Changing Times

Many things are changing

Today in London Town

New buildings going up

Old ones coming down

Just like London people

Houses too grow old

And can no longer do their job

To keep out the damp and cold

Many are old fashioned

And were built long ago

For people in a different age

Who didn’t hurry so

People’s ways are changing

Like the things we use

Telephones for speaking

Television news

Just try to imagine

How things used to be

Different songs to listen to

Different things to see

Everyone used horses

Or else their own two feet

Everything moved slowly

Like the policeman on his beat

No motor cars to take them

Quickly on their way

No discos or videos

Like there are today

No package holidays

And no aeroplanes

No electric railways

And only puffer trains

People used to manage

It didn’t matter how

But when you come to think of it

Aren’t you glad it’s NOW.

 *Eric Slayter*

Questions:

1. What is the overall message of this poem?
2. Look at the punctuation. What effect does this have on the poem?
3. Even though this is a fairly modern poem it was still written over 15 years ago. Can you find and clues in the poem which might indicate this?
4. Make a list of some different songs to sing (parental advisory only please) and different things to see (think about the last decade e.g., buildings).
5. Why is NOW written in capital letters?
6. To bring this poem up-to-date think about 4-6 lines which could be added for the 21st century.