

# 2nd Grade Poetry

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**Answer to a Child's Question***Samuel Taylor Coleridge*

Do you ask what the birds say? The sparrow, the dove,  
The linner and thrush say, "I love and I love!"  
In the winter they're silent - the wind is so strong;  
What it says, I don't know, but it sings a loud song.  
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm weather,  
And singing, and loving - all come back together.  
But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,  
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,  
That he sings, and he sings; and for ever sings he-  
"I love my Love, and my Love loves me!" ❀

## The Arrow and the Song

*Henry Wordsworth Longfellow*

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. ❀

## At the Garden Gate

*David McCord*

Who so late  
at the garden gate?  
Emily, Kate,  
and John.  
"John,  
where have you been?  
It's after six;  
Supper is on,  
And you've been gone  
An hour,  
John!"  
"We've been, we've been,  
We've just been over  
The field," said,  
John.  
(Emily, Kate,  
and John.)

Who so late  
at the garden gate?  
Emily, Kate  
and John  
"John,  
what have you got?"  
"A whopping toad  
Isn't he big?  
He's a terrible  
Load.  
(We found him  
A little ways  
Up the road,"  
said Emily,  
Kate,  
and John.)

Who so late  
at the garden gate?  
Emily, Kate,  
and John.  
"John,  
put that thing down!

( Do you want to get warts?"  
(They all three have 'em  
By last  
Reports.)  
Still, finding toads

Is the best of  
Sports,  
Say Emily,  
Kate,  
and John. ❀

## The Balloon

*Karla Kuskin*

I went to the park  
And I bought a balloon.  
It sailed through the sky  
Like a large orange moon.  
It bumped and it fluttered  
And swam with the clouds.  
Small birds flew around it,  
In high chirping crowds.  
It bounced and it balanced  
And bowed with the breeze.  
It skimmed past the leaves  
On the tops of the trees.  
And then as the day  
Started turning to night  
I gave a short jump  
And I held the string tight  
And home we all sailed  
Through the darkening sky,  
The orange balloon, the small birds,  
And I. ❀

**Bedtime***Eleanor Farjeon*

Five minutes, five minutes more please!

Let me stay five minutes more!

Can't I just finish the castle

I'm building here on the floor?

Can't I just finish the story

I'm reading here in my book?

Can't I just finish this bead-chain—

It almost is finished, look!

Can't I just finish this game, please!

When a game's once begun

It's a pity never to find out

Whether you've lost or won.

Can't I just stay five minutes?

Well, can't I just stay four?

Three minutes then? two minutes?

Can't I stay one minute more? ❁



**Bernard Bartholomew Benjamin Brown***Carolyn Cawthorne*

Bernard Bartholomew Benjamin Brown  
Was really the dirtiest boy in town.  
He'd play in the mud, and splash in the pool,  
When starting out each morning for school.  
His teacher said, with a sorry frown,  
"You certainly are a disgrace to the town.  
Bernard Bartholomew Benjamin Brown."

Bernard Bartholomew Benjamin Brown  
Was caught, when policemen were searching the town  
To find a bad boy. Said they: "Here's the scamp!  
He surely looks like a wild little tramp!"  
But as he stood trembling, with tears running down,  
Said his clean little sister, in dainty pink gown,  
"His name is Bernard Bartholomew Benjamin Brown!"

Bernard Bartholomew Benjamin Brown  
Is now without spot, from his soles to his crown.  
His shoes are polished—his suit is clean  
A neater boy could never be seen.  
And teacher says now with a smile, looking down:  
"When you've grown, you'll be Mayor of the town,  
Bernard Bartholomew Benjamin Brown." ❀

**Boarding House***Ted Kooser*

The blind man draws his curtains for the night  
and goes to bed, leaving a burning light

above the bathroom mirror. Through the wall,  
he hears the deaf man walking down the hall

in his squeaky shoes to see if there's a light  
under the blind man's door, and all is right ✿

## Books Fall Open

*David McCord*

Books fall open,  
you fall in,  
delighted where  
you've never been;  
hear voices not once  
heard before,  
reach world on world  
through door on door;  
find unexpected  
keys to things  
locked up beyond  
imaginings.

What might you be,  
perhaps become,  
because one book  
is somewhere? Some  
wise delver into  
wisdom, wit,  
and wherewithal  
has written it.

True books will venture,  
dare you out,  
whisper secrets,  
maybe shout  
across the gloom  
to you in need,  
who hanker for  
a book to read. ❁

## The Brook

*Florence Piper Tuttle*

I know a little prattling brook  
That chatters all the day;  
It always is in such a rush,  
With never time to stay.

And yet it seems quite friendly like,  
A-babbling this and that;  
I do believe 'twould like to stay  
And have a cozy chat.

Sometimes it seems so very near,  
A-coaxing me to play;  
But all the time it's running far,  
Just miles and miles away.

Do you suppose the time will come  
When I shall ever learn  
That brooks keep running on and on  
And never do return? ❀

## The Butterfly and the Bee

*William Lisle Bowles*

Methought I heard a butterfly  
Say to a labouring bee:  
"Thou hast no colours of the sky  
On painted wings like me."

"Poor child of vanity! those dyes,  
And colours bright and rare,"  
With mild reproof, the bee replies,  
"Are all beneath my care."

"Content I toil from morn to eve,  
And scorning idleness,  
To tribes of gaudy sloth I leave  
The vanity of dress." ❀

**The Canary***Elizabeth Turner*

Mary had a little bird,  
With feathers bright and yellow,  
Slender legs-upon my word,  
He was a pretty fellow!

Sweetest notes he always sung,  
Which much delighted Mary;  
Often where his cage was hung,  
She sat to hear Canary.

Crumbs of bread and dainty seeds  
She carried to him daily,  
Seeking for the early weeds,  
She decked his palace gaily.

This, my little readers, learn,  
And ever practice duly;  
Songs and smiles of love return  
To friends who love you truly. ❀

**The Cat***Ogden Nash*

You get a wife, you get a house,  
Eventually you get a mouse.  
You get some words regarding mice,  
You get a kitty in a trice.

By two a.m. or thereabouts,  
The mouse is in, the cat is out.  
It dawns upon you, in your cot,  
The mouse is silent, the cat is not.

Instead of kitty, says your spouse,  
You should have got another mouse. ❀

**Catalogue***Rosalie Moore*

Cats sleep fat and walk thin.  
Cats, when they sleep, slump;  
When they wake, pull in—  
And where the plump's been  
There's skin. Cats walk thin.

Cats wait in a lump,  
Jump in a streak.  
Cats when they jump, are sleek  
As a grape slipping its skin—  
They have technique.  
Oh, cats don't creak.  
They sneak.

Cats sleep fat.  
They spread comfort beneath them  
Like a good mat  
As if they picked the place  
And then sat.  
You walk around one  
As if he were the City Hall  
After that. ❀



**A Child's Evening Prayer***Samuel Taylor Coleridge*

Ere on my bed my limbs I lay,  
God grant me grace my prayers to say:  
O God! preserve my mother dear  
In strength and health for many a year;  
And, O! preserve my father too,  
And may I pay him reverence due;

And may I my best thoughts employ  
To be my parents' hope and joy;  
And O! preserve my brothers both  
From evil doings and from sloth,

And may we always love each other  
Our friends, our father, and our mother:  
And still, O Lord, to me impart  
An innocent and grateful heart,  
That after my great sleep I may  
Awake to thy eternal day! Amen ❀

**A Child's Prayer**

*M. Bentam Edwards*

God make my life a little light,  
    Within the world to glow;  
A tiny flame that burneth bright  
    Wherever I may go.  
God make my life a little flower,  
    That giveth joy to all,  
Content to bloom in native bower,  
    Although its place be small  
God make my life a little song,  
    That comforteth the sad;  
That helpeth others to be strong,  
    And makes the singer glad.  
God make my life a little staff,  
    Whereon the weak may rest,  
That so what health and strength I have  
    May serve my neighbors best. ❀

## A Child's Thought of God

*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

They say that God lives very high!  
But if you look above the pines  
You cannot see our God. And why?

And if you dig down in the mines  
You never see Him in the gold,  
Though from Him all that's glory shines.

God is so good, He wears a fold  
Of heaven and earth across His face—  
Like secrets kept, for love untold.

But still I feel that His embrace  
Slides down by thrills, through all things  
Through sight and sound of every place:

As if my tender mother laid  
On my shut lids her kisses' pressure,  
Half-waking me at night and said  
"Who kissed you through the dark, dear guesser?" ❀

**Counting-Out Rhyme**

*Edna St. Vincent Millay*

Silver bark of beech, and willow  
Bark of yellow birch and yellow  
    Twig of willow.

Stripe of green in moosewood maple,  
Colour seen in leaf of apple,  
    Bark of popple.

Wood of popple pale as moonbeam,  
Wood of oak for yoke and barn-beam,  
    Wood of hornbeam.

Silver bark of beech, and hollow  
Stem of elder, tall and yellow  
    Twig of willow. ❁

**The Cow***Robert Louis Stevenson*

The friendly cow, all red and white,  
I love with all my heart:  
She gives me cream with all her might,  
To eat with apple tart:

She wanders lowing here and there,  
And yet she cannot stray,  
All in the pleasant open air,  
The pleasant light of day;

And blown by all the winds that pass  
And wet with all the showers,  
She walks among the meadow grass  
And eats the meadow flowers. ❀

**Eletelephony**

*Laura E. Richards*

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.) ❀

**General Store***Rachel Field*

Someday I'm going to have a store  
With a tinkly bell hung over the door,  
With real glass cases and counters wide  
And drawers all spilly with things inside.  
There'll be a little of everything;  
Bolts of calico; balls of string;  
Jars of peppermint; tins of tea;  
Pots and kettles and crockery;  
Seeds in packets; scissors bright;  
Kegs of sugar, brown and white;  
Sarsaparilla for picnic lunches,  
Bananas and rubber boots in bunches.  
I'll fix the window and dust each shelf,  
And take the money in all myself.  
It will be my store and I will say:  
"What can I do for you today?" ❁

## Going to Bed

*Marchette Chute*

I'm always told to hurry up—  
Which I'd be glad to do,  
If there were not so many things  
That need attending to

But first I have to find my towel  
Which fell behind the rack  
And when a pillow's thrown at me  
I have to throw it back.

And then I have to get the things  
I need in bed with me  
Like marbles and my birthday train  
And Pete the chimpanzee.

I have to see my polliwog  
Is safely in its pan,  
And stand a minute on my head  
To be quite sure I can.

I have to bounce upon my bed  
To see if it will sink  
And then when I am covered up  
I find I need a drink. ✱



**Good Morning***Eleanor Farjeon*

Good morning, nurse, good morning, cook,  
Good morning, all of you;  
Good morning to my picture-book,  
And to my window-view,

Good morning to the bird out there  
That cannot sing enough,  
And to the carpet which my bare  
Feet press on, soft and rough.

Good morning to the breakfast smell  
That rises from below,  
And to the breakfast sound as well  
That clatters to and fro.

Good morning, Towzer! Come, let's run,  
Jump, shout, and laugh and sing  
Good morning to you, every one!  
Good morning, everything! ❀

## A Good Play

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

We built a ship upon the stairs,  
All made of the back-bedroom chairs,  
And filled it full of sofa pillows  
To go a-sailing on the billows.

We took a saw and several nails,  
And water in the nursery pails;  
And Tom said, "Let us also take  
An apple and a slice of cake";—  
Which was enough for Tom and me  
To go a-sailing on, till tea.

We sailed along for days  
and days, And had the very best of plays;  
But Tom fell out and hurt his knee,  
So there was no one left but me. ❀

## Habits of the Hippopotamus

*Arthur Guiterman*

The hippopotamus is strong  
And huge of head and broad of bustle;  
The limbs on which he rolls along  
Are big with hippopotomuscle.

He does not greatly care for sweets  
Like ice cream, apple pie, or custard,  
But takes to flavor what he eats  
A little hippopotomustard.

The hippopotamus is true  
To all his principles, and just;  
He always tries his best to do  
The things one hippopotomust.

He never rides in trucks or trams,  
In taxicabs or omnibuses,  
And so keeps out of traffic jams  
And other hippopotomusses. ❀

## Halfway Down

*A. A. Milne*

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!" ❁

## How to Write a Letter

*Elizabeth Turner*

Maria intended a letter to write,  
But could not begin as she thought to indite.  
So she went to her mother with pencil and slate,  
Containing "Dear Sister," and also a date.

"With nothing to say, my dear girl, do not think  
Of wasting your time over paper and ink.  
But certainly this is an excellent way,  
To try with your slate to find something to say.

"I will give you a rule," said her mother, "my dear,  
Just think for a moment your sister is here.  
And what would you tell her? Consider, and then  
Though silent your tongue, you can speak with your pen." ❀

**If I Can Stop One Heart from Breaking***Emily Dickinson*

If I can stop one heart from breaking  
I shall not live in vain,  
If I can ease one life the aching  
Or cool one pain,  
Or help one fainting robin  
Into his nest again,  
I shall not live in vain. ❀

## In the Morning

*Ralph Cushman*

I met God in the morning,  
When my day was at its best  
And His presence came like sunrise  
Like a glory in my breast.

All day long the Presence lingered.  
All day long He stayed with me.  
And we sailed with perfect calmness  
O're a very troubled sea.

Other ships were blown and battered  
Other ships were sore distressed.  
But the winds that seemed to drive them  
Brought to us a peace and rest.

Then I thought of other mornings  
With a keen remorse of mind,  
When I, too, had loosed the moorings  
With the Presence left behind.

So I think I know the secret  
Learned from many a troubled way.  
You must seek God in the morning  
If you want Him through the day. ❀

**Jabbering in School***Eleanor Farjeon*

Was that me jabbering?  
I expect it was.  
It's no use complaining  
Why and because;  
When you've been jabbering  
Teacher doesn't try  
To take any interest  
In because and why.  
I might have seen a heron  
Flying in the sun,  
Or been telling Jeanie  
Her pinny was undone,  
I might have been noticing  
Something dark and dire,  
Like lions in the playground,  
Or the curtains on fire,  
I might have had a stomachache—  
Oh, there might have been  
Lots of reasons why I  
Was jabbering with Jean.  
But it's no use explaining  
Why and because.  
Was that me jabbering?  
I expect it was. ❀



**A Kitten***Eleanor Farjeon*

He's nothing much but fur  
And two round eyes of blue,  
He has a giant purr  
And a midget mew.

He darts and pats the air,  
He starts and cocks his ear,  
When there is nothing there  
For him to see and hear.

He runs around in rings,  
But why we cannot tell;  
With sideways leaps he springs  
At things invisible.

Then halfway through a leap  
His startled eyeballs close,  
And he drops off to sleep  
With one paw on his nose. ❀

## The Kitten and the Falling Leaves

*William Wordsworth*

See the kitten on the wall,  
Sporting with the leaves that fall!  
Withered leaves, one, two, and three,  
From the lofty elder-tree.  
Through the calm and frosty air  
Of this morning bright and fair,  
Eddying round and round they sink  
Softly, slowly. One might think,  
From the motions that are made,  
Every little leaf conveyed  
Some small fairy, hither tending,  
To this lower world descending.

—But the kitten, how she starts!  
Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts!  
First at one, and then its fellow.  
Just as light, and just as yellow.  
There are many now—now—one—  
Now they stop and there are none,  
What intentness of desire  
In her upturned eye of fire!  
With a tiger leap halfway,  
Now she meets the coming prey.  
Lets it go at last, and then  
Has it in her power again. ❀

**A Little Bird I Am***Louisa May Alcott*

'A little bird I am,  
Shut from the fields of air,  
And in my cage I sit and sing  
To Him who placed me there:  
Well pleased a prisoner to be,  
Because, my God, it pleases Thee!

'Naught have I else to do;  
I sing the whole day long;  
And He whom most I love to please  
Doth listen to my song,  
He caught and bound my wandering wing,  
But still He bends to hear me sing.' ❀

**The Little Mouse***Author Unknown*

I have seen you, little mouse,  
Running all about the house,  
Through the hole your little eye  
In the wainscot peeping sly,  
Hoping soon some crumbs to steal,  
To make quite a hearty meal.  
Look before you venture out,  
See if pussy is about.  
If she's gone, you'll quickly run  
To the larder for some fun;  
Round about the dishes creep,  
Taking into each a peep,  
To choose the daintiest that's there,  
Spoiling things you do not care. ❀

**Little Things***Julia A. Carney*

Little drops of water,  
Little grains of sand,  
Make the mighty ocean  
And the beauteous land.

And the little moments,  
Humble though they be,  
Make the mighty ages  
Of eternity.

So our little errors  
Lead the soul away,  
From the paths of virtue  
Into sin to stray.

Little deeds of kindness,  
Little words of love,  
Make our earth an Eden,  
Like the heaven above. ❀

**Little Tiger Cat***Annette Wynne*

Little Tiger Cat with the spotted face,  
Do you think you've found a baby-jungle place?  
Going through the grass, stealthily and slow,  
Are you waiting to jump out and scare the folks you know?  
And send them running to the house as fast as they can go?  
Little Tiger Cat, it's no use at all,  
No matter what you think yourself, you're rather tame and small,  
And with all your hiding and your stern contemplation,  
You cannot scare a single one of high or low station,  
And so, there's no use trying to be like your wild relation. ❀

## The Little Whistler

*Frances Frost*

My mother whistled softly,  
My father whistled bravely,  
My brother whistled merrily,  
And I tried all day long!  
I blew my breath inwards,  
I blew my breath outwards,  
But all you heard was breath blowing  
And not a bit of song!

But today I heard a bluebird,  
A happy, young and new bird,  
Whistling in the apple tree,  
He'd just discovered how!  
Then quick I blew my breath in,  
And happy I blew my breath out,  
And sudden I blew three wild notes—  
And I can whistle now! ❀

**Make Me a Picture of the Sun***Emily Dickinson*

Make me a picture of the sun—  
So I can hang it in my room  
And make believe I'm getting warm  
When others call it "day"!

Draw me a robin on a stem—  
So I am hearing him, I'll dream,  
And when the orchards stop their tune,  
Put my pretense away.

Say if it's really warm at noon,  
Whether it's buttercups that "skim,"  
Or butterflies that "bloom"?  
Then skip the frost upon the lea,  
And skip the russet on the tree,  
Let's pray those never come! ❀



**Missing***A.A. Milne*

Has anybody seen my mouse?  
I opened his box for half a minute,  
Just to make sure he was really in it,  
And while I was looking, he jumped outside!  
I tried to catch him, I tried, I tried.  
I think he's somewhere about the house.  
Has anyone seen my mouse?  
Uncle John have you seen my mouse?  
Just a small sort of mouse, a dear little brown one,  
He came from the country, he wasn't a town one,  
So he'll feel lonely in a London street;  
Why, what could he possibly find to eat?  
He must be somewhere. I'll ask Aunt Rose:  
Have you seen a mouse with a woffelly nose?  
Oh, somewhere about—  
He's just got out ...  
Hasn't anybody seen my mouse? ❀

**My Books and I***Florence Piper Tuttle*

My books and I the whole day through  
Find many, many things to do;  
We travel anywhere we please.  
On dragonflies and bumblebees.

We visit pirates in their den;  
We sail the seas and back again.  
With Indians, lying all around,  
We spread our blankets on the ground.

At night, the fairies on the green  
Ask me to be their Fairy Queen  
The most exciting time of day  
Is when my books and I just play. ❀

**My Cat, Mrs. Lick-A-Chin***John Ciardi*

Some of the cats I know about  
Spend a little time in and a lot of time out.  
Or a lot of time out and a little time in.  
But my cat, Mrs. Lick-a-chin,  
Never knows where she wants to be.  
If I let her in, she looks at me  
And begins to sing that she wants to go out.  
So I open the door, and she looks about  
And begins to sing, "Please let me in!"

Poor silly Mrs. Lick-a-chin!

The thing about cats, as you may find,  
Is that no one knows what they have in mind.  
And I'll tell you something about that:  
No one knows it less than my cat. ❀

**My Visitors***Ethel H. Chesterfield*

I built a little house,  
With a red front door;  
Someone came knocking,  
One, two, three, four!  
I hurried up to open it,  
And what did I see?  
Two squirrels and a dormouse  
Had come to visit me!

Their eyes were very wistful,  
As they peered inside my house;  
I stood aside to let them in,  
The squirrels and the dormouse;  
They curled up on the hearth rug  
To warm their little feet;  
I gave them buns and banbury cakes  
And apple tarts to eat.

And when I rose next morning,  
Before the early dawn,  
They'd gone, but on my doorstep  
Were hazelnuts and corn. ✱

**The Noble Nature***Ben Johnson*

It is not growing like a tree  
In bulk doth make man better be;  
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year  
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sear  
    A lily of a day  
    Is fairer far in May,  
    Although it fall and die that night,—  
    It was the plant and flower of light.  
In small proportions we just beauties see;  
And in short measures life may perfect be. ❀

**Now the Day is Over***Sabine Baring-Gould*

Now the day is over,  
Night is drawing nigh,  
Shadows of the evening  
Steal across the sky.

Now the darkness gathers,  
Stars began to peep,  
Birds and beasts and flowers  
Soon will be asleep.

Jesus, give the weary  
Calm and sweet repose;  
With thy tenderest blessing  
May our eyelids close.

Grant to little children  
Visions bright of thee;  
Guard the sailors tossing  
On the deep blue sea.

Comfort every sufferer  
Watching late in pain;  
Those who plan some evil  
From their sin restrain.

Through the long night-watches  
May thine angels spread  
Their white wings above me,  
Watching round my bed.

When the morning wakens,  
Then may I arise  
Pure and fresh and sinless  
In thy holy eyes.

Glory to the Father,  
Glory to the Son,  
And to thee, blest Spirit,  
Whilst all ages run. ❀

**Old Glory**

*Alonzo Newton Benn*

I love each shining star because  
It tells a wondrous story;  
I love each stripe in our dear flag,  
The flag we call Old Glory!

I love its field of azure blue,  
Each star that twinkles there;  
I love its red and snowy white  
To me it all is fair.

I love to see it float on high  
Above each tower and steeple;  
I love to doff my hat to it  
The flag of a free people.

I love Old Glory more each day,  
The banner of our nation;  
America, our native land  
A land of God's creation! ❁

**Opossum***William Jay Smith*

Have you ever in your life seen a

Possum play possum?

Have you ever in your life seen a

Possum play dead?

When a Possum is trapped and can't get away

He turns up his toes and lays down his head,

Bats both his eyes and rolls over dead.

But then when you leave him and run off to play,

The Possum that really was just playing possum

Gets up in a flash and scurries away. ❁



**Ornithology***Eleanor Farjeon*

What's ornithology? Pray can you tell?  
It's hard to pronounce and it's harder to spell—  
Yet that's what you're learning whenever you care

To study the Birds of the Earth, Sea, and Air.

There's a long word

To stand for a Bird!

For a Lark or a Sparrow its length is absurd!  
Eagles and Ostriches need no apology

If you should label them as ornithology!

But how can it fit

The tiny Tom-Tit?

The Finch.

Wants a word that's no more than an inch!  
Yet all the Birds of the East and the West,

Whatever they be, and wherever they nest—

The Vulture—the Hen—

The Flamingo—the Wren—

The Dove—the Canary—

The queer Cassowary

The Thrush on the bough, and the Duck in the pool—  
They are all ornithology when you're in School! ❀

## Our Snowman

*Lucille Chiddix*

Our fat snow man  
Was a comical sight,  
He had two hands,  
But he couldn't write.

He had a wide grin,  
But he couldn't talk.  
He had a tall cane,  
But he couldn't walk.

He had four buttons,  
But he had no coat.  
We tied a big bow  
Around his throat.

The sun looked down  
On our fat snow man.  
Said mother, "I fear  
He'll get a bad tan."

By noon the poor fellow  
Had tears in his eyes.  
By four he was down  
To Tom Thumb size.

By the time the moon shone  
On the fast melting snow,  
He was down to nothing.  
But his buttons and bow. ❄

## Out in the Fields with God

*Anonymous*

The little cares that fretted me  
I lost them yesterday  
Among the fields, above the sea,  
Among the winds at play,  
Among the lowing of the herds,  
The rustling of the trees,  
Among the singing of the birds,  
The humming of the bees.

The foolish fears of what might happen,  
I cast them all away,  
Among the clover-scented grass,  
Among the new-mown hay,  
Among the husking of the corn,  
Where drowsy poppies nod,  
Where ill thoughts die and good are born--  
Out in the fields with God. ❀

**Persevere**

*From The Children's Book of Virtues*

The fisher who draws in his net too soon,

Won't have any fish to sell;

The child who shuts up his book too soon,

Won't learn any lessons well.

If you would have your learning stay,

Be patient – don't learn too fast;

The man who travels a mile each day,

May get round the world at last. ❁

## Questions at Night

*Louis Untermeyer*

Why  
Is the sky?

What starts the thunder overhead?  
Who makes the crashing noise?  
Are the angels falling out of bed?  
Are they breaking all their toys?

Why does the sun go down so soon?  
Why do the night-clouds crawl  
Hunggrily up to the new-laid moon  
And swallow it, shell and all?

If there's a Bear among the stars  
As all the people say,  
Won't he jump over those Pasture-bars  
And drink up the Milky Way?

Does every star that happens to fall  
Turn into a fire-fly?  
Can't it ever get back to heaven at all?

And why  
Is the sky? ❀

**Rain in Summer***Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

How beautiful is the rain!  
After the dust and heat,  
In the broad and fiery street,  
In the narrow lane,  
How beautiful is the rain!  
How it clatters along the roofs,  
Like the tramp of hoofs!

How it gushes and struggles out  
From the throat of the overflowing spout!  
Across the window pane  
It pours and pours;  
And swift and wide,  
With a muddy tide,  
Like a river down the gutter roars  
The rain, the welcome rain! ❀

## The Rainbow

*David McCord*

The rainbow arches in the sky,  
But in the earth it ends;  
But if you ask the reason why,  
They'll tell you: "That depends."

It never comes without the rain,  
Nor goes without the sun;  
But though you try with might and main,  
You'll never catch me one.

Perhaps you'll see it once a year,  
Perhaps you'll say: "No, twice";  
But every time it does appear,  
It's very clean and nice.

If I were God, I'd like to win  
At sun-and-moon croquet:  
I'd drive the rainbow-wickets in  
And ask someone to play. ❁

## The Reason for the Pelican

*John Ciardi*

The reason for the pelican  
Is difficult to see:  
His beak is clearly larger  
Than there's any need to be.

It's not to bail a boat with—  
He doesn't own a boat.  
Yet everywhere he takes himself  
He has that beak to tote.

It's not to keep his wife in—  
His wife had got one, too.  
It's not a scoop for eating soup.  
It's not an extra shoe.

It isn't quite for anything.  
And yet you realize  
It's really quite a splendid beak  
In quite a splendid size. ❀



**Seal***William Jay Smith*

See how he dives  
From the rocks with a zoom!  
See how he darts  
Through his watery room  
Past crabs and eels  
And green seaweed,  
Past fluffs of sandy  
Minnow feed!  
See how he swims  
With a swerve and a twist,  
A flip of the flipper,  
A flick of the wrist!  
Quicksilver quick,  
Softer than spray,  
Down he plunges  
And sweeps away;  
Before you can think,  
Before you can utter  
Words like "Dill pickle"  
Or "Apple butter,"  
Back up he swims  
Past sting-ray and shark,  
Out with a zoom,  
A whoop, a bark;  
Before you can say  
Whatever you wish,  
He plops at your side  
With a mouthful of fish! ❀

## So Long As There Is Weather

*Tamara Kitt*

Whether it's cold  
or  
whether it's hot,  
I'd rather  
have weather  
whether or not  
it's just what I'd choose  
Summer  
or  
Spring  
or  
Winter  
or  
Fall—  
any  
weather  
is  
better  
than  
no weather  
at all.

I really like weather.

I never feel  
whiney  
when weather is  
rainy.  
And when it's  
sunshiny  
I don't feel  
complainy.

Weather sends me.

So—  
Rain?  
Let it SPLASH!  
Thunder?  
CRRRA SH!  
Hail?  
Clitter-clatter!  
What does it  
matter—

so long as there's weather! ❁

**Sweet and Low**

*Alfred, Lord Tennyson*

SWEET and low, sweet and low,  
Wind of the western sea,  
Low, low, breathe and blow,  
Wind of the western sea!  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
Blow him again to me;  
While my little one, while  
my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west  
Under the silver moon:  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep ❀

## There Was a Naughty Boy

*John Keats*

There was a naughty boy,  
A naughty boy was he,  
He would not stop at home,  
He could not quiet be-  
He took  
In his knapsack  
A book  
Full of vowels  
And a shirt  
With some towels,  
A slight cap  
For night cap,  
A hair brush,  
Comb ditto,  
New stockings-  
For old ones  
Would split O!  
This knapsack  
Tight at 'is back  
He rivetted close  
And followed his nose  
To the North,  
To the North,  
And followed his nose  
To the North.

There was a naughty boy,  
And a naughty boy was he,  
He ran away to Scotland  
The people for to see-  
There he found  
That the ground  
Was as hard,  
That a yard  
Was as long,  
That a song  
Was as merry,  
That a cherry  
Was as red-  
That lead  
Was as weighty  
That fourscore  
Was as eighty,  
That a door  
Was as wooden  
As in England-  
So he stood in his shoes

And he wondered,  
He wondered,  
He stood in his shoes  
And he wondered. ❁

## The Things I Do

*Karla Kuskin*

I'm very good at climbing  
I nearly climbed a tree  
But just as I was almost up  
I sort of skinned my knee.

I'm wonderful at walking  
I almost walked a mile  
But when I got around the block  
I rested for a while.

I'm excellent at swimming  
Though I'm not very old  
I almost swam the ocean once  
But the water was too cold.

But what I'm really best at  
Is skipping down the hall.  
I'm very good at skipping.  
I'm wonderful at skipping.  
I'm marvelous at skipping,  
That is unless I fall. ❀

**Timothy Boon***Ivy O. Eastwick*

Timothy Boon  
Bought a balloon  
Blue as the sky,  
Round as the moon.  
"Now I will try  
To make it fly  
Up to the moon,  
Higher than high!"  
Timothy said,  
Nodding his head.

Timothy Boon  
Sent his balloon  
Up through the skies,  
Up to the moon.  
But a strong breeze  
Stirred in the trees  
Rocked the bright moon,  
Tossed the great seas,  
And, with its mirth,  
Shook the whole earth.

Timothy Boon,  
And his balloon,  
Caught by the breeze  
Flew to the moon;  
Up past the trees,  
Over the seas,  
Up to the moon—  
Swift as you please!—  
And, oh, I forget,  
They have not come down yet! ❀

**Tiptoe***Karla Kuskin*

Yesterday I skipped all day,  
The day before I ran,  
Today I'm going to tiptoe  
Everywhere I can.

I'll tiptoe down the stairway.  
I'll tiptoe through the door.  
I'll tiptoe to the living room  
And give an awful roar

And my father, who is reading,  
Will jump up from his chair  
And mumble something silly like  
"I don't see you there."

I'll tiptoe to my mother  
And give a little cough  
And when she spins to see me  
Why, I'll softly tiptoe off.

I'll tiptoe through the meadows,  
Over hills and yellow sands  
And when my toes get tired  
Then I'll tiptoe on my hands. ❀



**To God, with Love***Alice Joyce Davidson*

Dear God,  
This is the first time ever that  
I've written You a letter ... but I just had  
to thank You, now that everything is better.

I came to You a while back so troubled  
and distressed, I didn't know what course to  
take, what action would be best ... I told You  
all my troubles, and I felt Your presence near ...  
and as I talked the clouds broke up and seemed  
to disappear.

So, thank You, God, for listening, for  
keeping me from harm, for wiping tears and  
holding me within Your loving arms. ❀

**Verbs***Eleanor Farjeon*

Nouns are the things I see and touch,  
My Cake, my Mother, and my Ball;  
I like some nouns very much,  
Though some I do not like at all.

Verbs are the things I do, and make,  
And feel, in one way or another.  
Thanks to Verbs, I eat my Cake,  
And throw my Ball, and hug my Mother.

Yet Verbs, which make me laugh and play,  
Can also make me cry and fall,  
And tease my Mother every day,  
And spoil my Cake, and lose my Ball! ❀

**Weather***Eve Merriam*

Dot a dotdot ...dot a dotdot

Spotting the windowpane.

Spack a spack speck ...flick a flack fleck

Freckling the windowpane.

A spatter a scatter ...a wetcat aclatter

A splatter a rumble outside.

Umbrella umbrella umbrella umbrella

Bumbershoot barrel of rain.

Slosh a galosh ...slosh a galosh

Slither and slather a glide

A puddle a jump a puddle a jump

A puddle a jump puddle splosh

A juddle a pump aluddle a dump a

Puddmuddle jump in and slide! ❁

**Weathers**

*Thomas Hardy*

This is the weather the cuckoo likes,  
    And so do I;  
When showers betumble the chestnut spikes,  
    And nestlings fly;  
And the little brown nightingale bills his best,  
And they sit outside the "Traveller's Rest,"  
And maids come forth sprig-muslin dressed.  
And citizens dream of the South and West.

    And so do I.

This is the weather the shepherd shuns,  
    And so do I;  
When beeches drip in browns and duns,  
And thresh and ply.  
And hill-hid tides throb, throe on throe,  
And meadow rivulets overflow,  
And drops on gate-bars hang in a row,  
And rooks in families homeward go,

    And so do I. ❀

**What is Pink?***Christina Rossetti*

What is pink? A rose is pink

By the fountain's brink.

What is red? A poppy's red

In its barley bed.

What is blue? The sky is blue

Where the clouds float through.

What is white? A swan is white

Sailing in the light.

What is yellow? Pears are yellow,

Rich and ripe and mellow.

What is green? The grass is green,

With small flowers between.

What is violet? Clouds are violet

In the summer twilight.

What is orange? Why, an orange,

Just an orange! ❀

**What Robin Told***George Cooper*

How do robins build their nests?  
Robin Redbreast told me—  
First a wisp of yellow hay  
In a pretty round they lay;  
Then some shreds of down floss,  
Feathers, too, and bits of moss,  
Woven with a sweet, sweet song,  
This way, that way, and across;  
That's what Robin told me.

Where do robins hide their nests?  
Robin Redbreast told me—  
Up among the leaves so deep,  
Where the sunbeams rarely creep,  
Long before the winds are cold,  
Long before the leaves are gold,  
Bright-eyed stars will peep and see  
Baby robins—one, two, three;  
That's what Robin told me. ❀

**Will There Really Be a Morning?***Emily Dickinson*

Will there really be a morning?  
Is there such a thing as day?  
Could I see it from the mountains  
If I were as tall as they?

Has it feet like water lilies?  
Has it feathers like a bird?  
Is it brought from famous countries  
Of which I have never heard?

Oh, some scholar! Oh, some sailor!  
Oh, some wise man from the skies!  
Please to tell a little pilgrim  
Where the place called morning lies! ❀

## Winter Is Coming

*Velda Blumhagen*

The busy little squirrels  
Are hiding nuts away,  
So they'll have food to eat  
Upon a winter's day.

The robins and the bluebirds,  
And other songbirds too,  
Have started for the Southland.  
I think they're wise, don't you?

The little frogs and turtles  
Are in their soft mud beds.  
When Old Man Winter comes along  
They'll cover up their heads.

The big brown bear has eaten  
As much as he can hold.  
Now he'll curl up inside a cave  
And sleep when days are cold.

The furry little rabbit  
Wears a coat as white as snow.  
He changes for the winter,  
Just like you and me, you know. ❄



## **The Library**

By Barbara A. Huff

*It looks like any building  
When you pass it on the street,  
Made of stone and glass and marble,  
Made of iron and concrete.  
But once inside you can ride  
A camel or a train,  
Visit Rome, Siam or Nome,  
Feel a hurricane.  
Meet a king, learn to sing,  
How to bake a pie,  
Go to sea, plant a tree,  
Find how airplanes fly.  
Train a horse, and of course,  
Have all the dogs you like,  
See the moon, a sandy dune,  
Or catch a whopping pike.  
Everything that books can bring  
You'll find inside those walls.  
A world is there for you to share  
When adventure calls.  
You cannot tell its magic  
By the way the building looks,  
But there's wonderment within it,  
The wonderment of books.*