Read the following statements about Carol Ann Duffy’s poem ‘Stealing’. Write the appropriate letters in the diamond squares, putting the statements you feel are most relevant and important to the poem’s meaning and impact at the top, and the least relevant at the bottom. Work in pairs or small groups and discuss/justify your priorities.

A. Duffy sympathises with the speaker – who is obviously lonely and bored and needs someone to pay attention to him/her.
B. Duffy is trying to understand why anyone would want to commit a senseless crime. If there is enough snow for someone to have made a snowman, surely there is enough snow for the speaker to have made one too, so why steal one?
C. Duffy is examining someone else’s attitude to life: ‘Better off dead than giving in’.
D. We are shown the speaker’s loneliness (s/he Needs the snowman as a ‘mate’; s/he is ‘alone’).
E. We see how the speaker regards him or herself as a failure (‘…I stole a guitar and thought I might / learn to play’), who cannot succeed in an ‘ordinary’ way.
F. We see the speaker’s pessimistic attitude: although they’d like their life to be glamorous, they are reduced to getting kicks from stealing a snowman and ‘things I don’t need’.
G. The snowman is a symbol for the cold loneliness of the speaker’s own situation.
H. The tone of the poem is sneering and aggressive towards ordinary people who ‘don’t understand’.
I. The voice of the poem is deliberately ambiguous to intrigue the reader.

Post activity discussion:
- How did you arrive at your final decisions?
- What did you find most challenging in this task and why?
- Circle the learning skills you have used in this activity: