Anyone seen my...?

The people who keep losing things
Are searching high and low.
They poke and peer—'We left it here.'
But no one seems to know.
The people who keep losing things

Have not a single clue.
They look in vain—'It's lost, again.
I can't just wear one shoe.'

For people who keep losing things

There isn't any cure.
They carry on—'It can't be gone.
I left it there, I'm sure.'

They wear a look of great surprise
To think that it's mislaid.
A sock, a vest and all the rest,
Are stolen, lost or strayed.
The people who keep losing things—
They worry and they whine.
They can't think where ... but, most unfair,
They go and borrow mine.

by Max Fatchen

From Songs For My Dog
and Other People
(Puffin)
Teaching notes for
Anyone seen my . . . ?

OTHER RESOURCES
Dictionary and thesaurus.
Overhead projector or photocopies of the jigsaw cloze.

INTRODUCING THE UNIT
The text could be introduced by first presenting the students with a jigsaw cloze as a whole class using an overhead projector. Have the students reconstruct the poem, considering the rhythm and rhyme, so that it makes sense. Students should then compare their version of the poem with the original text.

WHAT A PERFORMANCE!
Focus on how tone of voice and intonation patterns indicate meaning. Explore with students the patterns which indicate mood in their own writing.

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!
It may be appropriate to have students work in small groups to discuss sequencing in the poem, linking of scenes and aspects of the poem which are important and require a close-up.

BE A POET!
Encourage students to use ‘Anyone seen my . . . ?’ as a model when shaping their own poems, and to revise, edit and proofread their writing for publication. The poems could then be compiled into a class book of poems and given a suitable title.

FOLLOW-UP/EXTENSION
• Discuss the rhyme scheme (abc) used in the poem. Students could create word banks or rhyming words. Point out rhymes based on different spelling patterns such as clue/shoe and mislaid/strayed. Discuss the concept of metre. (Metre is the recognisable pattern of rhythm). For example:
  -/-/-/-/
  -/-/-/
  -/-/-/-/
  -/-/-
After clapping the rhythm, students might like to make up their own notation symbols to represent the emphasised and unemphasised beats in the metre. In this case the - is the unemphasised word or syllable, the / is the emphasised word or syllable.
• Have students visit the library to find other poems by Max Fatchen, and to research information about him. They could then create a ‘Poet of the Week’ display.
What a performance!
Work with a group of friends to prepare a performance of the poem. Assign different group members to speak different lines. Practise using or combining your voices in interesting ways. You might like to try varying the pitch, tone or rhythm. You’ll need to rehearse before you perform for the rest of the class!

Design time
Create a poster or cover for a flyer to advertise your group’s performance of the poem. Use this space to experiment with different lettering styles before you make your good copy.
Lights! Camera! Action!

Imagine that you are a famous movie director and create a storyboard for the poem. A storyboard is a cartoon version of the poem. It is used as a shooting script. You will need to think carefully about what you want to include in each frame, and whether you want it to be a long shot, mid-shot or close-up. Under each frame in your cartoon write the dialogue plus notes about any special effects, sound effects or music.
Be a poet!

Talk with a partner about other things that you could complain about in a poem. How about the people who never do their homework or the people who are always late? What other ideas can you add? Now choose one of the ideas and write your own poem! Use this space to list and draft your ideas.

Things I could write about

Draft ideas

Now revise, edit and proofread your poem ready for publication!

NA 3.12 NSW 2.9 Uses strategies to plan, review, proofread and publish own writing with awareness of audience and written language features.

NA 3.11 NSW 2.10 2.14 Able to produce a clear text using correct sentence structure, most grammatical features and punctuation conventions of the text type.