Introduction
You can listen to a recording of this poem at:
http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/poems/seven-ages-man

This support pack contains the following materials:
- a pre-reading vocabulary activity
- some famous lines from Shakespeare's play As You Like It, that you can listen to
- a comprehension activity.

Before you read

Activity 1

Read the poem
Match the words and phrases at the top to their definitions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. creeping</th>
<th>b. furnace</th>
<th>c. hose</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d. lean</td>
<td>e. pard</td>
<td>f. players</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. puking</td>
<td>h. sans</td>
<td>i. saws</td>
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<tr>
<td>j. shrunk shank</td>
<td>k. the bubble reputation</td>
<td>l. the cannon’s mouth</td>
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<tr>
<td>m. whining</td>
<td>n. with good capon lin’d</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. actors
2. complaining, or expressing disappointment
3. facing guns, in battle
4. fat from eating good chicken
5. leopard
6. looking good by doing pointless things
7. moving slowly and quietly
8. object containing a fire for heating metal etc
9. proverbs
10. smaller legs
11. stocking
12. thin and healthy
13. vomiting
14. without

The Seven Ages of Man
(from As You Like It, II, vii)
by William Shakespeare

All the world’s a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse’s arms;
Then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress’ eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon’s mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lin’d,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper’d pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;
His youthful hose, well sav’d, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes

And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion;
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans
everything.

After you read

**Exercise 1**
Decide if each of the following 10 statements about the text is True or False.

1. People are described as sportsmen and sportswomen.
2. Life is compared to a play.
3. Babies vomit on their carers' arms.
4. School-boys complain.
5. School-boys go to school quickly.
6. Lovers create great poems for their mistresses.
7. Soldiers are temperamental.
8. Those at the age of justice are fat.
9. In the sixth age men have big manly voices.
10. In the last age we begin to resemble babies in some ways.

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**Answers**

**Activity 1:**

1. f; 2. m; 3. l; 4. n; 5. e; 6. k; 7. a; 8. b; 9. i; 10. j; 11. c; 12. d; 13. g; 14. h

**Activity 2:**