

Frog's legs

He shouts out.
Follow instructions lout.
Fit the battery in the space marked brain.

Now, a flick of the switch will make the frog's legs twitch
in repetitive muscular spasms as if it were swimming,
he adds with a smirk, down a little ditch.

Next in line. Salter, Bailey, Bannister, Haley,
each in turn subjected to post mortem pain

But I'm thinking. Follow instructions Sir,
fit your head in the space marked battery
and a flick of the switch will make you twitch
in repetitive muscular spasms as if you were swinging,
I add with a smile, like a Dunmow flitch*.

He catches me. Stand on your stool
and report for detention after school.

Later, outside, I break the unwritten, golden rule
and weep, behind the bike sheds, like a fool.

How could something so obscene
be done to a creature so innocent and green?

* A side of bacon from Dunmow in Essex