

*I wrote this poem in December, 2014. "BBL" stands for my school's name, the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning. Two terrific actors on the staff read the poem during one of our school's in-house TV broadcasts. The kids watched on SmartBoards in their classrooms. The **red** parts are where the beats fall.*

Winter Break Poem

Listen to my **poem** of a **school** called **BBL**,
Where the **kids** are accustomed to **always** doing **well**,
And the **staff** is accustomed to the **kids** doing **fine**,
And **everyone** appreciates a **great** poetic **line**!

It **starts** in **September** when the **kids** return to **school**,
After **playing** all **summer** at the **beach** and **pool**,
And **now** it's **December** – and **time** for winter **break**,
Which is **bearing** down **upon** us like a **giant** snow **flake**!

Soon we'll be at **home**, feeling **happy** and **content**,
Doing **homework** when we **need** to just to **stay** **confident**.
We'll **also** play with **friends** - spend **time** with family,
And **some** of us will **gaze** in awe, **at** a Christmas **tree**!

We come **back** to **BBL** on **January 5th**,
As the **winter** stretches **forward** like a **big** snow **drift**.
Maybe it will **snow** so much the **school** will close for **days**,
Well, **who** doesn't **love** those **extra** **holidays**!

But **then** before you **know** it, the **flowers** bloom **again**,
The **kids** are writing **essays** with a **pencil** or a **pen**,
In **Math** they're solving **problems** – **ever** more **complex**,
And **when** we turn **around**, summer's **breathing** down our **necks**!

The **joy** of life **pervades** us on Bay**chester** Avenue,
I've **always** seen **successes** here – [**beat**] haven't **you**?
And **so** the seasons **circle** like a **sassy** carousel,
Teaching us a **world** of stuff...
Learning more than **just** enough...

Helping out when **times** are tough...

Watching children **learn** with glee...

Proving their **autonomy**...

Shining bright for **all** to see ...

Everyone a **V I P**...

Now it's **time** to end this **poem** ... Pack our **bags** and head on **home** ...

But **first**, before our **fare**-thee-well, let's **give** three cheers for **BBL**!

Hip-Hip-Hooray!

Hip-Hip-Hooray!

Hip-Hip-Hooray!

– Bruce Ballard, December, 2014