

Porosity.

A word for the space between skin where liquid or air may pass.

A word that links our pores and our port.

A word that makes contact and connection.

A word that can mean "passage," and "journey".

A word that tells a story.

A 14 year old boy on a voyage across the sea.

From Guyana, 'Land of Many Waters', of luscious rainforests and dusty savannah plateaus.

Home of the Harpy eagle and jaguar, solitary and secret like our hero.

James Clarke swam out from his land wearing the ocean as a second skin.

He sailed away from his home for a different kind of kin.

He found a new Irish family, and a friend in the sea of blue.

A family that you choose who will also choose you.

Water a constant, Atlantic salt stains cracked lips; a stowaway.

The water in his blood sings.

Yet, day embraced him, grey as an English winter.

Raindrops the size of acorns falling from the sky.

All of it, the water in, and around him.

A piece of home away from home.

Standing at the docklands, the portal to many worlds.

You must understand that the Mersey is both lullaby and warning.

James knew this.

Hands hard and calloused, worn from heavy dock work.

Strong and seaworthy.

They respected the power of water in all its moods.

'Don't dip in if you can't see Jim!'

Little ones play in the wet stuff. Frolicking freely.

They see fun and laughter.

Not how the sea can change so quickly.

The danger that lies beneath.

How water can go from friend to foe in a blink of their little eyes.

So he was there to teach them.

Him and his shadow.

We all need help sometimes.

To touch and connect.

A pat on the back, a high five, a hug.

We can all feel like we are drowning; the whirlpools in our heads have some of the strongest currents.

The sea and our emotions are mighty. So big we cannot see the end.

A helping hand serves us all.

On shining sea and dryer land.

There are 8 medals in Liverpool Museum.

Each one awarded for a life saved.

James taught the gift of walking on water. Of swimming like a fish- for neighbours or strangers.

A merman of his time.

A street stands.

The first ever named after a Black man in our city.

He left his birthplace of trees and green, and made a new home in our hearts and memories.

Porosity:  
James  
Clarke

