTRODUCTION

This is a moving, emotionally-charged **verse-novel** about 10-year-old Nate, his **family** and **friends** and his final year at primary school. Much of this will resonate with readers, young and old, but his personal life is complex and challenging. He has a lot to cope with – a young single mother who likes to drink and gamble, two younger brothers who he often has to care for, and his own **anger** to keep at bay. He loses his best friend (though only temporarily), and his little brother is hospitalised with a **life-threatening heart condition**. Fortunately, Mr Joshua, his new form teacher, sees a spark inside Nate that is lit by a **love of reading and writing** and shows him how to use this to process what's going on.

## ACTIVITIES

**Read** Give your child or children the opportunity to browse and dip into a wide range of poetry collections and anthologies. Encourage them to pick out some favourite poems to read aloud and share.

**Write or illustrate** a personal response to *The Final Year* (which could be submitted for the Portfolios) or pick one of the activities suggested in the resource pack (in the Links).

**Create** a Poet-Tree display. This could be used to display different forms of poems, poems by a selection of poets, thematic, seasonal or favourite poems. Or create a personal anthology, to illustrate & add to over time.

## NOW READ ON

*Let's Chase Stars Together; Poems to Lose Yourself in* by Matt Goodfellow (Bloomsbury, 2022) Poems about every-day life for 10+. *Skellig* by David Almond (Hodder Children's, 2013) referenced throughout and gifted to Nate by Mr Joshua at the end of the school year.

*The Stories Grandma Forgot (and how I Found Them)* by Nadine Aisha Jassat (Orion, 2023) A moving verse-novel family mystery. One of this year's Top Fifty books (POY 2024).

<https://www.lovereading4kids.co.uk/blog/20-verse-novels-to-shout-about-6355> Twenty recommended verse-novels for older readers.