

The minnow catching
boys and my parents
kept me from children
who were rough

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



Comparing and Contrasting the children in Susan Skinner's 'The Minnow Catching Boys' and 'My Parents Kept Me from Children who were Rough' by Stephen Spender. In this essay I am going to discuss 'The Minnow Catching Boys' by Susan Skinner and 'My Parents kept me from Children who were Rough' by Stephen Spender. I will focus on the similarities and differences between the children in the poems in terms of their actions, the language used to describe them and their impact on the reader. 'The Minnow Catching Boys' is a poem about a group of boys who very skillful and adventurous. 'My Parents kept me from children who were rough' is also about a group of boy bullies who really torture others a lot and play rough. The children in 'The Minnow Catching Boys' are described as skillful and the outdoor-type boys. This poem is based on a Victorian/older lifetime according to its facts; Boys nowadays play video games and are interested in technology or sports. This also refers to the quote "the sun burnt boys" which means that sunscreen was not invented.

I would imagine them as scruffy boys wearing a shirt with a waistcoat and knee breeches (knee length shorts from older times); all dull colours and by looking back it says 'Breeches rolled'. The children are in a focused, competitive mood, as said in the poem, 'Scan and dip' as well as 'they make bets poke and tip, their nimble catch'. 'For they have always been here the minnow catching boys.' makes me think that this competitive hobby has been passed down from many generations. '..... And when they have had enough, the minnow catching boys make their way home' makes me think these boys are very carefree.

I thought quotes like '..... And a small girl who can never quite catch up calls for them to wait, but no one waits' give me a feeling that these boys are mean and cruel or maybe just in a rush. The quote ' The dog shakes off in a cascade of diamonds' is one of the most striking pieces of imagery for me because it imaginatively describe thousands of sparkling water droplets as a ' cascade of diamonds'. The tone which this poem would be read in would be slow and suspending- long pauses. You would read this poem in this tone so you can get your audience right ' into' the scene-as the boys are focused and concentrating too hard.

The children in ' My Parents kept me from Children who were rough' are described as mean, arrogant and a fierce group of bullies. I imagine them as very scruffy boys with their clothes torn; as they don't care. I think they would be wearing the same clothes as the boys in the other poem but in an ill-suited manner. I think this poem is also set in the same time as the other poem- older times/Victorian times. This poem quotes ' They threw words like stones' which makes me think that these boys are rude, ill-mannered and that their insults really ' hurt' people- using words like weapons.

These boys were also involved in physical abuses to others, which refers to the quote' Their knees tight on my arms'. ' They were lithe', this quote makes me think these boys are super-fit, strong, flexible and very versatile. I think these boys look like are big headed and want to be threatening to people. Their parents might not able to control them or maybe are not even aware of their actions. ' Muscles like iron ' says that these boys are unbeatable and formidably strong. I would like to read this poem in a fast,

envious tone, because I think that the narrator is envying these strong and super-fit boys.