

Reading

Haiku



Haiku VI
Winter
More Poems And
Illustrations
By
William P. Kiffin

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Acrostic

A n acrostic poem
C reates a challenge
R andom words on a theme
O r whole sentences that rhyme
S elect your words carefully
T o form a word from top to bottom
I s the aim of this poetry style
C hoose a word then go!

Rhyming Couplets

Diamante

Writing

Quatrain

Cinquain

Concrete/ Shape

Narrative Poems

Poetry

[illegible]

Literary devices

Alliteration

Metaphors

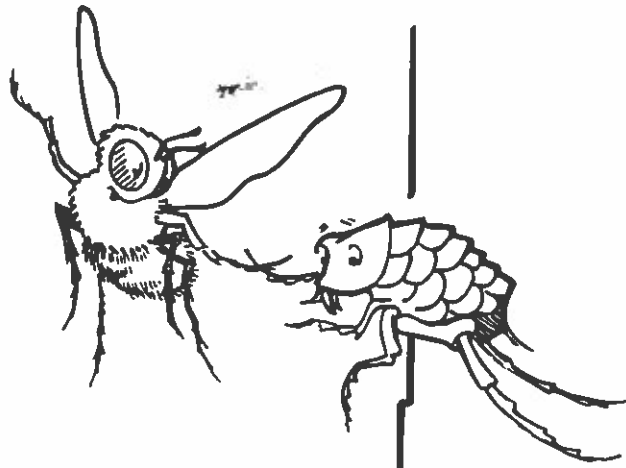
Onomatopeia

Hyperbole

Irony

Personification

Similes



The Flea and the Fly

A flea and a fly got caught in a flue.
Said the fly, "Let us flee."
Said the flea, "Let us fly."
So together they flew through a flaw in the flue.

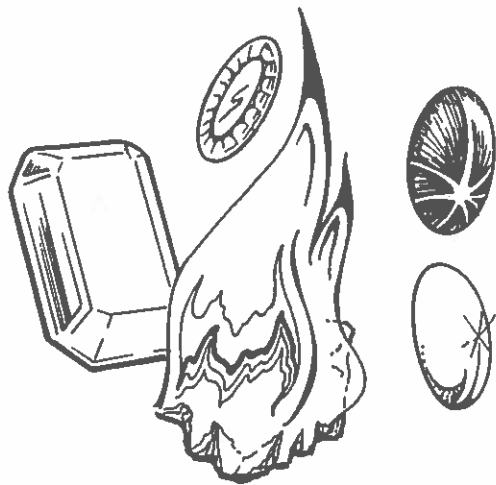


FACTS ABOUT ALLITERATION

Alliteration is a literary term in which an initial identical consonant sound is repeated. An example is this: *The willows were whispering in the wind*. When alliteration is used well, it not only adds interest and variety to language, it also lets us appreciate the sounds and beauty of words.

The lines above are from a humorous poem, "The Flea and the Fly." Read and talk about the poem with the students. Then discuss the examples of alliteration in the poem.

Alliteration Sampler



Precious Stones

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.

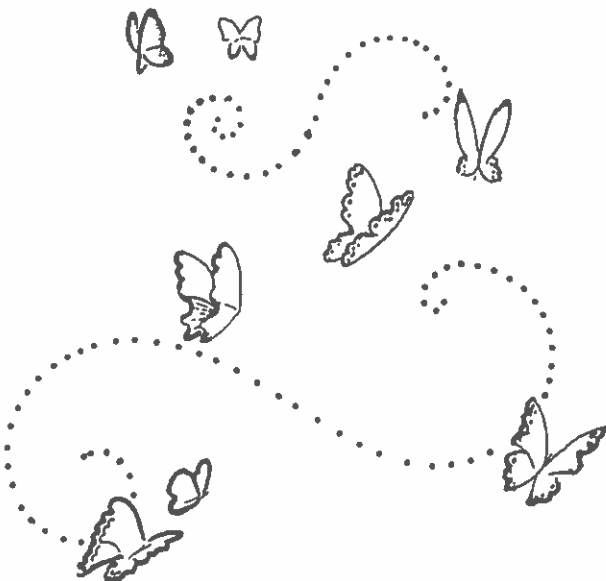
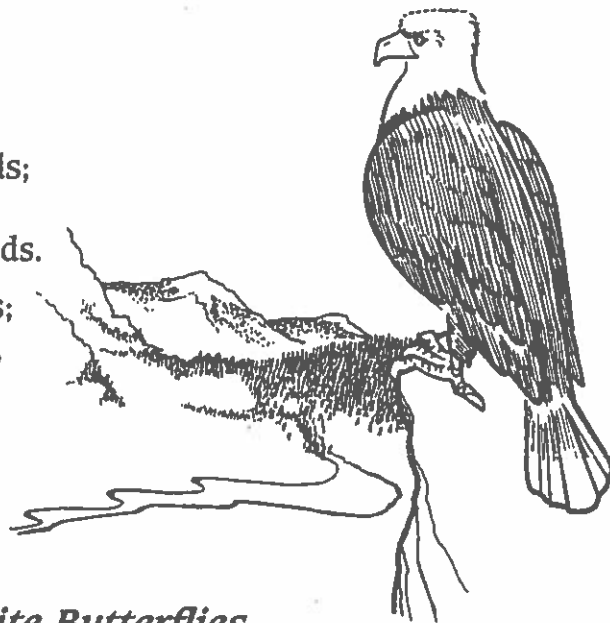
—Christina Georgina Rossetti

The Eagle

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

—Alfred, Lord Tennyson



White Butterflies

Fly, white butterflies, out to sea,
Frail, pale wings for the wind to try,
Small, white wings that we scarce can see,
Fly!

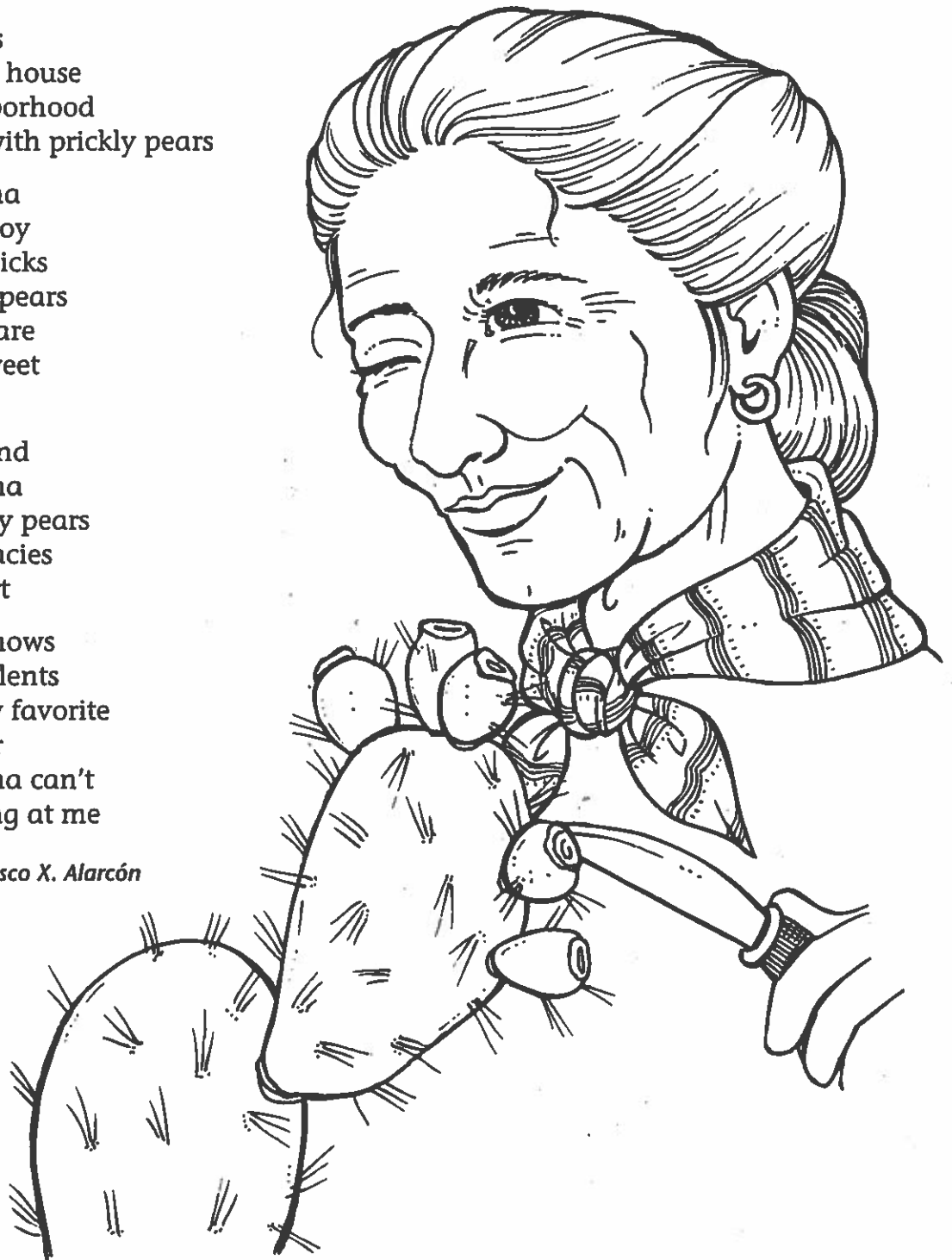
Some fly light as a laugh of glee,
Some fly soft as a long, low sigh;
All to the haven where each would be,
Fly!

—Algernon Charles Swinburne

My Grandma Is Like a Flowering Cactus

- 1 every fall
the nopales
around my house
and neighborhood
are laden with prickly pears
- 2 my grandma
sings with joy
when she picks
the prickly pears
she knows are
ripe and sweet
- 3 tongs and
knife in hand
my grandma
peels prickly pears
—the delicacies
of the desert
- 4 since she knows
these succulents
are also my favorite
fruits by far
my grandma can't
stop winking at me

—Francisco X. Alarcón



Did You Know? Francisco X. Alarcón is an award-winning author of poetry for both children and adults, written in both English and Spanish. He considers himself "bi-national" because four generations of his family have spent their lives in both the United States and Mexico. When he is not writing poetry, Mr. Alarcón directs a Spanish for Native Speakers program, teaching university students who speak Spanish to also read and write it.

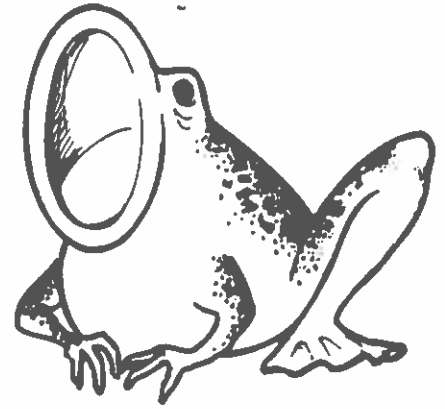
FACTS ABOUT METAPHORS

A metaphor is a literary device that compares two unlike items. For example, in the metaphor, *the bullfrog's croak was the tuba of the swamp band*, the low croaking sound of a bullfrog is compared to the low sound of a tuba.

Unlike similes, metaphors do not use the words "like" or "as" to compare the two items.

Although many metaphors have been overused and have become clichés, original metaphors can make language vivid and give us new insights.

The poem on page 9, "Dreams," was written by Langston Hughes. Read the poem to the students and have them identify and discuss the two metaphors: *life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly* and *life is a barren field frozen with snow*. Ask students if they agree with Hughes' ideas about a life without dreams. To what else could life without dreams be compared?



Nature Metaphors

A metaphor is a figure of speech that compares two different things without using a word of comparison such as like or as. Write some metaphors that relate to nature. For example: The teardrop was dew running down my face. Teardrop and dew are being compared.

Steps to help you write a metaphor.

1. Choose a Noun.
2. Ask yourself, "What different thing can I compare it to?"
3. Write your metaphor.

For example:

1. Noun: umbrella
2. I will compare it to a roof.
3. The umbrella was a roof over my head.



Writers use similes to compare things. Similes usually use the words "like" or "as".

For example:

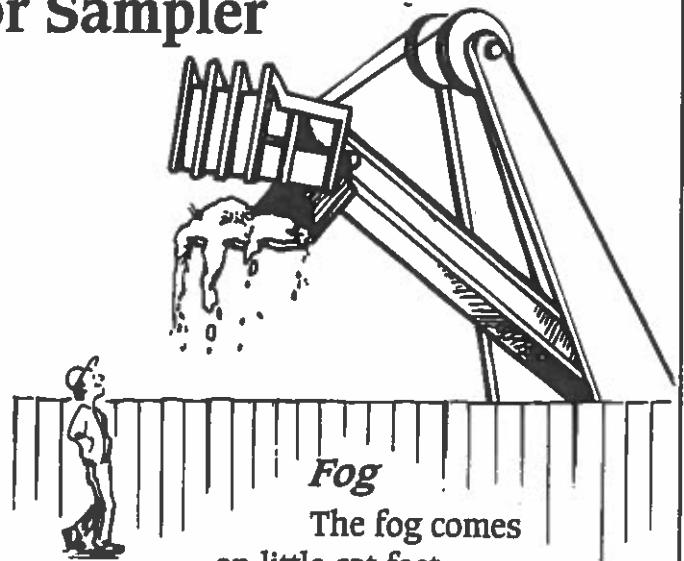
- His eyes were as blue as the sky.
- His eyes were blue like the sky.

Metaphor Sampler

Steam Shovel

The dinosaurs are not all dead.
I saw one raise its iron head
To watch me walking down the road
Beyond our house today.
Its jaws were dripping with a load
Of earth and grass that it had cropped.
It must have heard me where I stopped,
Snorted white steam my way,
And stretched its long neck out to see,
And chewed, and grinned quite amiably.

—Charles Malam



Fog

The fog comes
on little cat feet.

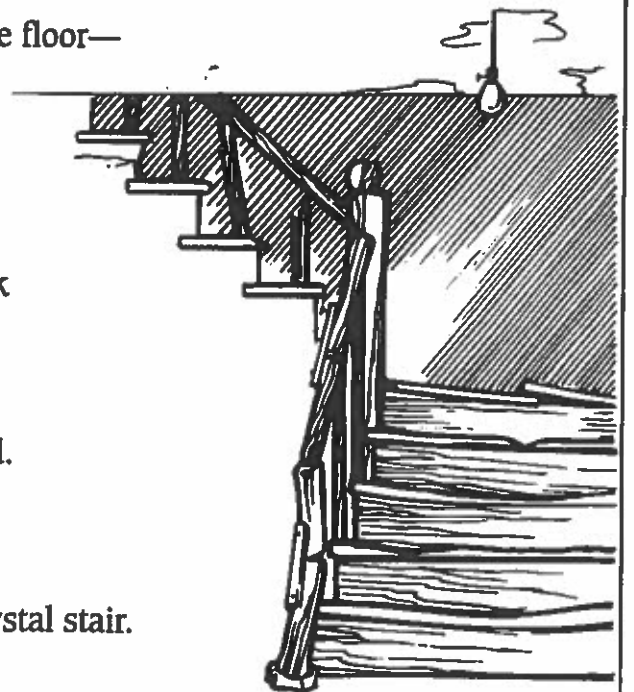
It sits looking
over harbor and city
on silent haunches
and then, moves on.

—Carl Sandburg

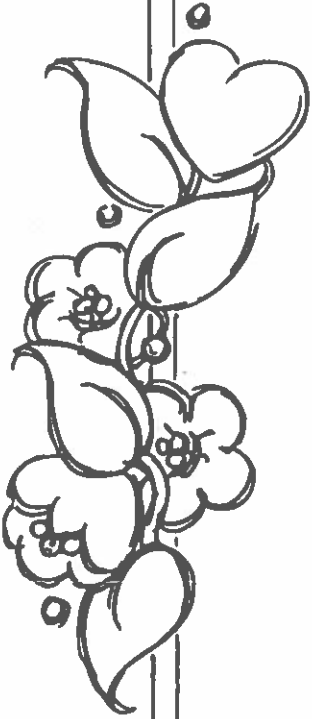

Mother to Son

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've 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've still goin', honey,
I've still climbin',
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

—Langston Hughes



Song to Mothers

- 
- 
- 1 Your laugh is a green song,
2 canción verde,
3 that branches
4 through our house,
5 its yellow blooms smelling
6 like warm honey.
7 Your laugh peels apples
8 and stirs their cinnamon bubblings,
9 then opens a book and pulls me
10 onto your lap.
11 At night, your laugh kisses
12 us soft as a petal, smooths my pillow
13 and covers me, a soft leafy blanket,
14 green and yellow.
15 I snuggle into your laugh,
16 your canción verde
17 and dream of growing
18 into my own green song.

—Pat Mora

The Musical Lion

by Oliver Herford

Said the Lion, "On music I dote
But something is wrong with my throat.
When I practice a scale,
The listeners quail,
And flee at the very first note!"



FACTS ABOUT PERSONIFICATION

Personification is a literary device that gives human qualities such as emotions, intelligence, personality, or form to animals, ideas, or inanimate objects. Personification extends our human experience to non-humans. This helps us better understand and appreciate our human qualities.

Read the poem "The Musical Lion" with the students and ask for their reactions. Do they think the poem is humorous? How does the personification of the lion affect students? Do they feel sorry for the lion?

Personification is a writer's craft that gives an idea, object, or animal qualities of a person.

For example: The large rock refused to budge. The word refused is something a person would do.

Personification Sampler

Under a Telephone Wire

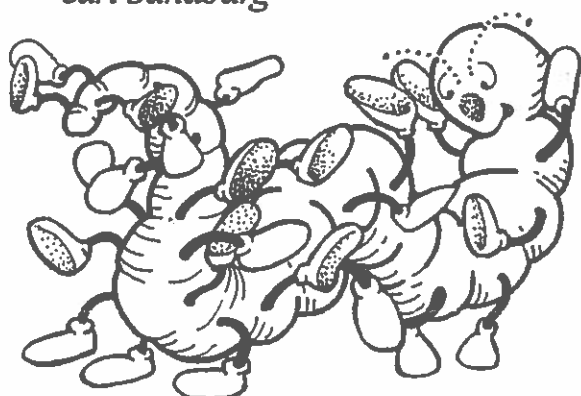
I am a copper wire slung in the air,
Slim against the sun I make not even a clear line of shadow.
Night and day I keep singing—humming and thrumming;
It is love and war and money; it is fighting and the tears, the work and the want,
Death and laughter of men and women passing through me, carrier of your speech,
In the rain and the wet dripping, in the dawn and shine drying,
A copper wire.

—Carl Sandburg

Proud Words

Look out how you use proud words.
When you let proud words go, it is not easy to call them back.
They wear long boots, hard boots, they walk off proud; they can't hear you calling—
Look out how you use proud words.

—Carl Sandburg



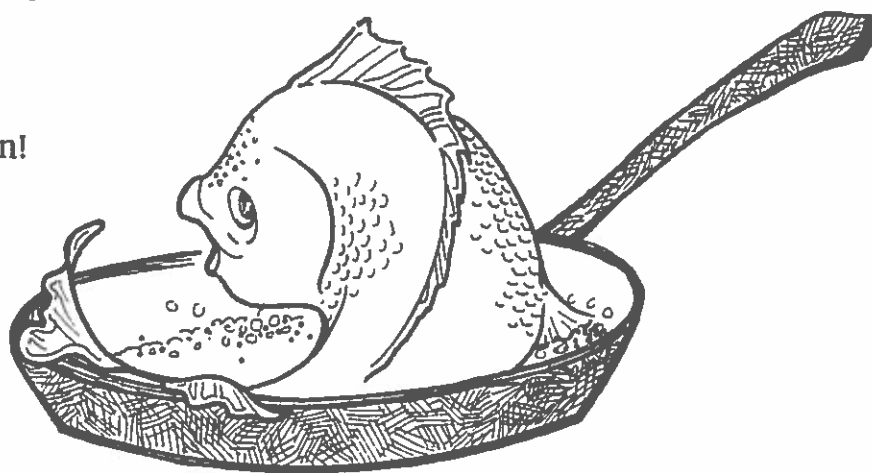
The Puzzled Centipede

A centipede was happy quite,
Until a frog in fun
Said, "Pray, which leg comes after which?"
This raised her mind to such a pitch,
She lay distracted in the ditch
Considering how to run.

Alas, Alack!

Ann, Ann!
Come quick as you can!
There's a fish that *talks*
In the frying pan.
Out of the fat,
As clear as glass,
He put up his mouth
And moaned "Alas!"
Oh, most mournful,
"Alas, alack!"
Then turned to his sizzling
And sank him back.

—Walter de la Mare



Tuen Ng— The Dragon Boat Races

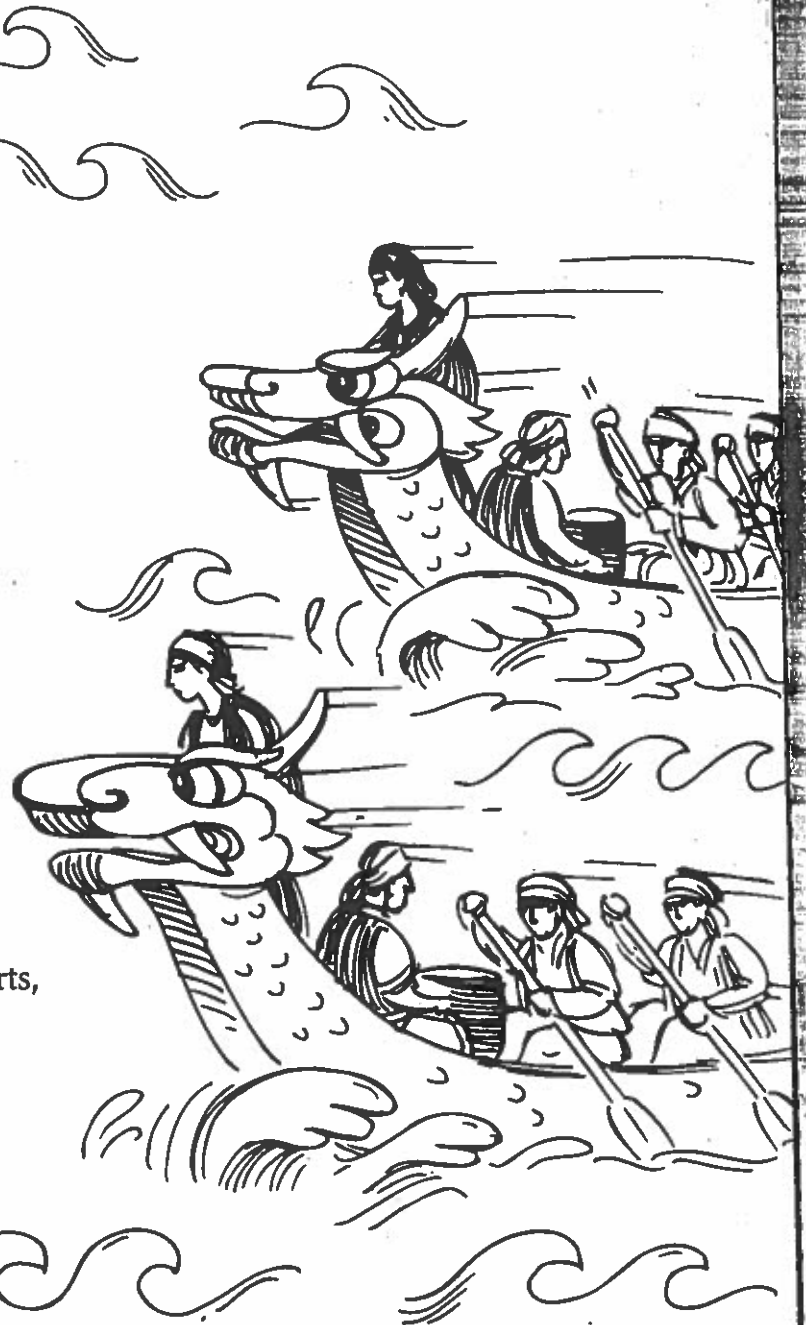
The air is hushed
round waiting boats;
water still before the race.
Slowly paddles lift
above the dragon-prows
like giant wing-bones
from a waking beast,
stretching into space. . .

*And then. . . they're off!
Away!*

Fish scatter in dismay
as dragon-racers slice the surface.
Wings dip, whip water into waves;
waves rise like flames,
set light by sun.

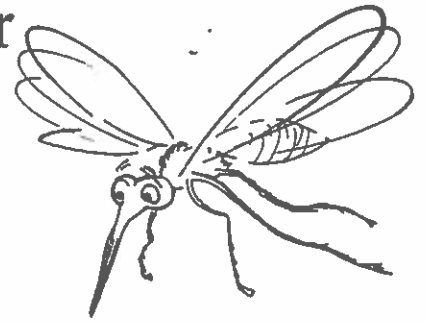
Above, flags tug at their fetters,
desperate to join the fun.
And all around,
like pumping, thumping dragon-hearts,
the pounding gongs,
the beating drum.

—Judith Nicholls

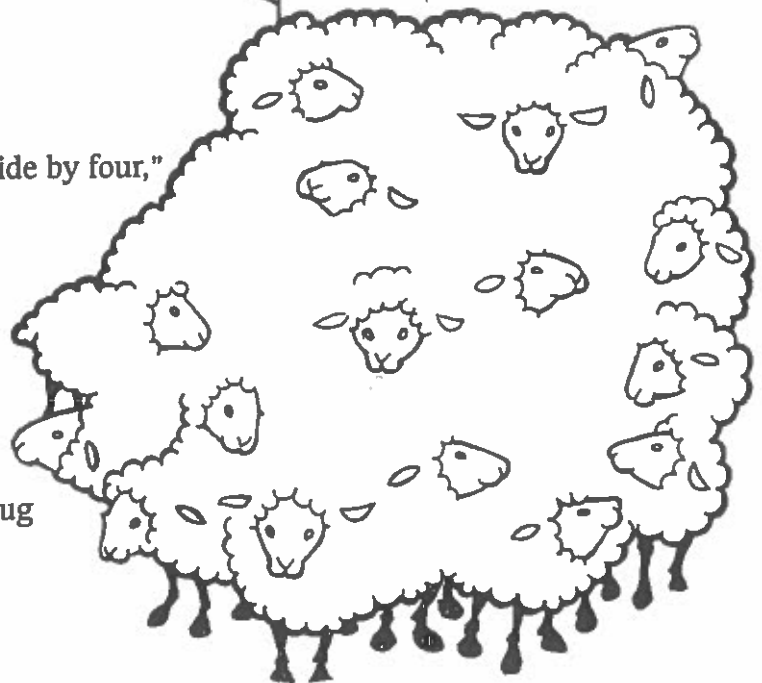


Did You Know? The Dragon Boat Race is a traditional Chinese holiday. It is held in rivers and waterfronts in Chinese communities around the world on the fifth day of the fifth month of the Chinese calendar, which usually falls in early June.

Hyperbole Sampler



They have yarns
 Of a skyscraper so tall
 they had to put hinges
 On the two top stories
 so to let the moon go by,
 Of one corn crop in Missouri when the roots
 Went so deep and drew off so much water
 The Mississippi riverbed that year was dry,
 Of pancakes so thin
 they had only one side,
 Of the man who drove a swarm of bees
 across the Rocky Mountains and the Desert
 "and didn't lose a bee."
 Of the boy who climbed a cornstalk
 growing so fast he would have starved to death
 if they hadn't shot biscuits up to him,
 Of the ship captain's shadow:
 it froze to the deck
 one cold winter night,
 Of the sheep-counter
 who was fast and accurate:
 "I just count their feet and divide by four,"
 Of mosquitoes:
 one can kill a dog,
 two of them a man,
 Of the man who killed a snake
 by putting its tail in its mouth
 so it swallowed itself,
 Of Paul Bunyan's big blue ox, Babe,
 measuring between the eyes
 forty-two ax-handles and a plug
 of Star tobacco exactly,
 Of John Henry's hammer
 and the curve of its swing
 and his singing of it
 as "a rainbow round my shoulder." They have yarns . . .



excerpts from "Yarns," from "The People, Yes" —Carl Sandburg



The Ostrich Is a Silly Bird—Mary E. Wilkins Freeman

The ostrich is a silly bird,
 With scarcely any mind.
 He often runs so very fast,
 He leaves himself behind.

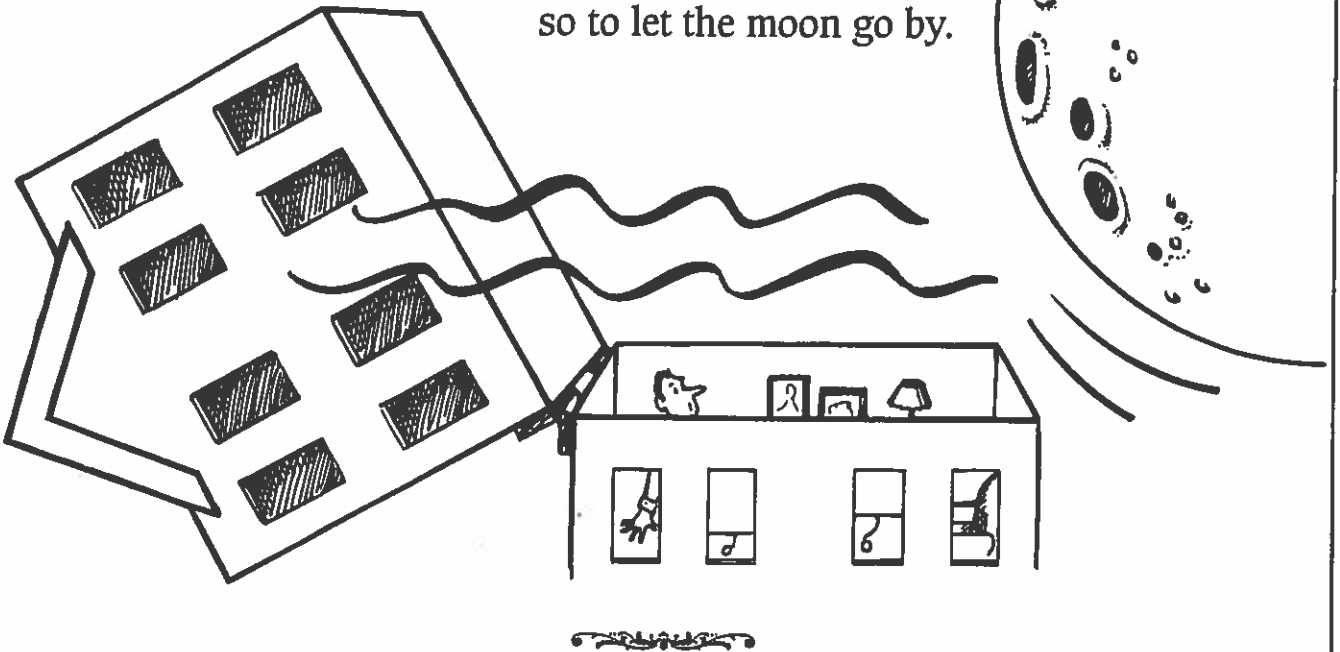
And when he gets there, has to stand
 And hang about till night,
 Without a blessed thing to do
 Until he comes in sight.



from "*Yarns*"

by Carl Sandburg

They have yarns
Of a skyscraper so tall
they had to put hinges
On the two top stories
so to let the moon go by.



FACTS ABOUT HYPERBOLE

A hyperbole is a literary form that gives force or intensity to what we say or write. We often use hyperbole in our everyday speech. For example, someone might say, "I'm so hungry, I could eat a horse!" This person is not being dishonest, but is trying to make the point that he or she is very hungry. Writers often use hyperbole to make a point, to create a strong feeling, or to capture the reader's interest. A hyperbole can be serious, but often, it is used in a humorous way.

The lines above are from a passage called "Yarns" from Carl Sandburg's poem "The People, Yes." More excerpts from the passage are included on the Hyperbole Sampler (page 28).

Hyperbole makes exaggerated comparisons for effect. Sometimes these can be very funny. They are often used in fairy tales and tall tales to make the story interesting.

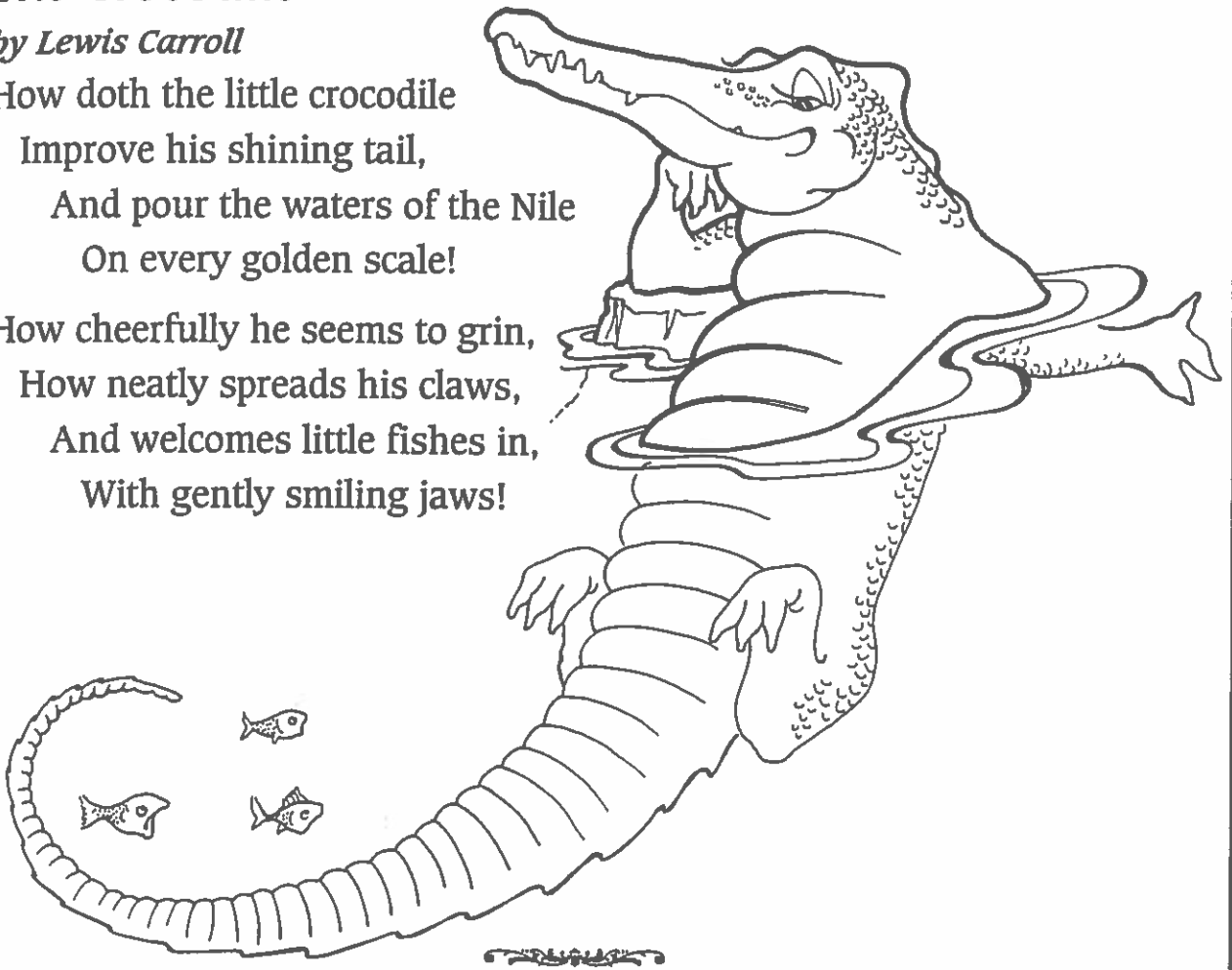
Example: The pavement was so hot our feet fried.
He was so tall his head touched the clouds.

The Crocodile

by 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!



FACTS ABOUT IRONY

Verbal irony is a literary form that lets us say one thing but mean the opposite. Usually irony is expressed in positive words, but it implies blame. Irony is lighter in tone than sarcasm, but it can be more cutting! There can also be irony in an event or situation in which the result is the opposite of what we expect to happen.

You may want to ask students if they have heard the term *crocodile tears*. Ask them how the term relates to the Lewis Carroll poem "The Crocodile." Then ask them to describe the ironic situations in this poem.

OBJECTIVES

- To introduce irony in a literary context
- To present examples of irony in well-known stories and poems
- To encourage students to use irony in writing
- To show students how irony can add interest and variety to language

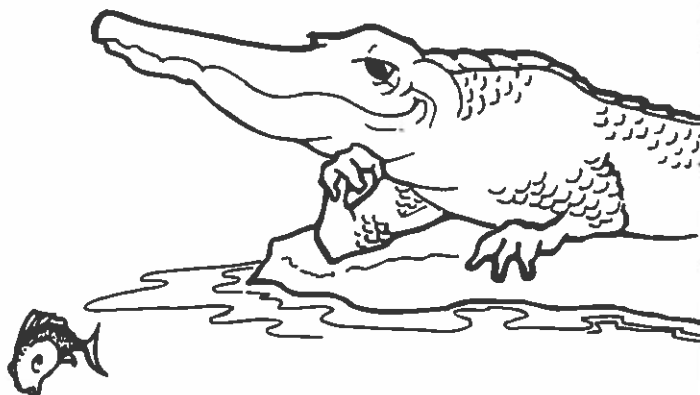
Irony Sampler

The Crocodile

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

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

—Lewis Carroll

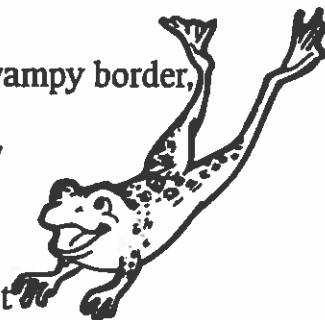


The Frogs Who Wanted a King

The frogs were living happy as could be
In a wet marsh to which they all were suited;
From every sort of trouble they were free,
and all night long they croaked, and honked, and hooted;
But one fine day a bull frog said, "The thing
We never had and *must* have is a king."



So all the frogs immediately prayed;
"Great Jove," they chorused from their swampy border,
"Send us a king and he will be obeyed,
A king to bring a rule of Law and Order."
Jove heard and chuckled. That night in the bog
There fell a large and most impressive Log.



The swamp was silent; nothing breathed. At first
The baldly frightened frogs did never *once* stir;
But gradually some neared and even durst
To touch, aye, even dance upon, the monster.
Whereat they croaked again, "Great Jove, oh hear!
Send us a *living* king, a king to fear!"



Once more Jove smiled, and sent them down a Stork,
"Long live—!" they croaked. But ere they framed the sentence,
The stork bent down and, scorning knife or fork,
Swallowed them all, with no time for repentance!

The moral's this: No matter what your lot,
It might be worse. Be glad with what you've got.

—Joseph Lauren



from "*The Bells*"

by Edgar Allan Poe



Hear the sledges with their bells—
Silver bells!

What a world of merriment their melody foretells!

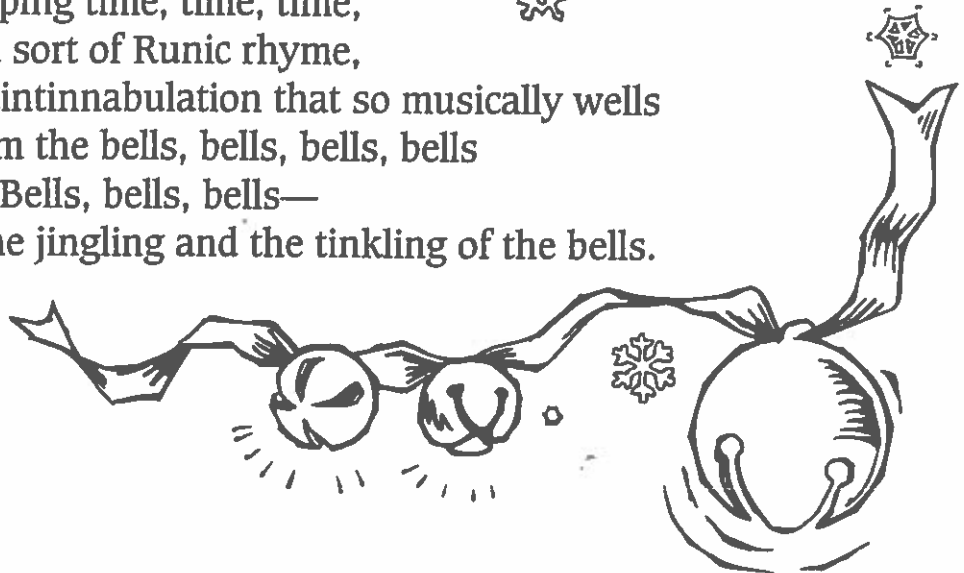
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!

While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle

With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,

To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells

Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.



FACTS ABOUT ONOMATOPOEIA

Onomatopoeia is a literary form in which words sound like their meaning. Some examples are "snap," "hiss," "bang," "clash," "boom," "thud," "buzz," and "sizzle." These types of words are used not only in poetry, but in everyday speech. Onomatopoeia makes our language fun to say and hear.

The poem above is an excerpt from Edgar Allan Poe's poem, "The Bells." Ask students to identify any onomatopoeia in the excerpt. Discuss with students how Poe, in addition to using onomatopoeia, chose his words carefully and repeated them to make them sound like bells ringing. You may want to obtain a copy of the entire poem and read it aloud with the students. Students may also enjoy a choral reading of the poem.

Onomatopoeia Sampler

The Night Wind

Have you ever heard the wind go "Yooooo"?

'Tis a pitiful sound to hear!

It seems to chill you through and through
With a strange and speechless fear.

'Tis the voice of the night that broods outside
When folk should be asleep,

And many and many's the time I've cried
To the darkness brooding far and wide
Over the land the deep:

"Whom do you want, O lonely night,
That you wail the long hour through?"

And the night would say in its ghostly way:

"Yooooooooo!
Yooooooooo!
Yooooooooo!"

My mother told me long ago

(When I was a little tad)

That when the night went wailing so,
Somebody had been bad;

And then, when I was snug in bed,
Whither I had been sent,

With the blankets pulled up round my head,
I'd think of what my mother'd said,

And wonder what boy she meant!

And "Who's been bad to-day?" I'd ask
Of the wind that hoarsely blew,

And the voice would say in its meaningful way:

"Yooooooooo!
Yooooooooo!
Yooooooooo!"

That this was true I must allow—

You'll not believe it, though!

Yes, though I'm quite a model now,

I was not always so.

And if you doubt what thing I say,

Suppose you make the test;

Suppose, when you've been bad some day

And up to bed are sent away

From mother and the rest—

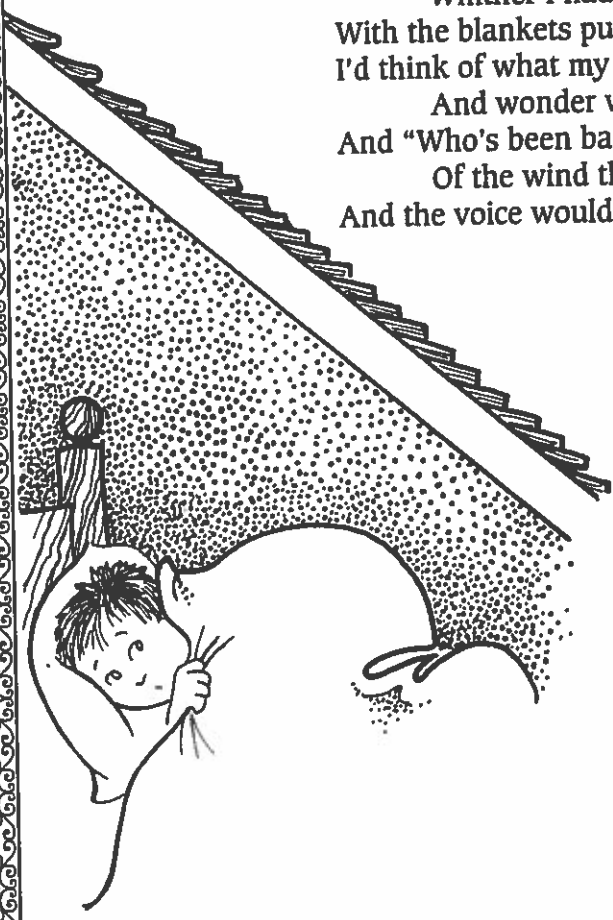
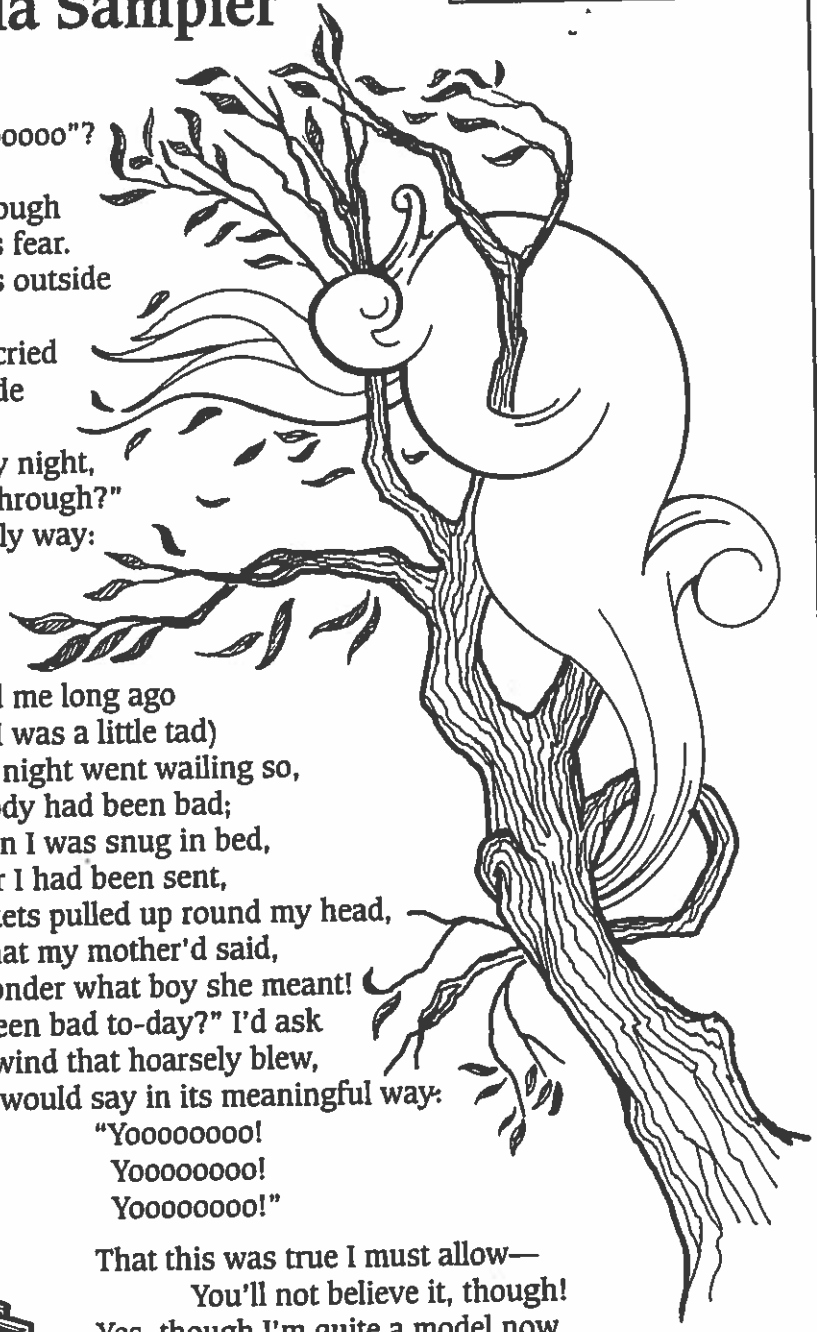
Suppose you ask, "Who has been bad?"

And then you'll hear what's true;

For the wind will moan in its ruefulest tone:

"Yooooooooo!
Yooooooooo!
Yooooooooo!"

—Eugene Field



Free Verse Sampler

Buffalo Dusk

The buffaloes are gone.
 And those who saw the buffaloes are gone.
 Those who saw the buffaloes by the thousands
 and how they pawed the prairie sod into dust
 with their hooves, their great heads down
 pawing on in a great pageant of dusk,
 Those who saw the buffaloes are gone.
 And the buffaloes are gone.

— *Carl Sandburg*

The Dream Keeper

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

— *Langston Hughes*

Free Verse

This type of poetry is free of rhyme and regular rhythm (meter). It may appear in several stanzas or in a single long one.

Be sure to include examples of figurative language, imagery, allusions, and repetition.

Free verse poetry attempts to capture the normal rhythms of ordinary speech.

Attempt to write at least 15 lines.

Choose a topic that interests you or one for which you hold strong feelings.

WRITING A FREE-VERSE POEM

Many of the poems you have just read are about subjects you know well (one's ancestors, mountain-climbing, canoeing, childhood memories), but the poets have responded to them in original, imaginative ways. You may have noticed that the poems in this section do not rhyme, and that the rhythm in them is not as regular as you had expected. (Such "free-verse" poetry will be discussed in more detail in the last section, New Directions.) This type of poetry, in which there is no rhyme and in which rhythm is more "natural" than in strictly regular verse, is popular with many students. You may find that it is easier to express yourself poetically in free verse and that the pleasure you feel from actually creating your own poetry is great.

1. One of the best ways to get started is to take a colourful and descriptive selection from some story and put it into free verse. Remember that poetic writing is sometimes present in what is usually called "prose." Often this prose just needs rearranging into a slightly different form to become a very respectable poem. Here are some points to remember:
 - Set the poem up so that the main words and phrases become separate lines.
 - Leave out unnecessary words.
 - Use imaginative language so that a word or phrase will suggest a whole picture.
 - Change the verbs from the past to the present tense to help lend the poem immediacy.
 - For a final revision, you may wish to put in some descriptive words — words that suggest pictures. Also, you may wish to repeat certain words to give emphasis to important ideas.

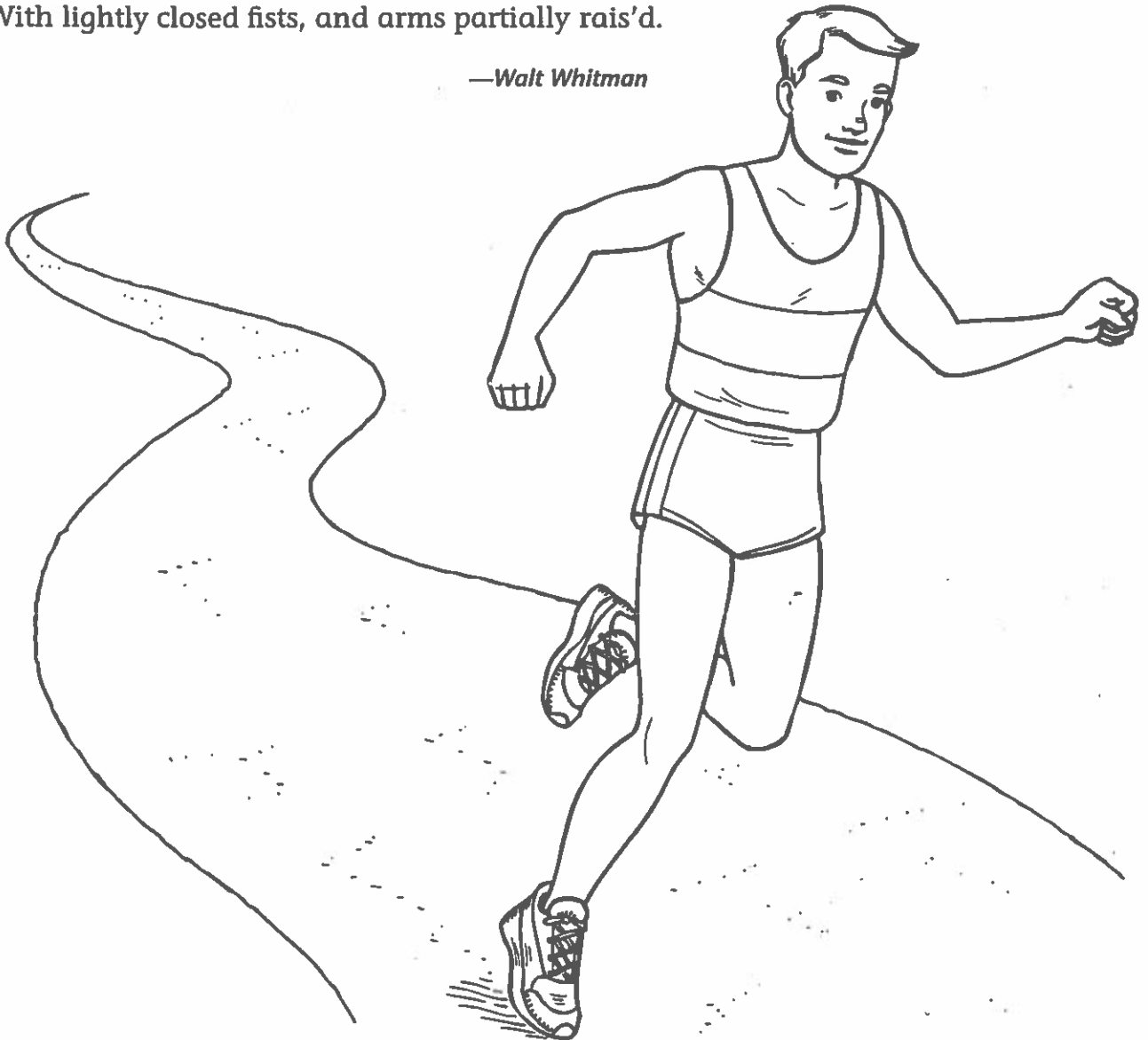
Thus the original prose passage has become a free-verse poem. This is a painless way to begin writing poetry and, even though it is partly borrowed from someone else, a good deal of originality can go into such a composition. It permits you to gain confidence, too, before you make a completely original effort. (Remember that there are many ways in which prose selections can be put into free verse. If you are using the same prose passage as your classmates, compare your version with those that your classmates have produced.)

2. It is also possible to use a particularly vivid poem to create a prose version of the poem's content. There are many prose forms to choose from (e.g. paragraph, essay, letter, report), each suitable to a particular purpose. Choose the form you feel would best express the content and purpose of one of the poems in this chapter. When finished writing, compare the effectiveness of your effort and that of the poet's. Which do you feel conveyed the stronger feeling? Why?

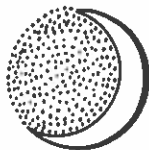
The Runner

On a flat road runs the well-train'd runner;
He is lean and sinewy, with muscular legs;
He is thinly clothed—he leans forward as he runs,
With lightly closed fists, and arms partially rais'd.

—Walt Whitman

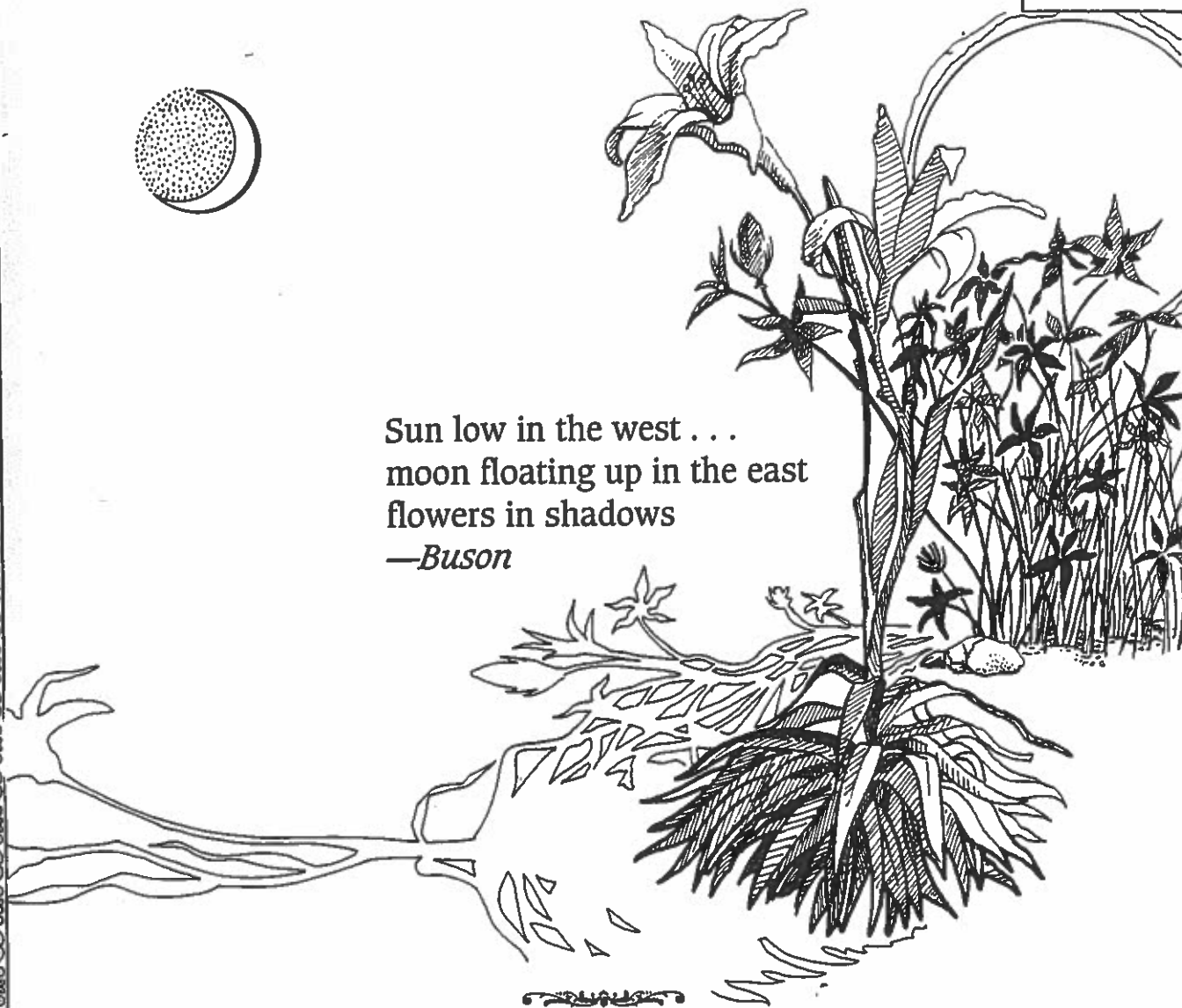


Did You Know? This poem comes from a book called *Leaves of Grass* by Walt Whitman. The book was reprinted about half a dozen times during the poet's life. Every time a new edition came out, Whitman changed the order of the poems, and he added new poems, too. Each edition was very different from the one before.



Sun low in the west . . .
moon floating up in the east
flowers in shadows

—*Buson*



FACTS ABOUT HAIKU

Haiku is an ancient poetry style that originated in Japan. For entertainment, courtiers would make up long poems with many parts or stanzas. The first stanzas of the poems were called *hokkus* and described the season and place in which the poem was composed. Eventually, some *hokkus* were published separately.

French diplomats in Japan liked the poems and took them back to France. They became quite popular there, and by the end of the nineteenth century, the *hokkus* were called haiku. From France, the poem form spread to England and America.

A haiku is short, but it does two things:

1. it usually describes a natural object;
2. it includes a second image or an insight that gives energy to the first image.

Traditionally, there are 17 syllables in a haiku. The first line has five syllables, the second line has seven syllables, and the third line has five syllables. Not all haiku poems follow this format, as you can see on the Haiku Sampler (page 32).



Haiku Sampler

Above the meadow
A skylark, singing, flies high
High into silence.

—author unknown

Rain went sweeping on
in the twilight, spilling moons
on every blade of grass.

—Sho-u

The sea in springtime—
All the warm day in breathing swells
In breathing swells.

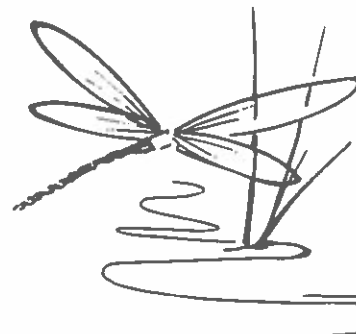
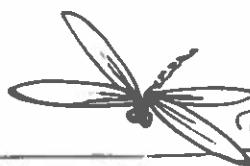
—Buson

The spring day closes
Lingering
Where there is water

—Issa

Red pepper pods
Add wings to them
And they are dragonflies

—Basho



Lightning Jumpshot

Daddy's voice thunders
he shoots a lightning jumpshot
through a sweaty storm.

—Michael Burgess



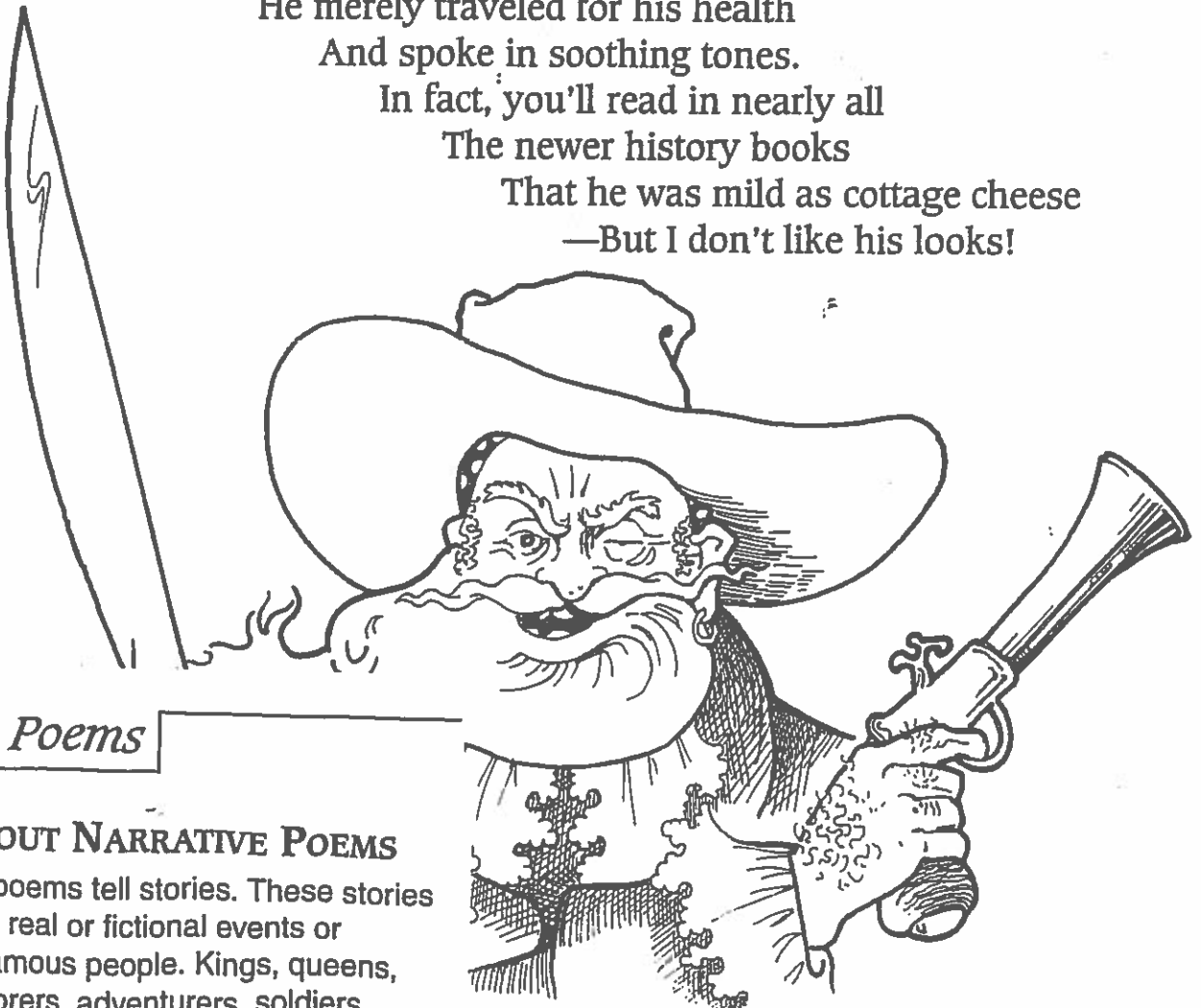
Captain Kidd

by Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet

This person in the gaudy clothes
Is worthy Captain Kidd.
They say he never buried gold.
I think, perhaps, he did.

They say it's all a story that
His favorite little song,
Was "Make these lubbers walk the plank!"
I think, perhaps, they're wrong.

They say he never pirated
Beneath the Skull-and-Bones.
He merely traveled for his health
And spoke in soothing tones.
In fact, you'll read in nearly all
The newer history books
That he was mild as cottage cheese
—But I don't like his looks!



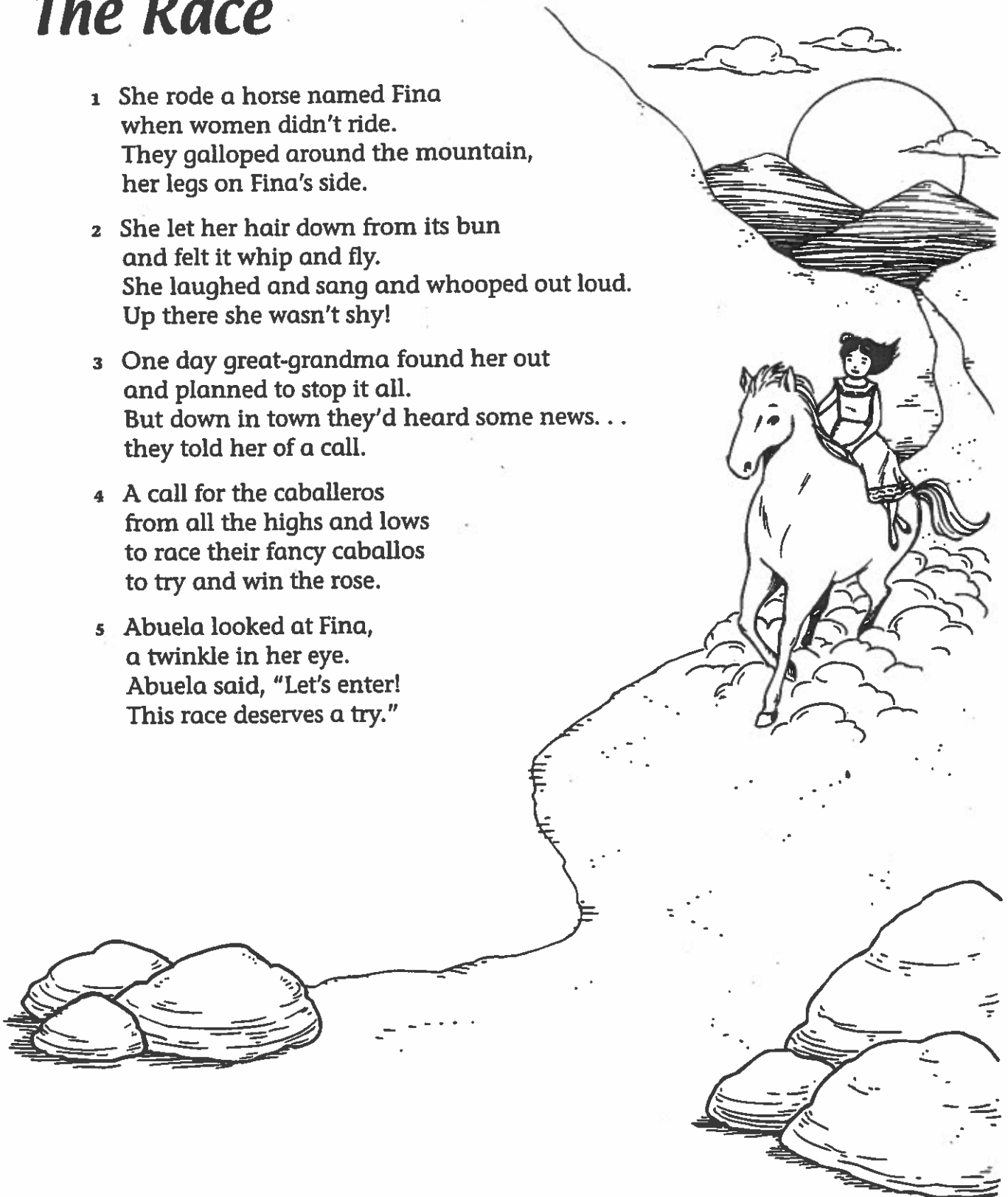
Narrative Poems

FACTS ABOUT NARRATIVE POEMS

All narrative poems tell stories. These stories can be about real or fictional events or ordinary or famous people. Kings, queens, knights, explorers, adventurers, soldiers, travelers, and presidents have all been written about in narrative poems. Narrative poems can rhyme or be in free verse.

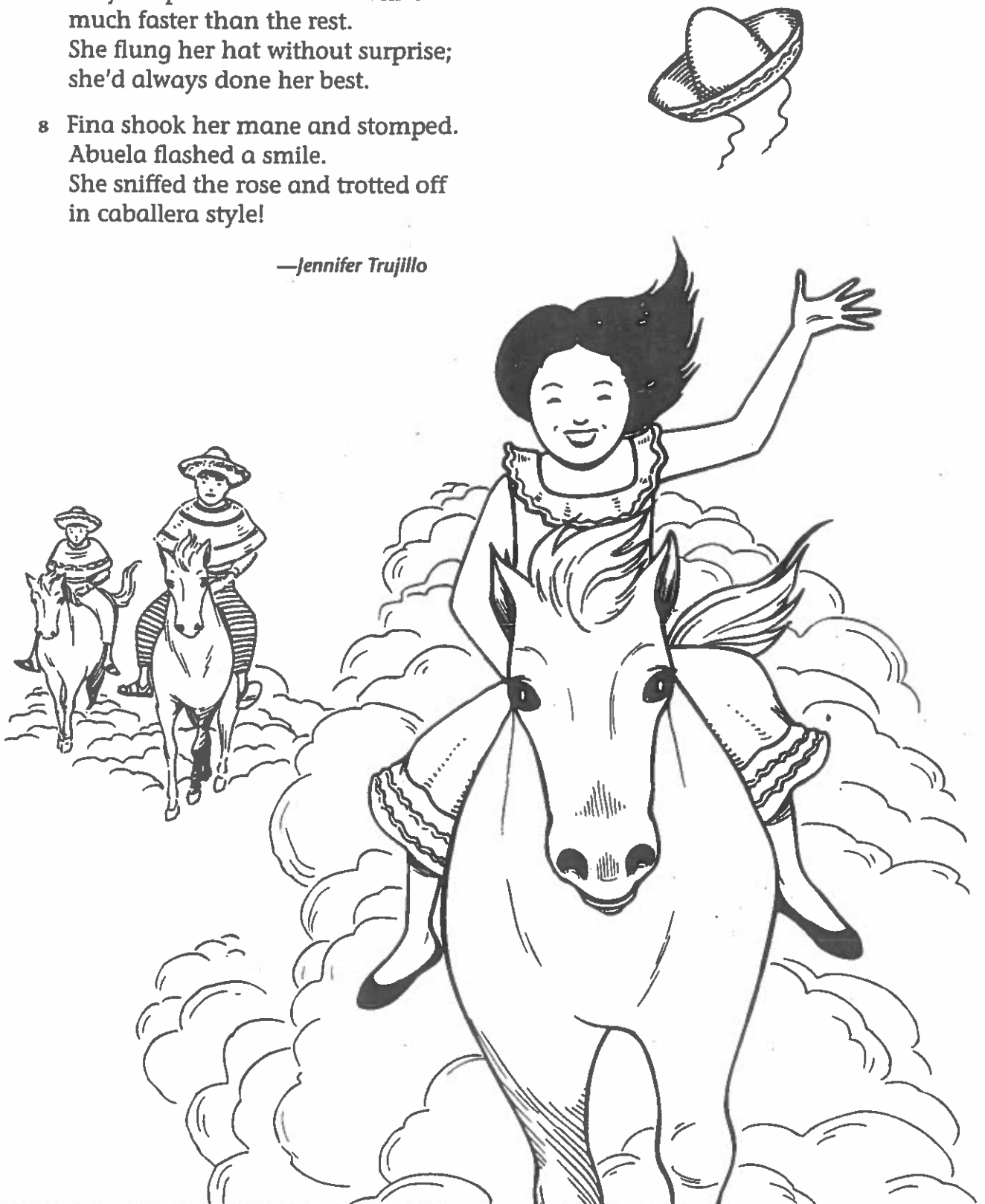
The Race

- 1 She rode a horse named Fina
when women didn't ride.
They galloped around the mountain,
her legs on Fina's side.
- 2 She let her hair down from its bun
and felt it whip and fly.
She laughed and sang and whooped out loud.
Up there she wasn't shy!
- 3 One day great-grandma found her out
and planned to stop it all.
But down in town they'd heard some news. . .
they told her of a call.
- 4 A call for the caballeros
from all the highs and lows
to race their fancy caballos
to try and win the rose.
- 5 Abuela looked at Fina,
a twinkle in her eye.
Abuela said, "Let's enter!
This race deserves a try."



- 6 At dawn she was the only girl,
but didn't even care.
She came to meet the challenge, and
her horse was waiting there.
- 7 They swept across the finish line
much faster than the rest.
She flung her hat without surprise;
she'd always done her best.
- 8 Fina shook her mane and stomped.
Abuela flashed a smile.
She sniffed the rose and trotted off
in caballera style!

—Jennifer Trujillo



Who Has Seen the Wind?

by 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 blow down their heads,

The wind is passing by.



FACTS ABOUT LYRIC POEMS

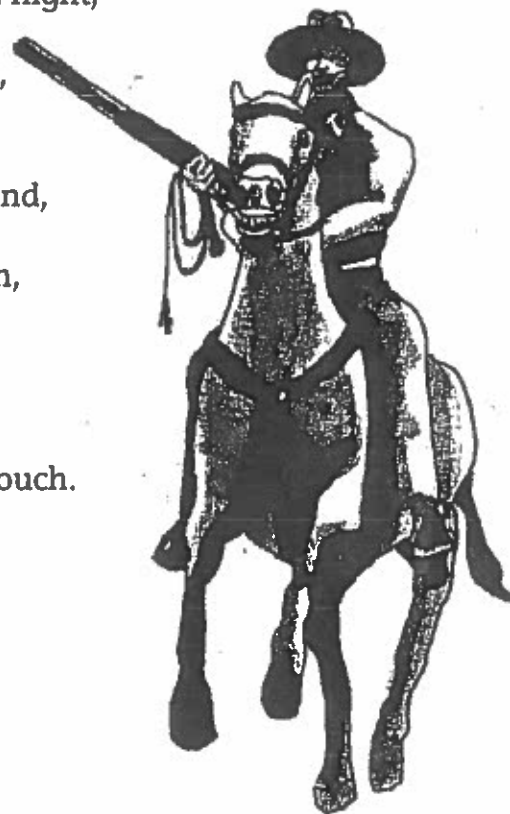
Lyric poetry developed from an ancient Greek form of poetry that was accompanied by a musical instrument, usually a lyre. These types of poems are like songs and have a musical quality about them.

Lyric poems appeal to our senses and emotions. They are personal, subjective poems. By choosing words and phrases carefully, you can set the mood for a lyric poem. Lyric poems can rhyme or be in free verse.

The Fugitive



- 1 With bleeding back, from tyrant's lash,
A fleet-foot slave has sped,
All frantic, past his humble hut,
And seeks the wood instead.
- 2 Once in the woods, his manhood wakes;
Why stand this bondage, wrath?
With diabolic, reckless heart,
He turns he, to the North.
- 3 He flings his crude hat to the ground,
And face the northern wind;
Fleet in his tracks, the blood-hounds bay,
He leaves them far behind.
- 4 By devious way, cross many a stream,
He fiercely pressed that day,
With deadly oaths for brush or brake,
That chance to block his way.
- 5 Erelong, when kind and soothing night,
Had hushed the strife of man,
He wades waist-deep, unto a tree,
To rest awhile and plan.
- 6 He knows no friends or shelter, kind,
To soothe his deadly grief,
He only knows, that farther north,
A slave may find relief.
- 7 No lore of book, or college crafts,
Lends cunning to his plan,
Fresh from the tyrant's blasting touch.
He stands a crude, rough, man.



- 8 But Providence, with pity, deep,
Looked down upon that slave,
And mapped a path, up through the South,
And strength and courage gave.
- 9 Sometimes, a friendly fellow-slave,
Chance, spying where he hid,
At night would bring his coarse, rough, fare,
And God-speed warmly bid.
- 10 And sometimes, when to hunger fierce,
He's seem almost to yield,
A bird would fall into his clutch,
A fish would shake his reel.
- 11 And when on reaching colder climes,
A sheep-cote shelter made,
Or, law-abiding Yankee, stern,
Clandestinely, lent aid.
- 12 Till after many a restless day,
And weary, toiling, night,
All foot-sore, worn, and tired of limb,
His haven looms in sight.
- 13 His tired feet press Canadian shore,
Friends tell him he is free;
He feels a craving still, to hide,
It seems it cannot be.
- 14 But from suspense and thralldom freed,
His manhood wakes at last,
And plies he hand and brain with might,
To mend his ruthless past.
- 15 And Providence, in years that came,
Sent blessings rife, his way,
With grateful heart journeyed through,
His free, allotted days.

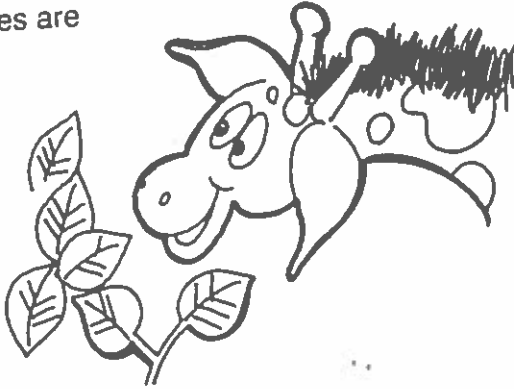
—Priscilla Jane Thompson



Write an ACROSTIC POEM. An acrostic poem is a poem in which each letter of a word is used as the beginning letter for one line of poetry. The lines do not need to rhyme.

Some examples are

Giants
In
Rugged
Africa
Fumble
For
Excellent
Suppers.



Boys will
Always
Suffer,
Even
Bravely
At
Losing their
Last game.



A n acrostic poem
C reates a challenge
R andom words on a theme
O r whole sentences that rhyme
S elect your words carefully
T o form a word from top to bottom
I s the aim of this poetry style
C hoose a word then go!

P _____
I _____
Z _____
Z _____
A _____



New Year Prayer

Renewal
Of
Spirit
Healing
Heart
And
Soul
Harmony
Among
Nations
And
Humanity

—*Sarita Chávez Silverman*



Did You Know? Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, always begins on the first day of the Jewish month of Tishrei. In 2001, this date corresponded to Tuesday, September 18 on the Gregorian calendar (the calendar used in the United States and much of the world). This date was exactly one week after the events of September 11, 2001. This poem expresses the poet's hopes for healing and forgiveness following the tragic events of that day.

LIMERICKS

Limericks are five-line poems. They are usually intended to be funny. All limericks follow a pattern:

The first, second and fifth lines have the same rhyme and the same number of syllables (usually eight).

The third and fourth lines have the rhyme and the same number of syllables (usually six).

The rhyme pattern is AABBA.

It is easy to write a limerick. Think of something you would like to write a limerick about. Limericks are funny, so your topic can be silly. Maybe you would like to write about your hometown (many limericks start "There once was a man from ____" or "There once was a girl from ____"). Maybe you would like to write about someone you know.

Now think of at least two other words that rhyme with your topic. For example, if your subject is "Japan", your rhyming words could be "man" and "ran".

The first two lines of a limerick introduce the character or topic.

There once was a boy from Japan
Who wanted to look like a man

The third and fourth lines introduce a conflict, or a kind of problem, and rhyme with each other

He put on a tie
But no one knew why

The last line is the end of the poem, so it should solve the problem, maybe in a funny way.

And they all laughed at him til he ran.

Practice writing a limerick.

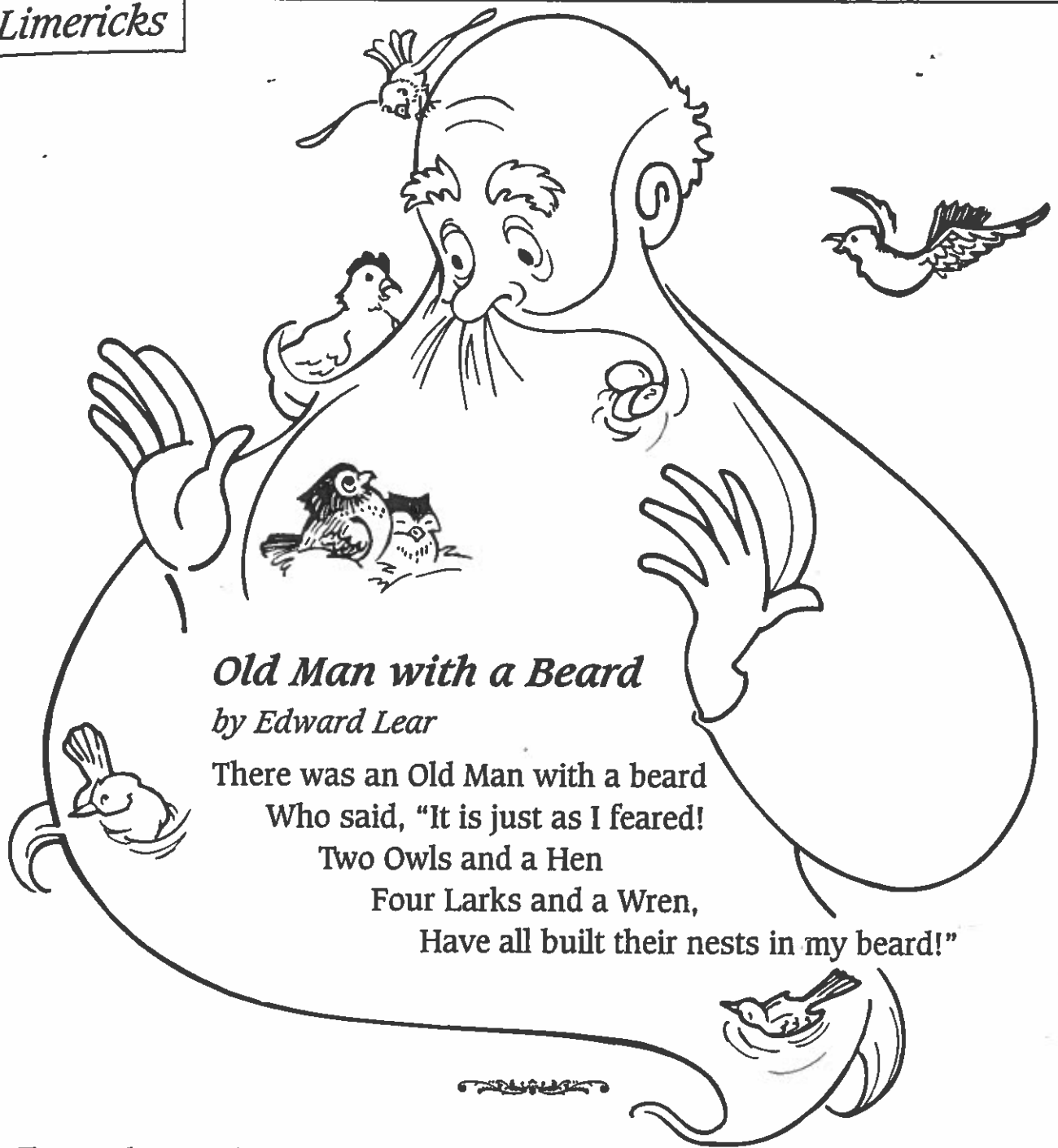
A _____

A _____

B _____

B _____

A _____



Old Man with a Beard

by Edward Lear

There was an Old Man with a beard
Who said, "It is just as I feared!
Two Owls and a Hen
Four Larks and a Wren,
Have all built their nests in my beard!"

FACTS ABOUT LIMERICKS

A limerick is a five-line poem. The first, second, and fifth lines rhyme and have three beats to the rhythm. The third and fourth lines rhyme and have two beats to the rhythm. Limericks are often silly and humorous. They're great fun to read and even more fun to write!

OBJECTIVES

- To identify important characteristics of limericks
- To create original limericks
- To publish poems in classroom displays

Selections from The Book of Nonsense

15.

There was an Old Man in a boat,
Who said, "I'm afloat! I'm afloat!"
When they said, "No! you ain't!"
He was ready to faint,
That unhappy Old Man in a boat.



65.

There was an Old Man of the Dee
Who was sadly annoyed by a flea;
When he said, "I will scratch it,"
They gave him a hatchet,
Which grieved that Old Man of the Dee.

112.

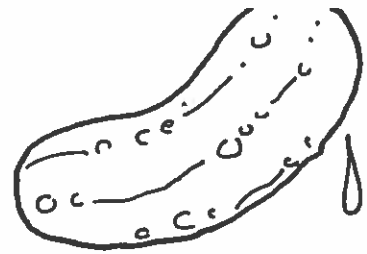
There was a Young Lady of Clare,
Who was sadly pursued by a bear;
When she found she was tired,
She abruptly expired
That unfortunate Lady of Clare.

—Edward Lear

Write a COUPLET. A couplet is a two-lined verse that rhymes.

Some examples are

If I just had one tiny nickel,
I could simply buy a pickle.



I would not bother Mister Shark.
He'll be disturbed and make his mark.

Couplets

A couplet is a two line poem that rhymes.
Each line contains the same number of syllables.

I found a starfish in the bay
When I was fishing yesterday.
Starfish, starfish in the ocean
Moving along in slow motion.
Many arms and colors bright
Sea stars are a special sight.



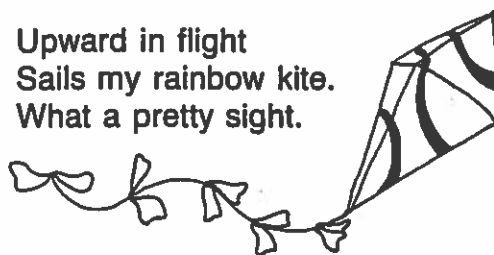
(by third graders during a unit on sea stars)

Variations:



Triplet — Three lines that rhyme.
Each line has the same number of syllables.

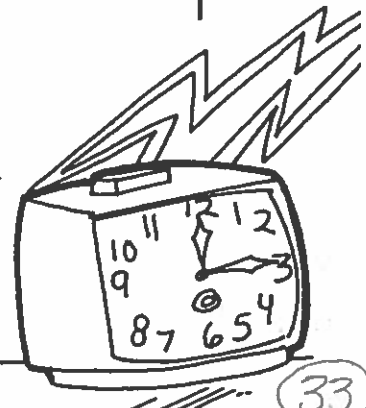
Upward in flight
Sails my rainbow kite.
What a pretty sight.



Now, you try it. Use the following rhyming words and write a couplet:

clock

shock





Diwali

Bright blazing light,
burning up the night
drive the dark and cold away
make the night-time bright as day
bright blazing light
beautiful sight
from each window lamps will burn
Rama, Sita will return
to bring us wealth, bring us love
from the goddess high above
bright blazing light
this Diwali night.

—David Harmer



Did You Know? *Diwali* is an important Hindu festival of light that falls during the dark days of winter. *Diwali* means "a row of lights." Oil-burning "diva lamps" are lit and fireworks are displayed for this festival. It is believed that light brings happiness and good luck, as do Rama and Sita, a couple viewed by Hindus as role models of ideal behavior. The "goddess high above" is Lakshmi, the goddess of abundance. During *Diwali*, she is believed to enter the homes of Hindus, bringing Rama and Sita with her.

FACTS ABOUT CINQUAINS

In some ways, cinquains are similar to haiku. Both cinquains and haiku are short poems that follow a set pattern. Like haiku, cinquains are often about nature, but many authors write about other topics, too. Cinquain poems do not rhyme.

The inventor of the cinquain was Adalaide Crapsey (1878–1914). Cinquains have five lines. The number of syllables in successive lines are two, four, six, eight, and two. This pattern is used in the poem on page 51. "November Night" by Adalaide Crapsey (page 54) also uses this pattern. Below are two other popular patterns for writing cinquains.

Dinosaurs

by Cindy Barden

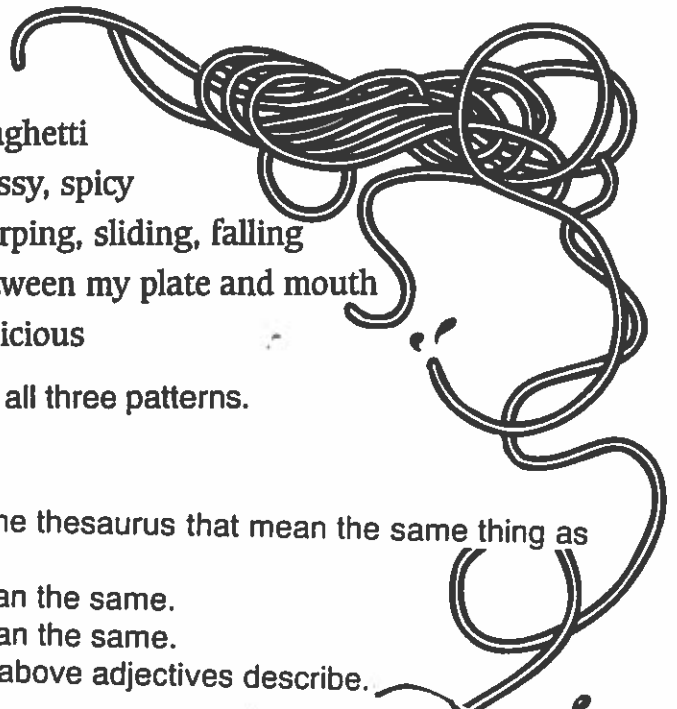
<i>Line 1: One word</i>	Dinosaurs
<i>Line 2: Two words</i>	Lived once,
<i>Line 3: Three words</i>	Long ago, but
<i>Line 4: Four words</i>	Only dust and dreams
<i>Line 5: One word</i>	Remain



Spaghetti

by Cindy Barden

<i>Line 1: A noun</i>	Spaghetti
<i>Line 2: Two adjectives</i>	Messy, spicy
<i>Line 3: Three words ending in -ing</i>	Slurping, sliding, falling
<i>Line 4: A phrase</i>	Between my plate and mouth
<i>Line 5: Another word for the noun</i>	Delicious



It can be fun for students to experiment with all three patterns.

On the first line, write the adjective.

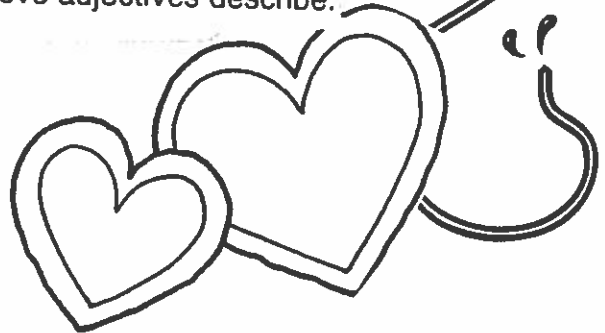
On the second line, write two words from the thesaurus that mean the same thing as the adjective.

On the third line, write three words that mean the same.

On the fourth line, write four words that mean the same.

On the fifth line, write a noun that all of the above adjectives describe.

Lovable
Adorable, dear,
Likeable, enchanting, pleasing,
Sweet, good, warm, tender,
Teddy Bear.

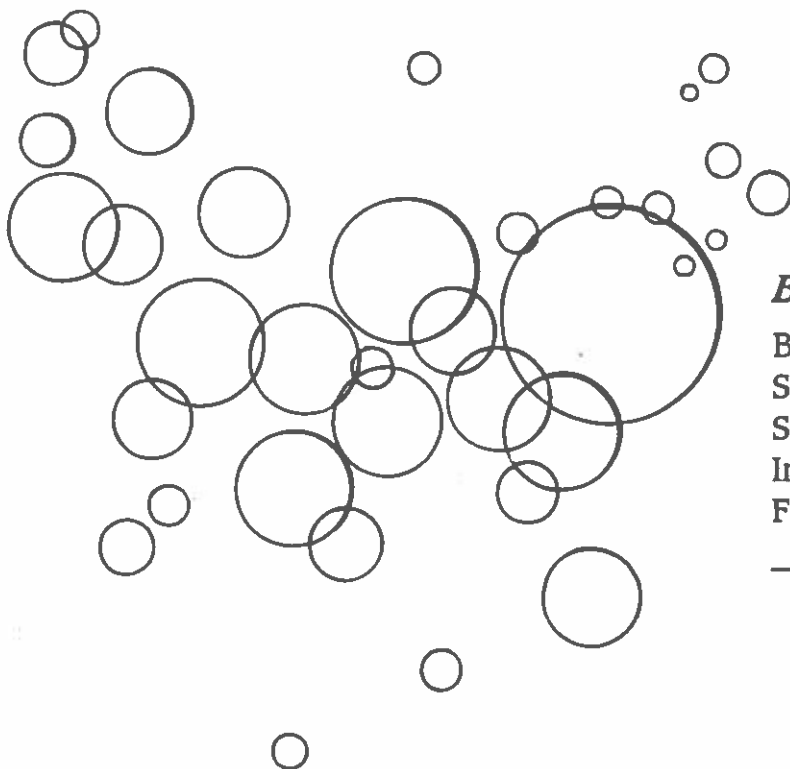


Cinquain Sampler

November Night

Listen . . .
 With faint dry sound,
 Like steps of passing ghosts,
 The leaves, frost-crisp'd, break from the trees
 And fall.

—Adalaide Crapsey

*Bubbles*

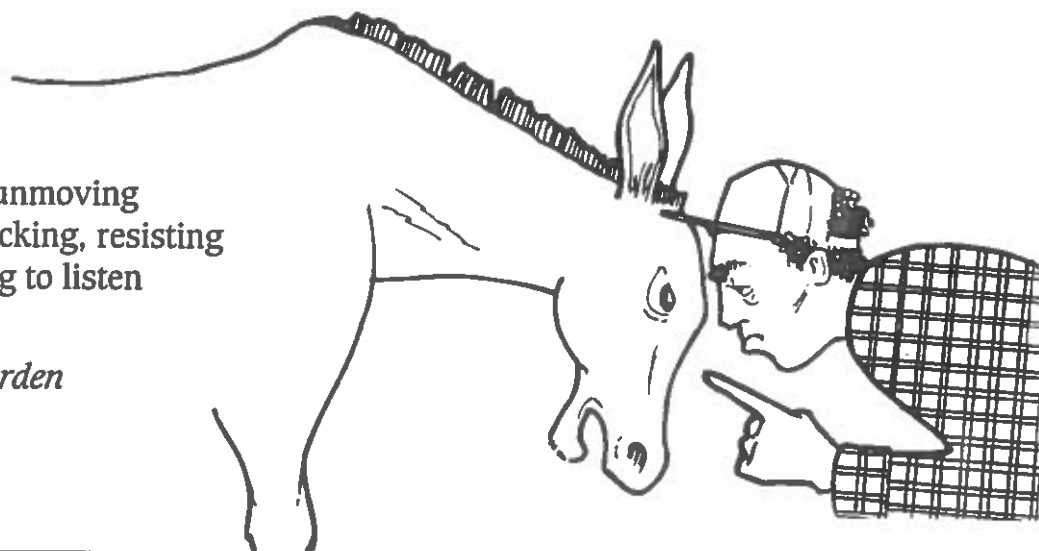
Bubbles
 Shiny, short-lived
 Shimmering, bursting, floating
 In the summer breeze
 Freedom

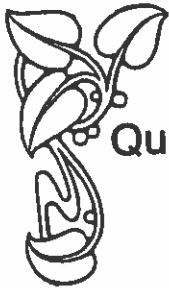
—Cindy Barden

Mules

Mules
 Stubborn, unmoving
 Braying, kicking, resisting
 Not wanting to listen
 People

—Cindy Barden





Quatrain — Four lines with several possible rhyming patterns.

AABB — lines 1 and 2 rhyme, lines 3 and 4 rhyme



Birthday parties are colorful, surprising affairs,
With presents of dolls and cute teddy bears.
After the presents come cake and ice cream.
The party girl certainly feels like a queen.

ABAB — lines 1 and 3 rhyme, lines 2 and 4 rhyme



The wind is a creature with glistening wings,
Who flits about and gossips with the deer.
She is more playful, though, in the middle of Spring,
When she blows nice, warm breezes against my ear.

ABCB — lines 2 and 4 rhyme, lines 1 and 3 do not rhyme



A book is something you always rely on,
Since it can take all your worries away,
And send you off on an adventurous journey,
Or a little picnic on a bright, sunny day.

ABBA — lines 1 and 4 rhyme, lines 2 and 3 rhyme



A museum is a place where time disappears,
You may be a young pirate sailing the ocean waves,
Or a brave Spanish explorer in search of golden caves,
But when you leave the museum, time reappears.

Quatrain Samples

• A Poem •

Student Author: Rachel Coch

A poem starts in the back of your head,
And you don't even know it's there.
It works its way to the front of your brain,
And seems to pop out of thin air!

A poem with people and places and things,
That tells about joy and despair.
That poem started in the back of your head,
And you didn't know it was there!

• Hair •

Student Author: Rachel Coch

Long hair, short, or in between,
When you swim, the ends turn green.
Take a handful, pull it out.
If you do I'll really shout!

• The Deer •

Student Author: Kelly Russell

The deer, the deer, so quick and fast,
Who jumps with so much grace.
When you see him, you will gasp
As you observe his pace.

• Your Mind Is a Window •

Student Author: Rachel Coch

Your mind is a window deep within.
Your mind is a window taking things in.
Your mind is a window ready to grow,
Stretching to hold everything you know.

• My Doll •

Student Author: Amanda Coch

I have a pretty doll,
And she is rather small.
Though I am fairly tall,
She doesn't mind at all.

The most common form of a **Diamante** poem is the seven-lined version. This form is written about two opposite subjects and makes a comparison between them by moving from one to the other. Subjects might include war-peace, fire-ice, hot-cold, etc. Here is the model for writing such a poem:

Line 1: one noun that names the first subject of the diamante

Line 2: two adjectives that describe the first subject

Line 3: three -ing words that are related to the first subject

Line 4: four nouns: the first two related to the first subject (named in line 1) and the second two related to the second subject (named in line 7)

Line 5: three -ing words that are related to the second subject

Line 6: two adjectives that describe the second subject

Line 7: one noun that names the second subject of the diamante

Here is an example:

Dogs,
playful, active
running, playing, growing
fast, fun, soft, nice
sleeping, meowing, eating
furry, whiskery
Cats

Diamonte Samples

• Summer/Winter •

Student Author: Ryan Caro

Summer
Hot, green
Swimming, playing, resting
Insects, fruit, snow, rain
Skiing, sledding, hibernating
Cold, white
Winter

• Train/Airplane •

Student Author: Preston Hara

Train
Fast, large
Chugging, steaming, traveling
Rail, caboose, wing, jet
Flying, soaring, zooming
Swift, sleek
Airplane

• Surfing/Skateboarding •

Student Author: David Stough

Surfing
Fun, extreme
Exciting, thrilling, challenging
Wave, surfboard, asphalt, wheels
Riding, jumping, grinding
Cool, fast
Skateboarding

• Math/Spelling •

Student Author: Katrina Ford

Math
Orderly, logical
Working, thinking, knowing
Arithmetic, fractions, letters, words
Learning, writing, memorizing
Correct, fun
Spelling

• Pegasus/Unicorn •

Student Author: Katrina Ford

Pegasus
Smart, pretty
Flying, running, playing
Horse, wings, horn, pony
Gallop, wishing, racing
Magical, clever
Unicorn

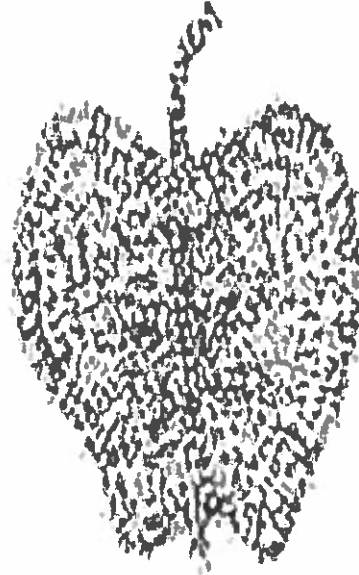
• Desert/Mountain •

Student Author: Ryan Caro

Desert
Red, hot
Burning, drying, blistering
Dunes, sand, snow, forest
Towering, rising, refreshing
Cold, white
Mountain

Concrete Poetry

Concrete Poetry is the use of words and their physical formation to convey meaning. This may be done with color, the shape of letters, or the arrangement of words.



What is a Shape Poem?

A Shape Poem is a type of poetry that describes an object and is shaped the same as the object the poem is describing.

You could write your shape poem on anything.

What Shapes Could You Make Your Poetry?

You could have a circle-shaped poem describing a cookie, or a poem about love shaped like a heart.

An Example of a Shape Poem

A
volcano.
A huge rock,
shooting lava up into
the air! Everyone runs for
cover. Lots of thick, black smoke
pours out of the top, giving you a warning
before the explosions start. Nothing can stand in its
way. Sometimes they don't blow up for hundreds of years.
Still thousands in the world but they don't all work, some are even underwater.

	To	
	think	
	in only	
	two colors:	
	Black and	
	White. To be oblivious	to all
	others. only black. or	white. Or
	shallow or deep, high	or low, agree
	or fight I only think in	black or white.
	Have you finished your	job? No?
	Then you must not have	even tried
	at all. How was your	day? Terrible?
	No? Then it must	very
	much have been quite	the
	ball. I ask what color	is the
	grass If not green,	must
	be red. I ask how	is? If
	not well, she must	8 over
	2 equivalent to? If	it must
	be minus 4. Is it	me that you
	love and adore?	must be the
	one you abhor. I	dimensions I see
	both length and width.	is a mystery To me, a
	myth. Like a paper I have	but two sides. Each time you
see	just one face Its blank stare is one you	cannot erase. BUT! what
if I had	finished the job halfway and my day	had just been okay. The
grass looks	like a dead yellow and I hear	your mother feels quite
mellow. What	if one had changed divid-	ends And rather than
lover, we were	just friends. These are	the truly unique colors of
life. This is where identity and variety	are rife. With amethyst, bronze,	
cerulean, and deep pink.	Ecrú, flam ingo, indigo and pitch	
like ink. Do not think there	is just wr ong and right For we	
cannot think in only black	and white. Do not fall	
for any extremist propaganda.	For we are not as	

monochrome as an innocent small panda.

Glossary of Poetry Terms

Accent See "Stressed Syllables"

Acrostic (uh-CROSS-tick)

In an *acrostic* poem, a word or short message is spelled out vertically using the first letter of each line. The hidden message in an acrostic is always related to the theme or main idea of the poem, as in this example from a poem about the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah.

Example:

R enewal
O f
S pirit
H ealing

from "New Year Prayer"
by Sarita Chávez Silverman



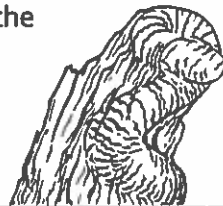
Alignment (uh-LINE-mint)

The way the words are arranged in the lines of a poem is called *alignment*. In the stanza shown in this example, all of the lines except for the last one are set centered. The last line is set off to the right. The poet may be calling special attention to the word *listening* by using this alignment.

Example:

"It's in there, sleeping,"
Don Luis says and winks.
He knows I want to feel
the animal asleep in a piece of wood,
like he does
turning it this way and that
listening.

from "The Purple Snake" by Pat Mora



Alliteration (uh-lih-tuh-RAY-shun)

When several words that begin with the same sound are next to each other or close together, it is called *alliteration*. In this example, the repetition of the beginning *b* creates alliteration. The effect is strengthened by the *b*'s in the middle of some words.

Example:

I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

from "The Brook"
by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Assonance (ASS-uh-nance)

When the same vowel sound is repeated in words that are next to each other or close together, it is called *assonance*. Assonance can make poetry more musical, and it can also make it easier to learn by heart. In this example, the words *bright*, *light*, *night*, *drive*, and *time* create assonance.

Example:

Bright blazing light,
burning up the night
drive the dark and cold away
make the night-time bright as day

from "Diwali" by David Harner



Atmosphere (AT-muss-fear)

A poet uses words to help readers "see" the setting in a poem. It may be a still, quiet place or a busy, noisy place. In describing the setting, a poet creates an *atmosphere*. In this example, the poet uses just eighteen words to create a specific atmosphere.

Example:

Night from a railroad car window
Is a great, dark, soft thing
Broken across with slashes of light.

"Window" by Carl Sandburg



Ballad

A *ballad* is a song or poem that tells a story. Most ballads are written in *quatrains*, or four-line stanzas, with patterns of rhyme that help make them easier to recite or sing by heart. Ballads are among the earliest forms of poetry, and many continue to be passed along by word of mouth in what is called the *oral tradition*.

Example: Come all you rounders if you want to hear
A story 'bout a brave engineer,
Casey Jones was the rounder's name
'Twas on the Illinois Central that he won his fame.
from "The Ballad of Casey Jones" by Wallace Saunders



Capitalization

The rules for using capital letters and punctuation marks are not always strictly followed in poetry. Some poets choose not to follow them at all. In this example, though, the poet has used capital letters on words that don't require them. This was probably done to emphasize the silly nature of this limerick.

Example:
There was an Old Man in a boat,
Who said, "I'm afloat! I'm afloat!"
When they said, "No! you ain't!"
He was ready to faint,
That unhappy Old Man in a boat.
*Limerick 15 from The Book of Nonsense
by Edward Lear*

Colloquial Language (kuh-LOW-kwee-ul)

Informal language and vocabulary that is part of everyday speech is referred to as *colloquial language*. Colloquial expressions include slang and familiar expressions. They are often used when a poet wants to reach simple, "regular" people or to show that they are speaking in a poem. In this example, the poet has replaced the words *blowing* and *growing* with colloquialisms.

Example:
It sets the sand a-blowing,
And the blackberries a-growing.
*from "What's the Railroad to Me?"
by Henry David Thoreau*



Consonance

The repetition of consonant sounds at the end of words is called *consonance*. Poets use consonance to help create a musical quality in their poetry or to emphasize a particular sound. In this example, the words *trail* and *hill* create consonance.

Example:
When I walk the river trail
the ground grabs every step
and makes me pay for every hill,
*from "Skating the River Trail"
by Linda Armstrong*

Contraction

When poets use a particular pattern of meter, or rhythm, they may sometimes need to shorten a word so that it fits the pattern. One way to shorten a word is to take out a syllable, replacing the missing letter or letters with an apostrophe. This creates a *contraction*, or shortened word. In this example, however, the contraction does not change the number of syllables. It is one of the ways that Walt Whitman experimented with words and language in his poetry.

Example: On a flat road runs the well-train'd runner;
He is lean and sinewy, with muscular legs;
He is thinly clothed—he leans forward as he runs,
With lightly closed fists, and arms partially rais'd.
"The Runner" by Walt Whitman



Dialog

When two or more characters have a conversation, it is called a *dialog*. When dialog is included in poetry, some poets follow the same rules of punctuation used for writing dialog in prose. Some poets do not. In this example, each speaker's words are in separate stanzas. *Italic* type is used for the mother's words.

Example:

When I grow up,
I want to be a doctor.

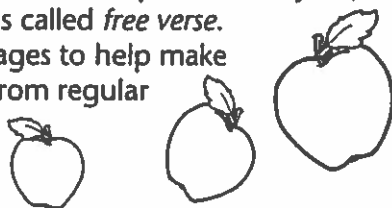
*M'ija, you will patch scraped knees
and wipe away children's tears.*

from "Growing Up"
by Liz Ann Báez Aguilar



Free Verse

When a poem is written without a pattern of rhyme, meter, or line length, it is called *free verse*. Poets use words and images to help make free verse feel different from regular sentences, or *prose*.



Example:

Your laugh peels apples
and stirs their cinnamon bubblings,
then opens a book and pulls me
onto your lap.

from "Song to Mothers"
by Pat Mora

Haiku (hi-KOO)

Haiku is a form of poetry that first began in Japan in the 1700s. A haiku always has three lines. The first and third lines have five syllables, and the second line has seven. A traditional haiku focuses on an image in nature. Most haiku present a closeup look at a single detail.

Example:

Daddy's voice thunders
he shoots a lightning jumpshot
through a sweaty storm

"Lightning Jumpshot"
by Michael Burgess

Imagery (IH-muh-jree)

We call the words used by writers to help readers make pictures in their mind *imagery*. Notice how the poet's imagery in this example helps you make a mental picture of the runaway slave.

Example: The runaway slave came to my house and stopt outside,
I heard his motions crackling the twigs of the woodpile,
Through the swung half-door of the kitchen I saw him
limpsy and weak,

from "The Runaway Slave" by Walt Whitman



Invented Words

Invented words are made up by the poet. You can usually guess what they mean by seeing how they fit with the other words in the poem. What kind of weapon is a "vorpal sword"? What sort of enemy is a "manxome foe"? What might a "Tumtum tree" be? You'll have to use your imagination.

Example:

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.

from "Jabberwocky"
by Lewis Carroll

Limerick (LIH-muh-rick)

Limericks are silly or nonsensical rhymes that follow a very specific rhyme scheme. Limericks always have five lines. The first, second, and fifth lines always rhyme. The third and fourth lines also rhyme. Limericks always follow the same pattern of meter, or rhythm, as you'll find in this limerick.



Example:

There was a Young Lady of Clare,
Who was sadly pursued by a bear;
When she found she was tired,
She abruptly expired
That unfortunate Lady of Clare.

Limerick 112 from The Book of Nonsense
by Edward Lear

Lyrics (LIH-rix)

When the words of a poem are set to music and sung, they are called *lyrics*. Sometimes, the words and the music are created separately and combined later. Sometimes, the words and music are created at the same time. These lyrics are from a traditional sea shanty sung by sailors.

Example: 'Twas Friday morn when we set sail,
And we had not got far from land,
When the Captain, he spied a lovely mermaid,
With a comb and a glass in her hand.

from "The Mermaid," Traditional



Metaphor (MET-uh-for)

A *metaphor* compares two things by presenting them as being almost identical. For example, a metaphor that compares snow to a white blanket would read: *The snow is a white blanket*. In this example, laughter is compared to a "green song."

Example:

Your laugh is a green song,
canción verde,
that branches
through our house,

from "Song to Mothers"
by Pat Mora

Meter (MEE-tur)

A regular pattern of rhythm is called *meter*. Writing made up of sentences that use meter is called *verse*. Writing made up of sentences that do not use meter is called *prose*. To feel the meter in this example, clap or tap for each syllable.

Example:

With bleeding back, from tyrant's lash,
A fleet-foot slave has sped,
All frantic, past his humble hut,
And seeks the wood instead.

from "The Fugitive"
by Priscilla Jane Thompson

Narrative Verse

Narrative verse tells a story, or narrates. The difference between a narrative poem and a prose story is that the narrative poem is told in verse, so it rhymes.

Example: Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,

from "The Landlord's Tale: Paul Revere's Ride" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



Nonsense Poems

Nonsense poems are silly rhymes that don't always make sense. Their purpose is to entertain the reader with the sound of the words and the amusing images used by the poet.

Example:

There was an Old Man of the Dee
Who was sadly annoyed by a flea;
When he said, "I will scratch it,"
They gave him a hatchet,
Which grieved that Old Man of the Dee.

Limerick 65 from *The Book of Nonsense*
by Edward Lear



Ode

A poem that uses exalted, or elevated, language to celebrate a particular subject is called an *ode*. Odes are usually written using stanzas and may be quite long. They may deal with a serious subject or be a thoughtful meditation on a topic. In this case, the poet looks at the effects of slavery on African American men. Altogether, this ode has fifteen stanzas.

Example:

Sometimes, a friendly, fellow-slave,
Chance, spying where he hid,
At night would bring his coarse, rough, fare,
And God-speed warmly bid.

from "The Fugitive"
by Priscilla Jane Thompson

Onomatopoeia (aw-nuh-mah-tuh-PEE-uh)

When a word sounds like the noise or sound that it stands for, it is called *onomatopoeia*. *Buzz* and *sizzle* are examples of onomatopoeia. In this example, the poet uses onomatopoeia to evoke the sounds of sheep and birds.

Example:

He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
from "*The Landlord's Tale: Paul Revere's Ride*"
by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



Personification (per-sawn-uh-fuh-KAY-shun)

When a writer describes something that is not human as having qualities or capabilities that are human, it is called *personification*. In this example, the poet describes flags as if they have human feelings.

Example:

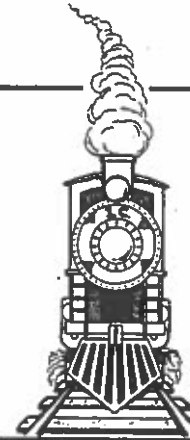
Above, flags tug at their fetters,
desperate to join the fun.
from "*Tuen Ng—The Dragon Boat Races*"
by Judith Nicholls

Quatrain (KWAH-trane)

A stanza made up of four rhyming lines is called a *quatrain*. Ballads are usually written using quatrains, as in this example.

Example: They pulled out of Memphis nearly two hours late,
Soon they were speeding at a terrible rate.
And the people knew by the whistle's moan
That the man at the throttle was Casey Jones.

from "*The Ballad of Casey Jones*" by Wallace Saunders



Refrain (ree-FRANE)

A *refrain* is a group of lines that are repeated two or more times in a poem. When song lyrics include a refrain, it is called a *chorus*. In Tennyson's "*The Brook*," the following refrain is repeated at the end of four different stanzas.

Example:

For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

from "*The Brook*"
by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Repetition (reh-peh-TIH-shun)

When a poet uses the same word or words more than once in a line or in a poem, it is called *repetition*. Repetition can be used to emphasize a word or an idea in a poem. Repetition can also be used to create special sounds or rhythms in a poem.

Example:

Bright blazing light,
burning up the night
drive the dark and cold away
make the night-time bright as day
bright blazing light
beautiful sight

from "*Diwali*"
by David Harmer



Rhyming Verse

When words end with the same sound, we say they *rhyme*. Poetry with a pattern of rhyme is called *rhyming verse*. Rhyming words help make their writing sound different from prose. Rhyming words are usually placed at the end of a line in a poem. In this example, the first and third lines rhyme and the second and fourth lines rhyme, so we can show this rhyme scheme as *abab*.

Example:

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

from "*The Brook*"
by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Simile (SIH-muh-lee)

A *simile* compares one thing to another using the word *like* or *as*. In this example, the poet compares oars, or paddles, to the huge wings of a beast.



Example:

Slowly paddles lift
above the dragon-prows
like giant wing-bones
from a waking beast,

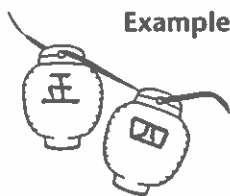
from "Tuen Ng—The Dragon Boat Races"
by Judith Nicholls

Sonnet (SAWE-net)

A *sonnet* has fourteen lines and follows a regular rhyme scheme. In the sonnet "The New Colossus" (see page 109), the rhyme scheme is made of two parts. The first eight lines, called an octave, has an *abbaabba* pattern. The last six lines, called a sestet, has a *cddcd* rhyme scheme.

Stanza (STAN-zuh)

A stanza is a group of lines in a poem. Usually, the lines in a stanza are related to each other in the same way that the sentences of a paragraph "go together."



Example: It's New Year's Day
in China Town,
another year
is counted down.1

Fireworks shoot
showers of light
lanterns wave,
burning bright.2

from "Chinese New Year in China Town" by Andrew Collett



Stressed Syllables

Rhyming verse usually has meter, or a pattern of rhythm. Poets use the natural pattern of accented, or stressed, syllables in the words they choose to help set the poem's rhythm. In the example at right, the syllables where the accent, or stress, falls appear in the darker boldface type.

Example:

It's New Year's Day
in **China Town**,
another year
is **counted down**.

from "Chinese New Year in China Town"
by Andrew Collett

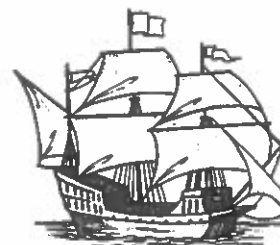


Traditional Poetry

The authors of *traditional poetry* are unknown. Traditional poems have been recited and passed down from one generation to the next. Often, these poems were recited for years before anyone wrote them down. There are often several different versions of traditional poems. This traditional ballad is hundreds of years old.

Example: Then three times 'round went our gallant ship,
And three times 'round went she,
And the third time that she went 'round
She sank to the bottom of the sea.

from "The Mermaid," Traditional



Word Order

In English, basic sentence structure begins with a subject, followed by a verb and a complement. Poets often change this typical *word order* to achieve a particular rhyme scheme or to add musicality to their poetry. In this example, Shakespeare has changed the usual order of "his bones are made of coral."

Example:

Full fathom five thy father lies.
Of his bones are coral made;

from "Full Fathom Five"
by William Shakespeare