



77 POEMS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

a poem is a net designed to catch the wind

--- Elinor Wylie

Funny Poems

Classic Poems

Limericks

Haiku

Cinquains

Quatrains





FUNNY POEMS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

**If I were in charge of the world
I'd cancel oatmeal,
Monday mornings,
Allergy shots, and also Sara Steinberg.
--- Judith Viorst**

Shel Silverstein

Jack Prelutsky

Samiya Vallee

AA Milne

Henry Leigh

And more



The Homework Machine

Shel Silverstein

The Homework Machine,
Oh, the Homework Machine,
Most perfect
contraption that's ever been seen.
Just put in your homework, then drop in
a dime,
Snap on the switch, and in ten seconds'
time,
Your homework comes out, quick and
clean as can be.
Here it is— 'nine plus four?' and the
answer is 'three.'
Three?
Oh me . . .
I guess it's not as perfect
As I thought it would be.

The Fly

Ogden Nash

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

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 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!
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.

How Not to Dry the Dishes

Shel Silverstein

If you have to dry the dishes
(Such an awful, boring chore)
If you have to dry the dishes
(‘Stead of going to the store)
If you have to dry the dishes
And you drop one on the floor—
Maybe they won't let you
Dry the dishes anymore.

If I Were In Charge of the World

Judith Viorst

If I were in charge of the world
I'd cancel oatmeal,
Monday mornings,
Allergy shots, and also Sara Steinberg.

If I were in charge of the world
There'd be brighter nights lights,
Healthier hamsters, and
Basketball baskets forty eight inches lower.

If I were in charge of the world
You wouldn't have lonely.
You wouldn't have clean.
You wouldn't have bedtimes.
Or 'Don't punch your sister.'
You wouldn't even have sisters.

If I were in charge of the world
A chocolate sundae with whipped cream and nuts would be a vegetable
All 007 movies would be G,
And a person who sometimes forgot to brush,
And sometimes forgot to flush,
Would still be allowed to be
In charge of the world.

Be Glad Your Nose is On Your Face

Jack Prelutsky

Be glad your nose is on your face,
not pasted on some other place,
for if it were where it is not,
you might dislike your nose a lot.

Imagine if your precious nose
were sandwiched in between your toes,
that clearly would not be a treat,
for you'd be forced to smell your feet.

Your nose would be a source of dread
were it attached atop your head,
it soon would drive you to despair,
forever tickled by your hair.

Within your ear, your nose would be
an absolute catastrophe,
for when you were obliged to sneeze,
your brain would rattle from the breeze.

Your nose, instead, through thick and thin,
remains between your eyes and chin,
not pasted on some other place--
be glad your nose is on your face!

Snowball

Shel Silverstein

I made myself a snowball
As perfect as could be.
I thought I'd keep it as a pet
And let it sleep with me.
I made it some pajamas
And a pillow for its head.
Then last night it ran away,
But first it wet the bed.

Herbert Hilbert Hubert Snod

Denise Richards

Herbert Hilbert Hubert Snod
was known for eating all things odd.
The thing that bothered me the most
has he spread toothpaste on his toast?

“It’s springtime fresh, so cool and minty.”
His smiling eyes were bright and squinty.
On baked potatoes, he would slather
one half can of shave cream lather.

I don’t know how his tum could cope
as he ingested cubes of soap.
At times his food choice made a scene;
at least he kept his innards clean.

Bleezer's Ice Cream

Jack Prelutsky

I am Ebenezer Bleezer,
I run BLEEZER'S ICE CREAM STORE,
there are flavors in my freezer
you have never seen before,
twenty-eight divine creations
too delicious to resist,
why not do yourself a favor,
try the flavors on my list:

COCOA MOCHA MACARONI
TAPIOCA SMOKED BALONEY
CHECKERBERRY CHEDDAR CHEW
CHICKEN CHERRY HONEYDEW
TUTTI-FRUTTI STEWED TOMATO
TUNA TACO BAKED POTATO
LOBSTER LITCHI LIMA BEAN
MOZZARELLA MANGOSTEEN
ALMOND HAM MERINGUE SALAMI
YAM ANCHOVY PRUNE PASTRAMI
SASSAFRAS SOUVLAKI HASH
SUKIYAKI SUCCOTASH
BUTTER BRICKLE PEPPER PICKLE
POMEGRANATE PUMPERNICKEL
PEACH PIMENTO PIZZA PLUM
PEANUT PUMPKIN BUBBLEGUM
BROCCOLI BANANA BLUSTER
CHOCOLATE CHOP SUEY CLUSTER
AVOCADO BRUSSELS SPROUT
PERIWINKLE SAUERKRAUT
COTTON CANDY CARROT CUSTARD
CAULIFLOWER COLA MUSTARD
ONION DUMPLING DOUBLE DIP
TURNIP TRUFFLE TRIPLE FLIP
GARLIC GUMBO GRAVY GUAVA
LENTIL LEMON LIVER LAVA
ORANGE OLIVE BAGEL BEET
WATERMELON WAFFLE WHEAT

I am Ebenezer Bleezer,
I run BLEEZER'S ICE CREAM STORE,
taste a flavor from my freezer,
you will surely ask for more.

The Silliest Teacher in School

Darren Sardelli

Our teacher gave detention
to the fountains in the hall.
She handed extra homework
to the artwork on the wall.

We saw her point a finger
at a banner and a sign.
She said their bad behavior
was completely out of line.

The principal approached her
and said, "What is all this fuss?
I heard you tried to punish
all the tires on a bus.

"You've made the teachers angry
by disrupting all their classes,
so if you want to keep this job,
you have to wear your glasses!"

Summer Camp Souvenirs

Richard Thomas

When I got home from camp today,
My parents almost died.
They asked me how I got this way,
And here's what I replied:

This little cast from heel to hip
Is nothing much at all.
Some broken shingles made me slip
From off the dining hall.

The poison ivy's not too bad.
It missed my back and chest.
Of course, I guess I oughta add
Mosquitoes got the rest.

I tried to eat some hick'ry nuts
And cracked a tooth or two.
And all these bruises, scabs, and cuts?
I haven't got a clue.

I got the lump that's on my head
From diving in the lake.
I should've watched for rocks instead
Of grabbing for the snake.

That leaves this bandage on my chin
And these three finger sprains,
Along with lots of sunburned skin
And sniffles from the rains.

I also got a muscle cramp
And very nearly drowned.
It's some terrific summer camp,
The coolest one around.

Table Manners

Gellet Burgess

The Goops they lick their fingers,
And the Goops they lick their knives;
They spill their broth on the tablecloth—
Oh, they lead disgusting lives!
The Goops they talk while eating,
And loud and fast they chew;
And that is why I'm glad that I
Am not a Goop—are you?

Englksh Is a Pane

Alan Balter

Hear eye sit inn English class; the likelihood is that eye won't pass
An F on my report card wood bee worse than swallowing glass
It's knot that eye haven't studied, often till late at knight
Butt the rules are sew confusing, eye simply can't get them write

Hour teacher says, "Heed my advice, ewe must study and sacrifice"
Butt if mouses are mice and louses are lice, how come blouses aren't blice
The confusion really abounds when adding esses two nouns
Gooses are geese, butt mooses aren't meese; somebody scent in the clowns

Two ultimatums are ultimata, and a couple of datum are data
Sew wouldn't ewe expect it wood bee correct fore a bunch of plums to be plata?
And if more than won octopus are octopi, and the plural of ox is oxen
Shouldn't a couple of busses bee bussi and a pare of foxes bee foxen?

Let's talk about spelling a wile, specifically letters witch are silent
Words like "psychologist" and "wreck" shirley make awl of us violent
And another example quite plane witch is really hard two explain
If it's eye before e except after sea, then what about feign and reign?

The final exam will determine how eye due, weather eye pass ore fail
I halve prepared as much as eye can down two the last detail
I'm ready two give it my vary best inn just a little wile
And then isle take a relaxing wrest on a tropical aisle.

Sneezles

AA Milne

Christopher Robin
Had wheezles
And sneezles,
They bundled him
Into
His bed.
They gave him what goes
With a cold in the nose,
And some more for a cold
In the head.
They wondered
If wheezles
Could turn
Into measles,
If sneezles
Would turn
Into mumps;
They examined his chest
For a rash,
And the rest
Of his body for swellings and lumps.
They sent for some doctors
In sneezles
And wheezles
To tell them what ought
To be done.
All sorts and conditions
Of famous physicians
Came hurrying round
At a run.
They all made a note
Of the state of his throat,
They asked if he suffered from thirst;
They asked if the sneezles
Came after the wheezles,
Or if the first sneeze
Came first.

They said, "If you teazle
A sneeze
Or wheeze,
A measles
May easily grow.
But humour or pleazle
The wheeze
Or sneeze,
The measles
Will certainly go."
They expounded the reazles
For sneezles
And wheezles,
The manner of measles
When new.
They said "If he freezles
In draughts and in breezles,
Then PHTHEEZLES
May even ensue."

Christopher Robin
Got up in the morning,
The sneezles had vanished away.
And the look in his eye
Seemed to say to the sky,
"Now, how to amuse them to-day?"

About the Teeth of Sharks

John Ciardi

The thing about a shark is—teeth,
One row above, one row beneath.

Now take a close look. Do you find
It has another row behind?

Still closer—here, I'll hold your hat:
Has it a third row behind that?

Now look in and...Look out! Oh my,
I'll never know now! Well, goodbye.

Disobedience

AA Milne

James James
Morrison Morrison
Weatherby George Dupree
Took great
Care of his Mother,
Though he was only three.
James James Said to his Mother,
"Mother," he said, said he;
"You must never go down
to the end of the town,
if you don't go down with me."

James James
Morrison's Mother
Put on a golden gown.
James James Morrison's Mother
Drove to the end of the town.
James James Morrison's Mother
Said to herself, said she:
"I can get right down
to the end of the town
and be back in time for tea."

King John
Put up a notice,
"LOST or STOLEN or STRAYED!
JAMES JAMES MORRISON'S MOTHER
SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN MISLAID.
LAST SEEN
WANDERING VAGUELY:
QUITE OF HER OWN ACCORD,
SHE TRIED TO GET DOWN
TO THE END OF THE TOWN -
FORTY SHILLINGS REWARD!"

James James
Morrison Morrison
(Commonly known as Jim)
Told his
Other relations
Not to go blaming him.
James James
Said to his Mother,
"Mother," he said, said he:
"You must never go down to the end of the
town
without consulting me."

James James
Morrison's mother
Hasn't been heard of since.
King John said he was sorry,
So did the Queen and Prince.
King John
(Somebody told me)
Said to a man he knew:
If people go down to the end of the town,
well,
what can anyone do?"

(Now then, very softly)
J.J.
M.M.
W.G.Du P.
Took great
C/O his M*****
Though he was only 3.
J.J. said to his M*****
"M*****," he said, said he:
"You-must-never-go-down-to-the-end-of-
the-town-
if-you-don't-go-down-with-ME!"

A Beetle Once Sat on a Barberry Twig

Leroy F. Jackson

A beetle once sat on a barberry twig,
And turned at the crank of a thingum-a-jig.
Needles for hornets, nippers for ants,
For the bumblebee baby a new pair of pants,
For the grizzled old gopher a hat and a wig,
The beetle ground out of his thingum-a-jig.

My Next Door Neighbor is a Witch

Samiya Vallee

My next door neighbor is a witch,
And she lives way down in a ditch.
Her clothing is a little strange,
Because she never wants to change.
She has a black robe and a black hat,
Green skin and a smelly black cat.
A big fat wart grows on her nose,
And seventeen pimples on her toes.

But...her food is EVEN worse,
Because she eats it course by course.
Her first course is seven dead bats,
Laid on top of seven rats.
Then she has twenty flies
With lots and lots of llama eyes.
Her main course is a horrible soup,
Because it's made with doggie poop.
But worst of all is her dessert.
It's little children rolled in dirt.

Last night she had a witch's feast
And turned into a greedy beast.
I think she cooked my best friend Tilly
And ate her with some peas and broccoli.

The Twins

Henry S. Leigh

In form and feature, face and limb,
I grew so like my brother,
That folks got taking me for him,
And each for one another.
It puzzled all our kith and kin,
It reach'd an awful pitch;
For one of us was born a twin,
Yet not a soul knew which.

One day (to make the matter worse),
Before our names were fix'd,
As we were being wash'd by nurse
We got completely mix'd;
And thus, you see, by Fate's decree,
(Or rather nurse's whim),
My brother John got christen'd me,
And I got christen'd him.

This fatal likeness even dogg'd
My footsteps when at school,
And I was always getting flogg'd,
For John turned out a fool.
I put this question hopelessly
To every one I knew—
What would you do, if you were me,
To prove that you were you?

Our close resemblance turn'd the tide
Of my domestic life;
For somehow my intended bride
Became my brother's wife.
In short, year after year the same
Absurd mistakes went on;
And when I died—the neighbors came
And buried brother John!

My One-Eyed Love

Andrew Jefferson

I've fallen in love—I don't know why
I've fallen in love with a girl with one eye.

I knew from the start. It was plain to see
That this wonderful girl had an eye out for me

She's charming and witty and jolly and jocular
Not what you'd expect from a girl who's monocular.

Of eyes—at the moment—she hasn't full quota
But that doesn't change things for me one iota.

It must be quite difficult if you're bereft.
If your left eye is gone and your right eye is left.

But she's made up her mind. She's made her decision.
She can see it quite clearly in 10/20 vision.

She'll not leave me waiting, not left in the lurch
If she looks slightly sideways she'll see me in church.

I'll marry my true love who's gentle and kind.
And thus prove to everyone that loves not quite blind.



CLASSIC POEMS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

Doom is the House without the Door

--- Emily Dickinson

Maya Angelou

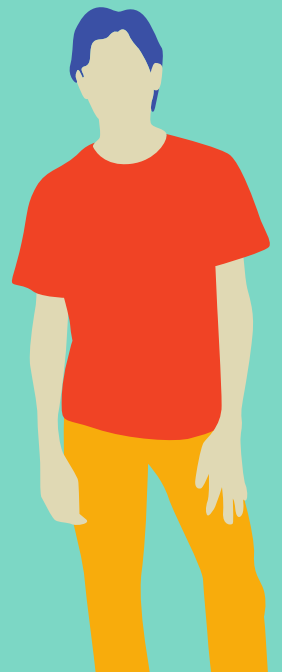
Edgar Allan Poe

Robert Frost

Pablo Neruda

Emily Dickinson

And more



Still I Rise

Maya Angelou

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.
Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.

Mother to Son

Langston Hughes

Well, son, I'll tell you:
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
It's had tacks in it,
And splinters,
And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on the floor—
Bare.
But all the time
I'se been a-climbin' on,
And reachin' landin's,
And turnin' corners,
And sometimes goin' in the dark
Where there ain't been no light.
So boy, don't you turn back.
Don't you set down on the steps
'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.
Don't you fall now—
For I'se still goin', honey,
I'se still climbin',
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

I Looked Up From My Writing

Thomas Hardy

I looked up from my writing,
And gave a start to see,
As if rapt in my inditing,
The moon's full gaze on me.

Her meditative misty head
Was spectral in its air,
And I involuntarily said,
'What are you doing there?'

'Oh, I've been scanning pond and hole
And waterway hereabout
For the body of one with a sunken soul
Who has put his life-light out.

'Did you hear his frenzied tattle?
It was sorrow for his son
Who is slain in brutish battle,
Though he has injured none.

'And now I am curious to look
Into the blinkered mind
Of one who wants to write a book
In a world of such a kind.'

Her temper overwrought me,
And I edged to shun her view,
For I felt assured she thought me
One who should drown him too.

Doom is the House Without the Door

Emily Dickinson

Doom is the House without the Door—
'Tis entered from the Sun—
And then the Ladder's thrown away,
Because Escape—is done—

'Tis varied by the Dream
Of what they do outside—
Where Squirrels play—and Berries die—
And Hemlocks—bow—to God—

A Crowded Trolley Car

Elinor Wylie

The rain's cold grains are silver-gray
Sharp as golden sands,
A bell is clanging, people sway
Hanging by their hands.

Supple hands, or gnarled and stiff,
Snatch and catch and grope;
That face is yellow-pale, as if
The fellow swung from rope.

Dull like pebbles, sharp like knives,
Glances strike and glare,
Fingers tangle, Bluebeard's wives
Dangle by the hair.

Orchard of the strangest fruits
Hanging from the skies;
Brothers, yet insensate brutes
Who fear each others' eyes.

One man stands as free men stand
As if his soul might be
Brave, unbroken; see his hand
Nailed to an oaken tree.

Design

Robert Frost

I found a dimpled spider, fat and white,
On a white heal-all, holding up a moth
Like a white piece of rigid satin cloth--
Assorted characters of death and blight
Mixed ready to begin the morning right,
Like the ingredients of a witches' broth--
A snow-drop spider, a flower like a froth,
And dead wings carried like a paper kite.

What had that flower to do with being white,
The wayside blue and innocent heal-all?
What brought the kindred spider to that height,
Then steered the white moth thither in the night?
What but design of darkness to appall?--
If design govern in a thing so small.

See It Through

Edgar Albert Guest

When you're up against a trouble,
Meet it squarely, face to face;
Lift your chin and set your shoulders,
Plant your feet and take a brace.
When it's vain to try to dodge it,
Do the best that you can do;
You may fail, but you may conquer,
See it through!

Black may be the clouds about you
And your future may seem grim,
But don't let your nerve desert you;
Keep yourself in fighting trim.
If the worst is bound to happen,
Spite of all that you can do,
Running from it will not save you,
See it through!

Even hope may seem but futile,
When with troubles you're beset,
But remember you are facing
Just what other men have met.
You may fail, but fall still fighting;
Don't give up, whate'er you do;
Eyes front, head high to the finish.
See it through!

Those Winter Sundays

Robert Hayden

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather made
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?

Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening

Robert Frost

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.

My Momma Moved Among the Days

Lucille Clifton

My Mama moved among the days
like a dreamwalker in a field;
seemed like what she touched was hers
seemed like what touched her couldn't hold,
she got us almost through the high grass
then seemed like she turned around and ran
right back in
right back on in

Mirror

Sylvia Plath

I am silver and exact. I have no preconceptions.
Whatever I see I swallow immediately
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike.
I am not cruel, only truthful,
The eye of a little god, four-cornered.
Most of the time I meditate on the opposite wall.
It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long
I think it is part of my heart. But it flickers.
Faces and darkness separate us over and over.

Now I am a lake. A woman bends over me,
Searching my reaches for what she really is.
Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon.
I see her back, and reflect it faithfully.
She rewards me with tears and an agitation of hands.
I am important to her. She comes and goes.
Each morning it is her face that replaces the darkness.
In me she has drowned a young girl, and in me an old woman
Rises toward her day after day, like a terrible fish.

O Captain! My Captain!

Walt Whitman

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;
Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

Discoverers

Pablo Neruda

From the north Almagro brought his wrinkled lightning,
and over the territory, amid explosion and twilight
he bent day and night as over a chart.
Shadow of thorns, shadow of thistle and wax
the Spaniard united with his dry figure,
watching the wounded strategies of earth.
Night, snow and sand make the form
of my slim fatherland,
all silence is in its long line,
all foam emerges from its marine beard,
all coal fills it with mysterious kisses.
Like an ember, gold burns in its fingers
and silver illumines, like a green moon,
its hardened shadow of grave planet.
The Spaniard seated near the rose, one day,
near the oil, near the wine, near the old sky,
could not conceive this spot of angry stone
rising from the dung of the marine eagle.

Ozymandias

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said—"Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal, these words appear:
My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;
Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

Bewick Finzer

Edwin Arlington Robinson

Time was when his half million drew
The breath of six per cent;
But soon the worm of what-was-not
Fed hard on his content;
And something crumbled in his brain
When his half million went.

Time passed, and filled along with his
The place of many more;
Time came, and hardly one of us
Had credence to restore,
From what appeared one day, the man
Whom we had known before.

The broken voice, the withered neck,
The coat worn out with care,
The cleanliness of indigence,
The brilliance of despair,
The fond imponderable dreams
Of affluence,—all were there.

Poor Finzer, with his dreams and schemes,
Fares hard now in the race,
With heart and eye that have a task
When he looks in the face
Of one who might so easily
Have been in Finzer's place.

He comes unfailing for the loan
We give and then forget;
He comes, and probably for years
Will he be coming yet,—
Familiar as an old mistake,
And futile as regret.

Even Such is Time

Sir Walter Raleigh

Even such is time, that takes in trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with age and dust;
Who, in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days.
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust.

Eldorado

Edgar Allan Poe

Gaily bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This knight so bold—
And o'er his heart a shadow—
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
'Shadow,' said he,
'Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?'

'Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,'
The shade replied,—
'If you seek for Eldorado!'



LIMERICKS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

**A circus performer named Brian
Once smiled as he rode on a lion.**

Anonymous poems
To make your
Students laugh
And giggle
And write
Poetry of their own



The Dread Pirate of Boulder

There was a dread pirate of Boulder
Whose cutlass was slung from his shoulder.
He'd mighty fine notions
Of plundering oceans,
But his mom said: "Perhaps, when you're older."

A Certain Young Fellow

A certain young fellow named Bee-Bee
Wished to wed a woman named Phoebe.
“But,” he said, “I must see
What the clerical fee
Be before Phoebe be Phoebe Bee-Bee.”

Ambition

An ambitious young fellow named Matt
Tried to parachute using his hat
Folks below looked so small
As he started to fall
Then got bigger and bigger and SPLAT!

There Was an Old Man From Nantucket

There was an old man of Nantucket
Who kept all his cash in a bucket;
But his daughter, named Nan
Ran away with a man—
And as far as the bucket, Nantucket.

A Canner

A canner, exceedingly canny
One morning remarked to his granny,
“A canner can can
Anything that he can;
But a canner can’t can a can, can he?”

The Circus Performer

A circus performer named Brian
Once smiled as he rode on a lion.
They came back from the ride,
But with Brian inside,
And the smile on the face of the lion.

The Young Woman From Bright

There was a young woman named Bright,
Whose speed was much faster than light.
She set out one day,
In a relative way,
And returned on the previous night.

The Mighty Hunter

There once was a hunter named Paul
Who strangled nine grizzlies one Fall.
Nine is such a good score,
So he tried for one more
But he lost. Well, you can't win them all!

Carpentry

I need a front door for my hall,
The replacement I bought was too tall.
So I hacked it and chopped it,
And carefully lopped it,
And now the dumb thing is too small.

I'd Rather

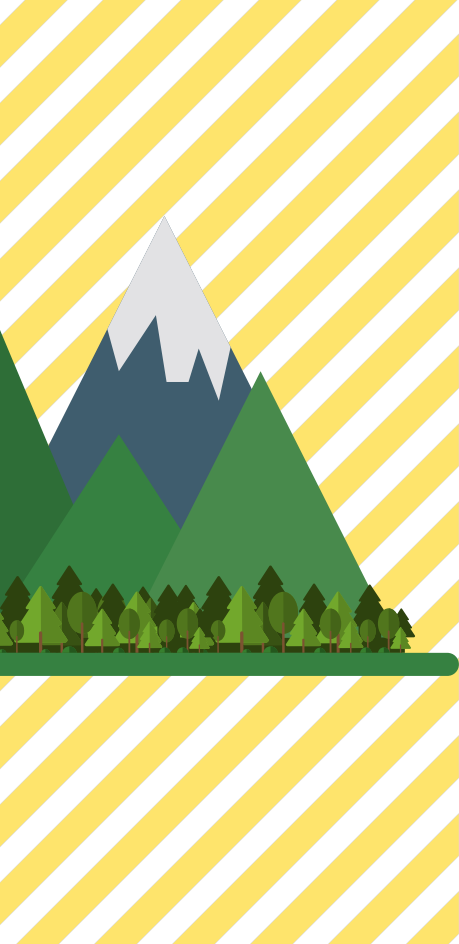
I'd rather have Fingers than Toes,
I'd rather have Ears than a Nose.
And as for my Hair,
I'm glad it's all there,
I'll be awfully sad, when it goes.

The Thingamajig

There once was a Thingamajig--
Like a Whatsis, but three times as big.
When it first came in view
It looked something like you
But it stayed and turned into a pig.

The Tale of Sid & the Shark

There once was a poor boy named Sid
Who thought he knew more than he did.
He thought that a shark
Would turn tail if you bark.
So he swam out to try it --- poor kid!



HAIKU FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

**Light of the moon
Moves west, flowers' shadows
Creep eastward.
-- Yosa Buson**

**Yosa Buson
Kobayeshi Issa
Natsume Soseki
RM Hansard
Katsushika Hokusai
And more**



April Wind

Richard Wright

Whitecaps on the bay:
A broken signboard banging
In the April wind.

Moon

Yosa Buson

Light of the moon
Moves west, flowers' shadows
Creep eastward.

Leafless Tree

Natsume Soseki

The crow has flown away:
swaying in the evening sun,
a leafless tree.

Christmas

Anonymous

Santa is coming
He rewards good behavior
No presents for me

School

Anonymous

My homework is late
Dog ate it before breakfast
Very helpful dog

Lighting One Candle

Yosa Buson

The light of a candle
Is transferred to another candle—
Spring twilight

A Poppy Blooms

Katsushika Hokusai

I write, erase, rewrite
Erase again, and then
A poppy blooms.

Over the Wintry

Natsume Sōseki

Over the wintry
Forest, winds howl in rage
With no leaves to blow.

Everything I Touch

Kobayashi Issa

Everything I touch
with tenderness, alas,
pricks like a bramble.

The West Wind Whispered

RM Hansard

The west wind whispered,
And touched the eyelids of spring:
Her eyes, Primroses.

Plum Flower Temple

Natsume Soseki

Plum flower temple:

Voices rise

From the foothills



CINQUAINS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

Apple
red, delicious
crunching, chewing, eating
my favorite snack
apple

William Swink
Adelaide Crapsey
Anita Sehgal
Chandra Thiagarajan
David Kulczyk
And more



Ice Cream, Cold & Yummy

Ice cream

Cold and yummy

I love its sweet richness

As it finds its way into my
tummy.

Summer Swim

Summer

Hot, humid

Swimming pool lounging

Refreshing coolness in midday

satisfaction

Apple, Red, Delicious

Apple
red, delicious
crunching, chewing, eating
my favorite snack
apple

School Days

David Kulczyk

School Days

Crazy, boring

Work! Work! Work! Too much work!

The last days are always the best

All done.

Water

Chandra Thiagarajan

Water

To drink

And to clean

An ambrosia for life

Paramount

Existence

Anita Sehgal

Existence

Joyous, melancholy

Creating, flowing, demolishing,

Energy that is life and death

Vitality

Snow

Adelaide Crapsey

Look up ...

From bleakening hills

Blows down the light, first breath

Of wintry wind ... look up, and scent

The snow!

Castle

William Swink

Castle

Strong, beautiful

Imposing, protecting, watching

Symbolizes wealth and power

Fortress

Acrobats Make Me Laugh

Acrobats

Flexible, amusing

Flipping, twirling, jumping

They make me laugh

Performers

Penguins

Penguins

White, black

Waddling, swimming, eating

They are playing in the water

Emperors



QUATRAINS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

**It was the schooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper had taken his little daughter,
To bear him company.**

--- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

William Blake

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Emily Dickinson

AE Housman

Claude McKay

And more



The Chimney Sweeper

William Blake

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry " 'weep! 'weep! 'weep! 'weep!"
So your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved, so I said,
"Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair."

And so he was quiet, & that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping he had such a sight!
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, & Jack,
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black;

And by came an Angel who had a bright key,
And he opened the coffins & set them all free;
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing they run,
And wash in a river and shine in the Sun.

Then naked & white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind.
And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father & never want joy.

And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark
And got with our bags & our brushes to work.
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy & warm;
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

The Wreck of the Hesperus

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

It was the schooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper had taken his little daughter,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailòr,
Had sailed to the Spanish Main,
"I pray thee, put into yonder port
For I fear a hurricane.

"Last night, the moon had a golden ring,
And to-night no moon we see!"
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,
A gale from the Northeast,
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain
The vessel in its strength;
She shuddered and paused, like a frightened steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

Come hither! come hither! my little daughter,
And do not tremble so;
For I can weather the roughest gale
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat
Against the stinging blast;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

"O father! I hear the church-bells ring,
Oh say, what may it be?"
"T is a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!" —
And he steered for the open sea.

"O father! I hear the sound of guns,
Oh say, what may it be?"
"Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea!"

"O father! I see a gleaming light,
Oh say, what may it be?"
But the father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That savèd she might be;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Tow'rds the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,
Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes;
And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,
In the midnight and the snow!
Christ save us all from a death like this,
On the reef of Norman's Woe!

Because I Could Not Stop for Death

Emily Dickinson

Because I could not stop for Death –
He kindly stopped for me –
The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
And Immortality.

We slowly drove – He knew no haste
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For His Civility –

We passed the School, where Children strove
At Recess – in the Ring –
We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain –
We passed the Setting Sun –

Or rather – He passed Us –
The Dews drew quivering and Chill –
For only Gossamer, my Gown –
My Tippet – only Tulle –

We paused before a House that seemed
A Swelling of the Ground –
The Roof was scarcely visible –
The Cornice – in the Ground –

Since then – 'tis Centuries – and yet
Feels shorter than the Day
I first surmised the Horses' Heads
Were toward Eternity –

Is My Team Ploughing

AE Housman

“Is my team ploughing,
That I was used to drive
And hear the harness jingle
When I was man alive?”

Ay, the horses trample,
The harness jingles now;
No change though you lie under
The land you used to plough.

“Is football playing
Along the river shore,
With lads to chase the leather,
Now I stand up no more?”

Ay the ball is flying,
The lads play heart and soul;
The goal stands up, the keeper
Stands up to keep the goal.

“Is my girl happy,
That I thought hard to leave,
And has she tired of weeping
As she lies down at eve?”

Ay, she lies down lightly,
She lies not down to weep:
Your girl is well contented.
Be still, my lad, and sleep.

“Is my friend hearty,
Now I am thin and pine,
And has he found to sleep in
A better bed than mine?”

Yes, lad, I lie easy,
I lie as lads would choose;
I cheer a dead man’s sweetheart,
Never ask me whose.

December, 1919

Claude McKay

Last night I heard your voice, mother,
The words you sang to me
When I, a little barefoot boy,
Knelt down against your knee.

And tears gushed from my heart, mother,
And passed beyond its wall,
But though the fountain reached my throat
The drops refused to fall.

'Tis ten years since you died, mother,
Just ten dark years of pain,
And oh, I only wish that I
Could weep just once again.

The Eagle & the Mole

Elinor Wylie

Avoid the reeking herd,
Shun the polluted flock,
Live like that stoic bird,
The eagle of the rock.

The huddled warmth of crowds
Begets and fosters hate;
He keeps above the clouds
His cliff inviolate.

When flocks are folded warm,
And herds to shelter run,
He sails above the storm,
He stares into the sun.

If in the eagle's track
Your sinews cannot leap,
Avoid the lathered pack,
Turn from the steaming sheep.

If you would keep your soul
From spotted sight or sound,
Live like the velvet mole:
Go burrow underground.

And there hold intercourse
With roots of trees and stones,
With rivers at their source,
And disembodied bones.

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.