



Severne Junior, Infant and (NC) School

Poetry Spine

Autumn 2022



The purpose of the Poetry Spine is to ensure that children have the opportunity to explore, learn and recite a breadth of poems, in line with national curriculum requirements. It is a progressive literature spine and it is expected that children will explore and learn all of the poems on this list, by the time they leave in Year 6, not only exploring poems from their current year group, but also revisiting poems from previous year groups. Opportunities to perform and present poems will be incorporated into the rhythms of school life.

This Poetry Spine has been gathered through consultation with published recommended poetry lists and staff input.

Nursery	One, Two, Three, Four, Five	<i>Traditional</i>
	If you're happy and you know it	<i>Traditional</i>
	The Wheels on the Bus	<i>Traditional</i>
	Old Macdonald had a Farm	<i>Traditional</i>
	One Finger One Thumb, keep moving	<i>Traditional</i>
	Clap Clap Hands	<i>Traditional</i>
Reception	Ten in the bed	<i>Traditional</i>
	Miss Polly had a Dolly	<i>Traditional</i>
	The Ants go Marching	<i>Traditional</i>
	Twinkle Twinkle Little Star	<i>Traditional</i>
	Dinosaurs	Nancy Klein
	I wish I was a pirate	Tony Bradman
Year 1	Catch a Little Rhyme	Eve Merriam
	The More It Snows	A.A. Milne
	Who has seen the Wind?	Chrisina Rossetti
	On the Ning Nang Nong	Spike Milligan
	We Share the Air	Kevin McCann
	On a Wild, Wild Walk	James Carter
Year 2	The Treasures	Clare Bevan
	The Owl and the Pussy-Cat	Edward Lear
	The Three Little Kittens	Eliza Lee Cabot Follen
	'Twas the Night Before Christmas	Clement Clarke Moore
	Scissors	Allan Ahlberg
	The Sound Collector	Roger McGough
Year 3	The Crocodile	Lewis Carroll
	Topsy-Turvy World	William Brighty Rands
	Duck's Ditty	Kenneth Grahame
	Something Told the Wild Geese	Robert Field
	An Emerald is as Green as the Grass	Christina Rossetti
	Hot Food	Michael Rosen
Year 4	The British Poem	Benjamin Zephaniah
	Dream Variations	Langston Hughes
	My Shadow	Robert Louis Stevenson
	Please Mrs Butler	Allan Ahlberg
	Matilda	Hilarie Belloc
	The School Kid's Rap	John Foster
Year 5	The Tyger	William Blake
	Silver	Walter de la Mare
	I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud	William Wordsworth
	In Flanders Fields	John McCrae
	Sonnet 18	William Shakespeare
	Jabberwocky	Lewis Carroll
	The Biggest Burp Ever	Kenn Nesbitt
	Cosmic Disco	Grace Nichols
Year 6	Sonnet 27	William Shakespeare
	Dulce et Decorum Est	Wilfred Owen
	The Charge of the Light Brigade	Alfred, Lord Tennyson
	If -	Rudyard Kipling
	Dreams	Langston Hughes
	Caged Bird	Maya Angelou
	Macavity the Mystery Cat	T.S. Elliot
	Cinderella	Roald Dahl

Nursery

Severnyy

One, Two, Three, Four, Five

One, two, three, four, five,
Once I caught a fish alive.

Six, seven, eight, nine, ten,
Then I let him go again.

Why did you let him go?
Because he bit my finger so!

Which finger did he bite?
This little finger on the right!

If You're Happy and You Know It

If you're happy and you know it,
Clap your hands.

If you're happy and you know it,
Clap your hands.

If you're happy and you know it,
And you really want to show it,
If you're happy and you know it,
Clap your hands.

If you're happy and you know it,
Stamp your feet.

If you're happy and you know it,
Stamp your feet.

If you're happy and you know it,
And you really want to show it,
If you're happy and you know it,
Stamp your feet.

If you're happy and you know it,
Nod your head.

If you're happy and you know it,
Nod your head.

If you're happy and you know it,
And you really want to show it,
If you're happy and you know it,
Nod your head.

If you're happy and you know it,
Shout 'hooray!'

If you're happy and you know it,
Shout 'hooray!'

If you're happy and you know it,
And you really want to show it,
If you're happy and you know it,
Shout 'hooray!'

The Wheels on the Bus

The wheels on the bus go round and round
Round and round, round and round.

The Wheels on the bus go round and round,
All day long.

The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish, etc...

The driver on the bus goes 'Toot! Toot! Toot!' etc...

The conductor on the bus says: 'Hurry along please!' etc...

The mummies on the bus go, 'yakkity-yak', etc...

The children on the bus make too much noise, etc...

The babies on the bus fall fast asleep, etc...

Old Macdonald Had A Farm

Old MacDonald had a farm,

Ee i ee i oh!

And on that farm he had some cows,

Ee i ee i oh!

With a moo-moo here,

And a moo-moo there

Here a moo, there a moo,

Everywhere a moo-moo

Old MacDonald had a farm

Ee i ee i oh!

Old MacDonald had a farm,

Ee i ee i oh!

And on that farm he had some sheep,

Ee i ee i oh!

With a baa-baa here,

And a baa-baa there

Here a baa, there a baa,

Everywhere a baa-baa

Old MacDonald had a farm

Ee i ee i oh!

One Finger, One Thumb, Keep Moving

One finger, one thumb, keep moving
One finger, one thumb, keep moving
One finger, one thumb, keep moving
We'll all be merry and bright.

One finger, one thumb, one arm, keep moving
One finger, one thumb, one arm, keep moving
One finger, one thumb, one arm, keep moving
We'll all be merry and bright.

One finger, one thumb, one arm, one leg, keep moving
One finger, one thumb, one arm, one leg, keep moving
One finger, one thumb, one arm, one leg, keep moving
We'll all be merry and bright.

One finger, one thumb, one arm, one leg,
one nod of the head, keep moving
One finger, one thumb, one arm, one leg,
one nod of the head, keep moving
One finger, one thumb, one arm, one leg,
one nod of the head, keep moving
We'll all be merry and bright.

We'll all be merry and bright.

Clap Clap Hands

Clap clap hands

One two three

Clap clap hands

Clap with me

Clap clap hands

One two three

You can clap with me

Stamp stamp feet

One two three

Stamp stamp feet

Stamp with me

Stamp stamp feet

One two three

You can stamp with me

Clap clap hands

One two three

Clap clap hands

Clap with me

Clap clap hands

One two three

You can clap with me

You can clap with me

Reception

Severin

Ten in the Bed

There were TEN in the bed and the little one said,
'Roll over, roll over!'
So they all rolled over and one fell out...

There were NINE in the bed and the little one said...

There were EIGHT in the bed and the little one said...

There were SEVEN in the bed and the little one said...

There were SIX in the bed and the little one said...

There were FIVE in the bed and the little one said...

There were FOUR in the bed and the little one said...

There were THREE in the bed and the little one said...

There were TWO in the bed and the little one said...

There was one in the bed and the little one said,
'Good night!'

Miss Polly had a Dolly

Miss Polly had a dolly who was sick, sick, sick.
So she phoned for the doctor to be quick, quick, quick.

The doctor came with his bag and his hat
And he knocked at the door with a rat-a-tat-tat.

He looked at the dolly and he shook his head
And he said "Miss Polly, put her straight to bed!"

He wrote on a paper for a pill, pill, pill
"I'll be back in the morning yes I will, will, will."

The Ants Go Marching

The ants go marching **one** by **one**, hurrah, hurrah.

The ants go marching **one** by **one**, hurrah, hurrah.

The ants go marching **one** by **one**,

The little one stops to suck his thumb.

And they all go marching down,

To the ground, to get out, of the rain.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

...two...tie her shoe...

...three...climb a tree...

...four...shut the door...

...five...take a dive...

...six...pick up sticks...

...seven...pray to heaven...

...eight...check the gate...

...nine...check the time...

...ten...say "The End!"

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Twinkle twinkle little star.
How I wonder what you are.
Up above the world so high.
Like a diamond in the sky.
Twinkle twinkle little star.
How I wonder what you are.

Twinkle twinkle little star.
How I wonder what you are.
Up above the world so high.
Like a diamond in the sky.
Twinkle twinkle little star.
How I wonder what you are.

Dinosaurs

Nancy Klein

Spread your arms, way out wide,
Fly like a Pteranodon, soar and glide.

Bend to the floor, head down low,
Move like Stegosaurus, long ago.

Reach up tall, try to be
As tall as Apatosaurus eating on a tree.
Using your claws, grumble and growl
Just like Tyrannosaurus on the prowl.

I wish I was a Pirate

Tony Bradman

I wish I was a pirate
With a long beard hanging down,
A cutlass dangling from my belt,
My teeth all black and brown.

A parrot on my shoulder.
A patch upon one eye,
A pirate ship to sail on,
A pirate flag to fly.

The rolling waves would be my home,
I'd live through many wrecks.
I'd always have the best of maps –
The ones marked with an X!

Pirates don't have parents,
They don't get sent to school.
They never have to take a bath,
For them there are no rules.

Yo-ho-ho me hearties!
It's a pirates life for me...
Pistols in my in my pockets,
Salt-pork for my tea!

Year 1 Severn

Catch a Little Rhyme

Even Merriam

Once upon a time
I caught a little rhyme

I set it on the floor
but it ran right out the door

I chased it on my bicycle
but it melted to an icicle

I scooped it up in my hat
but it turned into a cat

I caught it by the tail
but it stretched into a whale

I followed it in a boat
but it changed into a goat

When I fed it tin and paper
it became a tall skyscraper

Then it grew into a kite
and flew far out of sight ...

The More it Snows

A.A. Milne

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

Who Has Seen the Winter Wind?

Christina Rossetti

Who has seen the wind?

Neither I nor you:

But when the leaves hang trembling,

The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?

Neither you nor I:

But when the trees bow down their heads,

The wind is passing by.

On the Ning Nang Nong

Spike Milligan

On the Ning Nang Nong
Where the Cows go Bong!
and the monkeys all say BOO!
There's a Nong Nang Ning
Where the trees go Ping!
And the tea pots jibber jabber joo.
On the Nong Ning Nang
All the mice go Clang
And you just can't catch 'em when they do!
So its Ning Nang Nong
Cows go Bong!
Nong Nang Ning
Trees go ping
Nong Ning Nang
The mice go Clang
What a noisy place to belong
is the Ning Nang Ning Nang Nong!

We Share the Air

Kevin McCann

With lions that roar,
with eagles that soar.

With wolves that howl,
and dogs that growl.

With swifts that swoop,
and loop the loop.

With foxes that bark,
and the grinning white shark.

With slow-growing trees,
and pollen-mad bees.

With nibbling back rats,
and honey-eyed cats.

With seals and with snails,
and spouting blue whales.

With dolphins that leap,
and not too bright sheep.

With piglets and sows,
and spiders and cows.

So, whether it's got roots
or legs or flippers
or wings.

Whether it swims
or flies or slithers
or sings.

Whether it's a fiery tiger
or an angry wasp
with a red-hot sting:

We share the air with everything.

On a Wild, Wild Walk

James Carter

On a wild, wild walk
a while ago

We climbed a hill
we turned a bend
we crossed a stream
we stopped and then...SNOW!

Big snow thick snow
snow you could lick snow
white snow bright snow
snow snow snow!

We climbed a hill
we turned a bend
we crossed a stream
we stopped and then...SNOW!

Big wind warm wind
blowing up a storm wind
high wind wild wind
wind wind wind!

We climbed a hill
we turned a bend
we crossed a stream
we stopped and then...RAIN!

Big rain wet rain
hard as you can get rain
warm rain storm rain
rain rain rain!

We climbed a hill
we turned a bend
we crossed a stream
we stopped and then...MIST!

Big mist white mist
oh what a sight mist
high mist wide mist
mist mist mist!

We climbed a hill
we turned a bend
we crossed a stream
we stopped and then...SUN!

Big sun hot sun
oh what a lot sun
bight sun light sun
sun sun sun!

It all began with a fall of snow
-
on a wild, wild walk
a while ago

Year 2

Severn 2

The Treasures

Clare Bevan

Who will bring me the hush of a feather?

“I,” screeched the Barn Owl. “Whatever the weather.”

Who will bring me the shadows that flow?

“I,” snarled the Tiger. “Wherever I go.”

Who will bring me the colours that shine?

“I,” shrieked the Peacock. “Because they are mine.”

Who will bring me the crash of the wave?

“I,” sang the Dolphin, “Because I am brave.”

Who will bring me the secrets of night?

“I,” called the Bat. “By the moon’s silver light.”

Who will bring me the scent of the flower?

“I,” hummed the Bee. “By the sun’s golden power.”

Who will bring me the waterfall’s gleam?

“I,” sighed the Minnow. “By river and stream.”

Who will bring me the strength of the small?

“I,” cried the Spider. “When webs line your wall.”

Who will bring me the shiver of snow?

“I,” howled the Wolf Cub. “When icicles grow.”

And who will bring me a nest, furry warm?

“I,” squeaked the Rat, “When we hide from the storm...”

But who will care for the treasures we give?

“I,” said the Child.

“For as long as I live.”

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat

Edward Lear

I

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 stars 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!"

II

Pussy said to the Owl, "You elegant fowl!
How charmingly sweet you sing!
O 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.

III

"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 on 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.

The Three Little Kittens

Eliza Lee Cabot Follen

Three little kittens
They lost their mittens,
And they began to cry,
Oh, mother dear,
We sadly fear
Our mittens we have lost.
What! lost your mittens,
You naughty kittens!
Then you shall have no pie.
Mee-ow, mee-ow, mee-ow.
No, you shall have no pie.

The three little kittens
They found their mittens,
And they began to cry,
Oh, mother dear,
See here, see here,
Our mittens we have found.
Put on your mittens,
You silly kittens,
And you shall have some pie.
Purr-r, purr-r, purr-r,
Oh, let us have some pie.

The three little kittens
Put on their mittens
And soon ate up the pie;
Oh, mother dear,
We greatly fear
Our mittens we have soiled.
What! soiled your mittens,
You naughty kittens!
Then they began to sigh,
Mee-ow, mee-ow, mee-ow,
Then they began to sigh.

The three little kittens
They washed their mittens,
And hung them out to dry;
Oh! mother dear,
Do you not hear,
Our mittens we have washed.
What! washed your mittens,
Then you're good kittens,
But I smell a rat close by.
Mee-ow, mee-ow, mee-ow,
We smell a rat close by.

'Twas the Night Before Christmas

Clement Clarke Moore

*'Twas the night before Christmas,
When all through the house
Not A creature was stirring,
Not even A mouse;*

*The stockings were hung
By the chimney with care,
In hopes that St Nicholas
Soon would be there;*

*The children were nestled
All snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar plums
Danced in their heads.*

*And Mamma in her 'kerchief,
And I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains
For a long winter's nap,
When out on the lawn
There arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed
To see what was the matter.*

*Away to the window
I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters
And threw up the sash.
The moon, on the breast
Of the new fallen snow,
Gave the lustre of mid-day*

To objects below,

When what to my wondering

*Eyes should appear,
But A miniature sleigh,
And eight tiny reindeer,
With A little old driver,
So lively and quick,
I knew in a moment
It must be St Nick.*

*More rapid than eagles
His coursers they came,
And he whistled and shouted,
And called them by name;*

*"Now Dasher! Now, Dancer!
Now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid!
Now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid!
On, Donner and Blitzen
To the top of the porch!
To the top of the wall!
Now, dash away! Dash away!
Dash away all!"*
*As dry leaves that before
The wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle,
Mount to the sky;
So up to the housetop
The coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys,
And St Nicholas too.*

*And then, in a twinkling,
I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing
Of each little hoof -
As I drew in my head,
And was turning around,
Down the chimney St Nicholas
Came with a bound.*

*He was dressed all in fur,
From his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished
With ashes and soot;
A bundle of toys he had
Flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler
Just opening his pack.*

*His eyes - how they twinkled!
His dimples, how merry!
His cheeks were like roses,
His nose like a cherry.*

*His droll little mouth
Was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin
Was as white as the snow;*

*The stump of his pipe he held
Tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled
His head like a wreath;*

*He had a broad face
And a little round belly*

*That shook, when he laughed,
Like a bowlful of jelly.*

*He was chubby and plump,
A right jolly old elf,
And I laughed, when I saw him,
In spite of myself;*

*A wink of his eye
And a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know
I had nothing to dread;*

*He spoke not a word,
But went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings;
Then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger
Aside of his nose,
And giving a nod,
Up the chimney he rose;*

*He sprang to his sleigh,
To his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew
Like the down of a thistle.*

But I heard him exclaim

Ere he drove out of sight

Scissors

Allan Ahlberg

Nobody leave the room.
Everyone listen to me.
We had ten-pair of scissors
At half-past two,
And now there's only three.

Seven pair of scissors,
Disappeared from sight.
Not one of you leaves
Till we find them.
We can stop here all night!

Scissors don't lose themselves,
Melt away, or explode.
Scissors have not got
Legs of their own
To go running off up the road.

We really need those scissors,
That's what makes me mad.
If it was seven pairs
Of children we'd lost,
It wouldn't be so bad.

I don't want to hear excuses.
Don't anyone speak.
Just ransack this room
Till we find them,
Or we'll stop here... all week!

The Sound Collector

Roger McGough

A stranger called this morning
Dressed all in black and grey
Put every sound into a bag
And carried them away

The whistling of the kettle
The turning of the lock
The purring of the kitten
The ticking of the clock

The popping of the toaster
The crunching of the flakes
When you spread the marmalade
The scraping noise it makes

The hissing of the frying pan
The ticking of the grill
The bubbling of the bathtub
As it starts to fill

The drumming of the raindrops
On the windowpane
When you do the washing-up
The gurgle of the drain

The crying of the baby
The squeaking of the chair
The swishing of the curtain
The creaking of the stair

A stranger called this morning
He didn't leave his name
Left us only silence
Life will never be the same

Year 3

Severn 3

The Crocodile

Lewis Carroll

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 spreads his claws,
And welcomes little fishes in,
With gently smiling jaws!

Seventeen

Topsy Turvey World

William Brighty Rands

IF the butterfly courted the bee,
And the owl the porcupine;
If churches were built in the sea,
And three times one was nine;
If the pony rode his master,
If the buttercups ate the cows,
If the cats had the dire disaster
To be worried, sir, by the mouse;
If mamma, sir, sold the baby
To a gypsy for half a crown;
If a gentleman, sir, was a lady,—
The world would be Upside-down!
If any or all of these wonders
Should ever come about,
I should not consider them blunders,
For I should be Inside-out!

(Chorus)

Ba-ba, black wool,
Have you any sheep?
Yes, sir, a packfull,
Creep, mouse, creep!
Four-and-twenty little maids
Hanging out the pie,
Out jump'd the honey-pot,
Guy Fawkes, Guy!
Cross latch, cross latch,
Sit and spin the fire;
When the pie was open'd,
The bird was on the brier!

Duck's Ditty

Kenneth Grahame

All along the backwater,
Through the rushes tall,
Ducks are a-dabbling,
Up tails all!

Ducks' tails, drakes' tails,
Yellow feet a-quiver,
Yellow bills all out of sight
Busy in the river!

Slushy green undergrowth
Where the roach swim —
Here we keep our larder,
Cool and full and dim.

Every one for what he likes!
We like to be
Heads down, tails up,
Dabbling free!

High in the blue above
Swifts whirl and call —
We are down a-dabbling
Up tails all!

Something Told the Wild Geese

Robert Field

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.

As Emerald is as Green as the Grass

Christian Ressetti

An emerald is as green as grass;
A ruby red as blood;
A sapphire shines as blue as heaven;
A flint lies in the mud.

A diamond is a brilliant stone,
To catch the world's desire;
An opal holds a fiery spark;
But a flint holds fire.

Hot Food

Michael Rosen

We sit down to eat
and the potato's a bit hot
so I only put a little bit on my fork
and I blow
whooph whooph
until it's cool
just cool
then into the mouth
nice.

An there's my brother
he's doing the same
whooph whooph
into the mouth
nice.

There's my mum
she's doing the same
whooph whooph
into the mouth
nice.

But my dad.
My dad
What does he do?
He stuffs a great big chunk of potato
into his mouth.
Then
that really does it.
His eyes pop out
he flaps his hands
he blows, he puffs, he yells
he bobs his head up and down
he spits bits of potato
all over his plate
and he turns to us and he says,
'Watch out everybody-
the potato's very hot'

Year 4

Severn

The British Poem

Benjamin Zephaniah

Take some Picts, Celts and Silures
And let them settle,
Then overrun them with Roman conquerors.

Remove the Romans after approximately 400 years
Add lots of Norman French to some
Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Vikings, then stir vigorously.

Mix some hot Chileans, cool Jamaicans, Dominicans,
Trinidadians and Bajans with some Ethiopians, Chinese,
Vietnamese and Sudanese.

Then take a blend of Somalians, Sri Lankans, Nigerians
And Pakistanis,
Combine with some Guyanese
And turn up the heat.

Sprinkle some fresh Indians, Malaysians, Bosnians,
Iraqis and Bangladeshis together with some
Afghans, Spanish, Turkish, Kurdish, Japanese
And Palestinians

Then add to the melting pot.

Leave the ingredients to simmer.

As they mix and blend allow their languages to flourish
Binding them together with English.

Allow time to be cool.

Add some unity, understanding, and respect for the future,

Serve with justice

And enjoy.

Note: All the ingredients are equally important. treating one ingredient better than another will leave a bitter unpleasant taste.

Warning: An unequal spread of justice will damage the people and cause pain. Give justice and equality to all.

Severine

Dream Variations

Langston Hughes

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—
That is my dream!

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.

My Shadow

Robert Louis Stevenson

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow—
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an india-rubber ball,
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.

Please Mrs Butler

Allan Ahlberg

Please Mrs Butler
This boy Derek Drew
Keeps copying my work, Miss.
What shall I do?
Go and sit in the hall, dear.
Go and sit in the sink.
Take your books on the roof, my lamb.
Do whatever you think.

Please Mrs Butler
This boy Derek Drew
Keeps taking my rubber, Miss.
What shall I do?
Keep it in your hand, dear.
Hide it up your vest.
Swallow it if you like, my love.
Do what you think is best.

Please Mrs Butler
This boy Derek Drew
Keeps calling me rude names, miss.
What shall I do?
Lock yourself in the cupboard, dear.
Run away to sea.
Do whatever you can, my flower.
But don't ask me.

Matilda

Hilarie Belloc

Matilda told such Dreadful Lies,
It made one Gasp and Stretch one's Eyes;
Her Aunt, who, from her Earliest Youth,
Had kept a Strict Regard for Truth,
Attempted to Believe Matilda:
The effort very nearly killed her,
And would have done so, had not She
Discovered this Infirmity.
For once, towards the Close of Day,
Matilda, growing tired of play,
And finding she was left alone,
Went tiptoe to the Telephone
And summoned the Immediate Aid
Of London's Noble Fire-Brigade.
Within an hour the Gallant Band
Were pouring in on every hand,
From Putney, Hackney Downs, and Bow
With Courage high and Hearts a-glow
They galloped, roaring through the Town
'Matilda's House is Burning Down!'
Inspired by British Cheers and Loud
Proceeding from the Frenzied Crowd,
They ran their ladders through a score
Of windows on the Ball Room Floor;
And took Peculiar Pains to Souse
The Pictures up and down the House,
Until Matilda's Aunt succeeded
In showing them they were not needed;
And even then she had to pay
To get the Men to go away!

It happened that a few Weeks later
Her Aunt was off to the Theatre
To see that Interesting Play
The Second Mrs Tanqueray.
She had refused to take her Niece
To hear this Entertaining Piece:
A Deprivation Just and Wise
To Punish her for Telling Lies.
That Night a Fire did break out-
You should have heard Matilda Shout!
You should have heard her Scream and Bawl,
And throw the window up and call
To People passing in the Street-
(The rapidly increasing Heat
Encouraging her to obtain
Their confidence)-but all in vain!
For every time She shouted 'Fire!'
They only answered 'Little Liar!'
And therefore when her Aunt returned,
Matilda, and the House, were Burned.

The School Kid's Rap

John Foster

Miss was at the blackboard writing with her chalk
When suddenly she stopped in the middle of her talk

She snapped her fingers, snap! snap! snap!
Pay attention children and I'll teach you how to rap.

She picked up her a pencil, she started to tap,
All together children, now clap! clap! clap!
Just get the rhythm, just get the beat
Drum it with your fingers, stamp it with your feet.

That's right children, keep in time,
Now we got the rhythm, all we need is the rhyme
This school is cool, Miss Grace is ace,
Strut your stuff with a smile on your face.

Snap those fingers, tap those toes,
Do it like they do on the video shows,
Flap it! Slap It! Clap! Snap! Clap
Let's all do the school kids' rap!

Year 5

Severn

The Tyger

William Blake

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

Silver

Walter de la Mare

Slowly, silently, now the moon
Walks the night in her silver shoon;
This way, and that, she peers, and sees
Silver fruit upon silver trees;
One by one the casements catch
Her beams beneath the silvery thatch;
Couched in his kennel, like a log,
With paws of silver sleeps the dog;
From their shadowy cote the white breasts peep
Of doves in a silver-feathered sleep;
A harvest mouse goes scampering by,
With silver claws and a silver eye;
And moveless fish in the water gleam,
By silver reeds in a silver stream.

I wandered Lonely as a Cloud

William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

In Flanders Fields

John McCrae

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

Sonnet 18

William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Jabberwocky

Lewis Carroll

'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 awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffing 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!
O 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.

Severn

The Biggest Burp Ever

Kenn Nesbitt

The record, so far, for the world's biggest burp,
is held by Belinda Melinda McNurp.
It wasn't on purpose. She wasn't to blame.
Her tummy just rumbled, and out the burp came.

Belinda then instantly saw her mistake.
The ground began trembling and starting to shake.
That rumble was suddenly more of a roar.
It busted the windows and knocked down the door.

Her mother and father both covered their ears.
Her brother and sister were nearly in tears.
Her puppy looked panicked and yipped as he fled.
Her kitten just cowered and covered his head.

The cars on the street began skidding and stopping.
The shoppers in shops started dropping their shopping.

The squirrels all burrowed. The birds flew away.
The sun disappeared for the rest of the day

as clouds began thundering all around town.
The trees toppled over. The buildings fell down.
Tornadoes and hurricanes blew through the sky.
The rivers flowed backward. The oceans ran dry.

Volcanoes erupted from Perth to Peru.
The Grand Canyon widened. Mount Everest grew.
The earth started spinning a different direction.
And, worst of all, I lost my iPhone connection.

Belinda was pretty embarrassed alright,
but she was well-mannered, and very polite.
And that's why she knew it would all be okay
when she said, "Excuse me," and went on her way.

Cosmic Disco

Grace Nichols

Rocking-with-wind-trees
waltzing-with-moon-ocean –
Everything in purposeful motion
like the lifting lark
or the swirls of Saturn

Even the far-away stars
explode
on the dance-floor of infinity –
grouping and regrouping
into new constellations.

O see them
Under the shifting disco
Of the inter-galactic lights –

The gravitational boys
in their shimmering shirts.

The orbiting girls
In their luminous glad-rags –
Within magnetic reach of their rotating handbags

Year 6

Severn

Sonnet 27

William Shakespeare

Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired;
But then begins a journey in my head,
To work my mind, when body's work's expired:
For then my thoughts (from far where I abide)
Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,
And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see:
Save that my soul's imaginary sight
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,
Which, like a jewel hung in ghastly night,
Makes black night beauteous and her old face new.
Lo, thus, by day my limbs, by night my mind,
For thee, and for myself, no quiet find.

Dulce et Decorum Est

Wilfred Owen

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs,
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.—
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.

The Charge of the Light Brigade

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

I

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
“Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!” he said.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

II

“Forward, the Light Brigade!”
Was there a man dismayed?
Not though the soldier knew
Someone had blundered.
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and
shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of hell
Rode the six hundred.

IV

Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wondered.
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right through the line they
broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre stroke
Shattered and sundered.
Then they rode back, but not
Not the six hundred.

V

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and
shell,
While horse and hero fell.
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of
Death,
Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

VI

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.
Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

If...

Rudyard Kipling

If you can keep your head when all about you

Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,

If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,

But make allowance for their doubting too;

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,

Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,

Or being hated, don't give way to hating,

And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;

If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;

If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster

And treat those two impostors just the same;

If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken

Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,

Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,

And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings

And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,

And lose, and start again at your beginnings

And never breathe a word about your loss;

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew

To serve your turn long after they are gone,

And so hold on when there is nothing in you

Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,

Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,

If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,

If all men count with you, but none too much;

If you can fill the unforgiving minute

With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,

Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,

And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

Dreams

Langston Hughes

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.

Seventyone

Caged Bird

Maya Angelou

A free bird leaps
on the back of the wind
and floats downstream
till the current ends
and dips his wing
in the orange sun rays
and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks
down his narrow cage
can seldom see through
his bars of rage
his wings are clipped and
his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze
and the trade winds soft through the sighing
trees
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn bright
lawn
and he names the sky his own.

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

Macavity the Mystery Cat

T.S. Elliot

Macavity's a Mystery Cat: he's called the Hidden Paw—
For he's the master criminal who can defy the Law.
He's the bafflement of Scotland Yard, the Flying Squad's despair:
For when they reach the scene of crime—Macavity's not there!

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
He's broken every human law, he breaks the law of gravity.
His powers of levitation would make a fakir stare,
And when you reach the scene of crime—Macavity's not there!
You may seek him in the basement, you may look up in the air—
But I tell you once and once again, Macavity's not there!

Macavity's a ginger cat, he's very tall and thin;
You would know him if you saw him, for his eyes are sunken in.
His brow is deeply lined with thought, his head is highly domed;
His coat is dusty from neglect, his whiskers are uncombed.
He sways his head from side to side, with movements like a snake;
And when you think he's half asleep, he's always wide awake.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
For he's a fiend in feline shape, a monster of depravity.
You may meet him in a by-street, you may see him in the square—
But when a crime's discovered, then Macavity's not there!

He's outwardly respectable. (They say he cheats at cards.)
And his footprints are not found in any file of Scotland Yard's.
And when the larder's looted, or the jewel-case is rifled,
Or when the milk is missing, or another Peke's been stifled,
Or the greenhouse glass is broken, and the trellis past repair—
Ay, there's the wonder of the thing! Macavity's not there!

And when the Foreign Office find a Treaty's gone astray,
Or the Admiralty lose some plans and drawings by the way,
There may be a scrap of paper in the hall or on the stair—
But it's useless to investigate—Macavity's not there!
And when the loss has been disclosed, the Secret Service say:
'It must have been Macavity!'—but he's a mile away.
You'll be sure to find him resting, or a-licking of his thumbs;
Or engaged in doing complicated long division sums.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
There never was a Cat of such deceitfulness and suavity.
He always has an alibi, and one or two to spare:
At whatever time the deed took place—MACAVITY WASN'T THERE!
And they say that all the Cats whose wicked deeds are widely known
(I might mention Mungojerrie, I might mention Griddlebone)
Are nothing more than agents for the Cat who all the time
Just controls their operations: the Napoleon of Crime!

Cinderella

Roald Dahl

I guess you think you know this story.
You don't. The real one's much more gory.

The phoney one, the one you know,
Was cooked up years and years ago,
And made to sound all soft and sappy
just to keep the children happy.

Mind you, they got the first bit right,
The bit where, in the dead of night,

The Ugly Sisters, jewels and all,
Departed for the Palace Ball,

While darling little Cinderella
Was locked up in a slimy cellar,

Where rats who wanted things to eat,
Began to nibble at her feet.

She bellowed 'Help!' and 'Let me out!

The Magic Fairy heard her shout.

Appearing in a blaze of light,

She said: 'My dear, are you all right?'

'All right?' cried Cindy. 'Can't you see

'I feel as rotten as can be!'

She beat her fist against the wall,

And shouted, 'Get me to the Ball!

'There is a Disco at the Palace!

'The rest have gone and I am jealous!

'I want a dress! I want a coach!

'And earrings and a diamond brooch!

'And silver slippers, two of those!

'And lovely nylon panty hose!

'Done up like that I'll guarantee

'The handsome Prince will fall for me!'

The Fairy said, 'Hang on a tick.'

She gave her wand a mighty flick

And quickly, in no time at all,

Cindy was at the Palace Ball!

It made the Ugly Sisters wince

To see her dancing with the Prince.

She held him very tight and pressed
herself against his manly chest.

The Prince himself was turned to pulp,

All he could do was gasp and gulp.

Then midnight struck. She shouted, 'Heck!

I've got to run to save my neck!'

The Prince cried, 'No! Alas! Alack!'

He grabbed her dress to hold her back.

As Cindy shouted, 'Let me go!'

The dress was ripped from head to toe.

She ran out in her underwear,

And lost one slipper on the stair.

The Prince was on it like a dart,

He pressed it to his pounding heart,

'The girl this slipper fits,' he cried,

'Tomorrow morn shall be my bride!

I'll visit every house in town

'Until I've tracked the maiden down!'

Then rather carelessly, I fear,

He placed it on a crate of beer.

At once, one of the Ugly Sisters,
(The one whose face was blotched with blisters)
Sneaked up and grabbed the dainty shoe,
And quickly flushed it down the loo.
Then in its place she calmly put
The slipper from her own left foot.
Ah ha, you see, the plot grows thicker,
And Cindy's luck starts looking sicker.

Next day, the Prince went charging down
To knock on all the doors in town.
In every house, the tension grew.
Who was the owner of the shoe?
The shoe was long and very wide.
(A normal foot got lost inside.)
Also it smelled a wee bit icky.
(The owner's feet were hot and sticky.)
Thousands of eager people came
To try it on, but all in vain.
Now came the Ugly Sisters' go.
One tried it on. The Prince screamed, 'No!'
But she screamed, 'Yes! It fits! Whoopee!
'So now you've got to marry me!'
The Prince went white from ear to ear.
He muttered, 'Let me out of here.'
'Oh no you don't! You made a vow!
'There's no way you can back out now!'
'Off with her head!' The Prince roared back.
They chopped it off with one big whack.
This pleased the Prince. He smiled and said,
'She's prettier without her head.'
Then up came Sister Number Two,
Who yelled, 'Now I will try the shoe!'
'Try this instead!' the Prince yelled back.
He swung his trusty sword and smack

Her head went crashing to the ground.
It bounced a bit and rolled around.
In the kitchen, peeling spuds,
Cinderella heard the thuds
Of bouncing heads upon the floor,
And poked her own head round the door.
'What's all the racket?' Cindy cried.
'Mind your own bizz,' the Prince replied.
Poor Cindy's heart was torn to shreds.
My Prince! she thought. He chops off heads!
How could I marry anyone
Who does that sort of thing for fun?
The Prince cried, 'Who's this dirty slut?
'Off with her nut! Off with her nut!'
Just then, all in a blaze of light,
The Magic Fairy hove in sight,
Her Magic Wand went swoosh and swish!
'Cindy! 'she cried, 'come make a wish!
'Wish anything and have no doubt
'That I will make it come about!'
Cindy answered, 'Oh kind Fairy,
'This time I shall be more wary.
'No more Princes, no more money.
'I have had my taste of honey.
I'm wishing for a decent man.
'They're hard to find. D'you think you can?'
Within a minute, Cinderella
Was married to a lovely feller,
A simple jam maker by trade,
Who sold good home-made marmalade.
Their house was filled with smiles and laughter
And they were happy ever after.