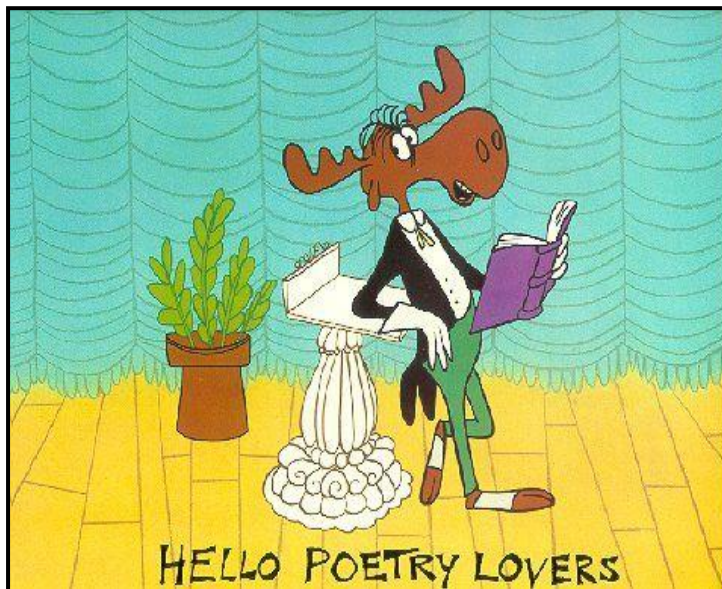


Poets Suggested in the Massachusetts English Language Arts Frameworks

This document contains poems written by poets suggested in the Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Frameworks for Grades 3-4 and Grade 5.

Poets include: Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet, Lewis Carroll, John Ciardi, Rachel Field, Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Edward Lear, Myra Cohn Livingston, David McCord, A. A. Milne, Ogden Nash, Laura Richards, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow for Grade 5.



Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet

Benjamin Franklin

Ben Franklin munched a loaf of bread while walking down the street
And all the Philadelphia girls tee-heed to see him eat,
A country boy come up to town with eyes as big as saucers
At the ladies in their furbelows, the gempmun on their horses.

Ben Franklin wrote an almanac, a smile upon his lip,
It told you when to plant your corn and how to cure the pip,
But he salted it and seasoned it with proverbs sly and sage,
And people read "Poor Richard" till Poor Richard was the rage.

Ben Franklin made a pretty kite and flew it in the air
To call upon a thunderstorm that happened to be there,
– And all our humming dynamos and our electric light
Go back to what Ben Franklin found, the day he flew his kite.

Ben Franklin was the sort of man that people like to see,
For he was very clever but as human as could be.
He had an eye for pretty girls, a palate for good wine,
And all the court of France were glad to ask him in to dine.

But it didn't make him stuffy and he wasn't spoiled by fame
But stayed Ben Franklin to the end, as Yankee as his name.
"He wrenched their might from tyrants and its lightning from the sky."
And oh, when he saw pretty girls, he had a taking eye!

Stephen Vincent Benet

Wilbur Wright and Orville Wright

Said Orville Wright to Wilbur Wright.
“These birds are very trying.
I’m sick of hearing them cheep-cheep
About the fun of flying.
A bird has feathers, it is true.
That much I freely grant.
But must that stop us, W?”
Said Wilbur Wright, “It shan’t.”

And so they build a glider, first,
And then they built another.
– There never were two brothers more
Devoted to each other.
They ran a dusty little shop
For bicycle-repairing.
And bought each other soda-pop
And praised each other’s daring.

They glided here, they glided there,
They sometimes skinned their noses.
– For learning how to rule the air
Was not a bed of roses –
But each would murmur, afterward,
While patching up his bro.
“Are we discouraged, W?”
“Of course we are not, O!”

And finally, at Kitty Hawk
In Nineteen-Three (let’s cheer it!),
The first real airplane really flew
With Orville there to steer it!
– And kingdoms may forget their kings
And dogs forget their bites,
But not till Man forgets his wings
Will men forget the Wrights.

Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet

George Washington

*Sing hey! for bold George Washington,
That jolly British tar,
King George's famous admiral
From Hull to Zanzibar!*

No – wait a minute – something's wrong –
George *wished* to sail the foam.
But, when his mother thought, aghast,
Of Georgie shinning up a mast,
Her tears and protests flowed so fast
That George remained at home.

*Sing ho! for grave Washington,
The staid Virginia squire,
Who farms his fields and hunts his hounds
And aims at nothing higher!*

Stop, stop, it's going wrong again!
George *liked* to live on farms,
But, when the Colonies agreed
They could and should and would be freed,
They called on George to do the deed
And George cried "Shoulder arms!"

*Sing ha! for Emperor Washington,
That hero of renown,
Who freed his land from Britain's rule
To win a golden crown!*

No, no, that's what George *might* have won
But didn't, for he said,
"There's not much point about a king,
They're pretty but they're apt to sting
And, as for crowns – the heavy thing
Would only hurt my head."

Sing ho! for our George Washington!
(At last I've got it straight.)
The first in war, the first in peace,
The goodly and the great.
But, when you think about him now,
From here to Valley Forge,
Remember this – he might have been
A highly different specimen,
And, where on earth would we be, then?
I'm glad that George was George.

Lewis Carroll

The Crocodile

How doth the little crocodile
 Improve his shining tail,
And pour the waters of the Nile
 On every golden scale!

How cheerfully he seems to grin!
 How neatly spread his claws,
And welcomes little fishes in
 With gently smiling jaws!

Lewis Carroll

Twinkle twinkle

Twinkle, twinkle little bat!
How I wonder what you're at!
Up above the world you fly
Like a tea-tray in the sky.
 Twinkle, twinkle –

Lewis Carroll

The Melancholy Pig

There was a pig that sat alone,
 Beside a ruined Pump.
By day and night he made his moan:
 It would have stirred a heart of stone
To see him wring his hoofs and groan,
 Because he could not jump.

Lewis Carroll

Jabberwocky

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood a while in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

One two! One two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
Oh frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Lewis Carroll

Epilogue To Through The Looking Glass

A boat, beneath a sunny sky
Lingering onward dreamily
In an evening of July --

Children three that nestle near,
Eager eye and willing ear
Pleased a simple tale to hear --

Long has faded that sunny sky:
Echoes fade and memories die:
Autumn frosts have slain July.

Still she haunts me, phantomwise
Alice moving under skies
Never seen by waking eyes.

Children yet, the tale to hear,
Eager eye and willing ear,
Lovingly shall nestle near.

In a Wonderland they lie,
Dreaming as the days go by,
Dreaming as the summers die:

Ever drifting down the stream --
Lingering in the golden gleam --
Life what is it but a dream?

Lewis Carroll

You Are Old Father William

"You are old, father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head --
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," father William replied to his son,
"I feared it might injure the brain;
But, now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again."

"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned before,
And you have grown most uncommonly fat;
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door --
Pray what is the reason for that?"

"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his grey locks,
"I kept all my limbs very supple
By the use of this ointment -- one shilling a box --
Allow me to sell you a couple?"

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too weak
For anything tougher than suet;
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak --
Pray, how did you manage to do it?"

"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength, which it gave to my jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life."

"You are old," said the youth, "one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as every;
Yet you balanced an eel on the tend of your nose --
What made you so awfully clever?"

"I have answered three questions, and that is enough,"
Said his father; "don't give yourself airs!

Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you downstairs!"

Lewis Carroll

The Walrus And The Carpenter

The sun was shining on the sea,
Shining with all his might:
He did his very best to make
The billows smooth and bright --
And this was odd, because it was
The middle of the night.

The moon was shining sulkily,
Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
After the day was done --
'It's very rude of him,' she said,
'To come and spoil the fun!'

The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky:
No birds were flying overhead --
There were no birds to fly.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand:
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand:
'If this were only cleared away,'
They said, 'it would be grand.'

'If seven maids with seven mops
Swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose,' the Walrus said,
'That they could get it clear?'
'I doubt it,' said the Carpenter,
And shed a bitter tear.

'O Oysters, come and walk with us!
The Walrus did beseech.
'A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk,
Along the briny beach:
We cannot do with more than four,
To give a hand to each.'

The eldest Oyster looked at him,
But never a word he said:
The eldest Oyster winked his eye,
And shook his heavy head --
Meaning to say he did not choose
To leave the oyster-bed.

Out four young Oysters hurried up.
All eager for the treat:
Their coats were brushed, their faces washed,
Their shoes were clean and neat --
And this was odd, because, you know,
They hadn't any feet.

Four other Oysters followed them,
And yet another four;
And thick and fast they came at last,
And more, and more, and more --
All hopping through the frothy waves,
And scrambling to the shore.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Walked on a mile or so,
And then they rested on a rock
Conveniently low:
And all the little Oysters stood
And waited in a row.

'The time has come,' the Walrus said,
'To talk of many things:
Of shoes -- and ships -- and sealing wax --
Of cabbages -- and kings --

And why the sea is boiling hot --
And whether pigs have wings.'

'But wait a bit,' the Oysters cried,
'Before we have our chat;
For some of us are out of breath,
And all of us are fat!'
'No hurry!' said the Carpenter.
They thanked him much for that.

'A loaf of bread,' the Walrus said,
'Is what we chiefly need:
Pepper and vinegar besides
Are very good indeed --
Now, if you're ready, Oysters dear,
We can begin to feed.'

'But not on us!' the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue.
'After such kindness, that would be
A dismal thing to do!'
'The night is fine,' the Walrus said,
'Do you admire the view?'

'It was so kind of you to come!
And you are very nice!'
The Carpenter said nothing but
'Cut us another slice-
I wish you were not quite so deaf-
I've had to ask you twice!'

'It seems a shame,' the Walrus said,
'To play them such a trick.
After we've brought them out so far,
And made them trot so quick!'
The Carpenter said nothing but
'The butter's spread too thick!'

'I weep for you,' the Walrus said:
'I deeply sympathize.'

With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding his pocket-handkerchief
Before his streaming eyes.

'O Oysters,' said the Carpenter,
'You've had a pleasant run!
Shall we be trotting home again?'
But answer came there none --
And this was scarcely odd, because
They'd eaten every one.

John Ciardi

Mummy Slept Late and Daddy Fixed Breakfast

Daddy fixed the breakfast.
He made us each a waffle.
It looked like gravel pudding.
It tasted something awful.

“Ha, ha,” he said, “I’ll try again.
This time I’ll get it right.”
But what I got was in between
Bituminous and anthracite.

“A little too well done? Oh well,
I’ll have to start all over.”
That time what landed on my plate
Looked like a manhole cover.

I tried to cut it with a fork:
The fork gave off a spark.
I tried a knife and twisted it
Into a question mark.

I tried it with a hack-saw.
I tried it with a torch.
It didn’t even make a dent.
It didn’t even scorch.

The next time Dad gets breakfast
When Mummy’s sleeping late,
I think I’ll skip the waffles.
I’d rather eat the plate!

John Ciardi

Summer's Song

By the sand between my toes,
By the waves behind my ears,
By the sunburn on my nose,
By the little salty tears
That make rainbows in the sun
When I squeeze my eyes and run,
By the way the seagulls screech,
Guess where I am? At the . . .!
By the way the children shout
Guess what happened? School is . . .!
By the way I sing this song
Guess if summer lasts too long:
You must answer Right or . . .!

John Ciardi

Read this with Gestures

It isn't proper, I guess you know,
To dip your hands – like this – in the snow,
And make a snowball, and look for a hat,
And try to know it off – like that!

John Ciardi

Dan Dunder

Dan Dunder is a blunder.
What makes Dan so loud, I wonder?
If I knew how to be that loud
I think I'd look for a big black cloud
And get a job with it – as thunder!

John Ciardi

A Warning About Bears

Some bears are fierce, and most grow fiercer
When any one bites off their ears, sir.
With bears it's best to be polite.
And a bit distant – that's all right.
But, please, when meeting bears, don't bite.

John Ciardi

More About Bears

Some bears are fierce, and some are fiercer.
Few bears (I rather hope) are near, sir.
From what I know of bears, they are
Better few and better far.

John Ciardi

Still More About Bears

The fiercest bear of all is very
(A good thing, too) imaginary.
I say “a good thing” for, my dear,
If he were real, he might be here.

John Ciardi

Last Word About Bears

I meet few bears and few meet me.
But still it's my belief
That, meeting bears, the thing to be
Is – brief.

John Ciardi

At the Farm

What would you say if I said I saw
A hen on the pond and a duck in the straw?

– I think I would say you had best go back
And see if that hen can say, “Quack! Quack!”

When that is done, you may try your luck
At asking that duck to say, “Cluck! Cluck!”

John Ciardi

My Horse, Jack

My horse, Jack, ran off to sea.
In ten years he came back to me
With a smell of salt and a smell of tar
And three little sea-horses swimming in a jar.

He ate my oats and he ate my hay
And he did no work and all he'd say
Was “I met my love when the sea was blue.
I loved her. She loved me true.

I lost my love when the sea was black.
She swam away and she never swam back.
So I tucked my babies into a jar
And here I am and here they are.”

And he ate my oats and he ate my hay
And he did no work, and that's all he'd say.

John Ciardi

Wouldn't You?

If I
Could go
As high
And low
As the wind
As the wind
As the wind
Can blow –

I'd go!

John Ciardi

How to Tell a Tiger

People who know tigers
Very very well
All agree that tigers
Are not hard to tell.

The way to tell a tiger is
With lots of room to spare.
Don't try telling them up close
Or we may not find you there.

Rachel Field

The Performing Seal

Who is so proud
As not to feel
A secret awe
Before a seal
That keeps such a sleek
And wet repose
While twirling candles
On his nose?

Rachel Field

If Once You Have Slept on an Island

If once you have slept on an island
You'll never be quite the same;
You may look as you looked the day before
And go by the same name,

You may bustle about in street and shop:
You may sit at home and sew,
But you'll see blue water and wheeling gulls
Wherever your feet may go.

You may chat with the neighbors of this and that
And close to your fire keep,
But you'll hear ship whistle and light house bell
And tides beat through your sleep.

Oh, you won't know why, and you can't say how
Such change upon you came,
But – once you have slept on an island
You'll never be quite the same!

Rachel Field

Some People

Isn't it strange some people make
You feel so tired inside,
Your thoughts begin to shrivel up

But when you're with some other ones,
It's stranger still to find
Your thoughts as thick as fireflies
All shiny in your mind!

Rachel Field

Skyscrapers

Do skyscrapers ever grow tired
Of holding themselves up so high?
Do they ever shiver on frosty nights
With their tops against the sky?
Do they feel lonely sometimes
Because they have grown so tall?
Do they ever wish they could lie right down
And never get up at all?

Rachel Field

The Little Rose Tree

Every rose on the little tree
Is making a different face at me!
Some look surprised when I pass by,
And others droop – but they are shy.

These two whose heads together press
Tell secrets I could never guess.
Some have their heads thrown back to sing,
And all the buds are listening.
I wonder if the gardener knows
Or if he calls each just a rose?

Rachel Field

Barefoot Days

In the morning, very early,
That's the time I love to go
Barefoot where the fern grows curly
And grass is cool between each toe,
On a summer morning-O!
On a summer morning!

That is when the birds go by
Up the sunny slopes of air,
And each rose has a butterfly
Or a golden bee to wear;
And I am glad in every toe –
Such a summer morning-O!
Such a summer morning!

Rachel Field

Something Told the Wild Geese

Something told the wild geese
It was time to go.
Though the fields lay golden
something whispered – “Snow.”
Leaves were green and stirring,
Berries, luster-glossed,
But beneath warm feathers
Something cautioned – “Frost.”
All the sagging orchards
Steamed with amber spice,
But each wild breast stiffened
At remembered ice.
Something told the wild geese
It was time to fly –
Summer sun was on their wings,
Winter in their cry.

Robert Frost

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.
My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.
He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.
The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Robert Frost

The Pasture

I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away
(And wait to watch the water clear, I may):
I shan't be gone long.—You come too.

I'm going out to fetch the little calf
That's standing by the mother. It's so young,
It totters when she licks it with her tongue.
I shan't be gone long.—You come too.

Robert Frost

The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth.

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same.

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Robert Frost

Dust of Snow

The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow
From a hemlock tree
Has given my heart
A change of mood,
And saved some part
Of a day I rued.

Langston Hughes

Dream Variation

To fling my arms wide
In some place of the sun,
To whirl and to dance
Till the white day is done.
Then rest at cool evening
Beneath a tall tree
While night comes on gently,
Dark like me –

To fling my arms wide
In the face of the sun,
Dance! Whirl! Whirl!
Till the quick day is done.
Rest at pale evening...
A tall, slim tree...
Night coming tenderly
Black like me.

Langston Hughes

Dreams

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.
Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

Langston Hughes

Poem

I loved my friend.
He went away from me.
There's nothing more to say.
The poem ends,
Soft as it began –
I loved my friend:

Langston Hughes

Winter Sweetness

This little house is sugar.
It's roof with snow is piled,
And from its tiny window
Peeps a maple-sugar child.

Langston Hughes

Winter Moon

How thin and sharp is the moon tonight!
How thin and sharp and ghostly white
Is the slim curved crook of the moon tonight!

Langston Hughes

April Rain Song

Let the rain kiss you.
Let the rain beat upon your head with silver liquid drops.
Let the rain sing you a lullaby.

The rain makes still pools on the sidewalk.
The rain makes running pools in the gutter.
The rain plays a little sleep-song on our roof at night –

And I love the rain.

Langston Hughes

Snail

Little snail,
Dreaming you go.
Weather and rose
Is all you know.

Weather and rose
Is all you see,
Drinking
The dewdrop's
Mystery.

Langston Hughes

City

In the morning the city
Spreads its wings
Making a song
In stone that sings.

In the evening the city
Goes to bed
Hanging lights
Above its head.

Langston Hughes

The Dream Keeper

Bring me all of your dreams,
You dreamers,
Bring me all of your
Heart melodies
That I may wrap them
In a blue cloud-cloth
Away from the too-rough fingers
Of the world.

Edward Lear

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat;
They took some honey, and plenty of money
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.
The Owl looked up to the moon above,
And sang to a small guitar:
"O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love,
What a beautiful Pussy you are,
You are,
You are!
What a beautiful Pussy you are!"

Pussy said to the Owl: "You elegant fowl,
How charmingly sweet you sing!
Oh, let us be married—too long we have tarried—
But what shall we do for a ring?"
They sailed away for a year and a day
To the land where the bong tree grows;
And there in a wood, a piggy-wig stood
With a ring at the end of his nose,
His nose,
His nose.
With a ring at the end of his nose

"Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling
Your ring?" Said the piggy, "I will."
So they took it away, and were married next day
By the turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined upon mince and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon,
And hand in hand on the edge of the sand
They danced by the light of the moon,
The moon,
The moon.
They danced by the light of the moon.

Edward Lear

The Old Man with a Beard

There was an old man with a beard
Who said, "It is just as I feared! –
Two owls and a hen
Four larks and a wren,
Have all built their nests in my beard!"

Edward Lear

The Old Man with a Nose

There was an Old Man with a nose,
Who said, "If you choose to suppose,
That my nose is too long,
You are certainly wrong!"
That remarkable Man with a nose.

Edward Lear

A Young Lady of Norway

There was a Young Lady of Norway
Who casually sat in a doorway;
When the door squeezed her flat,
She exclaimed, "What of that?"
This courageous Young Lady of Norway.

Myra Cohn Livingston

The Night

The night
 creeps in
 around my head
 and snuggles down
 upon the bed,
 and makes lace pictures
 on the wall
 but doesn't say a word at all.

Myra Cohn Livingston

Picture People

I like to peek
 inside a book
 where all the picture people look.
I like to peek
 at them and see
 if they are peeking back at me.

Myra Cohn Livingston

Understanding

Sun
and rain
and wind
and storms
and thunder go together.

There has to be a little bit of each
to make the weather.

Myra Cohn Livingston

Revenge

When I find out
who took
the last cooky

out of the jar
and left
me a bunch of

stale old messy
crumbs, I'm
going to take

me a handful
and crumb
up *someone's* bed.

Myra Cohn Livingston

Mad Song

I shut my door
To keep you out
Won't do no good
To stand and shout
Won't listen to
A thing you say
Just time you took
Yourself away
I lock my door
To keep me here
Until I'm sure
You disappear.

Myra Cohn Livingston

Prayer for Earth

Last night
an owl
called from the hill.
Coyotes howled.
A deer stood still
nibbling at bushes far away.
The moon shone silver.
Let this stay.

Today
two noisy crows
flew by,
Their shadows pasted to the sky.
The sun broke out
through clouds of gray.
An iris opened.
Let this stay.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The Arrow And The Song

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

There Was a Little Girl

There was a little girl, who had a little curl
Right in the middle of her forehead,
And when she was good, she was very, very good,

But when she was bad she was horrid.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Sea Memories

Often I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me.
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams.
And the burden of that old song,
It murmurs and whispers still:
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

I remember the black wharves and the ships,
And the sea tides tossing free;
And the Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.
And the voice of that wayward song
Is singing and saying still:
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The Rainy Day

The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
The vine still clings to the moldering wall,
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
My thoughts still cling to the moldering Past,
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The Children's Hour

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupation,
That is known as the children's hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes,
They are plotting and planning together,
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape, they surround me,
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all?

I have you fast in my fortress
And will not let you depart,
But put you down in the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The Village Blacksmith

Under a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his haul, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,--rejoicing,--sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Paul Revere's Ride

Listen my children and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,--
One if by land, and two if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said "Good-night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend through alley and street
Wanders and watches, with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church,
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,

To the belfry chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,--
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,--
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now he gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,

Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!

He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns.

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet;
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.
He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, black and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze

Blowing over the meadow brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read
How the British Regulars fired and fled,---
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
>From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the redcoats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,---
A cry of defiance, and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo for evermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

David McCord

Snowman

My little snowman has a mouth,
So he is always smiling south.
My little snowman has a nose;
I couldn't seem to give him toes,
I couldn't seem to make his ears.
He shed a lot of frozen tears
Before I gave him any eyes –
But they are big ones for his size

David McCord

The Pickety Fence

The pickety fence
The pickety fence
Give it a lick it's
The pickety fence
Give it a lick it's
A clickety fence
Give it a lick it's
A lickety fence
Give it a lick
Give it a lick
Give it a lick
With a rickety stick
Pickety
Pickety
Pickety
Pick.

David McCord

Every Time I Climb a Tree

Every time I climb a tree
Every time I climb a tree
Every time I climb a tree
I scrape a leg
Or skin a knee
And every time I climb a tree
I find some ants
Or dodge a bee
And get the ants
All over me.

And every time I climb a tree
Where have you been?
They say to me
But don't they know that I am free
Every time I climb a tree?
I like it best
To spot a nest
That has an egg
Or maybe three.

And then I skin
The other leg
But every time I climb a tree
I see a lot of things to see
Swallows roof tops and TV
And all the fields and farms there be
Every time I climb a tree
Though climbing may be good for ants
It isn't awfully good for pants
But still it's pretty good for me
Every time I climb a tree

David McCord

This is My Rock

This is my rock,
And here I run
To steal the secret of the sun;

This is my rock,
And here come I
Before the night has swept the sky;

This is my rock,
This is the place
I meet the evening face to face.

David McCord

To Walk in Warm Rain

To walk in warm rain
 And get wetter and wetter!
To do it again –
O walk in warm rain
 Till you drip like a drain.
To walk in warm rain
 And get wetter and wetter.

A. A. Milne

Outdoor Song Which Has to be Sung in the Snow

The more it
SNOWS-tiddely-pom,
The more it
GOES-tiddely-pom
The more it
GOES-tiddely-pom
On
Snowing.

And nobody
KNOWS-tiddely-pom,
How cold my
TOES-tiddely-pom
How cold my
TOES-tiddely-pom
Are
Growing.

A. A. Milne

Knight-in-Armour

Whenever I'm a shining Knight,
I buckle on my armour tight;
And then I look about for things,
Like Rushings-Out, and Rescuings,
And Savings from the Dragon's Lair,
And fighting all the Dragons there.
And sometimes when our fights begin,
I think I'll let the Dragons win...
And then I think perhaps I won't,
Because they're Dragons, and I don't.

A. A. Milne

If I Were King

I often wish I were a King,
And then I could do anything.

If only I were King of Spain,
I'd take my hat off in the rain.

If only I were King of France,
I wouldn't brush my hair for aunts.

I think, if I were King of Greece,
I'd push things off the mantelpiece

If I were King of Norway,
I'd ask an elephant to stay.

If I were King of Babylon,
I'd leave my button gloves undone.

If I were King of Timbuctoo,
I'd think of lovely things to do.

If I were King of anything,
I'd tell the soldiers, "I'm the King!"

A. A. Milne

The Wrong House

I went into a house, and it wasn't a house,
It has big steps and a great big hall;
But it hasn't got a garden,
A garden,
A garden,
It isn't like a house at all.

I went into a house, and it wasn't a house,
It has a big garden and great high wall;
But it hasn't got a may-tree,
A may-tree,
A may-tree,
It isn't like a house at all.

I went into a house, and it wasn't a house -
Slow white petals from the may-tree fall;
But it hasn't got a blackbird,
A blackbird,
A blackbird,
It isn't like a house at all.

I went into a house, and I thought it was a house,
I could hear from the may-tree the blackbird call...
But nobody listened to it,
Nobody
Liked it,
Nobody wanted it at all.

A. A. Milne

Halfway Down

Halfway down the stairs
Is a stair
Where I sit.
There isn't any
Other stair
Quite like
It.
I'm not at the bottom,
I'm not at the top;
So this is the stair
Where
I always
Stop.

Halfway up the stairs
Isn't up
And isn't down.
It isn't in the nursery,
It isn't in the town.
And all sorts of funny thoughts
Run round my head:
"It isn't really
Anywhere!
It's somewhere else
Instead!"

A. A. Milne

Swing Song

Here I go up in my swing

Ever so high.

I am the King of the fields, and the King

Of the town.

I am the King of the earth, and the King

Of the sky.

Here I go up in my swing...

Now I go down.

Ogden Nash

Adventures of Isabel

Isabel met an enormous bear,
Isabel, Isabel, didn't care;
The bear was hungry, the bear was ravenous,
The bear's big mouth was cruel and cavernous.
The bear said, Isabel, glad to meet you,
How do, Isabel, now I'll eat you!
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry.
Isabel didn't scream or scurry.
She washed her hands and she straightened her hair up,
Then Isabel quietly ate the bear up.
Once in a night as black as pitch
Isabel met a wicked old witch.
the witch's face was cross and wrinkled,
The witch's gums with teeth were sprinkled.
Ho, ho, Isabel! the old witch crowed,
I'll turn you into an ugly toad!
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry,
Isabel didn't scream or scurry,
She showed no rage and she showed no rancor,
But she turned the witch into milk and drank her.
Isabel met a hideous giant,
Isabel continued self reliant.
The giant was hairy, the giant was horrid,
He had one eye in the middle of his forehead.
Good morning, Isabel, the giant said,
I'll grind your bones to make my bread.
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry,
Isabel didn't scream or scurry.

She nibbled the zwieback that she always fed off,
And when it was gone, she cut the giant's head off.
Isabel met a troublesome doctor,
He punched and he poked till he really shocked her.
The doctor's talk was of coughs and chills
And the doctor's satchel bulged with pills.
The doctor said unto Isabel,
Swallow this, it will make you well.
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry,
Isabel didn't scream or scurry.
She took those pills from the pill concocter,
And Isabel calmly cured the doctor.

Ogden Nash

The Porcupine

Any hound a porcupine nudges
Can't be blamed for harboring grudges
I know one hound that laughed all winter
At a porcupine that sat on a splinter.

Ogden Nash

The Fly

God in his wisdom made the fly
And then forgot to tell us why.

Ogden Nash

Winter Morning

Winter is the king of showmen,
Turning tree stumps into snow men
And houses into birthday cakes
And spreading sugar over lakes.
Smooth and clean and frosty white
The world looks good enough to bite.
That's the season to be young,
Catching snowflakes on your tongue.
Snow is snowy when it's snowing,
I'm sorry it's slushy when it's going.

Ogden Nash

The Panther

The panther is like a leopard,
Except it hasn't been peppered,
Should you behold a panther crouch,
Prepare to say Ouch.
Better yet, if called by a panther,
Don't anther.

Ogden Nash

The Eel

I don't mind eels
Except as meals.
And the way they feels

Ogden Nash

The Hippopotamus

Behold the hippopotamus!
We laugh at how he looks to us,
And yet in moments dank and grim,
I wonder how we look to him.
Peace, peace, thou hippopotamus!
We really look all right to us,
As you no doubt delight the eye
Of other hippopotami.

Ogden Nash

The octopus

Tell me, O Octopus, I begs
Is those things arms, or is they legs?
I marvel at thee, Octopus;
If I were thou, I'd call me Us.

Ogden Nash

The Kitten

The trouble with a kitten is
THAT
Eventually it becomes a
CAT.

Ogden Nash

Song of the Open Road

I think that I shall never see
A billboard as lovely as a tree.
Perhaps unless the billboards fall,
I'll never see a tree at all.

Laura Richards

Eletelephony

Once there was an elephant,
Who tried to use the telephant -
No! No! I mean an elephone
Who tried to use the telephone -
(Dear me! I am not certain quite
That even now I've got it right.)

Howe'er it was, he got his trunk
Entangled in the telephunk;
The more he tried to get it free,
The louder buzzed the telephee -
(I fear I'd better drop the song
Of elephop and telephong!)

Laura Richards

The Snail and the Mouse

The Snail and the Mouse
Went round the house,
 Running a race together;
The riders were elves,
And proud of themselves,
 For neither weighed more than a feather.

The Snail went crawly, creepy, crawl,
 The Mouse went hoppety hop, sir;
But they came to a fence
That *was* so immense
 (Six inches!), they *had* to stop, sir!

Laura Richards;

The Cave-Boy

I dreamed I was a cave-boy
And lived in a cave,
A mammoth for my saddle horse,
A monkey for my slave.
And through the tree-fern forests
A-riding I would go,
When I was once a cave-boy,
A million years ago.

I dreamed I was a cave-boy;
I hunted with a spear
The sabre-toothed tiger,
The prehistoric deer.
A wolf-skin for my dress suit,
I thought me quite a beau,
When I was once a cave-boy,
A million years ago.

I dreamed I was a cave-boy;
My dinner was a bone,
And how I had to fight for it,
To get it for my own!
We banged each other o'er the head,
And oft our blood did flow,
When I was once a cave-boy,
A million years ago.

I dreamed I was a cave-boy.
The torches' smoky light
Shone on the dinner table,
A pile of bone so white.
I lapped some water from the spring,
The easiest way, you know,
When I was once a cave-boy,
A million years ago.

I dreamed – but now I am awake;
A voice is in my ear.
“Come out and have a game of ball!
The sun is shining clear.
We’ll have some doughnuts afterwards,
And then a-swimming go!”
I’m glad I’m *not* a cave-boy,
A million years ago!