

## Teacher's notes – Poetry battles honking horns in New York

### Lead-in

Check that the students understand all the vocabulary then put them in pairs to discuss the typical noise pollution problems in cities, and how they would respond to it. In the feedback, encourage discussion, and double check that the students understand the new and difficult words.

### Answers

Students' own ideas

### Reading 1

Read the introduction as a class, then ask the students to read the passage and answer the questions.

### Answers

1. Aaron Naparstek objects to New York drivers constantly honking their car horns.
2. He shouts at drivers, throws eggs, and writes poetry (haikus) which he puts on lampposts.
3. Students' own ideas.

### Reading 2

Put the students in pairs to discuss the phrases from the passage. This is difficult. Give the students time and encourage them to re-read the relevant sections in the context carefully.

### Answers

1. A pastime is a hobby, a fun activity. This use is ironical because the last thing this is to Naparstek is a fun activity.
2. The use of *nobly* is ironical. Naparstek did not change from being aggressive to writing poetry for noble reasons – it was because the drivers were angry with him and likely to hit him.
3. This is hardly everyone. Humorously, the writer is saying that the only people who wrote these haikus were extremist.
4. This is ironic. *Inevitably* because everyone in New York with a cause has a website.
5. This is a humorous and ironical comment. Poetry can only change the world if you are prepared to stick your poems on every lamppost.
6. It is ridiculously *tenuous*. A tenuous argument is one that is far-fetched and difficult to justify.

The writer of this article probably thinks Naparstek is over-reacting. She/he is making fun of Naparstek a little.

### Vocabulary in context

Put the students in pairs to decide which of these types of people are most likely to take direct, violent action, and which are more likely to be involved in non-violent protest. Then ask them to match the ways of taking action to the headings.

### Answers

Violent action:                      militants                      revolutionaries  
Non-violent protest:              campaigners              environmentalists  
Activists could be in either category. An activist is someone who takes action because they have strong political views – but this action need not be violent.

militant extremists:              take direct action, fire bomb the police, throw eggs, go on a demonstration, start a riot  
non-violent campaigners:      sign a petition, lobby the government, go on a demonstration, organise a peaceful protest

### Follow-up

Put the students in small groups of three or four to do this exercise. Give them plenty of time and prompts to come up with ideas. When they are ready, ask them to present their ideas to the class or design a poster encouraging people to join in their protest.

In class, or for homework, ask students to write a haiku to complain about the subject they feel strongly about.