

Title: Girls Around Me

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Genre: Poetry (friendship, bullying, feelings)

Level: Upper Intermediate

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Girls Around Me

The snobby girl in my class walked up to me and said,
“Honey, you are playing with fire.”

I replied, “Maybe I am but I don’t care.

Why do you always have to **bite** and scare?”

Another girl in my class left me a note, “Beware!”

They want me to stay away, but I will **dare!**

I also heard some gossipers saying I’m ridiculous.

All I did was smile, so I think they are **jealous.**

Once they humiliated me for my looks

But I know they think I outshine them; I found the truth in their diary books.

I know I don’t have any friends. I’m **lonely,**

But that’s how I can live my life so **gracefully.**

Learning Activities

Vocabulary

1. **Words from the second 1000 General Service High Frequency Word List**
bite, dare, gracefully, jealous, lonely
2. **Off List words** (These words are less common in English, so only learn them if you already know all the words from list #1 above.)
beware, diary, gossipers, honey, humiliated, outshine, ridiculous, scare, snobby

Comprehension Questions

- 1. Remembering:** Without looking back at the poem, can you remember which words describe how the writer feels her situation? Which words describe how the writer thinks about her classmates?
- 2. Understanding:** Why does the writer say that being lonely helps her to live life gracefully?
- 3. Understanding:** What is the meaning of “playing with fire?”
- 4. Inferring:** What do you think was written in the writer’s classmate’s diary books? How do you know?

Critical Thinking Questions:

- 1. Analysing:** Which words in the poem indicate positive feelings? Which words indicate negative feelings? Put these into the table below.
For every word you write on the left side of the table, think of another word that is opposite in meaning. Write these words on the right side of the table

Positive Words	Words with opposite meanings
Negative words	Words with opposite meanings

- 2. Applying:** If you were in the same situation as the writer of the poem, how would you respond to unkind words and actions of other people of your own age? Describe what you would say or do, in English.
- 3. Evaluating:** In the poem, the writer says she read the diary books of her classmates. Do you think this was a good or a bad thing to do? Why do you think the writer read the diaries? Explain your answers in English.
- 4. Creating:** The words and actions of the girls in the writers class can be described as *bullying*.
 - If you were the teacher of that class, how would you help the girls to be kinder to each other?
 - Think of a game or a classroom activity that the girls could do together that would help them to get to know each other better, and understand each other more fully so that they become better friends.

- Explain your activity or game to a group of your classmates, and have them take part in it. Give your instructions in English.
 - Afterwards, have a discussion about the game or activity. Have each person explain, in English, what they learned from doing it. Do you think you know each other better now? Do you think the activity or the game helped you to understand more about each other?
5. **Creating:** Write your own poem in English about a classroom experience you have had in the past. How did that experience make you feel? Make sure to use some positive and negative words from the number one question above. Share your poem with your classmates and explain what you wrote in English.