



Organized by

**The Rainy River Festival of the Performing Arts
Association**

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Comprehensive Resource Manual

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ENGLISH DRAMA
SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR KINDERGARTEN

Class D001 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Kindergarten

MY DOG - Bernice Aylen

When thunder splits the sky
And lightening quivers at the window
My dog crawls behind the sofa.

He covers his ears with his paws
and whimpers

I'm not really afraid
But my dog needs company.
So I crawl in beside him
And cuddle up
Close.

Class D001 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)

O EARTH – Chief Dan George

O earth
for the strength
in my heart
I thank thee.

O cloud
for the blood
in my body
I thank thee.
O fire
for the shine
in my eyes
I thank thee.

O sun
for the life
you gave to me
I thank thee.

Class D001 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)

FALLING STAR - Sara Teasdale

I saw a star slide down the sky,
Blinding the north as it went by,
Too burning and too quick to hold,
Too lovely to be bought or sold,
Good only to make wishes on
And then forever to be gone.

Class D001 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)

THE WINDOW CLEANER - M. Long

When I grow up I want to be
A window cleaning man
And make the windows in our street
As shiny as I can.
I'll put my ladder by the wall
And up the steps I'll go
But when I'm up there with my pail
I hope the wind won't blow.

Class D001 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)

THE SQUIRREL Author unknown

Whisky, frisky,
Hippity hop,
Up he goes
To the tree top!

Whirly, twirly,
Round and round,
Down he scampers
To the ground.
Furly, curly,
What a tail!
Tall as a feather,
Broad as a sail!

Where's his supper?
In the shell,
Snappity, crackity,
Out it fell!

Class D001 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)

MICE - Rose Fyleman

I think mice
Are rather nice.

Their tails are long,
Their faces small,
They haven't any
Chins at all.
Their ears are pink,
Their teeth are white,
They run about
The house at night.
They nibble things
They shouldn't touch
And no one seems
To like them much.

But I think mice
Are nice.

Class D001 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)

A LITTLE SEED - Mabel Watts

A little seed
For me to sow . . .
A little earth
To make it grow . . .
A little hole,
A little pat . . .
A little wish,
And that is that.
A little sun,
A little shower,
A little while.
And then – a flower!

Class D001 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

Class D002 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Kindergarten
UPSIDE DOWN – Aileen Fisher

It's funny how beetles
and creatures like that
can walk upside down
as well as walk flat:

They crawl on a ceiling
and climb on a wall
without any practice
or trouble at all,

While I have been trying
for a year (maybe more)
and still I can't stand
with my head on the floor.

Class D002 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)
THE ALPHABET MONSTER - Robert Heidbreder

I'm the Alphabet Monster
And nothing tastes better
To the Alphabet Monster
Than eating a letter.
A "J" and an "A"
And a "C" and a "K"
And the million more letters
I munch every day.
I'm hungry now.
What shall I do?
I think I'll eat
a "Y"
an "O"
and a "U".
That means. . .YOU!

Class D002 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)
IF I WERE A FISH - Marie Louise Allen

I like to play in water;
And if I were a fish,
I'd have water all around me
In a big glass dish.

And my tail would make it splatter
Till it splashed the sky—
And the Mother Fish would only say,
“Now, don't-get-dry!”

Class D002 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)
JACK BE NIMBLE - adapted by Joan Miller

Jack, be nimble.
Jack, be quick.
Jack! Jump over the candlestick!

Jack! Be careful!
Jack, take care.
Or else you'll burn your underwear!

O dear, Jack!
You should have jumped higher!
I'm afraid you've caught your pants on fire.

Class D002 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)
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.

Class D002 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)

PUZZLED - Margaret Hillert

I took a sip of lemon pop
And then a sip of lime,
A little orange soda too
A swallow at a time.
Some grape came next and cherry red,
And then I almost cried,
How could my stomach feel so bad
With rainbows down inside.

Class D002 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Kindergarten (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

Class D008 CHORAL SPEAKING –Kindergarten

WHEN YOUR SUCKER STICKS - Sheree Fitch

My sucker stuck to my sweater;
my sucker stuck in my hair.
Mum had to get the scissors
to cut it out of there.

All because of my sucker,
there's a bald spot on my head.
To tell the truth
I'd rather have
that sucker stuck instead.

Class D008 CHORAL SPEAKING –Kindergarten (Continued)

BABY'S DRINKING SONG - James Kirkup

Sip a little
Sup a little
From your little
Cup a little
Sup a little
Sip a little
Put it to your
Lip a little
Tip a little
Tap a little
Not into your
Lap or it'll
Dip a little
Drop a little
On the table
Top a little.

Class D008 CHORAL SPEAKING –Kindergarten (Continued)

THE HOUSE OF THE MOUSE - Lucy Sprague Mitchell

The house of the mouse
is a wee little house,
a green little house in the grass,
which big clumsy folk
may hunt and may poke
and still never see as they pass
this sweet little, neat little,
we little, green little,
cuddle-down hide-away
house in the grass.

Class D008 CHORAL SPEAKING –Kindergarten (Continued)

THE MOON'S THE NORTH WIND'S COOKY - Vachel Lindsay

The Moon's the North Wind's cooky.
He bites it, day by day,
Until there's but a rim of scraps
That crumble all away.

The South Wind is a baker.
He kneads clouds in his den,
And bakes a crisp new moon
that . . . greedy
North . . . Wind . . . eats . . . again!

Class D008 CHORAL SPEAKING –Kindergarten (Continued)

A SONG FOR SPRING – Author unknown

Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom
This is a song for the coming of Spring
Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom
We're tired of winter so let's all sing
Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom
After a winter of snow and ice.
Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom
The first sings of Spring are really nice
Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom
The first rains of Spring wash the snow away.
Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom
Soon warm weather will be here to stay.
Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom
The grass will turn from brown to green.
Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom
Prettiest sight you've ever seen.
Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom
Soon we'll hear robin's song.

Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom
 Before you know it the days get long.
Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom
 So let's all sing for the coming of Spring.
Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom
 For the fun-filled days that it will bring.
Boom Cha, Boom Cha, Boom Boom

Class D008 CHORAL SPEAKING –Kindergarten (Continued)
JACK FROST - Cecily E. Pike

Look out! Look out!
He's after our fingers and toes:
And, all through the night,
The gay little sprite
Is working where nobody knows.

He'll climb each tree,
So nimble is he,
His silvery powder he'll shake;
To windows he'll creep,
And while we're asleep,
Such wonderful pictures he'll make.

Across the grass,
He'll merrily pass,
And change all its greenness to white;
Then home he will go,
And laugh, "Ho! Ho! Ho!"
What fun I have had in the night!"

Class D008 CHORAL SPEAKING –Kindergarten (Continued)
BIRDS IN THE GARDEN - Unknown

Greedy little sparrow,
 Great big crow,
Saucy little tom-tits
 All in a row.

Are you very hungry,
 No place to go?
Come and eat my breadcrumbs,
 In the snow.

Class D008 CHORAL SPEAKING –Kindergarten (Continued)

RUNAWAY ENGINE - Mollie Clarke

Run away engine,
Ricketty Rack,
Running around the
Railway track.

All the way there and
All the way back,
Run away engine
Ricketty Rack.

Class D008 CHORAL SPEAKING –Kindergarten (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

ENGLISH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADE ONE

Class D101 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 1

THE STORM by Sara Coleridge

See lightning is flashing,
The forest is crashing,
The rain will come dashing,
A flood will be rising anon;

The heavens are scowling,
The thunder is growling,
The loud winds are howling,
The storm has come suddenly on!

But now the sky clears,
The bright sun appears,
Now nobody fears,
But soon every cloud will be gone.

Class D101 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 1 (continued)

MY DOG - Marchette Chute

His nose is short and scrubby;
His ears hang rather low;
And he always brings the stick back,
No matter how far I throw.

He gets spanked rather often
For things he shouldn't do,
Like lying on beds, and barking,
And chewing up shoes when they're new.

He always wants to be going
Where he isn't supposed to go
He tracks up the house when it's snowing –
Oh puppy, I love you so!

Class D101 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 1 (continued)

A LITTLE SEED - Mabel Watts

A little seed
 For me to sow . . .
A little earth
 To make it grow . . .
A little hole,
 A little pat . . .
A little wish,
 And that is that.
A little sun,
 A little shower,
A little while.
 And then – a flower!

Class D101 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 1 (continued)

UNDERSEA - Marchette Chute

Beneath the waters
Green and cool
The mermaids keep
A swimming school.

The oysters trot;
The lobsters prance;
The dolphins come
To join the dance.

But the jelly fish
Who are rather small
Can't seem to learn
The steps at all.

Class D101 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 1 (continued)

BEDTIME - Kate Cox Goddard

Sometimes when I get into bed,
And cannot go to sleep,
And after all my prayers are said,
And I have counted sheep,
I call to Mother, and I say:
“A Drink of water please.”

She knows I’m not thirsty, and
I only want to tease.
And so I laugh when she comes in
And opens wide the door,
She knows I only want to kiss
And hug her just once more.

Class D101 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 1 (continued)

HOSE – Valerie Worth

The hose
Can squeeze
Water to
A silver rod
That digs
Hard holes
In the mud,

Or, muzzled
Tighter by
The nozzle,
Can rain
Chill diamond
Chains
Across the yard,

Or, fanned
Out fine,
Can hang
A silk
Rainbow
Halo
Over soft fog.

Class D101 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 1 (continued)

GO WIND - Lillian Moore

Go wind, blow
Push wind, swoosh
 Shake things
 take things
 make things fly.

Go wind, blow
Push things, wheee.
 No, wind, no
 Not me –
 not me.

Class D101 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 1 (continued)

WINDY NIGHTS - Robert Louis Stevenson

Whenever the moon and stars are set,
 Whenever the wind is high,
All night long in the dark and wet,
 A man goes riding by.
Late in the night when the fires are out,
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

Whenever the trees are crying aloud,
 And ships are tossed at sea,
By, on the highway, low and loud,
 By at the gallop goes he.
By at the gallop he goes, and then
By he comes back at the gallop again.

Class D101 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 1 (continued)

OWN CHOICE

Class D102 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 1
GALOSHES - Rhoda Bacmeister

Susie's galoshes
Make splishes and splashes
And slooshes and sloshes
As Susie steps slowly
Along in the slush.

They stamp and they tramp
On the ice and concrete,
They get stuck in the muck and the mud;
But Susie likes much best to hear

The slippery slush
As it slooshes and sloshes,
And splishes and splashes,
All around her galoshes!

Class D102 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 1 (Continued)
DO FISHES GO TO SCHOOL By Ruth Whitman

After supper
before the dishes
we noticed suddenly
that fishes
were making little
leaps and swishes
under the setting sun.

Are they dolphins?
Brought in by some
far off gales?
Playing hopscotch
one by one?

Leda said, O silly fool,
these fishes clearly
are a school...
Davey interrupted
Yes,
but when do they have their
recess?

Class D102 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 1 (Continued)

FACE OFF - Lois Simmie

I got a fat lip last Saturday night
When the goal post said hi to my head;
Then a stick got stuck in the blade of my skate
And I turned the blueline red.

I flattened my nose up against the board;
I'm thinking it must be a sign
Not to forget my helmet again,
Or the *face off* is going to be mine!

Class D102 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 1 (Continued)

AFTER A BATH - Aileen Fisher

After my bath
I try, try, try
to wipe myself
till I'm dry, dry, dry.

Hands to wipe
and fingers and toes
and two wet legs
and a shiny nose.

Just think how much
less time I'd take
if I were d dog
and could shake, shake, shake.

Class D102 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 1 (Continued)

DANCING PANTS – Shel Silverstein

And now for the Dancing Pants,
Doing their fabulous dance,
From the seat to the pleat,
With no legs inside them
And no feet beneath.
They'll whirl, and twirl, and jiggle and prance,
So just start the music
And give them a chance—
Let's have a big hand for the wonderful, marvellous
Super sensational, utterly fabulous,
Talented Dancing Pants!

Class D102 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 1 (Continued)
AT THE BEACH - John Ciardi

-- Johnny, Johnny, let go of that crab!
You have only ten fingers, you know:
If you hold it that way, it is certain to grab
At least one or two of them. Please, let go!

--Thank you, Daddy, for teaching not scolding,
But there's one thing I think you should know:
I believe it's the crab that is doing the holding –
I let go – OUCH – ten minutes ago

Class D102 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 1 (Continued)
THE SNEEZE - Sheree Fitch

I winked and I blinked
And my nose got itchy
And my eyes watered
And my mouth went twitchy
I went AHHHH
I went AHHHH
I went AHHHH CHOOOOOOO
And I blew
And I sneezed
Then I coughed
And I wheezed
And my brother said, "Oh brother!"
And my mother said,
"GAZOONTIGHT!"
And my father said, "Bless You!"
And I said Ah . . . ah . . . ah . . .
AHHHHHHHHHH CHOOOOOOOO!

Class D102 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 1 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D104 PROSE READING - Serious Reading, Grade 1
OWN CHOICE

Class D105 PROSE READING - Humorous Reading, Grade 1
OWN CHOICE

Class D108 CHORAL SPEAKING – Grade 1
MY FAVORITE WORD - Lucia and James L. Hymes, Jr.

There is one word -
My favourite -
The very, very best.
It isn't No or Maybe
It's Yes, Yes, Yes, *Yes*, YES!

"Yes, yes, you may," and
"Yes, of course," and
"Yes, please help yourself."
And when I want a piece of cake,
"Why, yes, it's on the shelf."

Some candy? "Yes."
A cookie? "Yes."
A movie? "Yes, we'll go."

I love it when they say my word:
Yes, *Yes*, YES! (*Not No.*)

Class D108 CHORAL SPEAKING – Grade 1 (Continued)
HIDING - Dorothy Aldis

I'm hiding. I'm hiding,
And no one knows where;
For all they can see is my
Toes and my hair.

And I just heard my father
Say to my mother--
"But, darling, he must be
Somewhere or other;

"Have you looked in the ink well?"
And Mother said, "Where?"
"In the INK WELL," said Father. But
I was not there.

Then "Wait!" cried my mother--
"I think that I see
Him under the carpet." But
It was not me.

"Inside the mirror's
A pretty good place,"
Said Father and looked, but saw
Only his face.

"We've hunted," sighed Mother,
As hard as we could
And I AM so afraid that we've
Lost him for good."

Then I laughed out loud
And I wiggled my toes
And Father said-- "Look, dear,
I wonder if those

Toes could be Benny's.
There are ten of them. See?"
And they WERE so surprised to find
Out it was me!

Class D108 CHORAL SPEAKING – Grade 1 (Continued)
FURRY BEAR - A. A. Milne

If I were a bear,
And a big bear too,
I shouldn't much care
if it froze or sned;
I shouldn't much mind
If it snowed or friz –
I'd be all fur-lined
With a coat like his!

For I'd have fur boots and a brown fur wrap,
And brown fur knickers and a big fur cap.
I'd have a fur muffle-ruff to cover my jaws,
And brown fur mittens on my big brown paws.
With a big brown furry-down up to my head,
I'd sleep all winter in a big fur bed.

Class D108 CHORAL SPEAKING – Grade 1 (Continued)

CATS - Eleanor Farjcon

Cats sleep
Anywhere,
Any table,
Any chair,
Top of piano,
Window-ledge,
In the middle,
On the edge,
Open drawer,
Empty shoe,
Anybody's
Lap will do,
Fitted in a
Cardboard box,
In the cupboard
With your frocks –
Anywhere!
They don't care!
Cats sleep
Anywhere.

Class D108 CHORAL SPEAKING – Grade 1 (Continued)

FALLING ASLEEP - Ian Serraillier

I can't fall asleep
When Mummy goes to choir. I've said
My prayers, the cat is purring on my bed,
And Daddy's reading downstairs. My head
Lies pillowed deep,
But I can't fall asleep,

I can't fall asleep
Or settle. Though Mummy has undressed me
And bathed me and bedded me and kissed me,
I wonder - while she's singing - has she missed me?
Will I never fall asleep?
The long hours creep,

The long hours creep,
So slowly ... Then at least the front door
Bangs, and I hear her cross the floor.
I call good night and she kisses me once more
And hugs me. I could weep
For joy. But I fall asleep.

Class D108 CHORAL SPEAKING – Grade 1 (Continued)

NOISE - J. Pope

I like noise.
The whoop of a boy, the thud of a hoof,
The rattle of rain on a galvanized roof,
The hubbub of traffic, the roar of a train,
The throb of machinery numbing the brain,
The switching of wires in an overhead tram,
The rush of the wind, a door on the slam,
The boom of the thunder, the crash of the waves,
The din of a river that races and raves,
The crack of a rifle, the clank of a pail,
The strident tattoo of a swift - slapping sail
From any old sound that the silence destroys
Arises a gamut of soul-stirring joys.
I like noise.

Class D108 CHORAL SPEAKING – Grade 1 (Continued)
THE GOLD-TINTED DRAGON - Karla Kuskin

What's the good of a wagon
Without any dragon
To pull you for mile after mile?
An elegant lean one
A gold-tinted green one
Wearing a dragonly smile.
You'll sweep down the valleys
You'll sail up the hills
Your dragon will shine in the sun
And as you rush by
The people will cry
"I wish that my wagon had one!"

Class D108 CHORAL SPEAKING – Grade 1 (Continued)
ECHO - Sara Asheron

Hello!
Hello!
Are you near?
near, near.
Or far from here?
far, far from here.
Are you there?
there, there
Or coming this way,
Haunting my words
Whatever I say?

Halloo!
halloooo
Listen, you.
Who are you, anyway?
who, who, whooo?

Class D108 CHORAL SPEAKING – Grade 1 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

ENGLISH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADE TWO

Class D201 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 2

TREES - Joyce Kilmer

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is pressed
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree

Class D201 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)

SOME ONE - Walter de la Mare

Some one came knocking
At my wee, small, door;
Some one came knocking,
I'm sure—sure—sure;
I listened, I opened,
I looked to left and right,
But nought there was a-stirring
In the still dark night'
Only the busy beetle
Tap-tapping in the wall,
Only from the forest
The screech-owe's call,
Only the cricket whistling
While the dewdrops fall,
So I know not who came knocking,
At all, at all, at all.

Class D201 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)

WINDY NIGHTS - Robert Louis Stevenson

Whenever the moon and stars are set
 Whenever the wind is high,
All night long in the dark and wet,
 A man goes riding by.
Late in the night when the fires are out,
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

Whenever the trees are crying aloud,
 And ships are tossed at sea,
By, on the highway, low and loud,
 By at the gallop goes he.
By at the gallop he goes, and then
By he comes back at the gallop again.

Class D201 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)

STEAM SHOVEL - Charles Malam

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.

Class D201 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)

NIGHTMARE - Siv Widerberg

I never say his name aloud
and don't tell anybody
I always close all the drawers
and look behind the door before I go to bed
I cross my toes and count to eight
and turn the pillow over three times
Still he comes sometimes
one two three
like a shot
glaring at me with his eyes,
grating with his nails
and sneering his big sneer –
the Scratch Man

Oh-oh, now I said his name!
Mama, I can't sleep!

Class D201 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)

SHADOW DANCE - Ivy O. Eastwick

O Shadow,
Dear Shadow,
Come, Shadow,
And dance!
On the wall
In the firelight
Let both of
Us prance!
I raise my
Arms, thus!
And you raise
Your arms, so!

And dancing
And leaping
And laughing
We go!
From the wall
To the ceiling,
From ceiling
To wall,
Just you and
I, Shadow,
And none else
At all.

Class D201 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)

SEASIDE - Shirley Hughes

Sand in the sandwiches,
Sand in the tea,
Flat, wet sand running
Down to the sea.
Pools full of seaweed,
Shells and stones,
Damp bathing suits
And ice-cream cones.

Waves pouring in
to a sand-castle moat.
Man the defences!
Now we're afloat!

Water's for splashing,
Sand is for play,
A day by the sea
Is the best kind of day.

Class D201 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D202 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 2
MOTHER DOESN'T WANT A DOG - Judith Viorst

Mother doesn't want a dog.
Mother says they smell,
And never sit when you say sit,
Or even when you yell.
And when you come home late at night
And there is ice and snow,
You have to go back out because
The dumb dog has to go.

Mother doesn't want a dog.
Mother says they shed,
And always let the strangers in
And bark at friends instead,
And do disgraceful things on rugs,
And track mud on the floor,
And flop upon your bed at night
And snore their doggy snore.

Mother doesn't want a dog.
She's making a mistake.
Because, more than a dog, I think
She will not want this snake.

Class D202 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)
I BOUGHT OUR CAT A JETPACK - Kenn Nesbitt

I bought our cat a jetpack
which I think she liked a lot.
She strapped it on and instantly
she took off like a shot.

She zoomed around my bedroom
then she blasted down the hall.
She ricocheted off every piece
of furniture and wall.

Our dog freaked out and ran away.

Our hamster squeaked and fled.
I even saw my sister hiding
underneath her bed.

Our cat is so fired up
I almost hate to break the news:
She'll never catch our mouse;
I bought him rocket powered shoes.

Class D202 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)
THE SNEEZE - Sheree Fitch

I winked and I blinked
And my nose got itchy
And my eyes watered
And my mouth went twitchy
I went AHHHH
I went AHHHH
I went AHHHH CHOOOOOOO
And I blew
And I sneezed
Then I coughed
And I wheezed
And my brother said, "Oh brother!"
And my mother said,
"GAZOONTIGHT!"
And my father said, "Bless You!"
And I said Ah . . . ah . . . ah . . .
AHHHHHHHHHH CHOOOOOOOO!

Class D202 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)
AMBROSE AND PERCIVAL – Elizabeth Kouki

Ambrose and Percival
Conversed one eve
In the waters of Lily Bay

"Garrump," said Ambrose,
"Who are they?"

Answered Percival
In a gallumphous tone
"Why, don't you know?
They're a tribe called campers,
And they're filling all rivers and coves and bays
'Til a decent frog can hardly find
A quiet place to sleep these days."

Class D202 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)

THE WORM - Ralph Bergengren

When the earth is turned in spring
The worms are fat as anything.

And birds come flying all around
To eat the worms right off the ground.

They like worms just as much as I
Like bread and milk and apple pie.

And once, when I was very young,
I put a worm right on my tongue.

I didn't like the taste a bit,
And so I didn't swallow it.

But oh, it makes my Mother squirm
Because she thinks I ate that worm!

Class D202 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)

I'M JUST A SPIDER – May Flynn

I'm just a spider, hanging here.
I spin my web all day.
I work so hard now on my web
I don't have time to play.

Some people say I'm scary
And I don't know what for.
But what those people need to know
Is that they scare me **more!**

'Cause I'm just a spider - it's my job
To spin my web each day.
I don't try to frighten you...
so be kind with what you say.

Class D202 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)
AT THE BEACH - John Ciardi

–Johnny, Johnny, let go of that crab!
You have only ten fingers, you know:
If you hold it that way, it is certain to grab
At least one or two of them. Please, let go!

–Thank you, Daddy, for teaching not scolding,
But there’s one thing I think you should know:
I believe it’s the crab that is doing the holding—
I let go—OUCH!—ten minutes ago!

Class D202 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 2 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D204 PROSE READING - Serious Reading, Grade 2
OWN CHOICE

Class D205 PROSE READING - Humorous Reading, Grade 2
OWN CHOICE

Class D208 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 2
COPYCAT - Robert Heidbreder

Copycat, copycat
Shadow's a copycat!

Out in the sun
Whenever I run,
It runs.
Whenever I twirl,
It twirls.
I curl up small.
It curls up small.
I stand up tall.
It stands up tall.

Copycat, copycat,
Shadow's a copycat.

Whenever I hide,
It hides.
I spread out wide.
It spreads out wide.

I pat my head.
It pats its head.
I fall down dead.
It falls down dead.

But when I go inside to stay,
Copycat, copycat goes away!

Class D208 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 2 (Continued)
THE GRASSHOPPER - Conrad Aiken

Grasshopper
grasshopper
all day long
we hear your scraping
summer song
 like
 rusty
 fiddles
 in
 the
 grass
as through
 the meadow
 path
 we pass

such funny legs
such funny feet
and how we wonder
what you eat
maybe a single blink of dew
sipped from a clover leaf would do
then high in air
 once more you spring
 to fall in grass again
 and sing.

Class D208 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 2 (Continued)

THE SECRET SONG - Margaret Wise Brown

Who saw the petals
drop from the rose?
I, said the spider,
But nobody knows.

Who saw the sunset
flash on a bird
I, said the fish
Bur nobody heard.

Who saw the fog
come over the sea?
I, said the sea pigeon,
Only me.

Who saw the first
green light of the sun?
I, said the night owl,
The only one.

Who saw the moss
creep over the stone?
I, said the grey fox,
All alone.

Class D208 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 2 (Continued)

GOOD MORNING - Muriel Sipe

One day I saw a downy duck,
With feathers on his back;
I said, "Good morning, downy duck,"
And he said, "Quack, quack, quack."

One day I saw a timid mouse,
He was so shy and meek;
I said, "Good morning, timid mouse,"
And he said, "Squeak, squeak, squeak."

One day I saw a curly dog,
I met him with a bow;
I said, "Good morning, curly dog,"
And he said, "Bow-wow-wow."

One day I saw a scarlet bird,
He woke me from my sleep;
I said, "Good morning, scarlet bird,"
And he said, "Cheep, cheep, cheep."

Class D208 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 2 (Continued)

A MOSQUITO IN THE CABIN - Myra Stilborn

Although you bash her,
swat her, smash her,
and go to bed victorious,
happy and glorious
she will come winging,
zooming and zinging,
wickedly singing
over your bed.
You slap the air
but she's in your hair
cackling with laughter.
You smack your head,
but she isn't dead –
she's on the rafter.
She's out for blood –
yours my friend,
and she will get it, in the end.
She brings it first to boiling point,
then lets it steam.
With a fee, fi, fo and contented fum
she sips it
while you dream.

Class D208 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 2 (Continued)

EIGHT BALLOONS - Unknown

Eight balloons no one was buyin'
All broke loose one afternoon.
Eight balloons with strings a-flyin',
Free to do what they wanted to.
One flew up to touch the sun - POP!
One thought highways might be fun - POP!
One took a nap in a cactus pile - POP!
One stayed to play with a careless child - POP!
One tried to taste some bacon fryin' - POP!
One fell in love with a porcupine - POP!
One looked close in a crocodile's mouth - POP!
One sat around 'til his air ran out - WHOOSH!
Eight balloons no one was buyin'
They broke loose and away they flew,
Free to float and free to fly
And free to pop where they wanted to.

Class D208 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 2 (Continued)

FALLING ASLEEP - Ian Serraillier

I can't fall asleep
When Mummy goes to choir. I've said
My prayers, the cat is purring on my bed,
And Daddy's reading downstairs. My head
Lies pillowed deep,
But I can't fall asleep,

I can't fall asleep
Or settle. Though Mummy has undressed me
And bathed me and bedded me and kissed me,
I wonder - while she's singing - has she missed me?
Will I never fall asleep?
The long hours creep,

The long hours creep,
So slowly ... Then at least the front door
Bangs, and I hear her cross the floor.
I call good night and she kisses me once more
And hugs me. I could weep
For joy. But I fall asleep.

Class D208 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 2 (Continued)

JACK FROST - Cecily E. Pike

Look out! Look out!
He's after our fingers and toes:
And, all through the night,
The gay little sprite
Is working where nobody knows.

He'll climb each tree,
So nimble is he,
His silvery powder he'll shake;
To windows he'll creep,
And while we're asleep,
Such wonderful pictures he'll make.

Across the grass,
He'll merrily pass,
And change all its greenness to white;
Then home he will go,
And laugh, "Ho! ho! Ho!
What fun I have had in the night!"

Class D208 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 2 (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

ENGLISH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADE THREE

Class D301 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 3

THE MOUSE - Elizabeth Coatsworth

I hear a mouse
Bitterly complaining
In a crack of moonlight
Aslant on the floor--

"Little I ask
And that little is not granted.
There are few crumbs
In this world any more."

"The bread box is tin
And I cannot get in"

"The jam's in a jar
My teeth cannot mar."
"The cheese sits by itself
On an ice-box shelf."

"All night I run
Searching and seeking;
All night I run
About on the floor."

"Moonlight is there
And a bare place for dancing,
But no little feast
Is spread anymore."

Class D301 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)

SOMETHING TOLD THE WILD GEESE - Rachel Field

Something told the wild geese
It was time to go,
Though the fields lay golden
Something whispered, "Snow!"
Leaves were green and stirring,
Berries lustre-glossed,
But beneath warm feathers
Something cautioned, "Frost!"
All the sagging orchards
Steamed with amber spice,

But each wild beast stiffened
At remembered ice.
Something told the wild geese
It was time to fly -
Summer sun was on their wings,
Winter in their cry.

Class D301 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)
FOR SALE - Shel Silverstein

One sister for sale!
One sister for sale!
One crying and spying young sister for sale!
I'm really not kidding,
So who'll start the bidding?
Do I hear a dollar?
A nickel?
A penny?
Oh, isn't there, isn't there, isn't there any
One kid who will buy this old sister for sale,
This crying and spying young sister for sale?

Class D301 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)
MY NOISY BROTHER - Bruce Lansky

My brother's such a noisy kid,
When he eats soup he slurps.
When he drinks milk he gargles.
And after meals he burps.

He cracks his knuckles when he's bored.
He whistles when he walks.
He snaps his fingers when he sings,
and when he's mad he squawks.

At night my brother snores so loud
It sounds just like a riot.
Even when he sleeps
My noisy brother isn't quiet.

Class D301 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)

CRYING - Galway Kinnell

Crying only a little bit
is no use. You must cry
Until your pillow is soaked!
Then you can get up and laugh.
Then you can jump in the shower
And splash-splash-splash!
Then you can throw open your window
And, "Ha ha! Ha ha!"
And if people say, "Hey,
What's going on up there?"
"Ha ha!" sing back, "Happiness
Was hiding in the last tear!
I wept it! Ha ha!"

Class D301 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)

PEGASUS – Eleanor Farjeon

He could not be captured,
He could not be bought,
His running was rhythm,
His standing was thought;
With one eye on sorrow
And one eye on mirth
He galloped I heaven
And gambolled on earth
And only the poet
With wings to his brain
Can mount him and ride him
Without any rein,
The stallion of heaven,
The steed of the skies,
The horse of the singer
Who sings as he flies.

Class D301 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)

SHADOW DANCE - Ivy O. Eastwick

O Shadow,
Dear Shadow,
Come, Shadow, And dance!
On the wall
In the firelight
Let both of
Us prance!
I raise my

Arms, thus!
And you raise
Your arms, so!

And dancing
And leaping
And laughing
We go!
From the wall
To the ceiling,
From ceiling
To wall,
Just you and
I, Shadow,
And none else
At all.

Class D301 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)
WILLIAM WORM - Sheree Fitch

William Worm
Had quite a squirm
So I picked him up
I kept him for a pet
And put him in a cup.

Then I took him home
So I could show my dad
But for some strange reason
May dad got mad!

Oh, nooo! he said
A worm! A worm!
A squirmy slimy worm!
Oh, nooo! he said
A worm! A worm!
Worms are full of germs

But look, I said
Just watch this worm
See how he squiggles?
How he squirms?

His name is William
William Worm
And Bill and I are friends

Well, William Worm
How do you do?

My father started to grin
I'm sorry I have to tell you, but
YOU CAN'T COME IN!

Now take that worm
With his squiggly squirm
And put him on the ground
That's where worms belong
I cannot have Bill around.

So William Worm
He squirmed away
I looked for him
The other day
I found some worms
But not one squirms
In quite that squiggly way.

Class D301 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D302 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 3
MILLICENT'S MOTHER - Jeff Moss

Millie buttons her coat, gives her mother a kiss,
then Millicent's mother says something like this:
"Millie, take your umbrella in case there's a storm,
and be sure to wear mittens to keep your hands warm,
and, since it may snow, take your snowshoes and parka,
and pack your big flashlight in case it gets dark-a.
This bicycle pump will help fix a flat tire,
this fire extinguisher puts out a fire,
and take this roast turkey, you may need a snack,
this map and this compass will help you get back,
and take your galoshes, there may be some mud,
and your scuba-dive outfit in case there's a flood,
and in case you get bored, take your toys in your wagon
and please wear your armor, in case there's a dragon."
"Oh, Mommy!" says Millie. "I don't need all that!"
"Okay," says her mother. "But wear a warm hat."

Class D302 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)

THE ELF AND THE DORMOUSE - Oliver Herford

UNDER a toadstool
Crept a wee Elf,
Out of the rain
To shelter himself.

Under the toadstool,
Sound asleep,
Sat a big Dormouse
All in a heap.

Trembled the wee Elf,
Frightened and yet
Fearing to fly away
Lest he get wet.

To the next shelter—
Maybe a mile!
Sudden the wee Elf
Smiled a wee smile.
Tugged till the toadstool
Toppled in two.
Holding it over him,
Gaily he flew.

Soon he was safe home,
Dry as could be.
Soon woke the Dormouse—
"Good gracious me!

"Where is my toadstool?"
Loud he lamented.
And that's how umbrellas
First were invented.

Class D302 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)

ALL FOR AN ICE-CREAM by Karen Jackson

"Mum, can I have an ice-cream?"
"Go ask your dad."
"Dad, can I have an ice-cream?"
"Go ask your mum."
"But I've just asked her and she told me to ask you."
"Well tell her that I've told you to ask her."

"Mum, dad's just told me to tell you that you've got to tell me if I can have an ice-cream."
"Oh well I suppose you can but go ask your dad for 10 pence."

"Right."
"Dad, can I have 10 pence for an ice-cream?"
"I haven't got 10 pence."
"Oh come on dad you haven't looked yet and oh hurry the van'll go soon."
"Let's have a look then, ah, there you are."
"Thanks dad, Ohh!"
"What's the matter now?"
"The van's gone"

Class D302 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)
HARVEY ALWAYS WINS - Jack Prelutsky

Every game that Harvey plays
Harvey always wins,
he knows he will
before the game begins.

Follow the leader, leapfrog, tag
whatever game we choose,
as long as Harvey's in the game
then Harvey doesn't lose.

We hate to play with Harvey,
he loves to spoil our fun,
as soon as a game is over
he shouts, "You see, I won."

Harvey's always showing off,
he wins when he competes,
it isn't that he's better,
it's that Harvey always cheats.

Class D302 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)
WITCH GOES SHOPPING - Lilian Moore

Witch rides off
Upon her broom
Finds a space
To park it.
Takes a shiny shopping cart
Into the supermarket.
Smacks her lips and reads
The list of things she needs:

"Six bats' wings
Worms in brine
Ears of toads
Eight or nine.
Slugs and bugs

Snake skins dried
Buzzard innards
Pickled, fried."

Witch takes herself
From shelf to shelf
Cackling all the while.
Up and down and up and down and
In and out each aisle.
Out comes cans and cartons
Tumbling to the floor.
"This," says Witch, now all a-twitch,
"Is a crazy store.
I CAN'T FIND A SINGLE THING
I AM LOOKING FOR!"

Class D302 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)
CHORES – Gordon Korman

When you're tired from doing your schoolwork,
And there's something great on the TV,
They can't bear to see that you're idle,
They call out, "Please come and help me."
Then they give you a carrot, and tell you to grate it.
I hate it!

You're about to go out to play baseball,
You're putting your cap on your head,
They pull you back in through the doorway,
And show you your nice unmade bed.
You'll soon be back in it, but they won't debate it.
I hate it!

You're standing and drying the dishes,
You've swept the garage out today,
You figure you're well off the hook now,
They pat your sore back, and they say,
"We're moving the piano; please go in and crate it."
I hate it!

Class D302 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)

SPAGHETTI - Frank Flynn

A plate heaped high
with spaghetti
all covered with tomato sauce
is just about my favourite meal.
It looks just like a gigantic heap of:
steaming
tangled
 mixed
 up
twizzled
 twisted
wound
up
 woozled
WORMS!

I like picking them up
one at a time;
swallowing them slowly
head first,
until the tail flips
across my cheek
before finally wriggling
down my throat.
But best of all,
when I've finished eating
I go and look in a mirror
because the tomato sauce
smeared around my mouth
makes me look like a clown.

Class D302 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 3 (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

Class D304 PROSE READING - Serious Reading, Grades 3 and 4

Excerpt from an adaptation of **THE JUNGLE BOOKS** - Rudyard Kipling

But just as Teddy was stooping, something flinched in the dust, and a tiny voice said, "Be careful. I am death!" It was Karait, the dusty brown snakeling. His bite is as dangerous as the cobra's; but he is so small that nobody thinks of him and so he does more harm.

Rikki-tikki's eyes grew red again. He rocked back and forth, looking for the best fighting position. Karait struck out. Rikki jumped sideways to miss the bite. Then Rikki struck back, missed, and avoided a return lunge by Karait.

Teddy shouted, "Oh, Look! Our mongoose is killing a snake!"

His father came out with a stick, but by the time he came up, Karait had lunged out too far, and Rikki-tikki had sprung. Rikki's bite killed Karait.

Teddy's mother picked Rikki-tikki up from the dust and hugged him, crying that he had saved Teddy.

That night Teddy carried him off to bed and insisted on Rikki-tikki sleeping under his chin.

Class D304 PROSE READING - Serious Reading, Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)

Excerpt from **A BUMPY RIDE FOR A BEAR** - Shirley Benton Kerr

"Dad! Dad!" I called. "There's a bear down by the barn."

Dad pushed back his cap, shook his head, and muttered. I couldn't hear what he said, but it was probably something like, "What an imagination!"

He yelled, "Get on with your chores. There hasn't been a bear around these parts for twenty years or more."

I knew there was no use arguing with him so I ran to the house and shouted, "Mom! There's a bear down by the barn."

Mom called out the door, "Really, Jason? Well bring him in for some honey buns."

I could hear her chuckle.

I went right into the house and said, "Mom, there really is a bear down by the barn. I mean it."

Mom scolded. "This is too much, Jason. I don't mind you having an active imagination, but you have to know when to stop pretending."

"Please come down by the barn, Mom," I pleaded. "I'm not imagining anything. There is a bear there. Honest!"

I walked slowly out of the house, hoping she would call me back; she didn't of course. She remembered too many other times I guess. Like when my "ghost" down in the cornfield was one of her sheets that had blown off the clothes-line.

I saw Dad heading for the barn. "He must have believed me, after all," I thought. I ran to meet him.

"The bear must have gone inside the barn," I said.

"Are you still on about that bear?" Dad asked. He walked over to the tractor that was parked beside the barn. He climbed up, and started it. The noise of the tractor must have made the bear curious, because he poked his head out of the barn door.

"There he is," I shouted.

Dad looked where I was pointing and saw the bear. "My stars!" he exclaimed. "There really is a bear."

Class D304 PROSE READING - Serious Reading, Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)

Excerpt from **WORM PIE** - Beverly Scudamore

After French, we were supposed to do math.

But instead Mr. Stanley said, "Time for a Brain Drain!"

He divided the class into groups of three. He gave each group a pile of newspapers and a roll of masking tape.

"This is a contest!" he announced, rubbing his hands together. "Let's see which group can build the highest tower. You may use three things: newspaper, masking tape and your hands."

That's all he said! He didn't give us any instructions.

Jason and Cory were in my group. No matter how we taped the papers together, our tower kept flopping over.

"This is impossible!" I grumbled. "The only thing these newspapers are good for is making paper airplanes." I was busy making a supersonic missile when Jason poked me. "Look at Melissa's group!" he said, his eyes widening.

I dropped my missile. Their tower was almost as high as the ceiling. They were rolling pieces of newspaper into tubes. Then they were sticking one end of each tube inside another and taping the joints. Melissa was holding the bottom of the tower with her hands.

"Hey, no fair!" I cried out "Melissa's holding the tower up with her hands."

"You weren't listening," Mr. Stanley said. "I said, build a tower using newspaper, masking tape and your hands."

"Oh, yeah," I said, feeling my face turn red. I forgot."

When each group had finished building a tower, Mr. Stanley looked pleased. He stood up and said, "Today you built a tower out of newspaper. Who knows? Maybe someday you'll build a bridge out of steel."

Class D304 PROSE READING - Serious Reading, Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
PUPPIES FOR SALE - Dan Clark

A store owner was tacking a sign above his door that read "Puppies For Sale." Signs like that have a way of attracting small children, and sure enough, a little boy appeared under the store owner's sign. "How much are you going to sell the puppies for?" he asked.

The store owner replied, "Anywhere from \$30 to \$50."

The little boy reached in his pocket and pulled out some change. "I have \$2.37," he said. "Can I please look at them?"

The store owner smiled and whistled and out of the kennel came Lady, who ran down the aisle of his store followed by five teeny, tiny balls of fur. One puppy was lagging considerably behind. Immediately the little boy singled out the lagging, limping puppy and said, "What's wrong with that little dog?"

The store owner explained that the veterinarian had examined the little puppy and had discovered it didn't have a hip socket. It would always limp. It would always be lame. The little boy became excited. "That is the little puppy that I want to buy."

The store owner said, "No, you don't want to buy that little dog. If you really want him, I'll just give him to you."

The little boy got quite upset. He looked straight into the store owner's eyes, pointing his finger, and said, "I don't want you to give him to me. That little dog is worth every bit as much as all the other dogs and I'll pay full price. In fact, I'll give you \$2.37 now, and 50 cents a month until I have him paid for."

The store owner countered, "You really don't want to buy this little dog. He is never going to be able to run and jump and play with you like the other puppies."

To this, the little boy reached down and rolled up his pant leg to reveal a badly twisted, crippled left leg supported by a big metal brace. He looked up at the store owner and softly replied, "Well, I don't run so well myself, and the little puppy will need someone who understands!"

Class D304 PROSE READING - Serious Reading, Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)

Excerpt from **EDDIE AND THE FAIRY GODPUPPY** - Willo Davis Roberts

The sign in front said RIVERPARK CHILDREN'S HOME, but it didn't fool Eddie.

"An orphanage, that's what it is," he said to Miss Susan, who had a sign just like it, only smaller, on her desk. "I'll be stuck here forever, in an orphanage." He had picked some daisies from the field next door, and he stuck them in the little green vase beside her name sign.

Miss Susan was a pretty lady with brown hair who smiled a lot. She looked up at him and shook her head.

"Oh, Eddie, you know that Mrs. Wilson established the home to take care of children on a temporary basis, until permanent homes can be found for them, or they can rejoin their own families. I don't think you'll be here so long, dear. Two boys left last week to go into lovely homes."

Eddie rattled the marbles in his pocket. "That won't happen to me, though. Nobody's going to adopt me. Nobody likes me. I'm too ugly. They don't even want me in a foster home."

Miss Susan laughed and ruffled his hair with her fingers. Eddie liked it when she did that, though he never let it show. He remembered his grandma had done it, before she died.

"Oh, Eddie," Miss Susan said, "stop feeling sorry for yourself. You're not ugly at all. Why don't you go and tell Cook I said you might have some bread and jelly?"

Eddie sighed. Eating wasn't as good as being adopted, but it was the best he could do. He left Miss Susan's office and wandered down the hallway. In the glass-fronted bookcases there he could see his own reflection; he stopped and scowled at it. Red hair standing in stiff bristles, a short nose sprinkled with freckles; no wonder nobody wanted him. Who'd pick out a boy who looked like that?

Class D304 PROSE READING - Serious Reading, Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)

Excerpt from **JAKE DRAKE: BULLY BUSTER** – Andrew Clements

Then Link stopped. His face looked pale, and his lips looked blue. In a small voice he said, "I can't do this. Reports. You oknow, talking to the whole class." He gulped. And then very softly he said, "I can't."

We were face-to-face, about two feet apart. I was looking up at him. No SuperBully in sight. Just a scared kid. And then I knew why Link had kept telling me that I had to give the report.

Then I felt this rush of power. At last, the great and fearsome Link—completely at my mercy! At last, it was my turn to be the bulliest SuperBully of all!

I could have said, "Oh, wook! It's Wittle Winky—afraid of a weport!"

I could have said, "So—you make me feel terrible for a whole month, and now you want me to feel sorry for you? Well, too bad, tough guy!"

Or I could have said, "Hurry—let's get in the room so the whole class can see mighty Link Baxter throw up all over the floor—ha, ha, ha!"

But I didn't.

I said, "It'll be okay. Really. All you have to do is stand there and point at stuff when I talk about it. This is a great model. Everyone's going to think it's the best."

Link swallowed hard and took a deep breath. "Okay . . . but you're gonna do the report, right?"

I nodded, and we carried the project into the room and up to the table by the chalkboard.

I looked at a card I had made and said, "We made something to show how the Native Americans lived before the pilgrims came."

And Link pulled the bag off the model. Some kids in the back stood up so they could see it better. And Mrs. Brattle said, "Everyone should come up closer so you can see. This is really special. Careful, don't bump the table."

The kids were blown away. And so was I . . . Link's face got red, but he smiled. And it wasn't a bully-smile. It was his real smile.

Class D304 PROSE READING - Serious Reading, Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D305 PROSE READING - Humorous Reading, Grades 3 and 4
THE ELEPHANT AND HIS SON - Arnold Lobel

The Elephant and his son were spending an evening at home. Elephant Son was singing a song.

"You must be silent," said Father Elephant. "Your papa is trying to read his newspaper. Papa cannot listen to a song while he is reading his newspaper."

"Why not?" asked Elephant Son.

"Because Papa can think about only one thing at a time, that is why," said Father Elephant.

After a while, Elephant Son asked, "Papa, can you still think about only one thing at a time?"

"Yes, my boy," said Father Elephant, "that is correct."

"Well then," said Elephant Son, "you might stop thinking about your newspaper and begin to think about the slipper that is on your left foot."

"But my boy," said Father Elephant, "Papa's newspaper is far more important and interesting and informative than the slipper that is on his left foot."

"That may be true," said Elephant Son, "but while your newspaper is not on fire from the ashes of your cigar, the slipper that is on your left foot certainly is!"

Father Elephant ran to put his foot in a bucket of water. Softly, Elephant Son began to sing again.

Class D305 PROSE READING - Humorous Reading, Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)

Excerpt from **BUNNICULA** - Deborah and James Howe

Bunnacula opened his eyes wide and turned his face, as best he could, to me. I jumped up onto the nearest chair and placed the rabbit safely on the table's edge.

"Okay," I whispered, "there's your dinner. Go to it! Get your fill as fast as you can, poor bunny. I'll stand guard." I don't know that Bunnacula fully understood what was going on, but the sight of the vegetables piled high in the center of the table sent him scurrying in their direction. He was *very* hungry!

As luck would have it (and I should have anticipated), Chester's sense of timing was as astute as my own. No sooner had Bunnacula reached the edge of the salad bowl than the door swung open and Chester bounded into the room. He surveyed the scene frantically. I was unable to act fast enough. Upon seeing Bunnacula about to enjoy his first bit of nourishment in days, Chester leaped across the table, seemingly without touching floor, chairs, or anything else between himself and our furry friend and landed directly on top of the bunny.

"Oh no, you don't!" he shrieked. Bunnacula, not sure what to do, jumped high in the air and landed, with a great scattering of greens, smack in the centre of the salad bowl. Lettuce and tomatoes and carrots and cucumbers went flying all over the table and onto the floor. Chester flattened his ears, wiggled his rear end and smiled in anticipation. To cat observers, this is known as the "attack position."

"Run, Bunnacula!" I shouted. Bunnacula turned in my direction, as if to ask where.

"Anywhere!" I cried. "Just get out of his way!"

Chester sprang.

Bunnacula jumped.

And in the flash of a second, they had changed positions. Chester now found himself flat on his back (owing to the slipperiness of the salad dressing) in the bowl. And Bunnacula, too dazed to even think about food now, hovered quivering on the table.

Chester was having a great deal of difficulty getting back on his feet, but I knew it was only a matter of seconds before he'd attack again. And I knew also that Bunnacula was too petrified to do anything to save himself. So I did the only thing I could: I

barked. Very loudly and very rapidly.

The whole family rushed through the doors. Mr. Monroe must have just come home because his coat was still on.

"Oh, no!" cried Mrs. Monroe. "That's it, Chester. This is Chester's last stand!"

Chester rolled his eyes heavenward and didn't even try to move.

Class D305 PROSE READING - Humorous Reading, Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)

Excerpt from **BLUE RIBBON BLUES** - Jerry Spinelli

She whispered, "We're pals, aren't we, Pep?"

Pepperoni seemed to nod.

"And we're going to work hard and win that blue ribbon, aren't we?"

She put her ear to Pepperoni's mouth. She thought she heard the goat say *yes*.

Just then Chuckie and Harvey came running over. Chuckie was holding a book. He handed it to her. "Aunt Sally says you're supposed to study this. It's about goat parts."

Chuckie and Harvey ran off.

Tooter opened the book. On one page she found a drawing. It showed the parts of a goat.

"Okay, Pep," said Tooter. "These are your pin bones." She pointed to spots on either side of Pepperoni's tail. She spoke clearly and slowly into Pepperoni's ear. She figured her goat should learn her own parts.

"And this is your dewclaw." She pointed to a spot just above Pepperoni's hoof. "That's a funny one," she said to herself. "Wonder if I have one of those." She pulled up her pants leg and pulled down her sock. "Nope," she said. "Just the old anklebone."

She pronounced and pointed out other parts.

"Stifle."

"Chine."

"Withers."

And, of course, "udder" and "wattles," which she already knew.

She walked around the goat pasture, studying the parts. A great way to test herself came to mind. She ran into the house and returned with a pad of yellow Post-It notes. She wrote down each part name on a sheet. She pressed each part name where she

thought it belonged on Pepperoni's body. When she checked the drawing in the book, she'd gotten them all right!

Behind her she heard laughter. And arfing.

Her mother stood there, paintbrush in hand, with Chuckie and Harvey. When her mother stopped laughing, she said, "I guess I owe Chuckie an apology. When he told me you wallpapered your goat, I didn't believe him. Now I do!"

Class D305 PROSE READING - Humorous Reading, Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)

Excerpt from **SIDEWAYS STORIES FROM WAYSIDE SCHOOL** - Louis Sachar

Rondi had twenty-two beautiful teeth. Everyone else had twenty-four. Rondi was missing her two front teeth. And those were the most beautiful teeth of all.

"Your front teeth are so cute," said Mrs. Jewls. "They make you look just adorable."

"But, Mrs. Jewls," said Rondi. "I don't have any front teeth."

"I know," said Mrs. Jewls. "That's what makes them so cute."

Rondi didn't understand.

"Oooh, Rondi, I just love your two front teeth," said Maurecia. "I wish I had some like that."

"But I don't have them," said Rondi.

"That's why I love them so much," said Maurecia.

"Oh, this is silly," said Rondi. "Everybody thinks the teeth I don't have are cute. I'm not wearing a coat. Don't you all just love my coat? And what about my third arm? I don't have one. Isn't it lovely?"

"Love your hat, Rondi," said Joy.

"I'm not wearing a hat!" Rondi screamed.

"That's what makes it so interesting," said Joy.

"Don't you think so, Leslie?"

"Oh, yes," said Leslie. "It's a very nice hat. Nice boots, too."

"I'm not wearing boots!" Rondi insisted.

"Yes," said Joy, "very nice boots. They go so well with your hat."

"What hat?" asked Rondi.

"Yes," Leslie agreed. "Rondi showed excellent taste by not wearing the hat or the boots. They go so well together."

Rondi had had enough. She covered her head so nobody could see her hat. She put her feet under her desk so nobody could see her boots. Then she closed her mouth tightly so nobody could see her two front teeth.

Suddenly, everybody who was sitting near her began to laugh.

"What's so funny?" asked Todd.

"The joke Rondi didn't tell," said Jason.

"Ask Rondi not to tell it again, Todd," said Calvin.

"Rondi," said Todd, "don't tell it again."

Rondi was horrified. She didn't know what to do. She kept her mouth shut and just stared at Todd. To her amazement, Todd laughed.

"Hey, everybody," called Todd. "Listen to Rondi's joke.

Rondi didn't say a word, but the rest of the class began to laugh.

Mrs. Jewls got very angry. She wrote Rondi's name on the blackboard under the word DISCIPLINE.

"The classroom is not the place for jokes," she said.

"But, Mrs. Jewls," said Rondi. "I didn't tell a joke."

"Yes, I know," said Mrs. Jewls, "but the funniest jokes are the ones that remain untold."

Class D305 PROSE READING - Humorous Reading, Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)

Excerpt from **MORRIS HAS A COLD** - Bernard Wiseman

Morris the Moose said, "I have a cold. My nose is walking."

Boris the Bear said, "You mean your nose is running."

"No," said Morris. "My nose is walking. I only have a little cold."

Boris said, "Let me feel your forehead."

Morris said, "I don't have four heads!"

Boris said, "I know you don't have four heads. But this is called your forehead."

Morris said, "That is my ONE head."

"All right," Boris growled. "Let me feel your one head." Boris said,

"Your one head feels hot. That means you are sick. You need some rest. You should lie

down.”....

Morris coughed.

Boris asked, “How does your throat feel?”

Morris said, “Hairy.”

“No, no,” said Boris. “I don’t mean outside. How does it feel INSIDE?”

Morris said, “I will see ...”

“No! No! No!” Boris shouted. “Ohhh - just open your mouth. Let me look inside.”...

“Now stick out your tongue,” Boris said.

Morris said, “I will not stick out my tongue. That is not nice.”

Boris shouted, “Stick out your tongue!”

Morris stuck out his tongue.

“STOP!” Boris roared. “That is not nice!”

Morris said, “I told you it was not nice.”

Boris growled, “That’s because you did it the wrong way. Look - This is how to stick out your tongue.”

Boris looked at Morris’s tongue....

“Your tongue is white. That means your stomach is upset,” said Boris....

Boris said, “Here is a bowl of nice, hot soup.”

Morris licked the soup.

“No,” said Boris. “Use the spoon.”

Morris used the spoon.

“No, no,” said Boris. “Put the spoon in your mouth.”

Morris put the spoon in his mouth.

“No! No! No!” Boris shouted. “Give me the spoon!”

Boris fed Morris the soup....

In the morning Morris said, “My nose is not walking. My one head is not hot. My cold is better. Make me a big breakfast.”

“All right,” said Boris. “But you have to do something for me”

Morris asked, “What?”

“DON’T EVER GET SICK AGAIN!”

Class D305 PROSE READING - Humorous Reading, Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)

Excerpt from **HOWIE MERTON AND THE MAGIC DUST** - Faye Couch Reeves

Eddie turned to Howie. “You have one more thing to do before you are finished for the day.” Eddie stepped up onto the edge of the compost box. It was only a couple of inches wide, but she walked easily around the edge. She did not even begin to tip over or fall. How did she do that? Howie wondered.

Eddie jumped to the ground. “Now you do the same thing,” she said.

Howie stepped up. He put one foot on the edge of the box. The fish heads stared up at him with their fishy eyes. He looked at Eddie. Her green eyes stared at him, too. Daring him.

“You aren’t afraid of a few fish heads, are you?” Eddie asked with a smile. “Or is it the orange peels you’re afraid of?” She laughed.

Howie took a deep breath. No girl was going to laugh at him. He slid his foot

forward. Then he put his other foot in front. He took a few steps. He was doing all right! He took another step. Then he began to tip. First he tipped one way. Then the other. He tried to stop, but it was too late. He fell right into the oatmeal, the potato peelings, and all those fish heads with their staring eyes. He sat in the middle of the fish heads and groaned.

When he crawled out of the compost box, Howie had a potato peel over one ear, a fish head down the front of his shirt, and oatmeal in both his shoes. Soap and water at Thomas's house did not help. Thomas made him eat his cookie outside.

Howie's eyes watered all the way home. With every step he took, the oatmeal in his shoes squished between his toes. He could hardly breathe. He smelled just like Miss Marshmallow's cat food. The neighborhood cats thought so too. Every few steps Howie had to stop and yell "Scat!" to all the cats that were following him. They ran away but came right back again.

Finally he was home. Howie opened the front door of his house. If he could just get to the bathroom, he would take a bath - clothes and all. He could hang his clothes up to dry in the basement and no one would know what had happened.

He tiptoed down the hall. He was just two steps away from the bathroom when he heard a terrible howl. Did one of those cats follow him into the house? Howie turned around. It was his mother.

Class D305 PROSE READING - Humorous Reading, Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D308 CHORAL SPEAKING – Grade 3
THE OWL - Conrad Aiken

To whit
to whoo
he stares
right through
whatever
he looks at
maybe
YOU
and so
whatever
else
you do
don't
ever
ever
be
a
mouse
or
if
you
are
STAY
IN
YOUR
HOUSE
old owl
can you be really
wise
and do those great big
sunflower eyes
see THINGS
that WE
can never see
perched on the tiptop of our tree
or by jiminy
on a chimney
or whooshing by
on velvet wings?
Let's hie to bed
and leave him be.

Class D308 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 3 (Continued)
SKELETON HOUSE - Laurence Smith

Push, push the heavy door
CREE . . . CREE . . . CREEEEK!
Tip-Toe the rotten floor
SQUEE . . . SQUEEE . . . SQUEEEEEK!
Step across the missing stair
EER . . . EEER . . . EEEERK!
Is that something over there?
SWISH . . . SWISH . . . SWISH . . .
Behind the curtain, what is that?
SCRITTER . . . SCRITTER . . . BUMP!
A red-eyed rat, a swooping bat
OOOW . . . OOOOOW . . . OOOOOW!
There's something sitting on that chair
SSH . . . SSSH . . . SSSSH!
His head is white with cobweb hair
OH! . . . NO! . . . SSH!
He starts to speak with clacking jaws
CLACK . . . CLACK . . . CLACK!
I grab his leg with all my force
PULL . . . PULL PULL PULL . .
Just like I'm pulling yours!

Class D308 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 3 (Continued)

I WOULDN'T - John Ciardi

There's a mouse house
In the hall wall
With a small door
By the hall floor
Where the fat cat
Sits all day
Sits that way
All day
Every day?
Just to say,
"Come out and play"?
To the nice mice
In the hall wall
With the small door
By the hall floor.

And do they
Come out and play
When the fat cat
Asks them to?

Well, would you?

Class D308 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 3 (Continued)

DINNER-TIME RHYME - June Crebbin

Can you tell me, if you please,
Who it is likes mushy peas?
 Louise likes peas.
How about Sam?
 Sam likes spam.
How about Vince?
 Vince likes mince.
How about Kelly?
 Kelly likes jelly.
How about Trish?
 Trish likes fish.
How about Pips?
 Pips likes chips.
How about Pete?
 Pete likes meat.
How about Sue?
 Sue likes stew.
How about Greg?
 Greg likes egg.
How about Pam?

Pam likes lamb.

OK then, tell me, if you can –
How about Katerina Wilhelmina Theodora Dobson?

She goes home for dinner...

Class D308 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 3 (Continued)
CAREFUL CONNIE - Unknown

Careful Connie's terrified
Of accidents and ills,
Of gyms and germs and things that squirm,
Heights and depths and heat and chills;
Of bicycles and buses,
Cats and cows and lakes and hills,
Flying things and furry things;

So Careful Connie never will...

Climb a tree	might fall down
Go swimming	might drown
Play in the rain	might get muddy
Play games	might get bloody
Cross the street	might get hit
Pet a dog	might get bit
Eat candy	might get a toothache
Eat pizza	might get a bellyache
Read a book	might ruin her eyes
Say hello	might have to say goodbye

Careful Connie's oh so carefully
Sitting in her room,
She's absolutely safe there,
Just sitting in the gloom
She never laughs and never cries
She never falls and bumps her head,
She's going to live forever
But she might as well be ...

Class D308 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 3 (Continued)

ALARM - Unknown

“There’s a cat out there.”
“Cat? How do you know?”
“I hear the robins saying so.”
“There’s a hawk somewhere.”
“Don’t see a hawk.”
“The chickens do. Hear the hens’ hawk-squawk?
The young chicks hear it. They’ve run for cover.
A hawk need only fly, not hover.
See how one hen has cocked an eye?
That’s not a crow just flying by.
Hens know his flight. Might be an owl;
But owls by day aren’t on the prowl,
Except the short-eared one; he’s rare.
If you’re like me, you don’t much care
For jays; but though the jay is all
For robbing birds’ nests, his loud call
At any sign of danger wakes
The world around him: cats, black snakes,
Shrikes, hawks, dogs, weasels, squirrels, crows, rats!
But robins specialize on cats.”

Class D308 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 3 (Continued)

THE PELICAN - Unknown

What does the pelican
have for dinner?
Fish.
What makes the pelican
get no thinner?
Fish.
What does the pelican
have for supper?
Fish.
And when he’s an early
getter-upper?
Fish.

What does the pelican
have to munch
for breakfast
and dinner
and tea and brunch
and parties
and picnics
and snacks and lunch?
Fish.

Isn't it good
the pelican finds
 Fish.
in the sea
of (different kinds) ?
Fish, Fish, Fish.

Class D308 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 3 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

ENGLISH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADE FOUR

Class D401 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 4

AUNTIE AND UNCLE - John Hegly

My auntie gives me a colouring book and crayons.
I begin to colour.
After a while she looks over to see what I have done and says
you've gone over the lines
that's what you've done.
What do you think they're there for, ay ?
Some kind of statement is it?
Going to be a rebel are we?
I begin to cry.
My uncle gives me a hanky and some blank paper
do your own designs he says
I begin to colour.
When I have done he looks over and tells me they are all very good.
He is lying,
only some of them are.

Class D401 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)

THE BLUEBIRD - Emily Huntington Miller

I know the song that the bluebird is singing,
Out in the apple-tree where he is swinging.
Brave little fellow! the skies !nay be dreary,
Nothing cares he while his heart is so cheery .

Hark! how the music leaps out from his throat!
Hark! was there ever so merry a note?
Listen awhile, and you'll hear what he's saying,
Up in the apple-tree, swinging and swaying:

Class D401 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)

EVERYTIME I CLIMB A TREE - David McCord

Everytime I climb a tree
Everytime I climb a tree
Everytime I climb a tree
I scrape a leg
Or skin a knee
And everytime I climb a tree
I find some ants
Or dodge a bee
And get the ants

All over me.

And everytime I climb a tree
Where have you been?
They say to me
But don't they know that I am free
Everytime I climb a tree?

I like it best to spot a nest
That has an egg
Or maybe three.

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

Class D401 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)
THINK OF IT Betty Killion

"Go quickly," says my mother
Or some other hurry person.
Then I think of fast things -
hummingbird wings
lizards darting
racers starting
bicycle wheels
automobiles
wind through the trees
some angry bees -
and I'm quick!

"Sh-h-h," says my mother
Or some other tiptoe person.
Then I think of still things -
empty swings
dark nights
soaring kites
thick, soft mittens
newborn kittens
whispered prayers
sleeping bears -

and I'm quiet!

“Slow down,” says my mother
Or some other getting tired person.
Then I think of lazy things –
yawning kings
elephants strolling
plump pigs rolling
a cow chewing cud
some oozing mud
inchworm on my hand
sifting sand –

Class D401 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)
COLD ENOUGH - Jeff Moss

Nobody knows for sure what happened to the dinosaurs,
But some people think that about seventy million years ago
The weather got a bit colder all over the earth.
Not *that* cold,
But *cold* enough So that lots and lots of trees died.
Not freezing cold,
But *cold* enough
So that the plant-eating dinosaurs died
Because there weren't enough trees left for them to eat.
Not an ice age or anything,
But still *cold* enough
So that the meat-eating dinosaurs died
Because there were no plant-eating dinosaurs left for them to feed on.

So...
It is possible that
After one hundred fifty million years of ruling the earth,
Dinosaurs vanished and became extinct
Because the weather got *just enough* colder.

So next time your mom tells you
To wear your warm hat and gloves,
Pay attention.

Class D401 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)

THE LION – Conrad Aiken

The lion is a lordly thing
and right of the beasts called King
o yes indeed the King of Beasts
just so it's not on us he feasts
those golden eyes
how piercing wise
those powerful paws
those cutting claws
and o those might jaws
these are enough and more
even without a roar
to give us pause.
Those claws can rip a plank right
 through
those jaws can chew
a bone in two
he is fearful sight
by day or night
of might.
But let's remember too
he has beauty unsurpassed
see by the moon his shadow cast
upon a desert dune
or silhouetted on the moon
those sinewy shoulders and that mane
while thrice he roars
and roars again
proclaiming far and near
to norths to souths to wests to easts
Look and fear
your king is here
 I am the King of Beasts!

Class D401 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)
THE PARAGON - Bobbi Katz

Yuk! How I hate Nancy Feder!
I can't think why the world would need her.
Since Nancy Feder moved next door,
life's not worth living anymore.
I don't know how my mother knows
she makes her bed and folds her clothes
and does her homework everyday
before she goes outside to play.

She's such a goodie, goodie, good--
she'd make you barf! I bet she would!
(And you don't have to listen to
my mother rave the way I do!)
A rabbit's foot might bring me luck,
and then I'll see a moving truck.
Won't it be a sunny day,
when Nancy Feder moves away?

Class D401 SOLO POETRY - Serious Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D402 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 4
NO THANK YOU - Shel Silverstein

No I do not want a kitten,
No cute, cuddly kitty-poo,
No more long hair in my cornflakes,
No more midnight meowing mews.

No more scratchin', snarlin', spitters,
No more sofas clawed to shreds,
No more smell of kitty litter,
No more mousies in my bed.

No I will not take that kitten--
I've had lice and I've had fleas,
I've been scratched and sprayed and bitten,
I've developed allergies.

If you've got an ape,
I'll take him,
If you have a lion, that's fine,
If you brought some walking bacon,
Leave him here, I'll treat him kind.

I have room for mice and gerbils,
I have beds for boars and bats,
But please, *please* take away that kitten—
Quick—‘fore it becomes a cat
Well. . . it *is* kind of cute at that.

Class D402 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)

THE NEW SUIT - Nidia Sanabria de Romero translated by Larrosa Morán with N. Nye

Striped suit,
a terrific tie,
buttoned shoes and brown socks--
my outfit for the party.

And the recommendations
drove me crazy--
--Don't eat ice cream
because it might drip.
--Juice, drink it slowly
since it dribbles.
--And nothing about
chocolate bombs
that might explode!
Happy birthday!
Who's that stuffed breathless
inside a tight suit?

Next year will be different.
I'll wear old clothes,
be ready to dribble,
and enjoy
ice cream, cake, and everything else.

Class D402 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)

ARITHMETIC - Carl Sandburg

Arithmetic is where numbers fly
like pigeons in and out of your head.
Arithmetic tells you how many you lose or win
if you know how many you had
before you lost or won.
Arithmetic is seven eleven all good children
go to heaven - or five six bundle of sticks.
Arithmetic is numbers you squeeze from your
head to your hand to your pencil to your paper
till you get the right answer....
If you have two animal crackers, one good and one bad,
and you eat one and a striped zebra
with streaks all over him eats the other,

how many animal crackers will you have
if somebody offers you five six seven and you say
No no no and you say Nay nay nay
and you say Nix nix nix?
If you ask your mother for one fried egg
for breakfast and she gives you
two fried eggs and you eat
both of them, who is better in arithmetic,
you or your mother?

Class D402 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)

BETTY BOTTER – Anonymous

Betty Botter
bought some butter.
“But,” she said,
“the butter’s bitter.
If I put it
in my batter,
it will make
my batter bitter.
But a bit
of better butter—
that would make
my batter better.”
So she bought
a bit of butter
better than
her bitter butter.
And she put it
in her batter,
and the batter
was not bitter.
So ‘twas better
Betty Botter
bought a bit
of better butter!

Class D402 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)
MA AND GOD - Shel Silverstein

God gave us fingers--Ma says, "Use your fork."
God gave us voices--Ma says, "Don't scream."
Ma says eat broccoli, cereal and carrots.
But God gave us tasteys for maple ice cream.

God gave us fingers--Ma says, "Use your hanky,"
God gave us puddles--Ma says, "Don't splash."
Ma says, "Be quiet, your father is sleeping."
But God gave us garbage can covers to crash.

God gave us fingers--Ma says, "Put your gloves on."
God gave us raindrops--Ma says, "Don't get wet."
Ma says be careful, and don't get too near to
Those strange lovely dogs that God gave us to pet.

God gave us fingers--Ma says, "Go wash 'em."
But God gave us coal bins and nice dirty bodies.
And I ain't too smart, but there's one thing for certain--
Either Ma's wrong or else God is.

Class D402 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)
SPAGHETTI! SPAGHETTI! - Jack Prelutsky

Spaghetti! spaghetti!
You're wonderful stuff,
I love you spaghetti,
I can't get enough.
You're covered with sauce
and you're sprinkled with cheese,
spaghetti! spaghetti!
Oh, give me some please.

Spaghetti! spaghetti!
Piled high in a mound,
you wiggle, you wriggle,
you squiggle around.
There's slurpy spaghetti
all over my plate,
spaghetti! spaghetti!
I think you are great.

Spaghetti! spaghetti!
I love you a lot,
you're slishy, you're sloshy,
delicious and hot.

I gobble you down
oh, I can't get enough,
spaghetti! spaghetti!
You're wonderful stuff.

Class D402 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)

WISHES - Anon

Said the first little chicken
With a queer little squirm,
'I wish I could find
A fat little worm.'

Said the second little chicken
With an odd little shrug,
'I wish I could find
A fat little slug.'

Said the third little chicken
With a sharp little squeal,
'I wish I could find
Some nice yellow meal!'

Said the fourth little chicken
With a small sigh of grief,
'I wish I could find
A little green leaf.'

Said the fifth little chicken
With a faint little moan,
'I wish I could find
A small gravel stone.'

'Now see here,' said their mother
From the green garden patch.
'If you want any breakfast,
Just come here and SCRATCH!'

Class D402 SOLO POETRY - Humorous Poetry, Grade 4 (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

See Class D304 for PROSE READING – Serious reading, Grades 3 and 4

See Class D305 for PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 3 and 4

Class D408 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 4
HOW TO DELAY YOUR BEDTIME - Bruce Landsky

Refuse to turn off the TV.
Say, "All my friends watch this show."

Say, "No fair!" when you're told to go to bed.
Then ask, "Why can't I stay up till ten
like all my friends?"

When Dad says, "If all your friends
jumped off the Brooklyn Bridge,
would you jump too?"
sneer, "Yes!"

Whine, "I'm too tired to walk upstairs to
bed."
Make Dad carry you up the stairs.

Pout, "I'm too tired to brush my teeth."
Wait till Dad squeezes the toothpaste
onto your brush and starts brushing
your teeth for you.
Then groan, "Ouch, you're hurting me."

When Mom comes in to say good night
and asks you to pick up your clothes,
yawn, "I'm too tired to pick up my clothes."
Watch while Mom picks them up for you.

Beg, "I need a bedtime story."
When Mom finishes the story,
ask, "And then what happened?"

Tell her, "That story got me excited.
Now I need a backrub to make me sleepy."
When Mom starts rubbing, give directions:
"Rub a little higher.
No, a little to the left.
No, more in the middle."
When Mom stops rubbing,
grumble, "I was just starting to feel sleepy--
don't stop now."
When Mom says, "For the last time, good night!"
whine, "I'm thirsty.
Can I have a glass of water?"
When Mom asks you to promise
you won't wet the bed,
say, "I promise"--but cross your fingers.

Start crying.
When Dad comes to comfort you,
sob, "There's a monster under my bed."
When he turns on the lights,
you'll see it's only your shoes, socks, crayons,
and the toy you got last Christmas,
but only played with once because you lost it.
Tell him, "Leave the door open
so I can see the hall light!"
When he opens up the door
plead, "Open it wider!"

When Dad leaves,
get the toy from under your bed
and play with it in the light
shining through your doorway.

Class D408 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 4 (Continued)
I'M THANKFUL - Jack Prelutsky

I'm thankful for my baseball bat,
I cracked it yesterday,
I'm thankful for my checker set,
I haven't learned to play,
I'm thankful for my mittens,
one is missing in the snow,
I'm thankful for my hamsters,
they escaped a month ago.

I'm thankful for my basketball,
it's sprung another leak,
I'm thankful for my parakeet,
it bit me twice last week,
I'm thankful for my bicycle,
I crashed into a tree,
I'm thankful for my roller skates.
I fell and scraped my knee.

I'm thankful for my model plane
it's short a dozen parts,
I'm thankful for my target game,
I'm sure I'll find the darts,
I'm thankful for my bathing suit,
it came off in the river,
I'm thankful for so many things,
except, of course, for LIVER!

Class D408 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 4 (Continued)
BYE BYE BRONTOSAURUS - Jeff Moss

Ever since scientists began studying dinosaurs,
One of their favourites
Was the *Brontosaurus*.
Now there is no *Brontosaurus* anymore.
Here's what happened.

For years, Scientists kept finding
Brontosaurus bones.
They kept talking about
Brontosaurus this
And *Brontosaurus* that
And *Brontosaurus* blah-blah

Till one day they discovered
That the bones of the *Brontosaurus*
Were the same as some bones
From a different dinosaur they had discovered earlier.
They had called this other dinosaur *Apatosaurus*.
Well, it turned out that *Brontosaurus* and *Apatosaurus*
Were one and the same dinosaur.

So, even though for years and years
Everybody had been talking about
Brontosaurus this
And *Brontosaurus* that
And *Brontosaurus* blah-blah,
The scientists said:
"From now on, all the dinos we used to call *Brontosaurus*
Are going to be called *Apatosaurus*."

Stop and think about that.

It's kind of like
All your life your name was Jane,
And everyone said, "Hi Jane," and "Goodbye, Jane,"
And "Clean up your room, Jane?"
And "What's your favourite song, Jane?"
And then one day they said,
"You know what, Jane?"
From now on your name is Bill."

It's a good thing *Brontosaurus* are extinct,
Otherwise they would probably be very confused.

Class D408 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 4 (Continued)

THE RHINOCEROS - Conrad Aiken

Beware lest you should get a toss
from grumpy old Rhinoceros
bad-tempered he
so cautiously
we'd better
keep our distance—
see?
Is he the fable unicorn?
For he too wore a single horn
but we learn
was gentle born
and when he spied
a maid forlorn
lost in the darkest forest
he
would lay his head
upon her knee
then guide her
safely
home
to
tea.
Not so old grump Rhinoceros
who'd rather give us all a *toss*.

Class D408 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 4 (Continued)

ABIGAIL – Kaye Starbird

Abigail knew when she was born
Among the roses, she was a thorn.
Her quiet mother had lovely look.
Her quiet father wrote quiet books.
Her quiet brothers, correct though pale,
Weren't really prepared for Abigail.
Who entered the house with hows and tears
While both her brothers blocked their ears
And both her parents, talking low,
Said, "Why is Abigail screaming so?"

Abigail kept on getting worse.
As soon as she teathed she bit her nurse.
At three, she acted distinctly cool
Toward people and things at nursery school.
"I'm sick of cutting out dolls," she said,
And cut a hole in her dress, instead.
Her mother murmured, "She's bold for three."
Her father answered, "I quite agree."
Her brothers mumbled, "We hate to fuss,
But when will Abigail be like us?"

Abigail, going through her teens,
Liked overalls and pets and machines.
In college, hating most of its features,
She told off all of her friends and teachers.
Her brothers, graduating from Yale,
Said, "Really, you're hopeless, Abigail."
And while her mother said, "Fix your looks."
Her father added, "Or else write books."
And Abigail asked, "Is that a dare?"
And wrote a book that would curl your hair.

Class D408 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 4 (Continued)

MY ROOM - Florence Watts

My room is really something,
There are clothes all over the floor.
They are hanging out and down
From every dresser drawer.

My curtain rod fell down
And much to my surprise,
The curtains didn't hit the floor,
They are dangling from the ties

Dad came into my room
And exclaimed, "Girl what a mess!"
And over there I think I see
That two hundred dollar dress."

Grampa came and said, "My dear
Don't worry 'bout a thing,
I'll run on home and get the truck
You just start shoveling."

Mother came just to the door
And I think I heard her curse.
She said, "I have just come from the dump
And I think that this is worse."

Gramma came and laughingly,
"Good heavens." is what she said.
"You know that men are made of dust
And there are two beneath your bed."

My closet does not look too bad,
Which really is a switch,
But on the floor behind the clothes
Three is a dozen pair of gitch.

So I guess I had better start to clean,
I am grounded 'til I do,
And anyway its is weeks and months
Since I lost my other shoe.

Class D408 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 4 (Continued)
EIGHT BALLOONS - Unknown

Eight balloons no one was buyin'
All broke loose one afternoon.
Eight balloons with strings a-flyin',
Free to do what they wanted to.
One flew up to touch the sun - POP!
One thought highways might be fun - POP!
One took a nap in a cactus pile - POP!
One stayed to play with a careless child - POP!
One tried to taste some bacon fryin' - POP!
One fell in love with a porcupine - POP!
One looked close in a crocodile's mouth - POP!
One sat around 'til his air ran out - WHOOSH!
Eight balloons no one was buyin'
They broke loose and away they flew,
Free to float and free to fly
And free to pop where they wanted to.

Class D408 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 4 (Continued)

THE CIRCUS - Elizabeth Madox Roberts

Friday came and the circus was there,
And Mother said that the twins and I
And Charles and Clarence and all of us
Could go out and see the parade go by.

And there were wagons with pictures on,
And you never could guess what they had inside,
Nobody could guess, for the doors were shut,
And there was a dog that a monkey could ride.

A man on the top of a sort of cart
Was clapping his hands and making a talk.
And the elephant came - he can step pretty far -
It made us laugh to see him walk.

Three beautiful ladies came riding by,
And each one had on a golden dress,
And each one had a golden whip,
They were queens of Sheba, I guess.

A big wild man was in a cage,
And he had some snakes going over his feet
And somebody said "He eats them alive!"
But I didn't see him eat.

Class D408 CHORAL SPEAKING - Grade 4 (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

ENGLISH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADE FIVE

Class D501 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 5

HOT FOOD - Michael Rosen

We sit down to eat
and the potato's a bit hot
so I only put a little on my fork
and I blow
whooph whooph
until it's cool
just cool
then into the mouth
nice.
And there's my brother
he's doing the same
whooph whooph
into the mouth
nice.
There's my mum
she's doing the same
whooph whooph
into the mouth
nice. But my dad.
My dad.
What does he do?
He stuffs a great big chunk of potato
into his mouth.
Then
that really does it.
His eyes pop out
he flaps his hands
he blows, he puffs, he yells
he bobs his head up and down
he spits bits of potato
all over his plate
and he turns to us and he says,
"Watch out everybody--
the potato's very hot."

Class D501 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)
A MOSQUITO IN THE CABIN - Myra Stilborn

Although you bash her,
 swat her, smash her,
and go to bed victorious,
 happy and glorious
 she will come winging,
 zooming and zinging,
 wickedly singing
 over your bed.

You slap the air
 but she's in your hair
 cackling with laughter.

You smack your head,
 but she isn't dead -
 she's on the rafter.

She's out for blood -
 yours, my friend,
and she will get it, in the end.
She brings it first to boiling point,
 then lets it steam.

With a fee, fi, fo and contented fum
 she sips it
 while you dream.

Class D501 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)
THE LION IS LOOSE - David Bittle

LION AT LARGE IN SUBURBS
screamed the morning paper
in that bold red lettering
reserved for national emergencies

MANEATER ON THE PROWL
ALL CITIZENS STAY INDOORS
blared the radio announcer
afraid his two police dogs
could not protect him

A LION ESCAPED FROM THE CITY ZOO
TWO DAYS AGO
THE ARMY HAS BEEN CALLED
TO HELP IN THE HUNT
ALL RESIDENTS ARE WARNED
NOT TO APPROACH THE CREATURE
FOR HE IS BELIEVED
STARVED AND DANGEROUS
The six o'clock news signed off

with a picture of the empty cage

As I gazed across my living room at the lion
stretched full on the sofa
I began to think
maybe he had lied to me
and wasn't on vacation after all.

Class D501 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)
MURDER IN THE BATHTUB - Marja Pilbacka

About to take a bath
I spied a spider in the tub
Eight legs worked
trying to climb
the unscalable thirty feet
of slippery pink enamel
Poor thing –

What else could I do?
We didn't like his webs in the house
and out in the snow he would freeze or starve

I picked up a jar
and crushed him
quickly

I shrugged off the nasty guilt
After all
People kill spiders all the time

Class D501 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)
THE ANIMALS IN THAT COUNTRY from *The Harbrace Anthology of Poetry*

In that country the animals
have the faces of people:

the ceremonial
cats possessing the streets

the fox run
politely to earth, the huntsmen
standing around him, fixed
in their tapestry of manners

the bull, embroidered
with blood and given an elegant death, trumpets, his name
stamped on him, heraldic brand
because

(when he rolled
on the sand, sword in his heart, the teeth
in his blue mouth were human)

he is really a man

even the wolves, holding resonant
conversations in their
forests thickened with legend.

In this country the animals
have the faces of
animals.

Their eyes
flash once in car headlights
and are gone.

Their deaths are not elegant.

They have the faces of
no-one.

Class D501 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)
THE SHARK - E. J. Pratt

He seemed to know the harbour,
So leisurely he swam;
His fin,
Like a piece of sheet-iron,
Three-cornered,
And with knife-edge,
Stirred not a bubble
As it moved
With its base-line on the water.

His body was tubular
And tapered
And smoke-blue,
And as he passed the wharf
He turned,
And snapped at a flat-fish
That was dead and floating.
And I saw the flash of a white throat,
And a double row of white teeth,
And eyes of metallic grey,
Hard and narrow and slit.

Then out of the harbour,
With that three-cornered fin
Shearing without a bubble the water
Lithely,
Leisurely,
He swam –
That strange fish,
Tubular, tapered, smoke-blue,
Part vulture, part wolf,
Part neither – for his blood was cold.

Class D501 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)

CAT - Eleanor Farjeon

Cat!
Scat!
After her, after her,
Sleeky flatterer
Spitfire chatterer,
Scatter her, scatter her,
Off her mat!
Wuff!
Wuff!
Treat her rough!
Git her, git her! Whiskery spitter!
Catch her, catch her
Green-eyed scratcher!
Slathery
Slithery
Hisser,
"Don't miss her!"

Run till you're dithery
Hithery
Thithery
Pfitss! Pfitss!
How she spits!
Spitch! Spatch!
Can't she scratch!
Scratching the bark
Of the sycamore-tree
She's reached her ark
And's hissing at me
Pfitss! Pfitss!
Wuff! Wuff!
Scat,
Cat!
That's
That!

Class D501 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)

MY SHADOW - Robert Louis Stevenson

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

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

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

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

Class D501 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

Class D502 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 5

MY CHAUFFEUR - Bernice and Gordon Korman

My sister got her license,
And the future's looking sour .
She backs out of our driveway
At a hundred miles an hour!

She gives me lifts; I swear
My stomach's never been so tight.
We screech around the neighborhood
Well past the speed of light!

She's on and off the sidewalk,
Windows open, tape deck pounding,
As people run for cover,
Her obnoxious horn is sounding.
The whiplash doesn't bother me--
Nor even fear of death.
But on the way to school today
She sideswiped my friend Seth.

His bike's okay, but man oh man,
The guy is still in shock!
I should refuse to ride with her,
But then I'd have to walk!

Class D502 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)
DOING A GOOD DEED - John Ciardi

At the foot of the hill, the ice-cream truck
drove into a mudhole and got stuck.
We helped the driver back on the road.
But first we had to lighten the load.
When we had helped a gallon apiece,
the driver phoned the Chief of Police,
who drove a pole into the sludge
and measured five feet of chocolate fudge
that had to be lightened. Well, we turned to
and helped the man. What else could we do?
I even called my Boy Scout Troop.
By then there was nothing left but soup.
Still, ice-cream soup is very good.
And we wanted to help as much as we could.
It was our good deed for the day
to help the man get on his way.
At last we pulled him out of the muck,
and he drove away in his empty truck,
thanking us all for helping him out.
That made us happy. For there's no doubt
we must help our neighbor as much as we can.
Especially when he's the ice-cream man.

Class D502 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)
REBECCA (Who slammed Doors for Fun and Perished Miserably) - Hillaire Belloc

A Trick that everyone abhors
In Little Girls is slamming Doors.
A Wealthy Banker's little Daughter
Who lived in Palace Green, Bayswater
(By name Rebecca Offendort),
Was given to this Furious Sport.

She would deliberately go
And slam that door like Billy-Ho!
To make her Uncle Jacob start.
She was not really bad at heart,
But only rather rude and wild:
She was an aggravating child.

It happened that a Marble Bust

Of Abraham was standing just
Above the Door this little Lamb
Had carefully prepared to Slam,
And down it came! It knocked her flat!
It laid her out! She looked like that!

.

Her funeral Sermon (which was long
And followed by a Sacred Song)
Mentioned her Virtues, it is true,
But dwelt upon her Vices too,
And showed the Dreadful End of One
Who goes and slams the door for Fun.

Class D502 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)
THE FARMER AND THE QUEEN - Shel Silverstein

"She's coming," the farmer said to the owl.
"Oh, what shall I, what shall I do?
Shall I bow when she comes?
Shall I twiddle my thumbs?"
The owl asked, "Who?"

"The Queen, the Queen, the royal Queen—
She'll pass the farm today.
Shall I salute?" he asked the horse.
The horse said, "Nay ."

"Shall I give her a gift?" he asked the wren.
"A lovely memento for her to keep?
An egg or a peach or an ear of corn?"
The wren said, "Cheap."

"But should I curtsy or should I cheer?
Oh, here's her carriage now.
What should I do?" he asked the dog.
The dog said, "Bow."

And so he did, and so she passed,
Ah, tra lala lala,
"She smiled, she did!" he told the sheep.
The sheep said, "Bah."

Class D502 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)

MOSQUITO - J. Patrick Lewis

I was climbing up the sliding board
When suddenly I felt
A Mosquito bite my bottom
And it raised a big red welt.
So I said to that Mosquito,
"I'm sure you wouldn't mind
If I took a pair of tweezers
And I tweezered your behind?"

He shriveled up his body,
He shuffled to his feet.
He said, "I'm awfully sorry
But a fellow's got to eat!
There *are* Mosquito manners!
And I must have just forgot 'em.
I swear I'll never never NEVER
Bite another bottom."

But a minute later Archie Hill
And Buck and Theo Brown
Were horsing on the monkey bars,
Hanging upside down.
They must have looked delicious
From a skeeter's point of view
'Cause he bit 'em on the bottoms--
Archie, Buck and Theo, too!

You could hear 'em going HOLY-!
You could hear 'em going WHACK!
You could hear 'em cuss and holler,
Going SMACK–SMACK-SMACK!

A Mosquito's awful sneaky,
A Mosquito's mighty sly,
But I never never NEVER
Thought a skeeter'd tell a lie!

Class D502 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)

I WISH MY FATHER WOULDN'T TRY TO FIX THINGS ANYMORE - Jack Prelutsky

My father's listed everything
he's planning to repair,
I hope he won't attempt it,
for the talent isn't there,
he tinkered with the toaster
when the toaster wouldn't pop,
now we keep it disconnected,
but we cannot make it stop.

He fiddled with the blender,
and he took the top apart,
the clock isn't running backward,
and the blender would not start,
every windowpane he's puttied
now admits the slightest breeze,
and he's half destroyed the furnace,
if we're lucky we won't freeze.

The TV set was working,
yet he thought he'd poke around,
now the picture's out of focus,
and there isn't any sound,
there's a faucet in the basement
that had dripped one drop all year,
since he fixed it, we can't find it
without wearing scuba gear.

I wish my father wouldn't try
to fix things anymore,
for everything he's mended
is more broken than before,
if my father finally fixes
every item on his list,
we'll be living in the garden
for our house will not exist.

Class D502 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)
THE ATHLETE’S PRAYER - Bernice and Gordon Korman

Today
Is our big game,
The one to decide who's the best team in town,
 And who gets the trophy,
 And the glory,
 And who eats dirt.

If we lose
(Which is a distinct possibility)
When the ball goes into our net,

Please, please, please
 Don't let it
 Bounce off my knee,
 my nose,
 my elbow,
 my chest,
 my earlobe,
 my eyebrow,
and especially not my derriere

First!

Class D502 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 5 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D504 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grade 5 and 6
Excerpt from **THE BIRDS' PEACE** - Jean Craighead George

Fluter went on singing. After a few moments he flew across the meadow and boldly sang from a raspberry patch.

Dulce, his mate, flew off their nest in the thicket, where she had been incubating their eggs. She ate a bristlegrass seed and serenely preened her feathers. She was quite at ease.

Fluter was not. He turned this way and that. He flicked his tail and raised his crest, then flew to the bracken fern and sang. He flitted briskly to the sugar maple limb and sang from a conspicuous twig. He winged to the dogwood tree and sang from a high limb. As he flew and sang, Kristy became aware of what he was doing. He was making a circle, an invisible fence of song around his meadow and his nest in the thicket.

Suddenly Fluter clicked out what Kristy's father had told her were notes of warning. Dulce became alarmed. She flattened her feathers to her body and flew silently back to their nest.

Kristy checked to see what was the matter. The strange song sparrow was in Fluter's raspberry bush. He was pointing his bill at Fluter, who crouched as if he were going to fly at the stranger. But he did not. Instead, he sang.

The stranger heard Fluter's "stay-off-my-property" song and swiftly departed. He flew over Fluter's invisible fence of song and alighted on his own sapling. There he sang at Fluter.

Fluter flew to the sugar maple limb on the border of his territory and sang right back at him. The stranger answered with a flood of melody from his trees and bushes. When each understood where the other's territory lay, they rested and preened their feathers.

Kristy was fascinated. She sat up and crossed her legs.

"Even Daddy doesn't know about this," she said.

Putting her chin in her hands, she watched the birds until the day's long shadows told her she must go home. And all that time, Fluter did not fly or sing beyond the raspberry bush, nor did the stranger come back to Fluter's territory. But sing they did, brightly and melodically, while their mates sat serenely on their brown-splotched eggs.

Dear Daddy, Kristy wrote that night. I know how the birds keep the peace.

Class D504 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)

Excerpt from **THE VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER** - C. S. Lewis

Meanwhile Eustace slept and slept - and slept. What woke him was a pain in his arm. The moon was shining in at the mouth of the cave, and the bed of treasures seemed to have grown much more comfortable: in fact he could hardly feel it at all. He was puzzled by the pain in his arm at first, but presently it occurred to him that the bracelet which he had shoved up above his elbow had become strangely tight. His arm must have swollen while he was asleep (it was his left arm).

He moved his right arm in order to feel his left, but stopped before he had moved it an inch and bit his lip in terror. For just in front of him, and a little on his right, where the moonlight fell clear on the floor of the cave, he saw a hideous shape moving. He knew that shape: it was a dragon's claw. It had moved as he moved his hand and became still when he stopped moving his hand.

"Oh, what a fool I've been," thought Eustace. "Of course, the brute had a mate and it's lying beside me."

For several minutes he did not dare to move a muscle. He saw two thin columns of smoke going up before his eyes, black against the moonlight; just as there had been smoke coming from the other dragon's nose before it died. This was so alarming that he held his breath. The two columns of smoke vanished. When he could hold his breath no longer he let it out stealthily; instantly two jets of smoke appeared again. But even yet he

had no idea of the truth.

Presently he decided that he would edge very cautiously to his left and try to creep out of the cave. Perhaps the creature was asleep - and anyway it was his only chance. But of course before he edged to the left he looked to the left. Oh horror! there was a dragon's claw on that side, too.

No one will blame Eustace if at this moment he shed tears. He was surprised at the size of his own tears as he saw them splashing on to the treasure in front of him. They also seemed strangely hot; steam went up from them.

But there was no good crying. He must try to crawl out from between the two dragons. He began extending his right arm. The dragon's foreleg and claw on his right went through exactly the same motion. Then he thought he would try his left. The dragon limb on that side moved, too.

Two dragons, one on each side, mimicking whatever he did! His nerve broke and he simply made a bolt for it.

There was such a clatter and rasping, and clinking of gold, and grinding of stones, as he rushed out of the cave that he thought they were both following him. He daren't look back. He rushed to the pool. The twisted shape of the dead dragon lying in the moonlight would have been enough to frighten anyone but now he hardly noticed it. His idea was to get into the water.

But just as he reached the edge of the pool two things happened. First of all it came over him like a thunderclap that he had been running on all fours - and why on earth had he been doing that? And secondly, as he bent towards the water, he thought for a second that yet another dragon was staring up at him out of the pool. But in an instant he realised the truth. That dragon face in the pool was his own reflection. There was no doubt of it. It moved as he moved: it opened and shut its mouth as he opened and shut his.

He had turned into a dragon while he was asleep. Sleeping on a dragon's hoard with greedy, dragonish thoughts in his heart, he had become a dragon himself.

Class D504 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)

Excerpt from **MANIAC MAGEE** by Jerry Spinelli

Maniac Magee was blind. Sort of.

Oh, he could see objects, all right. He could see a flying football or a John McNab fastball better than anybody.

He could see Mars Bar's foot sticking out, trying to trip him up as he circled the bases for a home run.

He could see Mars Bar charging from behind to tackle him, even when he didn't have the football.

He could see Mars Bar's bike veering for a nearby puddle to splash water on him.

He could see these things, but he couldn't see what they meant. He couldn't see that Mars Bar disliked him, maybe even hated him.

When you think. about it, it's amazing all the stuff he didn't see.

Such as, big kids don't like little kids showing them up.

And big kids like it even less if another big kid (such as Hands Down) is laughing at them while the little kid is faking them out of their Fruit of the Looms.

And some kids don't like a kid who is different.

Such as a kid who is allergic to pizza.

Or a kid who does dishes without being told.

Or a kid who never watches Saturday morning cartoons.

Or a kid who's another color.

Maniac kept trying, but he still couldn't see it, this color business. He didn't figure he was white any more than the East Enders were black. He looked himself over pretty hard and came up with at least seven different shades and colors right on his own skin, not one of them being what he would call white (except for his eyeballs, which weren't any whiter than the eyeballs of the kids in the East End).

Which was all a big relief to Maniac, finding out he wasn't really white, because the way he figured, white was about the most boring color of all.

But there it was, piling up around him: dislike. Not from everybody. But enough. And Maniac couldn't see it.

And then all of a sudden he could.

Parvana... put down her board shovel.... Checking to make sure no one was looking, she headed over to the sheltered doorway.

“Hey Kaseem.”

Parvana looked back at her friend.

“Watch out for land mines,” Shauzia said.

Shauzia was probably joking, but she kept her eyes open anyway.

“Kabul has more land mines than flowers,” her father used to say, “Land mines are as common as rock and can blow you up without warning. Remember your brother.”

Parvana remembered the time someone from the United Nations had come to her class with a chart showing the different kinds of land mines. She tried to remember what they looked like. All she could remember was that some were disguised as toys – special mines to blow up children.

Parvana peered into the darkness of the doorway. Sometimes armies would plant mines in buildings as they left an area. Could someone have planted a landmine here? Would she blow up if she stepped inside?

She knew she was faced with three choices. One choice was to not go to the bathroom until she got home. That was not possible – she really couldn’t hold it much longer. Another choice was to go to the bathroom outside the doorway, where people might see her and figure out she was a girl. The third was to step into the darkness, go to the bathroom in private, and hope she didn’t explode.

She picked the third choice. Taking a deep breath and uttering a quick prayer, she stepped through the doorway. She did not explode.

“No land mines?” Shauzia asked when Parvana returned.

“I kicked them out of the way,” Parvana joked, but she was still shaking.

Class D504 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)

Excerpt from COPPER SUNRISE – Bryan Buchan

In one of our fields was a lark's nest, and on some days I could sit for half the afternoon watching the male bird on top of the stone wall. He liked the feel of the warm sunlight, the sound of the buzzing swarms of insects, the colour woven into the grass. It was his world, and he was in charge. I almost wanted to be that bird.

One bright afternoon I crouched in the deep grass, leaning against an old rock that had fallen long ago from the crumbling wall. The lark was sitting proudly on a bit of post that stuck above gorse bushes of the hedgerow.

His song was soothing: I began to daydream, dim images flooding my mind in rhythm with his notes, flowing and melting into one another. The real world was far away.

Slowly, almost as though it were a part of my daydream, I saw the lark stiffen. A few feathers floated out from his body as he fell from the post.

I lifted myself from the grass and moved towards the place where he had fallen. A familiar voice was speaking beside me but I paid no heed.

There, in the sharp spikes of the gorse bush, hung my lark, still alive. His bill moved slowly, open and shut. His grazed eyes stared into nothing. And again the voice at my side.

The lark's head drooped onto his twisted wing. Gradually his eyes turned dull and filmy as his life drained away. Robert was beside me, with a sling crutched in his hand.

The lark was dead--an ordinary field-bird, hanging stupidly in a gorse bush, the beautiful, magical music gone. .

I turned to face my brother.

"Why did you kill him, Robert?" I pleaded.

Robert looked away from me, but I knew his face was white, and his eyes frightened.

"I didn't think I'd hit it, Jamie. I only wanted to scare it." His voice trailed away and was lost. . . .

"We are leaving now, Jamie," he said quietly.

Class D504 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)

Excerpt from **BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA** – Katherine Paterson

"No," he said straight at May Belle. "It's a lie. Leslie ain't dead." He turned around and ran out the door, letting the screen bang sharply against the house. He ran down the gravel to the main road and then started running west away from Washington and Millsburg—and the old Perkins place. An approaching car beeped and swerved and beeped again, but he hardly noticed.

Leslie—dead—girl friend—rope—broke—fell—you—you—you. The words exploded in his head like popcorn against the side of the popper. *God—dead—you—Leslie—dead—you.* He ran until he stumbled but he kept on, afraid to stop. Knowing somehow that running was the only thing that could keep Leslie from being dead. It was up to him. He had to keep going.

Behind him came the *baripity* of the pickup, but he couldn't turn around. He tried to run faster, but his father passed him and stopped the pickup just ahead, then jumped out and ran back. He picked Jess up in his arms as though he were a baby. For the first few seconds Jess kicked and struggled against the strong arms. Then Jess gave himself over to the numbness that was buzzing to be let out from a corner of his brain.

He leaned his weight upon the door of the pickup and let his head thud-thud against the window. His father drove stiffly without speaking, though once he cleared his throat as though he were going to say something, but he glanced at Jess and closed his mouth.

When they pulled up at his house, his father sat quietly, and Jess could feel the man's uncertainty, so he opened the door and got out, and with the numbness flooding through him, went in and lay down on his bed.

Class D504 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)

Excerpt from **THE HIGH KING** - Lloyd Alexander

The night was waning quickly. Taran stumbled in exhaustion, his cold-numbed hands torn and bleeding. Fflewddur was barely able to keep his feet. But the efforts of the Fair Folk never slackened. Before dawn the lake and the watercourse were piled high, as though a forest had overgrown them. Only then was Doli satisfied.

"Now we'll set it alight," he cried to Taran. "Fair Folk tinder burns hotter than anything you humans know. It will blaze in no time." He whistled shrilly through his teeth. All along the lake the torches of the Fair Folk flamed, then arched like shooting stars as the warriors flung them into the pyre. Taran saw the first branches catch fire, then the rest. A fierce crackling filled his ears, and over it he heard Doli shouting for the companions to race clear of the blaze. A wave of heat like the breath of a furnace caught at Taran as he struggled for a foothold among the stones. The ice was melting. He heard the hiss of quenched flames. But the fire, too high to be altogether extinguished, raged even more hotly. From the watercourse came the crack and groan of boulders shifting under the growing pressure of the rising flood. In a moment, like a gate ripped from its hinges, like a wall collapsing, the side of the bluff gave way, and through the channel

burst a sheet of water carrying all before it. Hugh blocks of ice thundered down the slope, bounding and rolling as if they had been no more than pebbles. The swift outpouring bore with it the flaming branches~ above the streaming mass, clouds of sparks billowed and swirled, and the watercourse blazed all along its length.

In the gorge below, the Huntsmen shouted and strove to flee. It was too late. The rushing waters and careening boulders flung back the warriors as they sought to scramble up the ravine. Screaming and cursing, they fell beneath the cascade or were tossed in the air like chips, to be dashed against the sharp rocks. A few gained higher ground, but as they did, Taran saw dark shapes spring to grapple with them, and now it was the turn of the waiting animals to take vengeance on those who had ever mercilessly hunted and slaughtered them.

Class D504 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)
Excerpt from TOM'S MIDNIGHT GARDEN - Philippa Pearce

And at last - One! The clock struck the present hour; but, as if to show its independence of mind, went on striking - Two! For once Tom was not amused by its striking the wrong hour: Three! Four! "It's one o'clock," Tom whispered angrily over the edge of the bedclothes. "Why don't you strike one o'clock, then, as the clocks would do at home?" Instead: Five! Six! Even in his irritation, Tom could not stop counting; it had become a habit with him at night. Seven! Eight! After all, the clock was the only thing that would speak to him at all in these hours of darkness. Nine! Ten! Yes, and it hadn't finished yet: Eleven! Twelve! "Fancy striking midnight twice in one night!" jeered Tom, sleepily. Thirteen! proclaimed the clock, and then stopped striking.

Thirteen? Tom's mind gave a jerk: had it really struck thirteen? Even mad old clocks never struck that. He must have imagined it. Had he not been falling asleep, or already sleeping? But no, awake or dozing, he had counted up to thirteen. He was sure of it.

He was uneasy in the knowledge that this happening made some difference to him: he could feel that in his bones. The stillness had become an expectant one; the house seemed to hold its breath; the darkness pressed up to him, pressing him with a question: Come on, Tom, the clock has struck thirteen - what are you going to do about it?

Class D504 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D505 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grade 5 and 6

Excerpt from **HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERER'S STONE** - J. K. Rowling

The repaired alarm clock rang at six o'clock the next morning. Harry turned it off quickly and dressed silently. He mustn't wake the Dursleys. He stole downstairs without turning on any of the lights.

He was going to wait for the postman on the corner of Privet Drive and get the letters for number four first. His heart hammered as he crept across the dark hall toward the front door - "AAAAARRRGH!"

Harry leapt into the air; he'd trodden on something big and squashy on the doormat - something alive!

Lights clicked on upstairs and to his horror Harry realized that the big, squashy something had been his uncle's face. Uncle Vernon had been lying at the foot of the front door in a sleeping bag, clearly making sure that Harry didn't do exactly what he'd been trying to do. He shouted at Harry for about half an hour and then told him to go and make a cup of tea. Harry shuffled miserably off into the kitchen and by the time he got back, the mail had arrived, right into Uncle Vernon's lap. Harry could see three letters addressed in green ink.

"I want - " he began, but Uncle Vernon was tearing the letters into pieces before his eyes.

Uncle Vernon didn't go to work that day. He stayed at home and nailed up the mail slot.

"See," he explained to Aunt Petunia through a mouthful of nails, "if they can't *deliver* them they'll just give up."

"I'm not sure that'll work, Vernon."

"Oh, these people's minds work in strange ways, Petunia, they're not like you and me," said Uncle Vernon, trying to knock in a nail with the piece of fruitcake Aunt Petunia had just brought him.

On Friday, no less than twelve letters arrived for Harry. As they couldn't go through the mail slot they had been pushed under the door, slotted through the sides, and a few even forced through the small window in the downstairs bathroom.

Uncle Vernon stayed at home again. After burning all the letters, he got out a hammer and nails and boarded up the cracks around the front and back doors so no one could go out. He hummed "Tiptoe Through the Tulips" as he worked, and jumped at small noises.

On Saturday, things began to get out of hand. Twenty-four letters to Harry found their way into the house, rolled up and hidden inside each of the two dozen eggs that their

very confused milkman had handed Aunt Petunia through the living room window. While Uncle Vernon made furious telephone calls to the post office and the dairy trying to find someone to complain to, Aunt Petunia shredded the letters in her food processor.

"Who on earth wants to talk to *you* this badly?" Dudley asked Harry in amazement.

On Sunday morning, Uncle Vernon sat down at the breakfast table looking tired and rather ill, but happy.

"No post on Sundays," he reminded them cheerfully as he spread marmalade on his newspapers, "no letters today - "

Something came whizzing down the kitchen chimney as he spoke and caught him sharply on the back of the head. Next moment, thirty or forty letters came pelting out of the fireplace like bullets. The Dursleys ducked, but Harry leapt into the air trying to catch one -

"Out! OUT!"

Uncle Vernon seized Harry around the waist and threw him into the hall. When Aunt Petunia and Dudley had run out with their arms over their faces, Uncle Vernon slammed the door shut. They could hear the letters still streaming into the room, bouncing off the walls and floor.

"That does it," said Uncle Vernon, trying to speak calmly but pulling great tufts out of his mustache at the same time. "I want you all back here in five minutes ready to leave. We're going away. Just pack some clothes. No arguments!"

Class D505 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)

Except from **MANIAC MAGEE** - Jerry Spinelli

Now what?

Maniac uncrumpled the page, flattened it out as best he could. How could he return the book to Amanda in this condition? He couldn't. But he had to. It was hers. Judging from that morning, she was pretty finicky about her books. What would make her madder - to not get the book back at all, or to get it back with a page ripped out? Maniac cringed at both prospects.

He wandered around the East End, jogging slowly, in no hurry now to find 728 Sycamore Street. He was passing a vacant lot when he heard an all-too-familiar voice: "Hey, fishbelly!" He stopped, turned. This time Mars Bar wasn't alone. A handful of other kids trailed him down the sidewalk.

Maniac waited.

Coming up to him, Mars Bar said, "Where you runnin', boy?"

"Nowhere."

"You runnin' from us. You afraid."

"No, I just like to run."

"You wanna run?" Mars Bar grinned. "Go ahead. We'll give you a head start."

Maniac grinned back. "No thanks."

Mars Bar held out his hand. "Gimme my book."

Maniac shook his head.

Mars Bar glared. "Gimme it."

Maniac shook his head.

Mars Bar reached for it. Maniac pulled it away.

They moved in on him now. They backed him up. Some high-schoolers were playing basketball up the street, but they weren't noticing. And there wasn't a broom-swinging lady in sight. Maniac felt a hard flatness against his back. Suddenly his world was very small and very simple: a brick wall behind him, a row of scowling faces in front of him. He clutched the book with both hands. The faces were closing in. A voice called: "That you, Jeffrey?"

The faces parted. At the curb was a girl on a bike - Amanda! She hoisted the bike to the sidewalk and walked it over. She looked at the book, at the torn page. "Who

ripped my book?"

Mars Bar pointed at Maniac. "He did."

Amanda knew better. "*You* ripped my book."

Mars Bar's eyes went big as headlights. "I did *not*!"

"You *did*. You lie."

"I *didn't*!"

"You *did*!" She let the bike fall to Maniac. She grabbed the book and started kicking Mars Bar in his beloved sneakers. "I got a little brother and a little sister that crayon all over my books, and I got a dog that eats them and poops on them and that's just inside my own family, and I'm *not* - gonna have *nobody* - else *messin'* - with my *books*! You under-*stand*?"

By then Mars Bar was hauling on up the street past the basketball players, who were rolling on the asphalt with laughter.

Amanda took the torn page from Maniac. To her, it was the broken wing of a bird, a pet out in the rain. She turned misty eyes to Maniac. "It's one of my favourite pages."

Maniac smiled. "We can fix it."

The way he said it, she believed. "Want to come to my house?" she said.

"Sure," he said.

Class D505 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)
McBROOM'S ALMANAC - Sid Fleischman

It's not generally known, but I invented air conditioning. I read in the paper the idea has already spread to the big cities.

But, shucks, everyone is welcome to it. Folks around here call it McBroom's Natural Winter Extract & Relief for the Summer Dismals. You can make your own, same as us.

February is about the last month you can lay in a supply of prime Winter Extract

Wait for an infernal cold day. When the mercury in the thermometer drops to the bottom -- you're getting close. But the weather's still a mite too warm.

When the mercury busts the glass bulb and rolls over to the fireplace to get warm - that's Extract weather .

Willjillhesterchesterpeterpollytimtommarylarryandlittleclarinda!" I shouted to our young'uns. "Bulb's shattered. Fetch the rip-saws, the crosscut saws, and let's get to work!"

Cold? Mercy, it was so cold outside *the wind had frozen solid*.

Didn't we get busy! We began sawing up chunks of frozen wind.

Now, you got to do the thing right. Wind's got a grain, just like wood. So be positive to use the crosscut saw against the grain, and the rip-saw along with it.

It fell dark before we finished harvesting and hauling that Winter Extract to our icehouse. And there stood our neighbor Heck Jones. That skinflint is so mean and miserly he brands the horseflies over at his place for fear someone will rustle 'em.

"Are you hidin' my left sock, McBroom?" he asked.

"Of course not," I said.

"Someone stole it off the clothesline. My best black sock, too! It only had three holes in it. If I catch the thief, I'll have him in a court of law!"

He loped away, grumbling and snarling.

We finished packing sawdust around the chunks of wind to keep them frozen. "Good work, my lambs," I said. "We're all set for the Summer Dismals."

Well, Heck Jones walked around in one sock the rest of winter, and summer, too.

As soon as the days turned sizzle-hot, we'd set a chunk of Winter Extract in the parlor. In a second or three it would begin to thaw -- just a cool breeze at first. But when

that February
wind really got whistling, it would lift the curtains!

One hot night I fetched in a nice chunk of frozen wind without bothering to scrape off the sawdust. A few minutes later I saw a black thing shoot across the room. Something had got frozen in our Winter Extract.

"Heck Jones's sock!" I declared. "I can smell his feet!"

He was sure to think we'd stolen it. He'd have us in a court of law! I made a grab for it, but the February wind was kicking up such a blow it shot the sock past the curtains and far out the window.

I could see Heck Jones asleep in his hammock, one sock on, the other foot bare. The left sock hoisted its tail like a kite in the air and started down.

I declare, if I didn't see it with my own eyes, I'd think I was scambly-witted. That holey black sock had the instinct of a homing pigeon. It returned right to Heck Jones's left foot and pulled itself on. I think it navigated by scent.

What Heck Jones thought when he awoke and looked at both feet -- I can't reckon.

Class D505 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)
Excerpt from **DON'T GET CAUGHT WEARING THE LUNCH LADY'S HAIRNET**
- Todd Strasser

The new lunch rules were ridiculous:

No talking.

Sit in your assigned seat.

No getting up without permission.

No slouching. They wanted you to sit up straight.

If you got caught running, you had to walk back and forth five times.

If you got caught littering, you had to pick up five additional pieces of garbage from the floor.

And, finally, the rule that got us all sent to the office.

"*What?!!!!*" It began with Wilson's high-pitched cry of disbelief. All around the cafeteria kids looked over at table twelve, seat F, to see what was going on. Wanda the Widebody was standing behind Wilson.

"I said spit it out," ordered Wanda the Widebody.

"Are you serious?" Wilson asked loudly.

"Spit it out," Wanda the Widebody repeated.

"No!" Wilson sat stubbornly at the table, chewing.

“What's the problem?” Big Bertha lumbered over from the other side of the lunchroom.

As soon as Big Bertha went to Wanda the Widebody's aid, Dusty and I automatically went to assist Wilson.

“You two sit down!” Big Bertha ordered as she headed to table twelve where Wilson sat chewing and Wanda the Widebody stood glaring.

Neither Dusty nor I listened. We arrived at Wilson's table just as Wilson swallowed.

“What'd he do?” Big Bertha asked Wanda the Widebody.

“Started his dessert before he finished his vegetables,” Wanda the Widebody reported.

“Darn right.” Using his plastic fork, Wilson broke off another piece of cake.

“You have to finish your vegetables!” Wanda the Widebody ordered.

“Who says?” I asked.

“Sit down!” Big Bertha yelled at me.

“That's the stupidest thing I've ever heard,” said Dusty.

“You're not allowed to talk!” Big Bertha yelled at him.

Wilson put the second piece of cake into his mouth and started to chew.

“That's a clear and intentional violation of the lunchroom rules!” Wanda the Widebody declared.

“You guys are psycho,” said Dusty.

“I told you to sit down and stop talking,” Big Bertha yelled.

Dusty and I looked at each other and sat down . . . on the floor.

“Not on the floor!” yelled Big Bertha.

“You said to sit down,” I said.

Boooooo! Hissss! All around the lunchroom kids started booing and jeering. Pieces of cake, fruit salad grapes, and meatballs started flying toward the lunch monitors.

Big Bertha grabbed her radio and pressed it against her cheek. “Principal Chump! This is Bertha in the lunchroom! Code red! We have an emergency!”

Class D505 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)

Excerpt from **GO JUMP IN THE POOL** – Gordon Korman

The funny photo contest was received with an enthusiasm that even Bruno hadn't predicted – the faculty trip to town brought back two cases of film ordered by the students. Mark Davies recruited several helpers in anticipation of a heavy workload.

To everyone's surprise, especially the Headmaster's, the first entry was made by Mrs. Sturgeon. She entered the picture of her husband winning the door prize at the talent show. As Boots put it, "Everyone can forget first prize. That's the funniest picture lever saw in my life!" But then a senior named Mario Brundia entered a picture of Wilbur Hackenschleimer, his mouth opened wide enough to drive a truck through, about to attack a triple-decker hamburger with the works, and Boots was not so sure.

Pictures began to pour in by the hundreds. Notable among these was a particularly good study of Coach Flynn lying on the floor in pain after demonstrating to the boys the proper way to use the vaulting horse. Someone had taken a camera to gym class. There was also a picture of Sidney Rampulsky in free fall over the newly-waxed floor of the infirmary, where he had gone for an aspirin and stayed for an ankle cast. Bruno Walton had even managed to capture on film the expression on the face of Mr. Hubert, the chemistry teacher, when someone accidentally dipped his beard in a beaker of acid. This picture was of such good quality that smoke could actually be seen rising from the tip of the beard.

And still the pictures poured in. There were so many in just five days that Bruno and Boots had to start on a second wall in the dining hall. And mealtimes at Macdonald Hall were scenes of raucous delight as the boys all rushed to see the day's entries.

To Bruno's chagrin, Boots entered a picture of his roommate in a state of peaceful slumber, the blankets in turmoil and the pillow partially over his face. To get even, Bruno snapped a still-life photo of Boots's open gym locker, crammed full of old sweat socks and wadded-up jerseys. Prominent at the top was the stenciled name, Melvin O' Neal.

Even Miss Scrimmage became enthusiastically involved. Unfortunately, however, she was under the impression that she was entering a serious photo contest, and when she set up her antique camera on its tripod one evening, it was to capture on film the beauty of a bowl of fruit. This was the first time in thirty years that Miss Scrimmage had used her camera, so she might be excused for grossly overloading the hand-held flash tray. She was humming happily to herself as she crept under the black hood and peered through the lens to focus.

Foom! The flash powder ignited the hood, the curtains and the upholstery. Dense clouds of white smoke poured out of the sitting room and into the hall.

"Fire!" screamed Miss Scrimmage.

Into the room burst Cathy Burton, wildly spraying foam from a fire extinguisher. She sprayed until a thick blanket of foam layover everything, including the Headmistress. Then, satisfied that the fire was out, she whipped out her own small camera and snapped a picture of Miss Scrimmage amid the wreckage.

Diane Grant and two other girls came rushing in. "What happened?"

"Oh, nothing, " Cathy said airily. "Miss Scrimmage has everything under control."

"Oh, nothing, " Cathy said airily. "Miss Scrimmage has everything under control."

* * *

Perry Elbert was splashing happily in a bubble bath one evening when his roommate appeared, thrust a rubber duck into his arms and snapped a picture.

Things were getting worse. When Wilbur Hackenschleimer put his football helmet on at practice one afternoon, cold spaghetti spilled down over his head. Bruno Walton just happened to be there with his camera.

* * *

Miss Scrimmage's also had its share of troubles over the photo contest.

When Cathy was put on kitchen duty as punishment, she didn't see Diane Grant sneak in and add half a box of detergent to the dishwasher. Diane took a picture of Cathy, knee-deep in suds, vainly trying to stem the overflow with her bare hands.

For revenge, Cathy knotted all Diane's underwear together and photographed her, perplexed and astonished, pulling miles of it out of her drawer.

There were also pictures of girls caught unawares arm-wrestling, smoking cigars and drooling toothpaste. No one was immune.

Class D505 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)
HOWLIDAY INN - James Howe

"Hi, Harold," Toby said as he let me in. He looked at me sadly and put his arms around my neck. "I'm sorry boy. Mom says we can't take you on vacation this time. I'll bet you feel real disappointed, huh?"

Who's going to feed me: I asked with my eyes.

"But don't worry. We'll be back in a week. It won't be so long. Still, you feel bad you're not going, don't you? I know."

Who's going to feed me I pleaded, with a hint of a whimper.

"Oh, and if you're wondering what's going to happen to you while we're away..."
Yes? I asked, my eyes growing wider.

"... don't worry. Mom and Dad have that all figured out. See, Bunnacula is going to stay next door at Professor Mickelwhite's house..." I glanced over at the windowsill where the rabbit's cage was kept and saw that it had already been removed. I felt myself breaking into a cold sweat. What was going to happen to *me*?"... and you and Chester are going to be boarded."

Oh, I thought, feeling relieved immediately, that's all right then. Just one little detail

troubled me: I didn't have the slightest idea what being boarded meant. I decided to find Chester and ask him about it, since Chester knows, or thinks he knows, something about almost everything.

When I found him, he was sitting in the back yard staring off into space. Chester, being a cat, is very good at sharing of into space. He once explained to me that this was his way of meditating or, as he liked to put it, "getting mellow." At the moment I found him, he looked so mellow I thought there was a good chance of his ripening and rotting right there before my eyes if I didn't shake him out of I quickly.

"The Monroes are leaving, and they're going to do something to us with boards," I told him.

"Don't say hello or anything," Chester replied, without moving a muscle.

"Oh, sorry. Hello Chester. How's it going?"

Chester just nodded his head slowly as if that were supposed to be telling me something. "Now what was that about boards?" he asked at last.

"I'm not sure. They're leaving, and they're going to tie us to boards or something that's all I know."

"I'm sure that's not *all* you know, Harold," he said smoothly. "It may be all your brain can handle right now, but I'm sure you know at least one or two things more. Now, let's try again. What exactly did you hear?"

"Well," I explained, "Toby told me that while the family goes on vacation, you and I are going to be boarded."

"Boarded?!!" Chester exclaimed, his mellowness suddenly gone with the passing breeze. "We're going to be boarded? I can't believe they'd do this to us. It figures! That's all I can say. It just figures!"

What figures? I asked. "What are they going to do to us?"

"Oh just lock us up and throw away the key, that's all. Prison, Harold, that's what it boils down to. We're in their way now that they want to go off and have some fun. So out the door we go and into some dank, dark pit where we'll be fed moldy bread and rainwater – *if* we're lucky. You don't know what these places are like, Harold. But I do.!"

"How?" I asked. "Were you ever boarded?"

"Was I ever *boarded*? Was *I* ever boarded?"

"That's what I asked, Chester. Were you ever boarded?"

"*I've* read Charles Dickens sport," was his only reply, and he turned his attention to his tail, which he suddenly felt compelled to bathe.

Class D505 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)
Excerpt from HURRICANE HARRY - Judith Caseley

Dorothy and Chloe went to the backyard looking for rocks. Dorothy made Chloe pick them up, because sometimes bugs crawled out from under them. They collected six rocks from the back of the garden and went inside to wash them off.

Meanwhile, Harry collected bottles. His mother gave him a set of old perfume containers and a few miniature jam jars. Harry emptied out a bottle of screws from his tool box that was really a baby food jar, and that made seven perfume bottles in all.

While Chloe and Dorothy painted rocks in Chloe's bedroom, Harry shut himself in the bathroom with his bottles. He took the basin that his mother used to wash out her panty hose, and poured in two capfuls of his favorite shampoo. It was herbal and smelled like Christmas trees. Then he squirted some dishwashing liquid into the basin, the stuff his mother used for hand washing. The commercial said it smelled like sunlight.

"Sunlight is nice," said Harry, squirting a little more.

Harry reached for a can of cleanser from behind the toilet. He always liked the smell of it when his father washed pots with it.

"Just a sprinkle," said Harry, dusting the basin with it. Then he added a capful of lemon disinfectant. His mother always said she liked the smell.

Harry opened the door a crack. He stuck his head out, looking for his mother, but he could hear her singing downstairs.

He ran into his mother's room and pulled a stool over to his mother's dresser.

"I'll just borrow a little," said Harry, taking his mother's bottle of Tea Rose. He put two drops of Tea Rose into the basin and returned it to his mother's dresser.

Harry sniffed the basin. The smell wasn't quite right yet. Harry thought for a moment. Then he had his best idea yet. If he put some of his father's aftershave cologne in the perfume, men could wear it, too!

Harry sprinkled two drops of Brut into the basin, a drop of Stetson, and some water.

"Cowboys are nice," said Harry, and he took the end of his toothbrush and stirred with it as if he was making a cake.

There was a knock on the door. "Are you done?" whispered Chloe. Harry let his sisters in because he knew they could pour better.

"Smells good!" said Dorothy, sniffing at the basin. Chloe dipped the bottles into the liquid until they were full. She screwed the tops on. Then she tried to rinse out the basin. The more water she added, the more bubbles appeared.

"I hope this perfume doesn't bubble up on the skin," said Chloe, a worried look on her face.

"I hope it doesn't rain," said Dorothy as she watched Chloe wash away the last of the bubbles.

Class D505 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)
ALEXANDER AND THE TERRIBLE, HORRIBLE, NO GOOD, VERY BAD DAY
- Judith Viorst

I went to sleep with gum in my mouth and now there's gum in my hair and when I got out of bed this morning I tripped on the skateboard and by mistake I dropped my sweater in the sink while the water was running and I could tell it was going to be a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.

At breakfast Anthony found a Corvette Sting Ray car kit in his breakfast cereal box and Nick found a Junior Undercover Agent code ring in his breakfast cereal box but in my breakfast cereal box all I found was breakfast cereal.

I think I'll move to Australia.

In the car pool Mrs. Gibson let Becky have a seat by the window. Audrey and Elliot got seats by the window too. I said I was being scrunched. I said I was being smushed. I said, if I don't get a seat by the window I am going to be carsick. No one even answered.

I could tell it was going to be a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.

At school Mrs. Dickens liked Paul's picture of the sailboat better than my picture of the invisible castle.

At singing time she said I sang too loud. At counting time she said I left out sixteen. Who needs sixteen?

I could tell it was going to be a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.

I could tell because Paul said I wasn't his best friend anymore. He said that Philip Parker was his best friend and that Albert Moyo was his next best friend and that I was only his third best friend.

I hope you sit on a tack, I said to Paul. I hope the next time you get a double-decker strawberry ice-cream cone the ice cream part falls off the cone part and lands in Australia.

There were two cupcakes in Philip Parker's lunch bag and Albert got a Hershey bar with almonds and Paul's mother gave him a piece of jelly roll that had little coconut sprinkles on the top. Guess whose mother forgot to put in dessert?

It was a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.

That's what it was, because after school my mom took us all to the dentist and Dr. Fields found a cavity just in me. Come back next week and I'll fix it, said Dr. Fields.

Next week, I said, I'm going to Australia.

On the way downstairs the elevator door closed on my foot and while we were waiting for my mom to go get the car Anthony made me fall where it was muddy and then when I started crying because of the mud Nick said I was a crybaby and while I was punching Nick for saying crybaby my mom came back with the car and scolded me for being muddy and fighting.

I am having a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day, I told everybody. No one even answered.

So then we went to the shoe store to buy some sneakers. Anthony chose white ones with blue stripes. Nick chose red ones with white stripes. I chose blue ones with red stripes but then the shoe man said, We're all sold out. They made me buy plain old white ones, but they can't make me wear them.

When we picked up my dad at his office he said I couldn't play with his copying machine, but I forgot. He also said to watch out for the books on his desk, and I was

careful as could be except for my elbow. He also said don't fool around with his phone, but I think I called Australia. My dad said please don't pick him up anymore.

It was a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.

There were lima beans for dinner and I hate limas.

There was kissing on TV and I hate kissing.

My bath was too hot, I got soap in my eyes, my marble went down the drain, and I had to wear my railroad-train pajamas. I hate my railroad pajamas.

When I went to bed Nick took back the pillow he said I could keep and the Mickey Mouse night-light burned out and I bit my tongue.

The cat wants to sleep with Anthony, not with me.

It has been a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.

My mom says some days are like that.

Even in Australia.

Class D505 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D507 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grades 5 and 6
Psalm 15

Class D507 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)
Genesis 22:1 - 13

Class D507 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)
Matthew 28:108

Class D507 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grade 5 and 6 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D508 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 5
OUR HAMSTER'S LIFE - Kit Wright

Our hamster's life:
there's not much
to it,
not much
to it.

He presses his pink nose
to the door of his cage
and decides for the fifty six
millionth time
that he can't get
through it.

Our hamster's life;
there's not much
to it,
not much
to it.

It's about the most boring
life in the world,
if he only
knew it.
He sleeps and he drinks and he eats.
He eats and he drinks and he sleeps.

He slinks and he dreeps.
He eats.

This process
he repeats.

Our hamster's life:
there's not much
to it,
not much
to it.

You'd think it would drive him bonkers,
going round and round on his wheel.
It's certainly driving me bonkers,

watching him
do it.

But he may be thinking:

'That boy's life, there's not much
to it,
not much
to it:

watching a hamster go round on a wheel.
It's driving me bonkers if he only knew it,

watching him
watching me
do it.'

Class D508 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 5 (Continued)
THE OCTOPUS - Conrad Aiken

The many-handed octopus
does not INTEND to frighten us:
his family name is octopod
and certainly he is odd.
A kind of spider of the sea
is he.
Lovely to watch him waver round
under the sea without a sound
and how he folds
 and then unfolds
 shapes
 and then reshapes
 drapes
 and then undrapes
each slithery arm and hand
and
still always can
come back to where he first began.
O what a juggler he could be:
the greatest juggler of the sea:
eight balls at once he'd keep with ease
above his head beneath the seas
passing from one to other
without the slightest bother.
But if WE frighten HIM
then suddenly all goes dim
behind a cloud of ink
he seems to shrink
and off unseen he'll swiftly swim
upon a pearly oyster bed
to lay his troubled head.

Class D508 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 5 (Continued)

THE SEAL - Conrad Aiken

How must it feel
to be
a
seal
and swish among the
ducks
and teal
and swim
a cool
Virginia Reel
right underneath
somebody's
keel?
Then
Much
to
somebody's surprise
pop up your head
right out of sea

and blink your big blue baby eyes
and flap your fins
with glee?
And o what bliss
on summer days
what bliss it is
to lie and laze
on a warm mudflat
in the sun
and sunbathe
just
like
anyone.
I think the seal
has
all
the
fun.

Class D508 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 5 (Continued)

BEES, BOTHERED BY BOLD BEARS, BEHAVE BADLY - Walter R. Brooks

“Your honey or your life!” says the bold burglar bear,
As he climbs up the tree where the bees have their lair.
“Burglars! Burglars!” The tree begins to hum.
“Sharpen up your stings, brothers! Tighten up your wings, brothers!
Beat the alarm on the big brass drum!
Watch yourself, bear, for
here
we
come!”
Then the big black bees buzz out from their lair,
With sharp stings ready zoom down on the bear.
“Ouch! Ouch! Ouch! Don’t be so rough!”
He slithers down the tree, squalling, “Hey, let me be!” Bawling,
“Keep your old honey. Horrid sticky stuff!
I’m going home, for
I’ve
had
enough!”

Class D508 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 5 (Continued)
THE BREASTPLATE OF SAINT PATRICK – Unknown

I bind myself today
To the power of Heaven,
The light of sun,
The brightness of moon,
The splendour of fire,
The speed of lightning,
The swiftness of wind,
The depths of the sea,
The stability of the earth,
The firmness of rocks.

I bind myself today
To the power of God to guide me,
The might of God to uphold me,
The wisdom of God to teach me,
The eye of God to watch over me,
The ear of God to hear me,
The word of God to speak for me,
The hand of God to protect me,
The way of God to lie before me,
The shield of God to shelter me,
The host of God to defend me,
 Against the snares of demons,
 Against the temptations of vices,
 Against the lusts of nature,
 Against every man who meditates injury to me,
Whether far or near,
Alone and in a multitude.

Class D508 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 5 (Continued)
CAMPING AT GLACIER RIDGE - Gordon and Bernice Korman

Camping is the life, my boy!
To live outdoors!
Be free!
*There isn't any outlet here
to plug in the TV!*

We'll swim out in the ice-cold lake!
We'll fish for what we eat!
*A snake the size of Ogopogo
just attacked my feet!*

We'll hike until the day's last light
is gone without a trace!
*I wonder how the Cubs made out.
Oh, man, I hate this place!*

When you're out in the wilderness,
you always sleep the best!
*That tent hole's big enough
to land a spaceship on my chest!*

And what a hearty appetite!
You eat until you burst!
*I'm sure I'll really savor
what the insects don't get first!*

It's such a pristine setting—
it's impossible to spoil it!
*Bad news--a grizzly bear just
stole our only Porta-Toilet!*

The quiet and the solitude—
it's something I hold dear!
*I'd like to put an 80-story
building up right here!*

It's time to put our gear away.
Tonight is our last night.
*I couldn't get that lucky!
I'm hallucinating, right?*

And so we bid a fond farewell
to lovely Glacier Range.
*Good. Let some other sucker freeze
his butt off for a change!*

Class D508 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 5 (Continued)
HALLOWEEN - Hatty Behn

Tonight is the night
When dead leaves fly
Like witches on switches
Across the sky.
When elf and sprite
Flit through the night
On a moony sheen.

Tonight is the night
When leaves make a sound
Like a gnome in his home
Under the ground,

When spooks and trolls
Creep out of holes
Mossy and green.

Tonight is the night
When pumpkins stare
Through sheaves and leaves
Everywhere,
When ghoul and ghost
And goblin host
Dance around their queen.
It's Halloween!

Class D508 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 5 (Continued)

NOISE - J. Pope

I like noise.
The whoop of a boy, the thud of a hoof,
The rattle of rain on a galvanized roof,
The hubbub of traffic, the roar of a train,
The throb of machinery numbing the brain,
The switching of wires in an overhead tram,
The rush of the wind, a door on the slam,
The boom of the thunder, the crash of the waves,
The din of a river that races and raves,
The crack of a rifle, the clank of a pail,
The strident tattoo of a swift - slapping sail
From any old sound that the silence destroys
Arises a gamut of soul-stirring joys.
I like noise.

Class D508 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 5 (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

ENGLISH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADE SIX

Class D601 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 6
ALABAMA - Khe-Tha-A-Hi (Eagle Wing)

My brethren,
among the legends of my people
it is told how a chief,
leading the remnant of his people,
crossed a great river,
and striking his tipi-stake upon the ground,
exclaimed, " A-la-ba-ma!"
This in our language means
"Here we may rest!"
But he saw not the future.
The white man came:
he and his people could not rest there;
they were driven out,
and in a dark swamp
they were thrust down into the slime
and killed.
The word he so sadly spoke
has given a name to one of the white man's states.
There is no spot under those stars
that now smile upon us,
where the Indian can plant his foot
and sigh "A-la-ba-ma."

Class D601 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)
SEUMAS BEG - James Stephens

A man was sitting underneath a tree
Outside the village; and he asked me what
Name was upon this place; and said that he
Was never here before - He told a lot

Of stories to me too. His nose was flat!
I asked him how it happened, and he said -
The first mate of the Holy Ghost did that
With a marling-spike one day; but he was dead,

And jolly good job too; and he'd have gone
A long way to have killed him - Oh, he had
A gold ring in one ear; the other one
- 'Was bit off by a crocodile, bedad!' -

That's what he said. He taught me how to chew!
He was a real nice man! He liked me too!

Class D601 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)

THE BASE STEALER - Robert Francis

Poised between going on and back, pulled
Both ways taut like a tightrope-walker,
Fingertips pointing the opposites,
Now bouncing tiptoe like a dropped ball
Or a kid skipping rope, come on, come on,

Running a scattering of steps sidewise,
How he teeters, skitters, tingles, teases,
Taunts them, hovers like an ecstatic bird,
He's only flirting, crowd him, crowd him,
Delicate, delicate, delicate, delicate - now!

Class D601 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)

MY MOCCASINS HAVE NOT WALKED - Duke Redbird

My moccasins have not walked
Among the giant forest trees

My leggings have not brushed
Against the fern and berry bush

My medicine pouch has not been filled
with roots and herbs and sweetgrass

My hands have not fondled the spotted fawn

My eyes have not beheld
The golden rainbow of the north

My hair has not been adorned
With the eagle feather

Yet
My dreams are dreams of these
My heart is one with them
The scent of them caresses my soul

Class D601 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)

FOUL SHOT - Edwin A. Hoey

With two 60's stuck on the scoreboard
And two seconds hanging on the clock,
The solemn boy in the centre of eyes,
Squeezed by silence,
Seeks out the line with his feet,
Soothes his hands along his uniform,
Gently drums the ball against the floor,
Then measures the waiting net,
Raises the ball on his right hand,
Balances it with his left,
Calms it with fingertips,
Breathes,
Crouches,
Waits,
And then through a stretching of stillness,
Nudges it upward.

The ball
Slides up and out,
Lands,
Leans,
Wobbles,
Wavers,
Hesitates,
Exasperates,
Plays it coy
Until every face begs with unsounding screams-

And then

And then

And then

Right before ROAR - UP
Dives down and through.

Class D601 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)
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 a 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.

Class D601 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)
THE VISITOR - Ian Serraillier

A crumbling churchyard, the sea and the moon;
The waves had gouged out grave and bone;
A man was walking, late and alone. . .

He saw a skeleton on the ground;
A ring on a bony finger he found.

He ran home to his wife and gave her the ring.
"Oh, where did you get it?" He said not a thing.

"It's the loveliest ring in the world, " she said,
As it glowed on her finger. They slipped off to bed.

At midnight they woke. In the dark outside,
"Give me my ring!" a chill voice cried.

"What was that, William? What did it say?"
"Don't worry, my dear. It'll soon go away."

"I'm coming!" A skeleton opened the door.
"Give me my ring!" It was crossing the floor.

"What was that, William? What did it say?"

"Don't worry, my dear. It'll soon go away."

"I'm reaching you now! I'm climbing the bed.

"The wife pulled the sheet right over her head.

It was torn from her grasp and tossed in the air:

"I'll drag you out of bed by the hair!"

"What was that, William? What did it say?"

"Throw the ring through the window! THROW IT AWAY!"

She threw it. The skeleton leapt from the sill,

Scooped up the ring and clattered downhill,

Fainter. . . and fainter. . . Then all was still.

Class D601 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D602 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 6
FATHER WILLIAM - Lewis Carroll

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,

"And your hair has become very white;

And yet you incessantly stand on your head –

Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,

"I feared it might injure the brain;

But, now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,

Why, I do it again and again."

"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned before,

And have grown most uncommonly fat;

Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door –

Pray, what is the reason of that?"

"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his grey locks,

"I kept all my limbs very supple

By the use of this ointment – one shilling the box –

Allow me to sell you a couple?"

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too weak

For anything tougher than suet;

Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak –

Pray how did you manage to do it?"

"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,

And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength, which it gave to my jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life.”

“You are old,” said the youth, “one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever;
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose –
What made you so awfully clever?”

“I have answered three questions, and that is enough,”
Said his father; “don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you downstairs!”

Class D602 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)
THE WORD - Gordon and Bernice Korman

I'm packing my jeans
And my underwear, too
And I've found a ship bound for the sea.
For if Mom and Dad read
What I wrote on the wall,
It's going to be curtains for me.

It is just a Word,
It seemed harmless at first,
It has only four letters in all,
I did it in pencil,
It's not very dark,
And it's so nice and neat, and quite small.

So I'd better be off
To sail to those far distant lands
For my one little Word
Is the kind of Word that
Will grow hair on the palms of your hands.

So it's me for the window,
And down to the yard,
Then away I go over the hill
Of course, I could just
Turn my pencil around
And erase it - all right, then, I will!

Class D602 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)
THIS MORNING IS OUR HISTORY TEST – Kenn Nesbitt

This morning is our history test.
I've pinned my notes inside my vest.
Inside my coat I wrote my notes,
including dates and famous quotes.
I've written more upon my hand
that only I can understand,
and in my socks and sleeves I stowed
my scribbled notes in secret code.

I've written down so many names
of winners of Olympic games,
of buildings, people, places too,
from Tennessee to Timbuktu.
I even copied down a piece
on ancient Rome and ancient Greece,
plus everything from Shakespeare's plays
to who invented mayonnaise.

I came to school well prepared.
I wasn't nervous, wasn't even scared.
But here it is, the history test.
I look inside my coat and vest
to get the dates and famous quotes
and find I cannot read my notes.
So much for Shakespeare, Greece and Rome.
I left my glasses back at home.

Class D602 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)
A REMARKABLE ADVENTURE - Jack Prelutsky

I was at my bedroom table
with a notebook open wide,
when a giant anaconda
started winding up my side,
I was filled with apprehension
and retreated down the stairs,
to be greeted at the bottom
By a dozen grizzly bears.

We tumultuously tussled
till [sic] I managed to get free,
then I saw, with trepidation,
there were tigers after me,
I cold feel them growing closer,
I was quivering with f ear,

then I blundered into quicksand
and began to disappear.

I was rescued by an eagle
that descended from the skies
to embrace me with its talons,
to my terror and surprise,
but that raptor lost its purchase
when a blizzard made me sneeze,
and it dropped me in a thicket
where I battered both my knees.

I was suddenly surrounded
by a troop of savage trolls,
who maliciously informed me
they would toast me over coals,
I was lucky to elude them
when they briefly looked away--
that's the reason why my homework
isn't here with me today.

Class D602 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)
IT'S ONLY A TREE - Bernice and Gordon Korman

It's only a tree, and an ugly one, too,
And the fact is, it has to come down.
It blocks out the sun for each house on the street.
There's been a complaint from the town.
When Mom put up the tire swing
She checked the branch like anything,
Made sure our feet could reach the slope,
And then forgot to test the rope.
So when it broke, poor Mallory
Rolled right clear down to Highway 3.
The bus she almost hit head-on
Swerved right and jumped up on our lawn.
It sheared the hydrant off its post--
I think that's when I laughed the most--
The water shot up thirty feet
And hit the wires. It was neat.
Knocked out the electricity.
It was a special day for me.
I've got to save that tree!

Class D602 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)
NEGOTIATING BEDTIME - Bernice and Gordon Korman

Mom came in at nine P.M.,
I figured I'd start high.
I gave her half-past midnight
Hey, it was worth a try .

She jumped it to nine-thirty,
So I dropped to twelve-fifteen,
I had to give a little;
Look how sensible she's been!

She said, "Nine forty-five,"
I countered, "Twelve-o-seven-thirty ,"
Negotiated settlements
Are always down and dirty.

I mentioned it's one-thirty
Before Alvin goes to bed.
(Of course he looks like someone
From Night of the Living Dead.)

Mom dug in. I begged and pleaded,
"Just one more half hour!"
It's hard to bulldoze someone
Who already holds full power.

She offered up eleven,
With the TV off by ten,
I accepted with conditions,
And we started off again.

Like, midnight on the weekends,
And I had a perfect reason
To ask the same for Monday nights
Throughout the football season.

She had no answer; this had put her
On the ropes for real.
I threw in garbage take-out;
And she folded. "It's a deal!"

Class D602 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)
MY MOTHER MADE A MEAT LOAF - Jack Prelutsky

My mother made a meatloaf
that provided much distress,
she tried her best to serve it,
but met with no success,
her sharpest knife was powerless
to cut a single slice,
and her efforts with a cleaver
failed completely to suffice.

She whacked it with a hammer,
and she smacked it with a brick
but she couldn't faze that meatloaf
it remained without a nick,
I decided I would help her
and assailed it with a drill,
but the drill made no impression,
though I worked with all my skill.

We chipped at it with chisels,
but we didn't make a dent,
it appeared my mother's meatloaf
was much harder than cement,
then we set upon that meatloaf
with a hatchet and an ax,
but that meatloaf stayed unblemished
and withstood our fierce attacks.

We borrowed bows and arrows,
and we fired at close range,
it didn't make a difference,
for that meatloaf didn't change
we beset it with a blowtorch I,
but we couldn't find a flaw,
and we both were flabbergasted
when it broke the power saw.

We hired a hippopotamus
to trample it around,
but that meatloaf was so mighty
that it simply stood it's ground,
now we manufacture meatloaves
by the millions all year long,
they are famous in construction.
building houses tall and strong.

Class D602 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 6 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

See Class D504 for PROSE READING – Serious reading, Grades 5 and 6

See Class D505 for PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 5 and 6

Class D608 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 6
THE TYGER - William Blake

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

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

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

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

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

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

Class D608 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 6 (Continued)
PAUL BUNYAN - Arthur Stanley Bourinot

He came
striding
over the mountain,
the moon slung on his back,
like a pack.
A great pine,
stuck on his shoulder,
swayed as he walked,
as he talked
to his blue ox
Babe;
a huge, looming shadow
of a man,
clad
in a mackinaw coat,
his logger's shirt
open at the throat
and the great mane of hair
matching,
meeting
the locks of night,
the smoke from his cauldron pipe
a cloud on the moon;
and his laugh
rolled through the mountains
like thunder
on a summer night
while the lightning of his smile
split the heavens
asunder.

His blue ox, Babe,
pawed the ground
till the earth
trembled
and shook
and a high
cliff toppled and fell;
and Babe's bellow
was fellow
to the echo
of Bunyan's laughter;
and then
with one step
he was in the next valley
dragging the moon after,
the stars
tangled,
spangled
in the branches of the great pine.
And as he left,
he whistled in the dark
like a far-off train
blowing for a crossing,
and plainly heard
were the plodding grunts
of Babe, the blue ox,
trying
to keep pace
from hill to hill,
and then, the sounds,
fading,
dying,
were lost
in the churn of night, -
and all was still.

Class D608 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 6 (Continued)

VELVET SHOES - Elinor Wylie

Let us walk in the white snow
In a soundless space;
With footsteps quiet and slow,
At a tranquil pace,
Under veils of white lace.

I shall go shod in silk,
And you in wool,
White as a white cow's milk,
More beautiful
Than the breast of a gull.

We shall walk through the still town
In a windless peace;
We shall step upon white down,
Upon silver fleece,
Upon softer than these.

We shall walk in velvet shoes;
Wherever we go
Silence will fall like dews
On white silence below.
We shall walk in the snow.

Class D608 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 6 (Continued)

GREEDY DOG - James Hurley

The dog will eat anything.

Apple cores and bacon fat,
Milk you poured out for the cat.
He likes the string that ties the roast
And relishes hot buttered toast.
Hide your chocolates! He's a thief,
He'll even eat your handkerchief.
And if you don't like sudden shocks,
Carefully conceal your socks.
Leave some soup without a lid,
And you'll wish you never did.
When you think he must be full,
You find him gobbling bits of wool,
Orange peel or paper bags,
Dusters and old cleaning rags.

This dog will eat anything,
Except for mushrooms and cucumber.

Now what is wrong with those, I wonder?

Class D608 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 6 (Continued)

WELCOME - Sean O'Huigin

this is a poem
for those who are brave
it starts at the mouth
of a very old cave
a goblin will greet you
as you walk in
his hair long and greasy
and his green teeth agrin
his eyes red and tiny
his face grey and mean
he'll grab at your hand
and let out a scream
he'll lead you down tunnels
much darker than night
he'll take you past monsters
that will try to bite
the toes off your footsies
the ears off your head
you soon will start wishing
you'd stayed home in bed

worms wet and slimy
will crawl up your back
and as you go further
it really gets black
you can't see a thing
and all you can hear
is a creaky old voice
that says "come my dear
let's see if you're chunky
let's feel if you're fat
I'm hungry today
NO
STOP
DON'T GO BACK"
but if you are clever
you'll get out of there
or you'll end in some stomach
no one knows where

Class D608 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 6 (Continued)
THE MEWLIPS – J.R.R. Tolkien

The shadows where the Mewlips dwell
Are dark and wet as ink,
And slow and softly rings their bell,
As in the slime you sink.

You sink into the slime, who dare
To knock upon their door,
While down the grinning gargoyles stare
And noisome waters pour .

Beside the rotting river-strand
The drooping willows weep,
And gloomily the gorcrows stand
Croaking in their sleep.

Over the Merlock mountains a long and weary way,
In a mouldy valley where the trees are grey,
By a dark pool's border without wind or tide,
Moonless and sunless, the Mewlips hide.

The cellars where the Mewlips sit
Are deep and dank and cold
With single sickly candle lit;
And there they count their gold.

Their walls are wet, their ceilings drip;

Their feet upon the floor
Go softly with a squish-flap-flip,
 As they sidle to the door .

They peep out slyly; through a crack
 Their feeling fingers creep,
And when they've finished, in a sack
 Your bones they take to keep.

Beyond the Merlock Mountains, a long and lonely road,
 Through the spider-shadows and the marsh of Tode,
And through the wood of hanging trees and the gallows-weed,
 You go to find the Mewlips - and the Mewlips feed.

Class D608 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 6 (Continued)
BRONTOSAURUS - Gail Kredenser

The giant brontosaurus
Was a prehistoric chap
With four fat feet to stand on
And a very skimpy lap.
The scientists assure us
Of a most amazing thing -
A brontosaurus blossomed
When he had a chance to sing!

(The bigger brontosauruses,
Who liked to sing in choruses,
Would close their eyes and harmonize
And sing most anything.)

They growled and they yowled,
They deedled and they dummed;
They warbled and they whistled,
They howled and they hummed.
They didn't eat, they didn't sleep;
They sang and sang all day.
Now all you'll find are footprints
Where they tapped the time away!

Class D608 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 6 (Continued)

THE BASE STEALERS - Robert Francis

Poised between going on and back, pulled
Both ways taut like a tightrope-walker,
Fingertips pointing the opposites,
Now bouncing tiptoe like a dropped ball
Or a kid skipping rope, come on, come on,
Running a scattering of steps sidewise,
How he teeters, skitters, tingles, teases,
Taunts them, hovers like an ecstatic bird,
He's only flirting, crowd him, crowd him,
Delicate, delicate, delicate, delicate - now!

Class D608 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 6 (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

ENGLISH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADE SEVEN

When choosing their pieces, it is recommended that entrants consider consulting the following excellent sources of poetry:

- 1) the RRDFPA suggested selections starting on page 134 of this Resource Manual
- 2) the tables of suggested 20th/21st Century and pre-20th Century selections on this page
- 3) the AMAF (Manitoba) 2024 Speech Arts Suggested Repertoire Lists
- 4) *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, or any published anthology of comparable literary merit
- 5) reliable and trustworthy literary websites such as:
 - a. Poetry in Voice <https://poetryinvoice.ca/read/poems>
 - b. Poetry 180 <https://www.loc.gov/programs/poetry-and-literature/poet-laureate/poet-laureate-projects/poetry-180/all-poems/>

Selections will NOT be accepted if:

- the work is unpublished and/or of unknown origin.
- the work does not meet the criteria / difficulty level of the entrant's class
- the intent of the work is to disseminate racist, sexist, political, or any otherwise inappropriate propaganda.

SPOKEN POETRY: PRE-20th CENTURY, GRADES 7-8

Title	Author	Book Title	Publisher
"Not marble, nor the gilded monuments"	William Shakespeare	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Holy Sonnet 10"	John Donne	<i>The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 8th ed</i>	W.W. Norton and Company
"Death Be Not Proud"	John Donne	<i>New Horizons: An Anthology of Short Poems for Senior Students</i>	McClelland and Stewart Limited
"The Lamb"	William Blake	<i>Songs of Innocence</i>	Bodleian Library Publishing
"The Tyger"	William Blake	<i>Songs of Experience</i>	Bodleian Library Publishing
"Ozymandias"	Percy Bysshe Shelley	<i>Approaching Literature, 2nd ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"She Walks in Beauty"	Lord George Gordon Byron	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"O My Luve's Like a Red, Red, Rose"	Robert Burns	<i>The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 8th ed</i>	W.W. Norton and Company
"Annabel Lee"	Edgar Allan Poe	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"A Noiseless Patient Spider"	Walt Whitman	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's

SPOKEN POETRY: 20th/21st CENTURY, GRADES 7-8

Title	Author	Book Title	Publisher
"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"	Robert Frost	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"High Flight"	John Gillespie Magee	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"One Perfect Rose"	Dorothy Parker	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"nobody loses all the time"	e.e. cummings	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"The Knockout"	Stephen Vincent Benét	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"Those Winter Sundays"	Robert Hayden	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Bessie's Boil"	Robert Service	<i>The Collected Poems</i>	McGraw Hill and Ryerson
"To a Poet a Thousand Years Hence"	James Elroy Flecker	<i>New Horizons: An Anthology of Short Poems for Senior Students</i>	
"Catch"	Robert Francis	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"If"	Rudyard Kipling	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Root Cellar"	Theodore Roethke	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"The Death of Santa Clause"	Charles Harper Webb	<i>Shadow Ball: New and Selected Poems</i>	University of Pittsburgh Press
"The Bull Moose"	Alden Nowlan	<i>Bread, Wine, and Salt</i>	Clarke Irwin & Company, Ltd.
"Player Piano"	John Updike	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Hiding Place"	Richard Armour	<i>The Norton Introduction to Poetry</i>	W.W. Norton
"Acquainted with the Night"	Robert Frost	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Shakespearean Sonnet"	R.S. Gwynn	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House

Class D701 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 7
THE WAY THROUGH THE WOODS - Rudyard Kipling

They shut the road through the woods
Seventy years ago.
Weather and rain have undone it again,
 And now you would never know
There was once a road through the woods
 Before they planted the trees. It is underneath the coppice and heath,
 And the thin anemones.
 Only the keeper sees
That, where the ring-dove broods,
 And the badgers roll at ease,
There was once a road through the woods.
Yet, if you enter the woods
 Of a summer evening late,
When the night-air cools on the trout-ringed pools
 Where the otter whistles his mate
(They fear not men in the woods
 Because they see so few),
You will hear the beat of a horse's feet
 And the swish of a skirt in the dew,
 Steadily cantering through
The misty solitudes,
 As though they perfectly knew
The old lost road through the woods. . .
But there is no road through the woods.

Class D701 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)

RIVERDALE LION - John Robert Columbo

Bound lion, almost blind from meeting their gaze and popcorn
the Saturday kids love you. It is their parents
who would paint your mane with polkadots to match their California shirts
and would trim your nails for tieclips.

Your few roars delight them. But they wish you would quicken your pace
and not disappear so often into your artificial cave
for there they think you partake of secret joys and race
under an African sun as gold as your mane.

But you fool them. You merely suffer the heat and scatter the flies
with your tail. You never saw Africa.
The sign does not tell them that you were born here, in captivity,
that you are as much a Canadian as they are.

Class D701 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)

THAT WAS THE SUMMER - Marci Ridlon

Have you ever smelled summer ?
Sure you have.

Remember that time
When you were tired of running
Or doing nothing much
And you were hot
And you flopped right down on the ground?
Remember how the warm soil smelled—
And the grass?
That was summer.

Remember that time
When the storm blew up quick
And you stood under a ledge
And watched the rain till it stopped
And when it stopped
You walked out again to the sidewalk,
The quiet sidewalk?
Remember how the pavement smelled—
All steamy warm and wet?
That was summer.

Remember that time
When you were trying to climb
Higher in the tree,
And you didn't know how

And your foot was hurting in the fork
But you were holding tight
To the branch?
Remember how the bark smelled then—
All dusty dry, but nice?
That was summer.

If you try very hard,
Can you remember that time
When you played outside all day
And you came home for dinner
And had to take a bath right away,
Right away?
It took you a long time to pull
Your shirt over your head.
Do you remember smelling the sunshine?
That was summer.

Class D701 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)

THE WOLF - Georgia Roberts Durston

When the pale moon hides and the wild wind wails,
And over the tree-tops the nighthawk sails,
The gray wolf sits on the world's far rim,
And howls: and it seems to comfort him.

The wolf is a lonely soul, you see,
No beast in the wood, nor bird in the tree,
But shuns his path; in the windy gloom
They give him plenty, and plenty of room.

So he sits with his long, lean face to the sky
Watching the ragged clouds go by.
There in the night, alone, apart,
Singing the song of his lone, wild heart.

Far away, on the world's dark rim
He howls, and it seems to comfort him.

Class D701 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)

THROWING A TREE – Thomas Hardy

The two executioners stalk along over the knolls,
Bearing two axes with heavy heads shining and wide,
And a long limp two-handled saw toothed for cutting great boles,
And so they approach the proud tree that bears the death-mark on its side.

Jackets doffed they swing axes and chop away just above ground,
And the chips fly about and lie white on the moss and fallen leaves;
Till a broad deep gash in the bark is hewn all the way round,
And one of them tries to hook upward a rope, which at last he achieves.

The saw then begins, till the top of the tall giant shivers:
The shivers are seen to grow greater each cut than before:
They edge out the saw, tug the rope; but the tree only quivers,
And kneeling and sawing again, they step back to try pulling once more.

Then, lastly, the living mast sways, further sways: with a shout
Job and Ike rush aside. Reached the end of its long staying powers
The tree crashes downward: it shakes all its neighbours throughout,
And two hundred years' steady growth has been ended in less than two hours.

Class D701 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)

THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND – Myra B. Welch

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But held it up with a smile.
"What am I bidden, good folks;" he cried,
"Who'll start the bidding for me?"
"A dollar, a dollar;" then, two! Only two?
"Two dollars, and who'll make it three?"
"Three dollars, once; three dollars, twice;
Going for three. . ." But no,
From the room, far back, a grey-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow;
Then, wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening the loose strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet
As a caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said: "What am I bid for the old violin?"
And he held it up with the bow.
"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two?"
Two thousand! And who'll make it three?

Three thousand, once; three thousand, twice;
And going and gone," said he.
The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We do not quite understand
What changed its worth?"
Swift came the reply:
"The touch of a master's hand."

And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.
A "mess of potage" a glass of wine;
A game - and he travels on.
He is "going" once, and "going" twice,
He's "going" and almost "gone."
But the Master comes and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that's wrought
By the touch of the Master's hand.

Class D701 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)

I SHALL WAIT AND WAIT - Alooook Ipellie

As I stand alone on the middle of the ice,
the sky above gets darker by the minute.
The seal has not yet come.
It must be somewhere out there where I cannot see it.
It must be playing in the water below the ice,
or searching for food as I am doing now.
He has his life too, as I do.

I came here to bring food to my family,
so it is most important I stay and wait.
Wait till the seal comes up to the hole below me,
A hole that is filled with salted water.
Food is waiting there.

My children are waiting for me too.
Waiting to be fed from the seal that has not come.
The long wait is worth every single length of time.
I shall wait until the seal arrives to breathe for life.
Then I shall push my spear down into the hole
as hard as I can and let the blood appear.
Then I shall pull the seal out, smiling with the wonderful
feeling that food is on its way to my family;
to my wife, to my children.

They are still waiting for the moment
when fresh meat will touch their tongues
and visit their tummies,
when they can enjoy the taste of the seal
that hasn't made an appearance yet through the hole below.

I shall wait until it comes.

Class D701 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)

FOUR LITTLE FOXES - Lew Garrett

Speak gently, Spring, and make no sudden sound;
For in my windy valley, yesterday I found
New-born foxes squirming on the ground--
 Speak gently.

Walk gently, March; forbear the bitter blow;
Her feet within a trap, her blood upon the snow,
The four little foxes saw their mother go--
 Walk softly.

Go lightly, Spring; oh, give them no alarm;
When I covered them with boughs to shelter them from harm,
The thin blue foxes, suckled at my arm--
Go lightly.

Step softly, March, with your rampant hurricane;
Nuzzling one another, and whimpering with pain,
The new little foxes are shivering in the rain--
Step softly.

Class D701 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D702 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 7
THE CANE - Allan Ahlberg

The teacher
had some thin springy sticks
for making kites.

Reminds me
of the old days, he said;
and swished one.

The children
near his desk laughed nervously,
and pushed closer .

A cheeky girl
held out her cheeky hand.
Go on, Sir!

said her friends.
Give her the stick,
she's always playing up!

The teacher
paused, then did as he was told.
Just a tap.

Oh, Sir!
We're going to tell on you,
The children said.

Other children
left their seats and crowded round

the teacher's desk.

Other hands went out.
Making kites was soon
forgotten.

My turn next!
He's had one go already!
That's not fair!

Soon the teacher,
to save himself from the crush,
called a halt.

(It was
either that or use the cane
for real.)

Reluctantly,
the children did as they were told
and sat down.

If you behave yourselves,
the teacher said,
I'll cane you later.

Class D702 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)

TIME TO QUIT - Bernice and Gordon Korman

When the coach's wife makes liver
for the team's preseason bash,
and you're the only one to show up
in a tie,

And the shortstop's brother hates you
for no reason, and he's massive,
with a tattoo that says CRUSHER
on his thigh,

When your uniforms
are ugly polyester,
and the night before your first game
you're developing a zit,

And your father's Buick
breaks down on the freeway
while you're en route to the ballpark,
then you know it's time to quit!

When you take your lead off second,
and your jockstrap needs adjusting,
and they tag you
with your hand inside your belt,

And the coach gives you a lecture
from a distance of an inch
and he had onions
on his lunchtime tuna-melt,

When the other team erupts in celebration
when you come up to the plate
because they know
you'll never hit,

And the dugout smells like mothballs, and the
shortstop's brother taunts you from the bleachers,
then you're sure
it's time to quit!

BUT. . .

When you're down eleven-nothing
in the bottom of the second,
and the thunderstorm you pray for does arrive,

And the shortstop's brother has to go to Utah,
and you're thinking that you just might make it
through this year alive,

When you hit the winning homer
in a game in extra innings,
you're a hero, and you really must admit

That in baseball there is no such thing
as lying down and dying --
you're a *player* and it's never time to quit.

Class D702 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)

HELP – Lois Simmie

Talk to your plant, the experts say,
So I told it all about me, it took all day
And the day after that and the next day too,
I talked and talked till my face turned blue
And the plant turned yellow and withered and brown
With spots and bumps and bugs all around

I talked a little louder in case it missed a word,
I told that plant every joke I'd heard,
I told it all of my bowling scores
For all of the games last year and more,
I recited it poems and I sang it songs,
I read it the dictionary. Gee it was long.

Till it moaned in a pitiful kind of way
And it feebly started to crawl away,
Pulling its roots right out of the spot
And its little plant toes curled up on the spot.
Can you think why? I'm sure I can't.
And I still had lots to tell that plant.

Class D702 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)

OBEDIENT - Shel Silverstein

Teacher said, "You don't obey.
You fidget and twidget
And won't sit down.
So go stand in the corner now
'Til I say you can turn around."

So there I stood 'til it got dark
Without a whimper or a tear,
'Til everybody else went home.
I guess that she forgot me here.
And that was Friday, so I stayed
All through the weekend – bein' good,
And Monday was the first day of
Summer vacation, so I stood

Through hot July and sticky August,
Tryin' to obey her rule.
Stood right there until September,
When – yikes – they closed down the school
Boarded up the doors and windows,
Moved to a new one way 'cross town.

So here I've stood for forty years
In dark and dust and creaky sounds,
Waiting for her to say, "Turn around."

This might not be just what she meant,
But me – I'm so obedient.

Class D702 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)
MY MOTHER MADE A MEAT LOAF - Jack Prelutsky

My mother made a meatloaf
that provided much distress,
she tried her best to serve it,
but met with no success,
her sharpest knife was powerless
to cut a single slice,
and her efforts with a cleaver
failed completely to suffice.

She whacked it with a hammer,
and she smacked it with a brick
but she couldn't faze that meatloaf
it remained without a nick,

I decided I would help her
and assailed it with a drill,
but the drill made no impression,
though I worked with all my skill.

We chipped at it with chisels,
but we didn't make a dent,
it appeared my mother's meatloaf
was much harder than cement,
then we set upon that meatloaf
with a hatchet and an ax,
but that meatloaf stayed unblemished
and withstood our fierce attacks.

We borrowed bows and arrows,
and we fired at close range,
it didn't make a difference,
for that meatloaf didn't change.
We beset it with a blowtorch,
but we couldn't find a flaw,
and we both were flabbergasted
when it broke the power saw.

We hired a hippopotamus

to trample it around,
but that meatloaf was so mighty
that it simply stood its ground,
now we manufacture meatloaves
by the millions all year long,
they are famous in construction.
building houses tall and strong

Class D702 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)
RULES AND REGULATIONS – Lewis Carroll

A short direction
To avoid dejection,
By variations
In occupations,
And prolongation
Of relaxation,
And combinations
Of recreations,
And disputation
On the state of the nation
In adaptation
To your station
By invitations
To friends and relations,
By evitation
Of amputation,
By permutation
In conversation,
And deep reflection
You'll avoid dejection.

Learn well your grammar
And never stammer,
Write well and neatly,
And sing most sweetly,
Be enterprising,
Love early rising,
Go walk of six miles,
Have ready quick smiles
With lightsome laughter
Soft flowing after.
Drink tea, not coffee;
Never eat toffy.
Eat bread with butter.
Once more, don't stutter.

Don't waste your money,

Abstain from honey.
Shut doors behind you,
(Don't slam them, mind you.)
Drink beer, not porter.
Don't enter the water
Till to swim you are able.
Sit close to the table.
Take care of a candle.
Shut a door by the handle,
Don't push with your shoulder
Until you are older.
Lose not a button,
Refuse cold mutton
Starve your canaries.
Believe in fairies,
If you are able,
Don't have a stable
With any mangers.
Be rude to strangers.

Moral: Behave.

Class D702 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)

IT'S ONLY A TREE - Bernice and Gordon Korman

It's only a tree, and an ugly one, too,
And the fact is, it has to come down.
It blocks out the sun for each house on the street.
There's been a complaint from the town.

When Mom put up the tire swing
She checked the branch like anything,
Made sure our feet could reach the slope,
And then forgot to test the rope.
So when it broke, poor Mallory
Rolled right clear down to Highway 3.
The bus she almost hit head-on
Swerved right and jumped up on our lawn.
It sheared the hydrant off its post--
I think that's when I laughed the most--
The water shot up thirty feet
And hit the wires. It was neat.
Knocked out the electricity.
It was a special day for me.

I've got to save that tree!

Class D702 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)
A MONSTROUS MOUSE - X. J. Kennedy

Just as I'd sucked in wind to take
A giant puff at my birthday cake,

While all the children sang and cheered,
Up shot the window shade - in peered

A monstrous mouse with jagged jaws!
Into the kitchen poked two paws

With fingernails like reindeer antlers!
The way a team of house dismantlers

Continued on next page

Humorous Poetry - Grade 7 continued

Bash houses down with a swinging ball,
He kicked - boom! - no more kitchen wall--

And through a new door to our kitchen
That wicked mouse, his whiskers twitchin',

Grabbed hold of my cake plate by both handles
And shouted, "Yum! what nice hot candles!"

Straight through my cake his head went - squish!
I didn't have time to make a wish.

But when he pulled himself back out,
All fresh fruit frosting, his whole snout

Was fire! Sparks spluttered from 'each whisker!
You never did see mouse-dancing brisker.

Thick clouds of smoke choked our apartment.
My father phoned the Fire Department.

Up screeched four fire trucks, sirens roaring
Nobody found my party boring!

Our bowl of orangeade and ice
Proved just the thing for dunking mice.

Mouse ran outside and down his tunnel
Faster than water through a funnel.

I sort of forget what games we played.
Nobody drank much orangeade.

Class D702 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 7 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D704 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 7 and 8
Excerpt from **FAMILY SECRETS** - Susan Shreve

I cheated on a unit test in math class this morning during second period with Mr. Burke. Afterward, I was too sick to eat lunch just thinking about it.

I came straight home from school, went to my room, and lay on the floor trying to decide whether it would be better to run away from home now or after supper. Mostly I wished I was dead....

The fact is, I couldn't believe what I'd done in cold blood. I began to wonder about myself - really wonder - things like whether I would steal from stores or hurt someone on purpose or do some other terrible thing I couldn't even imagine. I began to wonder whether I was plain bad to the core.

I've never been a wonderful kid that everybody in the world loves and thinks is swell, like Nicho. I have a bad temper and I like to have my own way and I argue a lot. Sometimes I can be mean. But most of the time I've thought of myself as a pretty decent kid. Mostly I work hard, I stick up for little kids, and I tell the truth. Mostly I like myself fine - except I wish I were better at basketball.

Now all of a sudden I've turned into this criminal. It's hard to believe I'm just a boy. And all because of one stupid math test.

Lying on the floor of my room, I begin to think that probably I've been bad all along. It just took this math test to clinch it. I'll probably never tell the truth again.

I tell my mother I'm sick when she calls me to come down for dinner. She doesn't believe me, but puts me to bed anyhow. I lie there in the early winter darkness wondering what terrible thing I'll be doing next when my father comes in and sits down on my bed.

"What's the matter?" he asks.

"I've got a stomachache," I say. Luckily, it's too dark to see his face.

"Is that all?"

"Yeah. "

"Mommy says you've been in your room since school."

"I was sick there, too," I say.

"She thinks something happened today and you're upset."

That's the thing that really drives me crazy about my mother. She knows things sitting inside my head same as if I was turned inside out.

"Well," my father says. I can tell he doesn't believe me.

"My stomach *is* feeling sort of upset." I hedge.

"Okay," he says and he pats my leg and gets up.

Just as he shuts the door to my room I call out to him in a voice I don't even recognize as my own that I'm going to have to run away.

"How come?" he calls back not surprised or anything.

So I tell him I cheated on this math test. To tell the truth, I'm pretty much surprised at myself. I didn't plan to tell him anything.

He doesn't say anything at first and that just about kills me. I'd be fine if he'd spank me or something. To say nothing can drive a person crazy.

And then he says I'll have to call Mr. Burke.

It's not what I had in mind.

"Now?" I ask, surprised.

"Now," he says. He turns on the light and pulls off my covers.

"I'm not going to," I say.

But I do it. I call Mr. Burke, probably waking him up, and I tell him exactly what happened, even that I decided to cheat the night before the test. He says I'll come in Saturday to take another test, which is okay with me, and I thank him a whole lot for being understanding and all. He's not friendly but he's not absolutely mean either.

"Today I thought I was turning into a criminal," I tell my father when he turns out my light.

Sometimes my father kisses me good night and sometimes he doesn't. I never know. But tonight he does.

Class D704 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

Excerpt from **LES MISÉRABLES** - Victor Hugo

Jean Valjean listened, but there was not a sound; he gave the door - a push with the tip of his finger lightly, and with the gentleness of a cat that wants to get in. The door yielded to the pressure, and made an almost imperceptible and silent movement, which slightly widened the opening. He waited for a moment, and then pushed the door again more boldly. It continued to yield silently, and the opening was soon large enough for him to pass through. But near the door stood a small table which formed an awkward angle with it, and barred the entrance.

Jean Valjean noticed the difficulty; the opening must be enlarged at all hazards. He made up his mind, and pushed the door a third time, more energetically still. This time there was a badly oiled hinge, which suddenly uttered a hoarse, prolonged cry in the darkness. Jean Valjean started; the sound of the hinge smote his ear startlingly and formidably, as if it had been the trumpet of the day of judgment. He almost imagined that the hinge had become alive, had barked like a dog to warn and awaken the sleepers. He stopped, shuddering and dismayed, and fell back from tiptoes to his heels. He felt the arteries of his temples beat like two forge hammers, and it seemed to him that his breath issued from his lungs with the noise of the wind roaring out of a cavern. For a moment he believed himself lost.

He remained where he was, petrified like the pillar of salt, not daring to make a movement. A few minutes passed, during which the door remained wide open. He ventured to look into the room, and found that nothing had stirred. He listened; no one was moving in the house, the creaking of the rusty hinge had not awakened any one. The first danger had passed, but still there was fearful tumult within him. But he did not recoil, he had not done so when he thought himself lost; he thought only of finishing the job as speedily as possible, and entered the bedroom. He advanced cautiously and carefully, avoiding coming into collision with the furniture. He heard from the end of the room the calm and regular breathing of the sleeping Bishop. Suddenly he stopped, for he was close to the bed; he had reached it sooner than he had anticipated.

Nature at times blends her scenes with our actions, with a kind of gloomy and intelligent design, as if wishing to make us reflect. For nearly half an hour a heavy cloud had covered the sky, but at the moment when Jean Valjean stopped at the foot of the bed, this cloud was rent asunder, and a moonbeam passing through the tall window suddenly illumined the Bishop's pale face. He was sleeping peacefully, wrapped in a long garment of brown wool, which covered his arms down to the wrists. His head was thrown back on the pillow in the easy attitude of repose, and his hand, which had done so many good deeds, hung out of the bed. His entire face was lit up by a vague expression of satisfaction, hope, and felicity - it was more than a smile and almost a radiance.

At the moment when the ray of moonlight shone upon his face, the sleeping Bishop seemed as in a glory. His countenance, however, remained gentle and veiled in the half-light. The moon in the sky, the slumbering nature, the garden without a quiver, the house which was so calm, the hour of the night, the moment, the silence, added some solemn

and indescribable quality to the venerable repose of this man, and enveloped in a serene and majestic halo that white hair, those closed eyes, that face in which all was hope and all was confidence, that head of an old man, and that slumber of an infant.

There was something almost divine in this unconsciously august man.

Jean Valjean, in the shadow with his iron bar in his hand, stood motionless and terrified by this luminous old man. Never had he seen anything like this; such confidence terrified him. He looked at the Bishop, that was all; but what his thoughts were it would be impossible to divine. He was moved and shaken, but of what nature was this emotion? It seemed as if he were hesitating between two abysses, the one that saves and the one that destroys; he was ready to dash out the Bishop's brains or to kiss his hand. At the expiration of a few minutes his left arm slowly rose to his cap, which he took off; then his arm fell again with the same slowness, and Jean Valjean recommenced his meditation, with his cap in his left hand, his iron bar in his right, his hair bristling on his savage head.

Class D704 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

Excerpt from **LEININGEN VERSUS THE ANTS** - Carl Stephenson

Dawn found a thoroughly refreshed and active Leiningen riding along the edge of the ditch. The planter saw before him a motionless and unaltered throng of besiegers. He studied the wide belt of water between them and the plantation, and for a moment almost regretted that the fight had ended so soon and so simply. In the comforting, matter-of-fact light of morning, it seemed to him now that the ants hadn't the ghost of a chance to cross the ditch. Even if they plunged headlong into it on all three fronts at once, the force of the now powerful current would inevitably sweep them away. He had got quite a thrill out of the fight -- pity it was already over.

He rode along the eastern and southern sections of the ditch and found everything in order. He reached the western section, opposite the tamarind wood, and here, contrary to the other battle fronts, he found the enemy very busy indeed. The trunks and branches of the trees and the creepers of the lianas, on the far bank of the ditch, fairly swarmed with industrious insects. But instead of eating the leaves there and then, they were merely gnawing through the stalks, so that a thick green shower fell steadily to the ground.

No doubt they were victualling columns sent out to obtain provender for the rest of the army. The discovery did not surprise Leiningen. He did not need to be told that ants are intelligent, that certain species even use others as milch cows, watchdogs and slaves. He was well aware of their power for adaptation, their sense of discipline, their marvellous talent for organization.

His belief that a foray to supply the army was in progress was strengthened when he saw the leaves that fell to the ground being dragged to the troops waiting outside the wood. Then all at once he realized the aim that rain of green was intended to serve.

Each single leaf, pulled or pushed by dozens of toiling insects, was borne straight to the edge of the ditch. Even as Macbeth watched the approach of Birnam Wood in the hands of his enemies, Leiningen saw the tamarind wood move nearer and nearer in the

mandibles of the ants. Unlike the fey Scot, however, he did not lose his nerve; no witches had prophesied his doom, and if they had he would have slept just as soundly. All the same, he was forced to admit to himself that the situation was now far more ominous than that of the day before.

He had thought it impossible for the ants to build rafts for themselves -- well, here they were, coming in thousands, more than enough to bridge the ditch. Leaves after leaves rustled down the slope into the water, where the current drew them away from the bank and carried them into midstream. And every single leaf carried several ants. This time the farmer did not trust to the alacrity of his messengers. He galloped away, leaning from his saddle and yelling orders as he rushed past outpost after outpost: "Bring petrol pumps to the southwest front. Issue spades to every man along the line facing the wood !" And arrived at the eastern and southern sections, he dispatched every man except the observation posts to the menaced west.

Then, as he rode past the stretch where the ants had failed to cross the day before, he witnessed a brief but impressive scene. Down the slope of the distant hill there came toward him a singular being, writhing rather than running, an animal-like blackened statue with a shapeless head and four quivering feet that knuckled under almost ceaselessly. When the creature reached the far bank of the ditch and collapsed opposite Leiningen, he recognized it as a pampas stag, covered over and over with ants.

It had strayed near the zone of the army. As usual, they had attacked its eyes first. Blinded, it had reeled in the madness of hideous torment straight into the ranks of its persecutors, and now the beast swayed to and fro in its death agony.

With a shot from his rifle Leiningen put it out of its misery. Then he pulled out his watch. He hadn't a second to lose, but for life itself he could not have denied his curiosity the satisfaction of knowing how long the ants would take -- for personal reasons, so to speak. After six minutes the white polished bones alone remained. That's how he himself would look before you can - Leiningen spat once, and put spurs to his horse.

Class D704 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

Excerpt from **LUKE BALDWIN'S VOW** - Morley Callaghan

Leaving the bike in the ditch, he started to cross the field, intending to get close enough to the house so Dan could hear him if he whistled softly. He got about fifty yards away from the house and whistled and waited, but there was no sign of the dog, which might be asleep at the front of the house, he knew, or over at the sawmill. With the saws whining, the dog couldn't hear the soft whistle. For a few minutes Luke couldn't make up his mind what to do, then he decided to go back to the road, get on his bike and go back the way he had come until he got to the place where the river path joined the road. There he could leave his bike, go up the path, then into the tall grass and get close to the front of the house and the sawmill without being seen.

He had followed the river path for about a hundred yards, and when he came to the place where the river began to bend sharply toward the house his heart fluttered and his legs felt paralysed, for he saw the old row-boat in the one place where the river was

deep, and in the row-boat was Sam Carter with the collie.

The bearded man in the blue overalls was smoking the cigar; the dog, with a rope around its neck, sat contentedly beside him, its tongue going out in a friendly lick at the hand holding the rope. It was all like a crazy dream picture to Luke; all wrong because it looked so lazy and friendly, even the curling smoke from Sam Carter's cigar. But as Luke cried out, "Dan, Dan! Come on, boy!" and the dog jumped at the water, he saw that Sam Carter's left hand was hanging deep in the water, holding a foot of rope with a heavy stone at the end. As Luke cried out wildly, "Don't! Please don't!" Carter dropped the stone, for the cry came too late; it was blurred by the screech of the big saws at the mill. But Carter was startled, and he stared stupidly at the river bank, then he ducked his head and began to row quickly to the bank.

But Luke was watching the collie take what looked like a long, shallow dive, except that the hind legs suddenly kicked up above the surface, then shot down, and while he watched, Luke sobbed and trembled, for it was as if the happy secret part of his life around the sawmill was being torn away from him. But even while he watched, he seemed to be following a plan without knowing it, for he was already fumbling in his pocket for his jack-knife, jerking the blade open, pulling off his pants, kicking his shoes off while he muttered fiercely and prayed that Sam Carter would get out of sight.

It hardly took the mill hand a minute to reach the bank and go slinking furtively around the bend as if he felt that the boy was following him. But Luke hadn't taken his eyes off the exact spot in the water where Dan had disappeared. As soon as the mill hand was out of sight, Luke slid down the bank and took a leap at the water, the sun glistening on his slender body, his eyes wild with eagerness as he ran out to the deep place, then arched his back and dived, swimming under water, his open eyes getting used to the greenish-grey haze of the water, the sandy bottom and the imbedded rocks.

His lungs began to ache, then he saw the shadow of the collie floating at the end of the taut rope, rock-held in the sand. He slashed at the rope with his knife. He couldn't get much strength in his arm because of the resistance of the water. He grabbed the rope with his left hand, hacking with his knife. The collie suddenly drifted up slowly, like a water-soaked log. Then his own head shot above the surface, and while he was sucking in the air he was drawing in the rope, pulling the collie toward him and treading water. In a few strokes he was away from the deep place and his feet touched the bottom.

Hoisting the collie out of the water, he scrambled toward the bank, lurching and stumbling in fright because the collie felt like a dead weight.

He went on up the bank and across the path to the tall grass, where he fell flat, hugging the dog and trying to warm him with his own body. But the collie didn't stir, the good amber eye remained closed. Then suddenly Luke wanted to act like a resourceful competent man. Getting up on his knees, he stretched the dog out on its belly, drew him between his knees, felt with trembling hands for the soft places on the flanks just above the hipbones, and rocked back and forth, pressing with all his weight, then relaxing the pressure as he straightened up. He hoped that he was working the dog's lungs like a bellows. He had read that men who had been thought drowned had been saved in this

way.

"Come on, Dan. Come on, old boy," he pleaded softly. As a little water came from the collie's mouth, Luke's heart jumped, and he muttered over and over, "You can't be dead, Dan! You can't, you can't! I won't let you die, Dan!" He rocked back and forth tirelessly, applying the pressure to the flanks. More water dribbled from the mouth. In the collie's body he felt a faint tremor. "Oh, gee, Dan, you're alive," he whispered, "Come on, boy. Keep it up."

With a cough the collie suddenly jerked his head back, the amber eye opened, and there they were looking at each other. Then the collie, thrusting his legs out stiffly, tried to hoist himself up, staggered, tried again, then stood there in a stupor. Then he shook himself like any other wet dog, turned his head, eyed Luke, and the red tongue came out in a weak flick at Luke's cheek.

Class D704 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

Excerpt from **THE CALL OF THE WILD** - Jack London

He was older than the days he had seen and the breaths he had drawn. He linked the past with the present, and the eternity behind him throbbed through him in a mighty rhythm to which he swayed as the tides and seasons swayed. He sat by John Thornton's fire, a broad-breasted dog, white-fanged and long-furred; but behind him were the shades of all manner of dogs, half-wolves and wild wolves, urgent and prompting, tasting the savor of the meat he ate, thirsting for the water he drank, scenting the wind with him, listening with him and telling him the sounds made by the wild life in the forest, dictating his moods, directing his actions, lying down to sleep with him when he lay down, and dreaming with him and beyond him and becoming themselves the stuff of his dreams.

So peremptorily did these shades beckon him, that each day mankind and the claims of mankind slipped farther from him. Deep in the forest a call was sounding, and as often as he heard this call, mysteriously thrilling and luring, he felt compelled to turn his back upon the fire and the beaten earth around it, and to plunge into the forest, and on and on, he knew not where or why; nor did he wonder where or why, the call sounding imperiously, deep in the forest. But as often as he gained the soft unbroken earth and the green shade, the love for John Thornton drew him back to the fire again.

Thornton alone held him. The rest of mankind was as nothing. Chance travellers might praise or pet him; but he was cold under it all, and from a too demonstrative man he would get up and walk away. When Thornton's partners, Hans and Pete, arrived on the long-expected raft, Buck refused to notice them till he learned they were close to Thornton; after that he tolerated them in a passive sort of way, accepting favors from them as though he favored them by accepting.

For Thornton, however, his love seemed to grow and grow. He, alone among men, could put a pack upon Buck's back in the summer travelling. Nothing was too great for Buck to do, when Thornton commanded. One day, the men and dogs were sitting on the crest of a cliff which fell away, straight down, to naked bed-rock three hundred feet below. John Thornton was sitting near the edge, Buck at his shoulder. A thoughtless whim seized Thornton, and he drew the attention of Hans and Pete to the experiment he had in mind. "Jump, Buck!" he commanded, sweeping his arm out over the chasm. The

next instant he was grappling with Buck on the extreme edge, while Hans and Pete were dragging them back into safety.

“It’s uncanny,” Pete said, after it was over and they had caught their speech.

Thornton shook his head. “No, it is splendid, and it is terrible, too. Do you know, it sometimes makes me afraid.”

“I’m not hankering to be the man that lays hands on you while he’s around,” Pete announced conclusively, nodding his head toward Buck.

Class D704 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
Excerpt from THE GIVER – Lois Lowry

“Jonas was identified as a possible Receiver many years ago. We have observed him meticulously. There were no dreams of uncertainty.

“He has shown all of the qualities that a Receiver must have.”

With her hand still firmly on his shoulder, the Chief Elder listed the qualities.

“*Intelligence*,” she said. “We are all aware that Jonas has been a top student throughout his school days.

“*Integrity*,” she cried next. “Jonas has, like all of us, committed minor transgressions. She smiled at him. “We expect that. We hoped, also that he would present himself promptly for chastisement, and he has always done so.”

“*Courage*,” she went on. “Only one of us here today has ever undergone the rigorous training required of a Receiver. He, of course, is the most important member of the Committee: the current Receiver. It was he who reminded us, again and again, of the courage required.

“Jonas,” she said, turning to him, but speaking in a voice that the entire community could hear, “the training required of you involves pain. Physical pain.”

He felt fear flutter within him.

“You have never experienced that. Yes, you have scraped your knees in falls from your bicycle. Yes, you crushed your finger in a door last year.

Jonas nodded, agreeing, as he recalled the incident, and its accompanying misery.

“But you will be faced, now,” she explained gently, “with pain of a magnitude that none of us here can comprehend because it is beyond our experience. The Receiver himself was not able to describe it, only to remind us that you would be faced with it, that you would need immense courage. We cannot prepare you for that.

“But we feel certain that you are brave,” she said to him

He did not feel brave at all. Not now.

“The fourth essential attribute,” the Chief Elder said, “is *wisdom*. Jonas has not yet acquired that. The acquisition of wisdom will come through his training.”

“We are convinced that Jonas has the ability to acquire wisdom. That is what we

looked for.

“Finally, The Receiver must have one more quality, and it is one which I can only name, but not describe. I do not understand it. You members of the community will not understand it, either. Perhaps Jonas will, because the current Receiver has told us that Jonas already has this quality. He calls it the Capacity to See Beyond.”

The Chief Elder looked at Jonas with a question in her eyes. The audience watched him, too. They were silent.

For a moment he froze, consumed with despair. He *didn't* have it, the whatever-she-had-said. He didn't know what it was. Now was the moment when he would have to confess, to say, “No, I don't. I can't,” and just throw himself on their mercy, ask their forgiveness, to explain that he has been wrongly chosen, that he was not the right on at all.

Class D704 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

THE LOVED AND LOST - Morley Callaghan

In the corner to the left of the Canadian goal a Ranger forward was blocked out and held against the boards by a Canadian defenceman, who cleared the puck up the ice. The Ranger forward, skating past the defenceman, turned and slashed at him, breaking the stick across his shoulder. The official didn't see it. The play was at the other end of the ice. The defenceman who had been slashed spun crazily on his skates, dropped to his knees, and circled around holding his neck. The crowd screamed. The other Canadian defenceman, dropping his stick and gloves, charged at the Ranger forward and started swinging. The Ranger forward backed away, his stick up, trying to protect himself. The official, stopping the play, made frantic motions at the fist-swinging defenceman, waving him off the ice. Another Ranger forward came out of nowhere and dived at the defenceman and tackled him; then all the players converged on one another, each one picking an opponent in the widening huddle, fists swinging, gloves and sticks littering the ice. Some of the players fenced with their sticks. The crowd howled in glee. The referee finally separated the players and handed out penalties. He gave a major penalty to the Canadian defenceman who had first dropped his stick to attack the Ranger forward who had really precipitated the brawl; he gave a minor to the Ranger forward who had dived at this defenceman and tackled him. And the forward who had broken his stick over the defenceman's shoulder, the instigator, the real culprit, was permitted to escape. He skated around lazily, an indifferent innocent.

"What about him?" the priest asked Catherine as he pointed to the Ranger. "Yes, what about him? Look at the face innocent," Catherine cried. She thrust out her arm accusingly. Ten thousand others stood up, pointed and screamed indignantly, "Hey, what about him? Why don't you give him a penalty?" The Ranger skated nonchalantly to the bench to get a new stick. His air of innocence was infuriating, yet the referee, the blind fool, was deceived by it. The players on the Canadian bench, all standing up, slapped their sticks on the boards, screamed at the referee, and pointed. The referee, his hands on his hips, went right on ignoring the angry booing. He proposed to face off the puck.

"Boo-boo-boo!" Catherine yelled, her handsome face twisted, her eyes glazed with

indignation. "He's letting him go scot-free. The one who started the whole thing."

The stout French Canadian, who had been standing up shouting imprecations in bewilderingly rapid French, suddenly broke into English. Twelve thousand people were also screaming, but by shifting to English he imagined he would get the referee to listen to him. His jaw trembled, his eyes rolled back in their sockets, he was ready to weep; then his face became red and swollen, and he cried out passionately, "Blind man! Idiot! All night you are a blind man! A thief, a cheat! You're despicable—go back home, go out and die! I spit on you!" He cupped his hands around his mouth and let out a gigantic moan.

The ice was now a small white space at the bottom of a great black pit where sacrificial figures writhed, and on the vast slopes of the pit a maniacal white-faced mob shrieked at the one with the innocent air who had broken the rules, and the one who tolerated the offence. It was a yapping frenzied roaring. Short and choppy about the sound of horns, whistles, and bells, the stout French Canadian pounded McAlpine's shoulder; he jumped up on his own seat, he reached down and tore off his rubbers and hurled them at the ice. A shower of rubbers came from all sections of the arena and littered the ice as the players ducked and backed away. Hats sailed in wide arcs above the ice and floated down.

"They've all gone crazy, " McAlpine muttered to Catherine. "Just a crazy, howling mob."

Class D704 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
WHERE THE HIGH WINDS BLOW - David Walker

Sometimes the winds came stealthily. Sometimes they came full strength out of calm. This was such a wind. It rolled down on Simon Kepple Skafe as fast as a southbound express.

No sound of wind—time to check that the pressure ridge ran unbroken east and west as far as he could see—a rumour of wind—time to see that the team were going strong, swinging southwest from the pressure ridge. Already they had ceased to be eleven dogs and a lifeless sled, and had become a black corporate caterpillar moving on the white—a rushing of wind, a curtain billowing at him from the north—time to put up both hoods, to put on his wolfskin mitts, to miss the dark glasses. Then the wind was here.

The parallel tracks were not hard to see, although the wind whipped at the right side of his face, and iced him up, and he had to thaw himself, and the pain between his eyes was horrible. But he kept on. Sometimes the tracks were two or three inches deep in the changing immutable skin of the snow; sometimes they were the faintest indentations; but he could follow them, and now, any minute now, he would come in the loud wind upon the chaos of his dogs, dead dogs, murdering dogs and upset sled.

But he did not come upon them. He blundered into a crack in the ice and bruised his shin, and cursed about that, and saw ahead for the fifteen or twenty feet that he could see, ahead and to either side, and all he could see was bare dark ice through the wrack of

snow. He went a little farther to see bare dark ice, no square-cut trail of a sled that ran on steel.

Now he faced the wind. It was a killer. It cut his face with knives and then it froze him up. It froze his cheeks and nose. It froze his eyelids shut. He turned his back to it, and thawed his face again, bowing his head to meet his mitts.

The cold was seeping into him. He know what would be the first thing to go—his feet. If your hands went, there was something you could do—put them inside your bosom, rub them—and he did that now. But your feet—could you take off your socks to rub them? Could you put them in your bosom. You could jump about and run about and waste more body heat to keep your feet alive a little longer.

Class D704 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D705 PROSE READING – Humorous Poetry, Grades 7 and 8
Excerpt from **THE RANSOM OF RED CHIEF** - O. Henry

"What am I to do?" asks Bill, looking at the kid suspiciously.

"You are the hoss," says Black Scout. "Get down on your hands and knees. How can I ride to the stockade without a hoss?"

"You'd better keep him interested," said I, "till we get the scheme going. Loosen up."

Bill gets down on his all fours, and a look comes in his eye like a rabbit's when you catch it in a trap.

"How far is it to the stockade, kid?" he asks in a husky manner of voice.

"Ninety miles," says the Black Scout. "And you have to hump yourself to get there on time. Whoa, now!"

The Black Scout jumps on Bill's back and digs his heels in his side.

"For heaven's sake," says Bill, "hurry back, Sam, as soon as you can. I wish we hadn't made the ransom more than a thousand. Say, you quit kicking me or I'll get up and warm you good."

I walked over to Poplar Cove and sat around the post office and store, talking with the chawbacons that came in to trade. One whiskerando says that he hears Summit is all upset on account of Elder Ebenezer Dorset's boy having been lost or stolen. That was all I wanted to know. I bought some smoking tobacco, referred casually to the price of black-eyed peas, posted my letter surreptitiously and came away. The postmaster said the mail-carrier would come by in an hour to take the mail on to Summit.

When I got back to the cave Bill and the boy were not to be found. I explored the vicinity of the cave, and risked a yodel or two, but there was no response.

So I lighted my pipe and sat down on a mossy bank to await developments.

In about half an hour I heard the bushes rustle, and Bill wobbled out into the little glade in front of the cave. Behind him was the kid stepping softly like a scout, with a broad grin on his face. Bill stopped, took off his hat and wiped his face with a red handkerchief. The kid stopped about eight feet behind him.

"Sam," says Bill, "I suppose you'll think I'm a renegade, but I couldn't help it. I'm a grown person with masculine proclivities and habits of self-defence, but there is a time when all systems of egotism and predominance fail. The boy is gone. I have sent him home. All is off. There was martyrs in old times," goes on Bill, "that suffered death rather than give up the particular graft they enjoyed. None of 'em ever was subjugated to such supernatural tortures as I have been. I tried to be faithful to our articles of depredation; but there comes a limit."

"What's the trouble, Bill?" I asks him.

"I was rode," says Bill, "the ninety miles to the stockade, not barring an inch. Then, when the settler was rescued, I was given oats. Sand ain't a palatable substitute. And then, for an hour I had to try to explain to him why there was nothin' in holes, how a road can run both ways and what makes the grass green. I tell you, Sam, a human can only stand so much. I takes him by the neck of his clothes and drags him down the mountain. On the way he kicks my legs black-and-blue from the knees down; and I've got to have two or three bites on my thumb and hand cauterized.

"But he's gone"--continues Bill--"gone home. I showed him the road to Summit and kicked him about eight feet nearer there at one kick. I'm sorry we lose the ransom; but it was either that or Bill Driscoll to the madhouse."

Bill is puffing and blowing, but there is a look of ineffable peace and growing content on his rose-pink features.

"Bill," says I, "there isn't any heart disease in your family, is there?"

"No," says Bill, "nothing chronic except malaria and accidents. Why?"

"Then you might turn round," says I, "and have a look behind you."

Bill turns and sees the boy, and loses his complexion and sits down plump on the ground and begins to pluck aimlessly at grass and little sticks. For an hour I was afraid of his mind. And then I told him that my scheme was to put the whole job through immediately and that we would get the ransom and be off with it by midnight if old Dorset fell in with our proposition. So Bill braced up enough to give the kid a weak sort of a smile and a promise to play the Russian in a Japanese war with him as soon as he felt a little better.

Class D705 PROSE READING – Humorous Poetry, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

Excerpt from **OWLS IN THE FAMILY** - Farley Mowat

Although Wol loved practical jokes, the funny thing was that he never really harmed other animals if he could help it. Of course, if something tried to hurt him - that was different. Then Wol could be dangerous. But he certainly wasn't the fierce and bloodthirsty kind of bird that owls are supposed to be. He wouldn't even go hunting on his own; if a gopher or a white rat happened to get loose on the lawn, he wouldn't touch it. However, there was one kind of animal he would attack, and that was a skunk.

It seems that all horned owls just naturally hate skunks, though no one knows the reason why. What's more, horned owls are the only things I know of that will eat a skunk, and they even seem to like the taste.

Our house in Saskatoon stood close to the river, and along the bank of the river was a regular jungle of bushes and poplar trees which made an ideal place for skunks to live. Because they didn't have any enemies in town, the riverbank skunks had become so cocky they would stroll along the sidewalk in front of our place as boldly as if they owned it.

That was before Wol came to live with us.

Cocky as ever, one of the riverbank skunks decided to take a walk down Crescent Avenue one summer evening just after Wol had learned to fly. The skunk came strutting along the sidewalk quite sure nothing in the world would dare to bother him. He ambled along, taking his own time, until he got under the overhanging branches of our poplar trees . . .

Mother and Dad and I were having dinner. The dining room windows were open because it had been such a hot day. All of a sudden there was a great swoooooosh of wings - and there, on the window sill, sat Wol. Before any of us had time to move, he gave a leap and landed on the floor beside my chair. And he hadn't come empty-handed. Clutched in his talons was an enormous skunk. The skunk was dead, but that didn't help matters much because, before he died, he had managed to soak himself and Wol with his own special brand of perfume.

"Hoo-hoohoohoo-HOO!" Wol said proudly.

Which probably meant: "Mind if I join you? I've brought my supper with me."

Nobody stopped to answer. We three people were already stampeding through the door of the dining room, coughing and choking. Wol had to eat his dinner by himself.

It was two weeks before we could use the dining room again, and when Mother sent the rug and drapes to the cleaners, the man who owned the shop phoned her right back and wanted to know if she was trying to ruin him.

Wol didn't smell so sweet either, but he couldn't understand why he was so

unpopular all of a sudden. His feelings must have been hurt by the way everybody kept trying to avoid him. After two or three days, when even I wouldn't go near him, or let him come near me, he became very unhappy. Then an idea must have come into his funny head. He must have decided we were mad at him because he hadn't shared his skunk with us! So one day he went down to the riverbank and caught a second skunk, and brought it home for us.

By this time he was so soaked in skunk oil that you could smell him a block away. Some of our neighbours complained about it, and so finally my father had to give Wol a bath in about a gallon of tomato juice. Tomato juice is the only thing that will wash away the smell of skunk.

Poor Wol ! By the time Dad was through with him he looked like a rag mop that had been dipped in ketchup. But he got the idea, and he never again brought his skunks home to us.

Class D705 PROSE READING – Humorous Poetry, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

Excerpt from **REAL PONIES DON'T GO OINK!** - Patrick F. McManus

Retch and I arrived at the lake cabin just before dark, went inside and started a fire. Luckily, we were able to smother it before it did much damage.

"I don't know why Popper doesn't buy a new gas lantern," Retch said, rubbing off his eyebrows.

"Well, he'll have to now," I said. "The flames shot darn near to the ceiling. Good thing you had wits enough to throw your dad's fishing vest on top of it before you booted it out the door. Might have touched off a forest fire otherwise."

"You didn't do too bad yourself, tossing that bucket of water on the burning floorboards. The whole cabin could have gone up like a torch!"

The next morning we dragged the little cedar-strip boat down to the lake and launched it. It was one of the prettiest boats I'd ever seen, about what you'd expect of something that had been lovingly crafted with hand tools over a period of five years or so. It rowed like a dream. But the five-horse motor sent it skimming up the lake like a shaft of golden light playing on the waves. The fishing was wonderful, too. By evening we had two heavy stringers of perch and crappy.

Night was oozing in around us by the time we started back down the lake. Retch was rowing.

"Bail a little faster," he said. "We're taking on too much water."

"I'm bailing as fast as I can," I said. "You wouldn't think a little hole like that would let in so much water."

"Darn snag," Retch said. "Not only does it get the boat, it nails the motor, too. I've

been up here a dozen times with Popper, and he's never once mentioned that snag. You would think a person's father would mention an obstacle like that. No, all he does is shout, 'Not so fast, not so fast! You'll run into something!' I tell you it makes me feel bad to see that kind of negligence in a person's own parent. Bail faster!"

"Row faster!"

We finally made it back to the cabin, with a good three or four inches of the boat showing above water. We tied up at the dock, threw what was left of Mr. Sweeney's gear in the car, and headed home. Now, I certainly didn't recall seeing that big rock in the road on our way to the cabin. Retch said he was certain that it hadn't been there. The wrecker man said it had probably fallen down off the mountain after we had gone past on our way to the cabin. "Because," he said, "any fool would have noticed a rock that size."

The rock had gone right under the car, ripping off assorted parts, some of which were apparently fairly important, because the car refused to run.

"Can you fix it?" I asked the wrecker man.

"Fix it?" he said. "Only God could fix that car, and His bill would be almost as much as mine. You say a Mr. Herbert Sweeney will be happy to pay for my services, right? You boys just stand where I can see you until this Mr. Sweeney arrives, okay?"

"Okay," Retch said. "But unless you have a strong stomach, I think it would be better if he picked us up down the road a ways."

An hour after a collect phone call to the Sweeney residence, Mr. Sweeney's other car came roaring into the gas station. Mr. Sweeney got out and stood there for a moment staring at us. I wished he had been a little more specific about the consequences of our destroying his belongings. Then he rushed at us.

"You're both still alive!" he cried. "No missing limbs, no broken bones?"

"Naw, Popper, we're okay," Retch said, cringing. "But we destroyed your fishing car."

"That piece of junk! Good riddance!"

"And we hit a snag and broke a hole in your boat and knocked out your new motor. The boat's mostly sunk but tied up at the dock."

"You managed to get it back to the dock? That's wonderful! I thought I'd never see it or the motor again!"

"And we had a fire in the cabin, but we got it put out before it did much damage."

"You mean you didn't burn the cabin to the ground? I can't believe it? This is fantastic! And you two loons are still alive to tell about it! I never thought it could happen! Maybe you guys are actually ready to go out on your own, without me tagging along all the time. By gosh, I can hardly believe you made it back alive. What a relief!"

Driving back home with his father, Retch and I slowly recovered from the shocks of the day. Indeed, the good cheer of Mr. Sweeney proved infectious, and soon Retch and I were giving him a hilarious account of our adventure, to which Mr. Sweeney responded with great mirth.

“And then I kicked the lantern right out the door,” Retch said, “and busted it all to smithereens. Har har har!”

"Kicked it out the door and busted it all to smithereens!" shouted Mr. Sweeney. "Har har har!"

"But wait, there's more," Retch said, wiping tears from his eyes. "We put out the fire with your old fishing vest. Burnt a big hole in it! Heee heeee!"

“Burnt a hole in my old fishing vest?” Mr. Sweeney said, not laughing. “Burnt a hole in my fishing vest! Don’ press your luck, Retch. Don’t press your luck!”

As Retch said later, that was the problem with parents. All they cared about were their dumb old possessions.

Class D705 PROSE READING – Humorous Poetry, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

Excerpt from **THE TRUTH ABOUT RATS, RULES, & SEVENTH GRADE** - Linda Zinner

Suddenly a brown rat – ten feet long, three hundred pounds, easy – wriggled out of the insulation, scurried across the top of the stove, slipped down a burner hole and disappeared.

“Aha!” said Mom again. She grinned into my panic-stricken face. “He’s behind this last side panel! We got him cornered!”

Mom whaled on the last two screws. “Open the door, Larch, and stand by with the broom!”

I opened the door and cowered behind the broom.

Mom stripped the last screw and tore off the panel. The rat tried to squirm down through the fiberglass, but Mom dropped the screwdriver and with her bare hand, her bare hand, grabbed that rat by the base of its tail and held it up.

“Ta,dah!” she sang.

The rat’s body twisted in the air. Its frantic scrabbling at her fingers got Mom’s attention, all right. That brought her back to reality.

“I’m touching a rat!” she screeched and let go of the tail.

The rat ran wildly over the floor.

“Get it! Get it!” screamed Mom.

“You get it!” I screamed back. Up and down I danced, my toes determined not to touch a floor that rat feet had run over not a minute ago. The broom handle in my hand swept the flour canister off the counter. A cloud of flour exploded as the canister hit the floor.

“Hit the rat with the broom!” Mom yelled.

I closed my eyes against the drifting flour and brought the bristles down hard on the place where I had last seen the rat.

I swung again. The upswing caught the cupboard behind me. A jar of spaghetti sauce and a box of elbow noodles splatted to the floor. Fresh clouds of flour mushroomed on the downswing.

The rat, acting on a thousand years of rat instinct, dodged the broom, the flour canister, and the spaghetti sauce. It skittered over the noodles and darted lightning-quick into the first dark hole it found. Which happened to be the leg hole of my jeans.

I dropped the broom and let out a bellow.

My jeans were too narrow at the knee, thank goodness, for the rat to slither all the way up my leg. I clapped both hands over the rat bulge at my knee and tried to push it down.

Under the denim the rat writhed and moiled between my cupped fingers like a pulsating tumor. Tickly tumor claws gripped my skin. Malignant yellow fangs scraped lightly through the fine hairs on my leg. The rat was toasty warm; leftover stove heat radiated from the wormy tail twined around my shin.

The more I pushed the rat *down*, the harder it tried to climb *up*.

I let go of my knee and screamed hideously. Mom screamed. I screamed. Mom screamed. The rat and I careened from cupboard to fridge to counter to stove, destroying everything in sight. The toaster oven crashed to the floor. The cupboard door broke a hinge. The dish drainer catapulted through the air. Forks, spoons, plates, and glasses showered all over the kitchen.

Finally, the rat let go. It dropped out of my jeans and scrabbled over my bare toes. My foot, acting on a thousand years of foot instinct, kicked straight up to the ceiling. The rat sailed through the air, hit the threshold, and scurried out of the open kitchen door. Out into the deep, dark, safe, and quiet night.

Mom slammed the door shut.

Class D705 PROSE READING – Humorous Poetry, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

Excerpt from **THE LOON IN MY BATHTUB** - Ronald Rood

“Human beings,” Don Brown read aloud, “are born with just two basic fears. One is the fear of loud noises. The other is the fear of falling. All other fears are learned. This includes the fear of fire, fear of getting hurt, and even the fear of snakes.”

He put the book down. “See? I told you. People aren’t naturally afraid of snakes. It’s just because everybody else is, so they are, too.”

I thought this revelation over for a minute. “Do you mean that a little baby isn’t afraid of snakes?”

“Not according to this book.”

“Not even a big one? Not even if it crawled right over his feet?”

“Nope.”

We were kneeling down beside a pen in the back yard. Dad had taken us children to the Bronx Zoo early in the season, and I’d bought a fifty-cent Ditmars booklet which told about snakes. It made them sound so fascinating that Don and I caught a harmless garter snake on the strength of it. Together we learned about the amazing tongue which “sampled” the air for odors. We discovered the belly scutes which allowed the snake to slide over the ground, and the peculiar jaw-hinge which enabled it to swallow relatively monstrous prey.

We became so engrossed that we forgot our own fears. Soon we captured more snakes. Finally we had over a dozen of them. Now, looking at the pen full of snakes basking peacefully in the sun, we decided that some day we’d see if the book was really right.

The chance came sooner than either of us expected. A day or two later, we had visitors. “Now, Ronald, you watch Phillip and see that he keeps out of mischief,” Mother said, shooting me out the back door with a damp little two-year old. “His mother and I want to talk for awhile.”

I surveyed my small charge disdainfully. “Still in rubber pants,” I grumbled. “And I’m stuck with the job of taking care of him.”

Out into the back lawn we went. Then I remembered Don Brown and his book.

I glanced back at the house. No sign of any adults. “Phillip,” I said to him, “come with me.”

Trusting, the little fellow took my hand. I led him over to the edge of the snake pen. “These are nice, tame snakes,” I purred. “How would you like to play with them?”

I’m not sure what he said, but it wouldn’t have made any difference anyway. Quickly I picked him up and set him down right in the middle of my garter snakes.

He looked up at me in surprise. “It’s all right,” I nodded. “Go ahead. Play with them. See how smooth they are. Not slimy. See how much they like you, Phillip.”

And lo, the book was right! Little Phillip had the time of his young life. He stroked the

snakes thoughtfully as they lay in the sun. He picked them up and let them slide back to the ground. His eyes shone. Pleasure showed in his whole being as he sat among his new-found friends.

Everything was lovely. For five minutes, everything was wonderful. After that, things began to happen.

First there was a noise. About one part scream and four parts bellow. Then, before I could turn around, there was a series of earth tremors. Phillip suddenly shot skyward, trailing snakes as he rose. At the same instant I was sent sprawling on the grass.

The earth whirled for a moment. Then my eyes came into focus. I saw the retreating form of Phillip's indignant mother, who had snatched her beloved from the jaws of death.

"Don't you ever play with my boy again!" she threatened. "Ever, ever, ever!"

And--you guessed it: Phil's been afraid of snakes ever since. I've been afraid of his mother, too.

Class D705 PROSE READING – Humorous Poetry, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

NEVER PUT ROCKS IN YOUR MOUTH – Shirley Barone Craddock

When I was in the sixth grade, my teacher asked our class the question, "What does 'doing the right thing' mean to you?" She asked us to think about that question over the weekend, and to talk to our parents or anyone else we thought might have a good answer. By Monday, we were to turn in an essay on what "doing the right thing" meant, and be prepared to live up to our answers.

The entire weekend, I wracked my brain trying to come up with something that would impress my teacher and be easy to live by. I talked to my parents, called my grandmother and asked my next-door neighbor. I even asked the mailman! Everyone had good answers, but I didn't feel like I could live up to them.

By Sunday afternoon, I hadn't written my essay. To make matters worse, my parents said we were going to my Aunt Cindy's house. That usually meant that I would have to entertain my cousin Andrea while my parents visited after dinner. Andrea was four and a major pest.

Just as I predicted, my parents told me to play with Andrea while they visited. I turned on the television and found a Disney movie for Andrea, and then I sat down and started to write my essay. I still didn't know what I was going to write about, but it was due the next morning and this was my last chance.

Soon I felt a pair of eyes on me. It was Andrea. "What are you doing?" she asked. "I have to write an essay about what doing the right thing means to me."

Andrea laughed. "That's easy," she said.

"Okay," I said, thinking, *What could this smart aleck four-year-old possibly know that all of the adults who I had asked hadn't already come up with?*

"Tell me the answer," I said smugly.

Andrea cleared her throat and stood up.

"Doing the right thing means being nice to your family and friends. Doing what your mommy says. Never lie. Eat lots of fruits and vegetables. Don't eat dog food. Take a bath when you're dirty and wash your own private parts. Don't watch icky movies with kissing and stuff. Don't waste water and electricity. Don't scare the cat. Don't ever run away. And never, never put rocks in your mouth."

I stared with astonishment at my little cousin. Then I jumped up, grabbed Andrea and gave her the biggest hug I could. Not only had Andrea answered a very tough question for me, I could easily live by all of her rules. All I had to do was be nice, not lie, keep myself clean and healthy, not scare cats, and never, never put rocks in my mouth. Piece of cake. So when I wrote my essay, I included the story about Andrea and how she had answered my question.

Two weeks later, my teacher returned everyone's essays. I received an A+ along with a little note my teacher had written at the top: "Always do the right thing-and give Andrea an A+, too!"

Class D705 PROSE READING – Humorous Poetry, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

THE HERO – Author Unknown

Then Marvin got hot. He couldn't miss. Everyone on the team fed him the ball and he could throw it from anywhere and it went plop right into the basket. Marvin pivoted. His height, his spring carried him away from his guards. Marvin pranced. His long legs carried him where he would. He threw the ball over his head and from impossible angles. Once he was knocked down on the floor and he threw from there and made the basket. His joy, his perfection, his luck caused the crowd to burst into continuous wild cheering. Stone City took time out. They ran in substitutes but they couldn't stop Marvin. Perk would recover the ball, he and Johnny fed it skillfully to Marvin, and Marvin laid it in. The gun went off with Hilltown twelve points ahead.

Mr. Whalen was a wreck. He could hardly stand up. Mrs. Whalen took his arm and half supported him toward the stairs that led down to the school grounds. The Stone City fans were angry. A big, broad-shouldered man with fierce black eyes complained in a loud quarrelsome voice.

"That skinny kid--that Whalen boy--he fouled my boy. Who cares? But when my boy protects himself, what happens? They put him off the floor. They put my Guido out so Hilltown wins. I get my hands on that tall monkey and I'll fix him."

"Be careful. That's my son you're talking about." The strength had returned to Mr. Whalen. He was strong as a lion. Mrs. Whalen pulled at his arm but he jerked away. He turned on the crowded stairs.

Before you do anything to Marvin," he said, his voice loud and high, "you'd better do something to me. Your son fouled repeatedly."

"That's a lie!" yelled the other and Mr. Whalen hit him. He hit him right in the stomach as hard as he could punch him. Instantly there was a melee. Johnny's father

was punching somebody and for a moment the crowd heaved and milled on the stairs. Someone screamed. Something like a bolt of lightning hit Mr. Whalen in the eye and he struck back.

Friends were pulling him away. The town marshal shouldered good-naturedly between the combatants. The big man was in the grip of others from Stone City who dragged him back up the stairs. Mr. Whalen struggled with his captors, fellow townsmen who sympathized with him but had no intention of letting him fight. Johnny's mother and Marv's mother hustled their men out into the cold night air.

"Really!" the high school principal was saying anxiously. "Really we mustn't have any trouble. The boys don't fight. If we could just keep the fathers away from the games! Really, Mrs. Whalen, this won't do!"

"I've got a good notion to take a poke at him too," said Mrs. Whalen.

Class D705 PROSE READING – Humorous Poetry, Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D707 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grade 7 and 8
Psalm 137

Class D707 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grade 7 and 8 (Continued)
Exodus 20:1 - 17

Class D707 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grade 7 and 8 (Continued)
Matthew 27:27-38

Class D707 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grade 7 and 8 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D708 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 7
THE MEADOW MOUSE - Theodore Roethke

In a shoe box stuffed in an old nylon stocking
Sleeps the baby mouse I found in the meadow,
Where he trembled and shook beneath a stick
Till I caught him by the tail and brought him in,
Cradled in my hand.
A little quaker, the whole body of him trembling,
His absurd whiskers sticking out like a cartoon-mouse,
His feet like small leaves,
Little lizard-feet,
Whitish and spread wide when he tried to struggle away,
Wriggling like a minuscule puppy.

Now he's eaten three kinds of cheese and drunk from his bottle-cap watering-trough -
So much he just lies in one corner,
His tail curled under him, his belly big
As his head; his bat-like ears
Twitching, tilting toward the least sound.

Do I imagine he no longer trembles
When I come close to him?
He seems no longer to tremble.

But this morning his shoe-box house on the back porch is empty.
Where has he gone, my meadow mouse,
My thumb of a child that nuzzled in my palm? -
To run under the hawk's wing,
Under the eye of the great owl watching from an elm-tree,
To live by courtesy of the shrike, the snake, the tom-cat.

Class D708 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 7 (Continued)
SIR SHASSAM UPPE by E.V. Rieu

Good afternoon, Sir Smasham Uppe!
We're having tea: do take a cup!
Sugar and milk? Now let me see –
Two lumps, I think?... good gracious me!
The silly ting slipped off your knee!
Pray don' apologize, old chap:
A very trivial mishap!
So clumsy of you? How absurd!
My dear Sir Smasham, not a word!
Now do sit down and have another,
And tell us all about your brother –
You know, the one who broke his head.
Is the poor fellow still in bed! –

A chair – allow me, sir! ... Great Scott!
 That *was* a nasty smash! Eh, what?
 Oh, not at all: the chair was old –
 Queen Anne, or so we have been told.
 We've got at least a dozen more:
 Just leave the pieces on the floor.
 I want you to admire our view:
 Come nearer to the window, do;
 And look how beautiful... Tut, tut!
 You didn't see that it was shut?
 I hope you are not badly cut!
 Not hurt? A fortunate escape!
 Amazing! Not a single scrape!
 And now, if you have finished tea,
 I fancy you might like to see
 A little thing or two I've got.
 That china plate? Yes, worth a lot:
 A beauty too... Ah, there it goes!
 I trust it didn't hurt your toes?
 Your elbow bushed it off the shelf?
 Of course: I've done the same myself.
 And now, my dear Sir Smasham – oh,
 You surely don't intend to go?
 You *must* be off? Well, come again.
 So glad you're fond of porcelain!

Class D708 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 7 (Continued)
PEANUT BUTTER SANDWICH – Shel Silverstein

I'll sing you a story of a silly young king
 Who played with the world at the end of a string,
 But he only loved one single thing –
 And that was just a peanut-butter sandwich.

His sceptre and his royal gowns,
 His regal throne and golden crowns
 Were brown and sticky from the mounds
 And drippings from each peanut-butter sandwich.

His subjects all were silly fools
 For he had passed a royal rule
 That all that they could learn in school
 Was how to make a peanut-butter sandwich.

He would not eat his sovereign steak,
 He scorned his soup and kingly cake,
 And told his courtly cook to bake
 An extra-sticky peanut-butter sandwich.

And then one day he took a bite
And started chewing with delight,
But found his mouth was stuck quite tight
From that last bite of peanut-butter sandwich.

His brother pulled, his sister pried,
The wizard pushed, his mother cried,
“My boy’s committed suicide
From eating his last peanut-butter sandwich!”

The dentist came, and the royal doc.
The royal plumber banged and knocked,
But still those jaws stayed tightly locked.
Oh darn that sticky peanut-butter sandwich!

The carpenter, he tried with pliers,
The telephone man tried with wires,
The firemen they tried with fire,
But couldn’t melt that peanut-butter sandwich.

With ropes and pulleys, drills and coil,
With steam and lubricating oil-
For twenty years of tears and toil –
They fought that awful peanut butter sandwich.

Then all his royal subjects came.
They hooked his jaws with grapplin’ chains
And pulled both ways with might and main
Against that stubborn peanut butter sandwich.

Each man and woman, girl and boy
Put down their ploughs and pots and toys
And pulled until kerack! Oh joy –
They broke right through that peanut butter sandwich.

A puff of dust, a screech, a squeak –
The king’s jaw opened with a creak.
And then in voice so faint and weak –
The first words that they heard him speak
Were, “How about a peanut butter sandwich?”

Class D708 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 7 (Continued)
THE UPS AND DOWNS OF THE ELEVATOR CAR - Caroline C. Emerson

The elevator car in the elevator shaft,
Complained of the buzzer, complained of the draft.
It said it felt car sick as it rose and fell,
It said it had a headache from the ringing of the bell.

“There is spring in the air,” sighed the elevator car.
Said the elevator man, “You are well-off where you are.”
The car paid no attention but frowned an ugly frown

When
up it
going should
started be
it going
And down.

Down flashed the signal, but up went the car.
The elevator man cried, “You are going much too far!”
Said the elevator car, “I’m doing no such thing.
I’m through with buzzers buzzing. I’m looking for the spring.”

Then the elevator man began to shout and call
And all the people came running through the hall.
The elevator man began to call and shout,
“The car won’t stop! Let me out! Let me out!”

On went the car past the penthouse door.
On went the car up one flight more.
On went the elevator till it came to the top.
On went the elevator, and it would not stop!

Right through the roof went the man and the car.
And nobody knows where the two of them are!
(Nobody knows but everyone cares,
Wearily, drearily climbing the stairs!)

Now on a summer evening when you see
A shooting star
Fly through the air, perhaps it is –
That elevator car!

Class D708 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 7 (Continued)

A THRENODY – George T. Lanigan

The Ahkoond of Swat is dead. – London Papers

WHAT, what, what,
What's the news from Swat?
Sad news,
Bad news,
Comes by the cable led
Through the Indian Ocean's bed
Through the Persian Gulf, the Red
Sea and the Med—
Iterranean—he's dead;
The Ahkoond is dead!

For the Ahkoond I mourn.
Who wouldn't?
He strove to disregard the message stern,
But he Ahkoondn't.
Dead, dead, dead;
(Sorrow, Swats!)
Swats wha' hae wi' Ahkoond bled,
Swats whom he had often led
Onward to a gory bed,
Or to victory,
As the case might be,
Sorrow Swats!
Tears shed,
Shed tears like water,
Your great Ahkoond is dead!
That's Swat's the matter!

Mourn city of Swat!
Your great Ahkoond is not,
But lain 'mid worms to rot:
His mortal part alone, his soul was caught
(Because he was a good Ahkoond)
Up to the bosom of Mahound.
Though earthly walls his frame surround
(Forever hallowed be the ground!)
And skeptics mock the lowly mound
And say, "He's now of no Ahkoond!"
(His soul is in the skies!)
The azure skies that bend about his loved
Metropolis of Swat
He sees with larger, other eyes,
Athwart all earthly mysteries—
He knows what's Swat.

Let Swat bury the great Ahkoond
 With a noise of mourning and lamentation!
Let Swat bury the great Ahkoond
 With the noise of mourning the Swattish nation!
 Fallen is at length
 Its tower of strength,
Its sun is dimmed ere it had nooned:
Dead lies the great Ahkoond,
 The great Ahkoond of Swat
 is not!

Class D708 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 7 (Continued)
A MOM’S LIFE – Delia Ephron

Take your plate in the kitchen, please.
Take it downstairs when you go.
Don’t leave it there, take it upstairs.
Is that yours?
Don’t hit your brother.
I’m talking to you.
Just a minute, please, can’t you see I’m talking?
I said, Don’t interrupt.
Did you brush your teeth?
What are you doing out of bed?
Go back to bed.
You can’t watch in the afternoon.
What do you mean, there’s nothing to do?
Go outside.
Read a book.
Turn it down.
Get off the phone.
Tell your friend you’ll call her back. Right now!
Hello. No, she’s not home.
She’ll call you when she gets home.
Take a jacket. Take a sweater.
Take one anyway.

Someone left his shoes in front of the TV.
Get the toys out of the all. Get the boys out of the bathtub. Get the toys off the stairs.
Did you realize that could kill someone?
Hurry up.
Hurry up. Everyone’s waiting.
I’ll count to ten and then we’re going without you.
Did you go to the bathroom?
If you don’t go, you’re not going.
I mean it.
Why didn’t you go before you left?
Can you hold it?
What’s going on back there?
Stop it.
I said, Stop it!
I don’t want to hear about it.
Stop it or I’m taking you home right now.
That’s it. We’re going home.

Give me a kiss.
I need a hug.
Make your bed.
Clean up your room.

Set the table.
I need you to set the table!
Don't tell me it's not your turn.
Please move your chair in to the table.
Sit up.
Just try a little. You don't have to eat the whole thing.
Stop playing and eat.
Would you watch what you're doing?
Move your glass. It's too close to the edge.
Watch it!
More, what?
More, please. That's better.
Just eat one bit of salad.
You don't always get what you want. That's life.
Don't argue with me. I'm not discussing this anymore.
Go to your room.
No, ten minutes are not up.
One more minute.
How many times have I told you, don't do that.
Where did the cookies go?
Eat the old fruit before you eat the new fruit.

I'm not giving you mushrooms. I've taken all the mushrooms out. See?
Is your homework done?
Stop yelling. If you want to ask me something, come here.
STOP YELLING. IF YOU WANT TO ASK ME SOMETHING, COME HERE.
I'll think about it.
Not now.
Ask your father.
We'll see.
Don't sit so close to the television, it's bad for your eyes.
Calm down.
Calm down and start over.
Is that the truth?
Fasten your seat belt.
Did everyone fasten their seat belts?
I'm sorry, that's the rule. I'm sorry, that's the rule. I'm sorry, that's the rule.

Class D708 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 7 (Continued)

ALARM - Unknown

“There’s a cat out there.”

“Cat? How do you know?”

“I hear the robins saying so.”

“There’s a hawk somewhere.”

“Don’t see a hawk.”

“The chickens do. Hear the hens’ hawk-squawk?

The young chicks hear it. They’ve run for cover.

A hawk need only fly, not hover.

See how one hen has cocked an eye?

That’s not a crow just flying by.

Hens know his flight. Might be an owl;

But owls by day aren’t on the prowl,

Except the short-eared one; he’s rare.

If you’re like me, you don’t much care

For jays; but though the jay is all

For robbing birds’ nests, his loud call

At any sign of danger wakes

The world around him: cats, black snakes,

Shrikes, hawks, dogs, weasels, squirrels, crows, rats!

But robins specialize on cats.”

Class D708 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 7 (Continued)

THE BREASTPLATE OF SAINT PATRICK - Unknown

I bind myself today

To the power of Heaven,

The light of sun,

The brightness of moon,

The splendour of fire,

The speed of lightning,

The swiftness of wind,

The depths of the sea,

The stability of the earth,

The firmness of rocks.

I bind myself today

To the power of God to guide me,

The might of God to uphold me,

The wisdom of God to teach me,

The eye of God to watch over me,

The ear of God to hear me,

The word of God to speak for me,

The hand of God to protect me,

The way of God to lie before me,

The shield of God to shelter me,

The host of God to defend me,

Against the snares of demons,
Against the temptations of vices,
Against the lusts of nature,
Against every man who meditates injury to me,
Whether far or near,
Alone and in a multitude.

Class D708 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 7 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

ENGLISH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADE EIGHT

When choosing their pieces, it is recommended that entrants consider consulting the following excellent sources of poetry:

- 1) the RRDFPA suggested selections starting on page 181 of this Resource Manual
- 2) the tables of suggested 20th/21st Century and pre-20th Century selections on this page
- 3) the AMAF (Manitoba) 2024 Speech Arts Suggested Repertoire Lists
- 4) *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, or any published anthology of comparable literary merit
- 5) reliable and trustworthy literary websites such as:
 - a. Poetry in Voice <https://poetryinvoice.ca/read/poems>
 - b. Poetry 180 <https://www.loc.gov/programs/poetry-and-literature/poet-laureate/poet-laureate-projects/poetry-180/all-poems/>

Selections will NOT be accepted if:

- the work is unpublished and/or of unknown origin.
- the work does not meet the criteria / difficulty level of the entrant's class
- the intent of the work is to disseminate racist, sexist, political, or any otherwise inappropriate propaganda.

SPOKEN POETRY: PRE-20th CENTURY, GRADES 7-8

Title	Author	Book Title	Publisher
"Not marble, nor the gilded monuments"	William Shakespeare	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Holy Sonnet 10"	John Donne	<i>The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 8th ed</i>	W.W. Norton and Company
"Death Be Not Proud"	John Donne	<i>New Horizons: An Anthology of Short Poems for Senior Students</i>	McClelland and Stewart Limited
"The Lamb"	William Blake	<i>Songs of Innocence</i>	Bodleian Library Publishing
"The Tyger"	William Blake	<i>Songs of Experience</i>	Bodleian Library Publishing
"Ozymandias"	Percy Bysshe Shelley	<i>Approaching Literature, 2nd ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"She Walks in Beauty"	Lord George Gordon Byron	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"O My Luve's Like a Red, Red, Rose"	Robert Burns	<i>The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 8th ed</i>	W.W. Norton and Company
"Annabel Lee"	Edgar Allan Poe	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"A Noiseless Patient Spider"	Walt Whitman	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's

SPOKEN POETRY: 20th/21st CENTURY, GRADES 7-8

Title	Author	Book Title	Publisher
"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"	Robert Frost	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"High Flight"	John Gillespie Magee	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"One Perfect Rose"	Dorothy Parker	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"nobody loses all the time"	e.e. cummings	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"The Knockout"	Stephen Vincent Benét	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"Those Winter Sundays"	Robert Hayden	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Bessie's Boil"	Robert Service	<i>The Collected Poems</i>	McGraw Hill and Ryerson
"To a Poet a Thousand Years Hence"	James Elroy Flecker	<i>New Horizons: An Anthology of Short Poems for Senior Students</i>	
"Catch"	Robert Francis	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"If"	Rudyard Kipling	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Root Cellar"	Theodore Roethke	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"The Death of Santa Clause"	Charles Harper Webb	<i>Shadow Ball: New and Selected Poems</i>	University of Pittsburgh Press
"The Bull Moose"	Alden Nowlan	<i>Bread, Wine, and Salt</i>	Clarke Irwin & Company, Ltd.
"Player Piano"	John Updike	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Hiding Place"	Richard Armour	<i>The Norton Introduction to Poetry</i>	W.W. Norton
"Acquainted with the Night"	Robert Frost	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Shakespearean Sonnet"	R.S. Gwynn	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House

Class D801 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 8
HIGHWAYMAN’S HOLLOW - Gilbert V. Yonge

"Where the cliff hangs hollow, where the gloom falls chill,
You hear a something, follow, follow, follow down the hill;
Where the horses sweat and lather and the dusk begins to gather
It is there that I will meet you and will greet you,
You, Sir Traveller."

"Where the leaves lie rotting and the night falls blind,
You hear a someone trotting, trotting, trotting down the wind,
And you listen all a-shiver to my ghostly 'Stand, deliver,'
Yes, although my bones have whitened, you are frightened
Yet, Sir Traveller."

" 'Twas a traveller who slew me where the dark firs frown,
'Twas his small sword through me and the blood dripped down.
Where the horses sweat and lather and the dusk begins to gather,
It is there I ride behind you to remind you,
You, Sir Traveller."

Class D801 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)
HIGH FLIGHT by John Gillespie Magee

Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed and joined the tumbling mirth
of sun-split clouds - and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of - wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air.
Up, up the long delirious, burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace,
Where never lark, or even eagle, flew;
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.

Class D801 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)

THE LONELY LAND - A. J. M. Smith

Cedar and jagged fir
uplift sharp barbs
against the gray
and cloud-piled sky;
and in the bay
blown spume and windrift

and thin, bitter spray
snap
at the whirling sky;
and the pine trees
lean one way.

A wild duck calls
to her mate,
and the ragged
and passionate tones
stagger and fall,
and recover,
and stagger and fall,
on these stones—
are lost
in the lapping of water
on smooth flat stones.

This is a beauty
of dissonance,
this resonance
of stony strand,
this smoky cry
curled over a black pine
like a broken
and wind-battered branch
when the wind
bends the tops of the pines
and curdles the sky
from the north.

This is the beauty
of strength
broken by strength
and still strong.

Class D801 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)

THE DAWN WIND - Rudyard Kipling

At two o'clock in the morning, if you open your window and listen,
You will hear the feet of the Wind that is going to call the sun.
And the trees in the shadow rustle and the trees in the moonlight glisten,
And though it is deep, dark night, you feel that the night is done.

So do the cows in the field. They graze for an hour and lie down,
Dozing and chewing the cud; or a bird in the ivy wakes,
Chirrup one note and is still, and the restless Wind strays on,
Fidgeting far down the road, till, softly, the darkness breaks.

Back comes the Wind full strength, with a blow like an angel's wing,
Gentle but waking the world, as he shouts: "The Sun! The Sun!"
And the light floods over the fields and the birds begin to sing,
And the Wind dies down in the grass. It is Day and his work is done.

So when the world is asleep, and there seems no hope of her waking
Out of the long, bad dream that makes her mutter and moan,
Suddenly all men rise to the noise of fetters breaking,
And everyone smiles at his neighbour and tells him his soul is his own.

Class D801 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)

WE ARE GOING - Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker) for Grannie Coolwell

They came in to the little town
A semi-naked band subdued and silent,
All that remained of their tribe.
They came here to the place of their old bora ground
Where now the many white men hurry about like ants.
Notice of estate agent reads: "Rubbish May Be Tipped Here."
Now it half covers the traces of the old bora ring.
They sit and are confused, they cannot say their thoughts:
We are as strangers here now, but the white tribe are the strangers.
We belong here, we are of the old ways.
We are the corroboree and the bora ground,
We are the old sacred ceremonies, the laws of the elders.
We are the wonder tales of Dream Time, the tribal legends told.
We are the past, the hunts and the laughing games, the wandering camp fires.
We are the lightning-bolt over Gaphembah Hill
Quick and terrible,
And the Thunderer after him, that loud fellow.
We are the quiet daybreak paling the dark lagoon.
We are the shadow-ghosts creeping back as the camp fires burn low.
We are nature and the past, all the old ways
Gone now and scattered.
The scrubs are gone, the hunting and the laughter.

The eagle is gone, the emu and the kangaroo are gone from this place.
The bora ring is gone.
The corroboree is gone.
And we are going.

Class D801 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)
ABOUT SCHOOL - Author Unknown

He always wanted to explain things. But no one cared.
So he drew.

Sometimes he would just draw and it wasn't anything,
He wanted to carve it in stone or write it in the sky.
He would lie out on the grass and look up in the sky and it would
be only the sky and the things inside him that needed saying.

And it was after that he drew the picture.
It was a beautiful picture. He kept it under his pillow and
would let no one see it.

And he would look at it every night and think about it.
And when it was dark and his eyes were closed he could see it still
And it was all of him and he loved it.

When he started school he brought it with him.
Not to show to anyone, but just to have with him like a friend.

It was funny about school.
He sat in a square brown desk just like all the other square
brown desks and he thought it should be red.
And his room was a square brown room. Like a!! the other rooms.
And it was tight and close. And stiff.

He hated to hold the pencil and chalk, with his arm stiff and
his feet flat on the floor, stiff, with the teacher watching
and watching.

The teacher came and spoke to him..
She told him to wear a tie like all the other boys.
He said he didn't like them and she said it didn't matter.

After that they drew. And he drew all yellow and it was the way he
felt about morning. And it was beautiful.

The teacher came and smiled at him. "What's this?" she said.
"Why don't you draw something like Ken's drawing?
Isn't that beautiful?"

After that his mother bought him a tie and he always drew
airplanes and rocket-ships like everyone else.

And he threw the old picture away.

And when he lay out alone looking up at the sky, it was big and blue,
and all of everything, but he wasn't anyone.

He was square and brown inside and his hands were stiff.
And he was like everyone else. All the things inside him that
needed saying didn't need it anymore.

It had stopped pushing. It was crushed.
Stiff.

Like everything else.

Class D801 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)
THE SONG MY PADDLE SINGS - Pauline Johnson

West wind, blow from your prairie nest,
Blow from the mountains, blow from the west.
The sail is idle, the sailor too;
O! wind of the west, we wait for you.
 Blow, blow!
I have wooed you so,
But never a favour you bestow.
You rock your cradle the hills between,
But scorn to notice my white lateen.

I stow the sail, unship the mast:
I wooed you long but my wooing's past;
My paddle will lull you into rest.
O drowsy wind of the drowsy west,
 Sleep, sleep,
By your mountain steep,
Or down where the prairie grasses sweep!
Now fold in slumber your laggard wings,
For soft is the song my paddle sings.

August is laughing across the sky
Laughing while paddle, canoe and I,
 Drift, drift,
Where the hills uplift
One either side of the current swift.

The river rolls in its rocky bed;
My paddle is playing its way ahead!

Dip, dip,
While the waters flip
In foam as over their breast we slip.

And oh, the river runs swifter now;
The eddies circle about my bow.

Swirl, swirl!
How the ripples curl
In many a dangerous pool awirl!

And forward far the rapids roar,
Fretting their margin for evermore.

Dash, dash
With a mighty crash,
They seethe, and boil, and bound, and splash.

Be strong, O paddle, be brave, canoe!
The reckless waves you must plunge into.

Reel, reel
On your trembling keel,
But never a fear my craft will feel.

We've raced the rapids, we're far ahead!
The river slips through its silent bed.

Sway, sway,
As the bubbles spray
And fall in tinkling tunes away.

And up on the hills against the sky,
A fir tree is rocking its lullaby,
Swings, swings,
Its emerald wings,
Swelling the song that my paddle sings.

Class D801 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)

THE BLUE HERON - Theodore Goodridge Roberts

In a green place lanced through
With amber and gold and blue;
A place of water and weeds
And roses pinker than dawn,
And ranks of lush young reeds,
And grasses straightly withdrawn
From graven ripples of sands,
The still blue heron stands.

Smoke-blue he is, and grey
As embers of yesterday.

Still he is, as death;
Like stone, or shadow of stone,
Without a pulse or breath,
Motionless and alone
There in the lily stems:
But his eyes are alive like gems.

Still as a shadow; still
Grey feather and yellow bill:
Still as an image made
Of mist and smoke half hid
By windless sunshine and shade,
Save when a yellow lid
Slides and is gone like a breath:
Death-still--and sudden as death!

Class D801 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D802 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 8
from ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND - Lewis Carroll

'Stand up and repeat " 'Tis the voice of the sluggard," said the Gryphon.
Alice got up, and began to repeat it, but her head was so full of the
Lobster-Quadrille that she hardly knew what she was saying; and the words came very
queer indeed:

"Tis the voice of the Lobster; I heard him declare
"You have baked me too brown, I must sugar my hair."
As a duck with his eyelids, so he with his nose
Trims his belt and his buttons, and turns out his toes;
When the sands are all dry, he is gay as a lark,
And will talk in contemptuous tones of the Shark:
But, when the tide rises and sharks are around,
His voice has a timid and tremulous sound.'

('That's different from what I used to say when I was a child,' said the Gryphon.)

'I passed by his garden, and marked, with one eye,
How the Owl and the Panther were sharing a pie:
The Panther took pie-crust, and gravy and meat,
While the Owl had the dish as its share of the treat.
When the pie was all finished, the Owl, as a boon,
Was kindly permitted to pocket the spoon:
While the Panther received knife and fork with a growl,
And concluded the banquet by-----'

('What is the use of repeating all that stuff?' the Mock Turtle interrupted, 'if you don't explain it as you go on? It's by far the most confusing thing I ever heard!')

Class D802 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A MAD DOG - Oliver Goldsmith

Good people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song,
And if you find it wondrous short,
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad,
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp and hound
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends,
But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain some private ends,
Went mad, and bit the man.

Around from all the neighbouring streets
The wond'ring neighbours ran,
And swore the dog had lost its wits,
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seemed both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That showed the rogues they lied;
The man recovered of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

Class D802 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)
NUTRITION REPORT - Gordon and Bernice Korman

The minimum daily allowance
Of chocolate is now fourteen pounds,
Divided between Hershey Kisses,
Fudge, chocolate chip cookies, and Mounds.

Bazooka Joe gum is essential,
Tortilla chips make you much stronger,
Increase your intake of white sugar
So you can stay healthier longer.

For developing bones and good posture
It's obvious ice cream's the key,
Washed down with five gallons of cola,
Or 7-Up, not sugar-free.

Of course, you will need lots of fiber,
Like pretzels, and popcorn, and chips.
Make certain that nothing which grows in the ground
Is permitted to pass through your lips.

And this rule is terribly urgent:
We must be sure everyone eats a
Colossal amount of tomato, three-cheese,
Pepperoni and anchovy pizza.

SURGEON GENERAL'S NOTE:
It's probably a bad idea to do what this guy said.
It's excellent for gaining weight,
and things like dropping dead.

Class D802 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)
HOW PLEASANT TO KNOW MR. LEAR – Edward Lear

How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!
Who has written such volumes of stuff!
Some think him ill-tempered and queer,
But a few think him pleasant enough.

His mind is concrete and fastidious,
His nose is remarkably big;
His visage is more or less hideous,
His beard it resembles a wig.

He has ears, and two eyes, and ten fingers,
Leastways if you reckon two thumbs;

Long ago he was one of the singers,
But now he is one of the dumbs.

He sits in a beautiful parlour,
With hundreds of books on the wall;
He drinks a great deal of Marsala,
But never gets tipsy at all.

He has friends, laymen and clerical;
Old Foss is the name of his cat;
His body is perfectly spherical,
He weareth a runcible hat.

When he walks in a waterproof white,
The children run after him so!
Calling out, "He's come out in his night-
Gown, that crazy old Englishman, oh!"

He weeps by the side of the ocean,
He weeps on the top of the hill;
He purchases pancakes and lotion,
And chocolate shrimps from the mill.

He reads but he cannot speak Spanish,
He cannot abide ginger-beer:
Ere the days of his pilgrimage vanish,
How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!

Class D802 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)

AMANDA! - Robin Klein

Don't bite your nails, Amanda!
Don't hunch your shoulders, Amanda!
Stop that slouching and sit up straight,
Amanda!

(There is a languid, emerald sea,
where the sole inhabitant is me -
a mermaid, drifting blissfully.)

Did you finish your homework, Amanda?
Did you tidy your room, Amanda?
I thought I told you to clean your shoes,
Amanda!

(I am an orphan, roaming the street.
I pattern soft dust with my hushed, bare feet.
The silence is golden, the freedom is sweet.)

Don't eat that chocolate, Amanda!
Remember your acne, Amanda!
Will you please look at me when I'm speaking to you,
Amanda!

(I am Rapunzel, I have not a care;
life in a tower is tranquil and rare;
I'll certainly *never* let down my bright hair!)

Stop that sulking at once, Amanda!
You're always so moody, Amanda!
Anyone would think that I nagged at you,
Amanda!

Class D802 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)
(BRACKETS) – John Coldwell

It was Wednesday. Maths. Page 28.
And I was already thinking about tomorrow.
Thursday. Maths. Page 29.

We were doing problems.
The ones where you have to remove the brackets first.

I was on question 13 and right inside a bracket,
When this strange phrase came into my head.
And before I could trap it in a bracket
It shot out of my mouth
Into the classroom.
"Bring on the dancing prunes!"

The room went silent
And thirty pairs of bracket-solving eyes
Swivelled in my direction.
The teacher stopped putting crosses
In somebody's maths book
And looked crossly at me.
"What did you say?"

I could have told him
But instead,
I put a bracket round my reply
And said
"Nothing."

The teacher sighed.
"How would it be if *everybody*
Called out the first thing that came into their heads?"
(Very interesting.)

Class D802 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)
THE WRECK OF THE "JULIE PLANTE" - William Henry Drummond

On wan dark night on Lac St. Pierre,
De win' she blow, blow, blow,
An' de crew of de wood scow ' Julie Plante'
Got scar't an' run below--
For de win' she blow lak hurricane
Bimeby she blow some more,
An' de scow bus' up on Lac St. Pierre
Wan arpent from de shore.

De captinne walk on de fronte deck,
An' walk de hin' deck too
He call de crew from up de hole
He call de cook also.
De cook she's name was Rosie,
She come from Montreal,
Was chambre maid on lumber barge,
On de Grande Lachine Canal.

De win' she blow from nor'-eas'-wes',
De sout' win' she blow too,
W'en Rosie cry, 'Mon cher captinne,
Mon cher, w'at I shall do?'
Den de captinne t'row de beeg ankerre,
But still de scow she dreef:
De crew he can't pass on de shore,
Becos' he los' hees skeef.

De night was dark lak wan black cat,
De wave run high an' fas',
W'en de captinne tak' de Rosie girl
An' tie her to de mas'.
Den he also tak' de life preserve,
An' jomp off on de lak',
An' say, 'Good-bye, ma Rosie dear,
I go drown for your sak' ! '
Nex' morning very early
'Bout ha'f-pas' two--t'ree-- four--
De captinne--scow--an' de poor Rosie
Was corpses on de shore,
For de win' she blow lak hurricane,
Bimeby she blow some more,
An' de scow bus' up on Lac St. Pierre,
Wan arpent from de shore.

Moral

Now all good wood scow sailor man
Tak' warning by dat storm
An' go an' marry some nice French girl
An' leev on wan beeg farm.
De win' can blow lak hurricane,
An' s'pose she blow some more,
You can't get drown' on Lac St. Pierre
So long you stay on shore.

Class D802 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)

WHEN GREAT DOGS FIGHT - Melvin B. Tolson

He came from a dead-end world of under breed,
A mongrel in his look and in his deed.

His head sagged lower than his spine, his jaws
Spooned wretchedly, his timid little claws
Were gnarls. A fear lurked in his rheumy eye
When dwarfing pedigrees paraded by.

Often he saw the bulldog, arrogant and grim,
Beside the formidable mastiff; and sight of them
Devouring chunks of meat with juices red
Needled pangs of hunger in his belly and head.

Sometimes he whimpered at the ponderous gate
Until the regal growls shook the estate;
Then he would scurry up the avenue,
Singing the hedges with his buttercup hue.

The spool of luckless days unwound, and then
The izzard cur, accurst of dogs and men,
Heard yelps of rage beyond the iron fence
And saw the jaws and claws of violence.

He padded through the gate that leaned ajar,
Maneuvered toward the slashing arcs of war,
Then pounced upon the bone; and winging feet
Bore him into the refuge of the street.

A sphinx haunts every age and every zone:
When great dogs fight, the small dog gets a bone.

Class D802 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grade 8 (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

See Class D704 for PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 7 and 8

See Class D705 for PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 7 and 8

Class D808 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 8
SONG OF THE SHIRT by Thomas Hood

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch
She sang the "Song of the Shirt."

"Work! work! work!
While the cock is crowing aloof!
And work work work,
Till the stars shine through the roof!
It's Oh! to be a slave
Along with the barbarous Turk,
Where woman has never a soul to save,
If this is Christian work!

"Work work work
Till the brain begins to swim;
Work work work
Till the eyes are heavy and dim!
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
And sew them on in a dream!

"Oh, Men, with Sisters dear!
Oh, Men, with Mothers and Wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out,
But human creatures' lives!
Stitch stitch stitch,
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
Sewing at once with a double thread,
A Shroud as well as a Shirt.

But why do I talk of Death?
That Phantom of grisly bone,
I hardly fear its terrible shape,
It seems so like my own
It seems so like my own,
Because of the fasts I keep;
Oh, God! that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap!

"Work work work!
My Labour never flags;
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
A crust of bread and rags.
That shatter'd roof and this naked floor
A table a broken chair
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank
For sometimes falling there!

"Work work work!
From weary chime to chime,
Work work work!
As prisoners work for crime!
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Till the heart is sick, and the brain benumb'd,
As well as the weary hand.

"Work work work,
In the dull December light,
And work work work,
When the weather is warm and bright
While underneath the eaves
The brooding swallows cling
As if to show me their sunny backs
And twit me with the spring.

Oh! but to breathe the breath
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet
With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet
For only one short hour
To feel as I used to feel,
Before I knew the woes of want
And the walk that costs a meal!

Oh! but for one short hour!
A respite however brief!
No blessed leisure for Love or Hope,
But only time for Grief!
A little weeping would ease my heart,
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!"

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat in unwomanly rags,

Plying her needle and thread
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch,
Would that its tone could reach the Rich!
She sang this "Song of the Shirt!"

Class D808 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 8 (Continued)
THE LISTENERS - Walter de la Mare

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveller,
Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
Of the forest's ferny floor;
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
Above the Traveller's head;
And he smote upon the door again a second time;
"Is there anybody there?" he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller;
No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,
Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners
That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
To that voice from the world of men:
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
That goes down to the empty hall,
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely Traveller's call.

And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
'Neath the starred and leafy sky;
For he suddenly smote on the door, even
Louder, and lifted his head:
"Tell them I came, and no one answered
That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
From the one man left awake:
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

Class D808 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 8 (Continued)
THE EXPRESS - Stephen Spender

After the first powerful plain manifesto,
The black statement of pistons, without more fuss
But gliding like a queen, she leaves the station.
Without bowing and with restrained unconcern
She passes the houses which humbly crowd outside,
The gasworks and at last the heavy page
Of death, printed by gravestones in the cemetery.
Beyond the town there lies the open country
Where, gathering speed, she acquires mystery,
The luminous self-possession of ships on ocean.
It is now she begins to sing - at first quite low,
Then loud, and at last with a jazzy madness --
The song of her whistle screaming at curves,
Of deafening tunnels, brakes, innumerable bolts.
And always light, aerial, underneath
Goes the elate metre of her wheels.
Steaming through metal landscape on her lines
She plunges new eras of wild happiness
Where speed throws up strange shapes, broad curves
And parallels clean like the steel of guns.
At last, further than Edinburgh or Rome,
Beyond the crest of the world, she reaches night
Where only a low streamline brightness
Of phosphorus on the tossing hills is white.
Ah, like a comet through flame she moves entranced
Wrapt in her music no bird song, no, nor bough
Breaking with honey buds, shall ever equal.

Class D808 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 8 (Continued)
IF THE WORLD WAS CRAZY - Shel Silverstein

If the world was crazy, you know what I'd eat?
A big slice of soup and a whole quart of meat,
A lemonade sandwich, and then I might try
Some roasted ice cream or a bicycle pie,
A nice notebook salad, an underwear roast,
An omelet of hats and some crisp cardboard toast,
A thick malted milk made from pencils and daisies,
And that's what I'd eat if the world was crazy.

If the world was crazy, you know what I'd wear?
A chocolate suit and a tie of eclair,
Some marshmallow earmuffs, some licorice shoes,
And I'd read a paper of peppermint news.
I'd call the boys "Suzy" and I'd call the girls "Harry,"

I'd talk through my ears, and I always would carry
A paper umbrella for when it grew hazy
To keep in the rain, if the world was crazy.

If the world was crazy, you know what I'd do?
I'd walk on the ocean and swim in my shoe,
I'd fly through the ground and I'd skip through the air,
I'd run down the bathtub and bathe on the stair.
When I met somebody I'd say "G'bye, Joe,"
And when I was leaving - then I'd say "Hello."
And the greatest of men would be silly and lazy
I would be king. . . if the world was crazy.

Class D808 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 8 (Continued)
I AM A CANADIAN – Duke Redbird

I'm a lobster fisherman in Newfoundland
I'm a clambake in P.E.I.
I'm a picnic, I'm a banquet
I'm my mother's homemade pie
I'm a few drafts in a Legion hall in Fredericton
I'm a kite-flyer in a field in Moncton
I'm a nap on the porch after a hard day's work is done
I'm a snowball fight in Truro, Nova Scotia
I'm small kids playing jacks and skipping rope
I'm a mother who lost a son in the last great war
And I'm a bride with a brand new ring
And a chest of hope
I'm an Easterner
I'm a Westerner
I'm from the North
I'm from the South
I've swum in two big oceans
And I've loved them both
I'm a clown in Quebec during carnival
I'm a mass in the cathedral of St. Paul
I'm a hockey game in the forum
I'm Rocket Richard and Jean Beliveau
I'm a coach for little league Expos
I'm a babysitter for sleep defying rascals
I'm a canoe trip down the Ottawa
I'm a holiday on the Trent
I'm a mortgage, I'm a loan
I'm last week's unpaid rent
I'm Yorkville after dark
I'm a walk in the park
I'm Winnipeg gold-eye
I'm a hand-made trout fly

I'm a wheat-field and a sunset
 Under a prairie sky
 I'm Sir John A. Macdonald
 I'm Alexander Graham Bell
 I'm a pow-wow dancer
 And I'm Louis Riel
 I'm the Calgary Stampede
 I'm a feather Sarcee
 I'm Edmonton at night
 I'm a bar-room fight
 I'm a rigger, I'm a cat
 I'm a ten gallon hat
 And an unnamed mountain in the interior of B.C.
 I'm a maple tree and a totem pole
 I'm sunshine showers
 I'm fresh-cut flowers
 I'm a ferry boat ride to the Island
 I'm the Yukon
 I'm the Northwest Territories
 I'm the Arctic Ocean, and the Beaufort Sea
 I'm the prairies, I'm the Great Lakes
 I'm the Rockies, I'm the Laurentians
 I am French
 I am English
 And I'm Métis
 But more than this
 Above all this
 I am Canadian and proud to be free.

Class D808 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 8 (Continued)

MENDING WALL – Robert Frost

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
 That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
 And spills the upper boulders in the sun,
 And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
 The work of hunters is another thing:
 I have come after them and made repair
 Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
 But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
 To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
 No one has seen them made or heard them made,
 But at spring mending-time we find them there.
 I let my neighbour know beyond the hill;
 And on a day we meet to walk the line
 And set the wall between us once again.
 We keep the wall between us as we go.
 To each the boulders that have fallen to each.

And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
 We have to use a spell to make them balance:
 'Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'
 We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
 Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
 One on a side. It comes to little more:
 There where it is we do not need the wall:
 He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
 My apple trees will never get across
 And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
 He only says, 'Good fences make good neighbours'.
 Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
 If I could put a notion in his head:
 'Why do they make good neighbours? Isn't it
 Where there are cows?
 But here there are no cows.
 Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
 What I was walling in or walling out,
 And to whom I was like to give offence.
 Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
 That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to him,
 But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
 He said it for himself. I see him there
 Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
 In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
 He moves in darkness as it seems to me~
 Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
 He will not go behind his father's saying,
 And he likes having thought of it so well
 He says again, "Good fences make good neighbours."

Class D808 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 8 (Continued)
MUSIC WITH WORDS - Annemarie Ewing

Here he played...
 With a boom-a-lang-a-boogie
 and a boom-a-lang-a-woogie
 with a rub-a-dub-dub
 a pi-ya-na for a tub
 Whacha call that, man? What, man? That, man!
 Noise like someone rollin' blowin' balls in a vat
 Noise like flock o' locomotives loose on a grade
 Call that music, man? Mr. Pine Top spat
 On his hands like he was gonna pound
 Them ivories with a spade.
 Call it sumpin' in between a stampede and a shout
 Call it sumpin' lets a glory in the blood git out
 Call it boogie woogie. Mr. Pine Top calls it that.

Class D808 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 8 (Continued)
WELCOME - Sean O’Huigin

this is a poem
for those who are brave
it starts at the mouth
of a very old cave
a goblin will greet you
as you walk in
his hair long and greasy
and his green teeth agrin
his eyes red and tiny
his face grey and mean
he’ll grab at your hand
and let out a scream
he’ll lead you down tunnels
much darker than night
he’ll take you past monsters
that will try to bite
the toes off your footsies
the ears off your head
you soon will start wishing
you’d stayed home in bed

worms wet and slimy
will crawl up your back
and as you go further
it really gets black
you can’t see a thing
and all you can hear
is a creaky old voice
that says “come my dear
let’s see if you’re chunky
let’s feel if you’re fat
I’m hungry today
NO
STOP
DON’T GO BACK”
but if you are clever
you’ll get out of there
or you’ll end in some stomach
no one knows where

Class D808 CHORAL SPEAKING – Choral Speaking, Grade 8 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

ENGLISH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADES NINE AND TEN

When choosing their pieces, it is recommended that entrants consider consulting the following excellent sources of poetry:

- 1) the RRDFPA suggested selections starting on page 205 of this Resource Manual
- 2) the tables of suggested 20th/21st Century and pre-20th Century selections on this page
- 3) the AMAF (Manitoba) 2024 Speech Arts Suggested Repertoire Lists
- 4) *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, or any published anthology of comparable literary merit
- 5) reliable and trustworthy literary websites such as:
 - a. Poetry in Voice <https://poetryinvoice.ca/read/poems>
 - b. Poetry 180 <https://www.loc.gov/programs/poetry-and-literature/poet-laureate/poet-laureate-projects/poetry-180/all-poems/>

Selections will NOT be accepted if:

- the work is unpublished and/or of unknown origin.
- the work does not meet the criteria / difficulty level of the entrant's class
- the intent of the work is to disseminate racist, sexist, political, or any otherwise inappropriate propaganda.

SPOKEN POETRY, PRE-20th CENTURY, GRADE 9-ADULT

Title	Author	Book Title	Publisher
"The Passionate Shepherd to His Love"	Christopher Marlowe	<i>Approaching Literature</i> , 2 nd ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"To His Coy Mistress"	Andrew Marvell	<i>Approaching Literature</i> , 2 nd ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd"	Sir Walter Raleigh	<i>Approaching Literature</i> , 2 nd ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"A Valediction Forbidding Mourning"	John Donne	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"The Flea"	John Donne	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Ode to a Nightingale"	John Keats	<i>The Norton Anthology of English Literature</i> , 8 th ed	W.W. Norton and Company
"Frost at Midnight"	Samuel Taylor Coleridge	<i>The Norton Anthology of English Literature</i> , 8 th ed	W.W. Norton and Company
"I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud"	William Wordsworth	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Dover Beach"	Matthew Arnold	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"How Do I Love Thee?"	Elizabeth Barrett Browning	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"My Last Duchess"	Robert Browning	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada

SPOKEN POETRY, 20th/21st CENTURY, GRADE 9-ADULT

Title	Author	Book Title	Publisher
"Hiroshima Exit"	Joy Kogawa	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"A Call to Tea"	Maxine Tynes	<i>Woman Talking Woman</i>	Pottersfield Press
"Barbie Doll"	Marge Piercy	<i>To Be of Use</i>	Doubleday
"Hate Poem"	Julie Sheehan	<i>Orient Point</i>	W. W. Norton
"i carry your heart with me"	e.e. cummings	<i>Complete Poems: 1904-1962</i>	Liveright Publishing
"Diving into the Wreck"	Adriene Rich	<i>Approaching Literature</i> , 2 nd ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Bored"	Margaret Atwood	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"February"	Margaret Atwood	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Eighteen Months"	Joelle Barron	<i>Ritual Lights</i>	Goose Lane Editions
"The Larynx"	Alice Jones	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Machines"	Michael Donaghy	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
"Degrees of Green"	Jeannette Armstrong	<i>Breath Tracks</i>	Theytus Books
"Did I Miss Anything?"	Tom Wayman	<i>Did I Miss Anything?: Selected Poems 1973-1993</i>	Harbour Publishing
"Please Come Late"	Hugo Williams	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
"Bedecked"	Victoria Redel	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
"Dinner Out"	Christopher Howell	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
"Smoking"	Elton Glaser	<i>The Best American Poetry 1997</i>	Scribner
"Onions"	William Matthews	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
"The Dover Bitch"	Anthony Hecht	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's

Class D901 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 9 and 10
THE THREE TALL MEN - Thomas Hardy

THE FIRST TAPPING

"What's that tapping at night: tack, tack,
In some house in the street at the back?"

"O, 'tis a man who, when he has leisure,
Is making himself a coffin to measure.
He's so very tall that no carpenter
Will make it long enough, he's in fear.
His father's was shockingly short for his limb
And it made a deep impression on him."

THE SECOND TAPPING

"That tapping has begun again,
Which ceased a year back, or near then ?"

"Yes, 'tis the man you heard before
Making his coffin. The first scarce done
His brother died -- his only one --
And, being of his own height, or more,
He used it for him; for he was afraid
He'd not get a long enough one quick made.
He's making a second now, to fit
Himself when there shall be need for it.
Carpenters work so by rule of thumb
That they make mistakes when orders come."

THE THIRD TAPPING

"It's strange, but years back, when I was here,
I used to notice a tapping near;
A man was making a coffin at night,
And he made a second, if I am right?
I have heard again the self-same tapping
Yes, late last night - or was I napping?"
"O no. It's the same man. He made one
Which his brother had; and a second was done
For himself, as he thought. But lately his son,
As tall as he, died; aye, and as trim,
And his sorrowful father bestowed it on him.
And now the man is making a third,
To be used for himself when he is interred. "
"Many years later was brought to me
News that the man had died at sea."

Class D901 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

ITHAKA - Cavafy

When you set out for Ithaka
ask that your way be long,
full of adventure, full of instruction.
The Laistrygonians" and the Cyclops,
angry Poseidon-do not fear them:
such as these you will never find
as long as your thought is lofty, as long as a rare
emotion touch your spirit and your body.
The Laistrygonians and the Cyclops,
angry Poseidon-you will not meet them
unless you carry them in your soul,
unless your soul raise them up before you.

Ask that your way be long.
At many a summer dawn to enter
--with what gratitude, what joy--
ports seen for the first time;
to stop at Phoenician trading centres,
and to buy good merchandise,
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,
and sensuous perfumes of every kind,
sensuous perfumes as lavishly as you can;
to visit many Egyptian cities,
to gather stores of knowledge from the learned.

Have Ithaka always in your mind.
Your arrival there is what you are destined for.
But do not in the least hurry the journey.
Better that it last for years,
so that when you reach the island you are old,
rich with all you have gained on the way,
not expecting Ithaka to give you wealth.

Ithaka gave you the splendid journey.
Without her you would not have set out.
She hasn't anything else to give you.

And if you find her poor, Ithaka has not deceived you.
So wise have you become, of such experience,
that already you will have understood what these Ithakas mean.

Class D901 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)
5 WAYS TO KILL A MAN - Edwin Brock

There are many cumbersome ways to kill a man:
you can make him carry a plank of wood
to the top of a hill and nail him to it. To do this
properly you require a crowd of people
wearing sandals, a cock that crows, a cloak
to dissect, a sponge, some vinegar and one
man to hammer the nails home.

Or you can take a length of steel,
shaped and chased in a traditional way,
and attempt to pierce the metal cage he wears.
But for this you need white horses,
English trees, men with bows and arrows,
at least two flags, a prince and a
castle to hold your banquet in.

Dispensing with nobility, you may, if the wind
allows, blow gas at him. But then you need
a mile of mud sliced through with ditches,
not to mention black boots, bomb craters,
more mud, a plague of rats, a dozen songs
and some round hats made of steel.

In an age of aeroplanes, you may fly
miles above your victim and dispose of him by
pressing one small switch. All you then
require is an ocean to separate you, two
systems of government, a nation's scientists,
several factories, a psychopath and
land that no one needs for several years.

There are, as I began, cumbersome ways
to kill a man. Simpler, direct, and much more neat
is to see that he is living somewhere in the middle
of the twentieth century, and leave him there.

Class D901 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

THE ARCTIC INDIAN’S FAITH – Thomas D’Arcy McGee

We worship the spirit that walks unseen
Through our land of ice and snow:
We know not His face, we know not His place,
But His presence and power we know.

Does the Buffalo need the Pale-face word
To find his pathway far?
What guide has he to the hidden ford,
Or where the green pastures are?

Who teacheth the Moose that the hunter's gun
Is peering out of the shade
Who teacheth the doe and the fawn to run
In the track the Moose has made?

Him do we follow, Him do we fear—
The spirit of earth and sky;—
Who hears with the Wapiti's eager ear
His poor red children's cry.

Whose whisper we note in every breeze
That stirs the birch canoe
Who hangs the reindeer moss on the trees
For the food of the Caribou.

That Spirit we worship who walks unseen
Through our land of ice and snow:
We know not His face, we know not His place,
But His presence and power we know.

Class D901 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

JASON’S ANGEL - Beth Hamilton

She wears a black bracelet on her left wrist,
Along with other chains and scars.
It reads: “What would Jesus Do” in white woven letters.
Her brown hair is dyed jet black.
And she was caught stealing from Safeway again last Friday.

Her Mom always called her Jules, sort for Julie.
But this girl with the bracelet has no name.
She calls her brother Jason, and he’s on his own a lot.
She knows this is sad, but she looks out for him when she can, gets him fed.
And he understands.

They've had their share of bad times.

She's thought about taking off, running away...

Killing herself –

But then who would throw Jason out of the way when her dad's going at him?

Who would look out for him?

Who would love him if she weren't there?

She once took a belt buckle in the eye for him.

She had "walked into a door" for a week after that if anyone asked.

She lives in a counterfeit world.

She isn't really a person; only the representation of other people's thoughts.

"One messed up kid," "A terrible waste," "A worthless whore."

She is never Julie.

Most people wouldn't have guessed that she cried when she failed Grade 11 French for the third time.

Most people wouldn't even believe she cried when her mom killed herself four years ago.

She cries more than most people would believe.

- - -

What *would* Jesus do, alone and abused, and afraid?

She honestly doesn't know. She's just an angel.

Class D901 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

THE TWO FIRES – Margaret Atwood

One, the summer fire
Outside: the trees melting, returning
to their first red elements
on all sides, cutting me off
from escape or the saving
lake

I sat in the house, raised up
between that shapeless raging
and my sleeping children
a charm: concentrate on
form, geometry, the human
architecture of the house, square
closed doors, propped roofbeams,
the logic of windows

(the children could not be wakened:
in their calm dreaming

the trees were straight and still
had branches and were green)

The other, the winter
fire inside: the protective roof
shrivelling overhead, the rafters
incandescent, all those corners
and straight lines flaming, the carefully-
made structure
prisoning us in a cage of blazing bars
the children
were awake and crying;

I wrapped them, carried them
outside into the snow.
Then I tried to rescue
what was left of their scorched dream
about the house: blankets,
warm clothes, the singed furniture
of safety cast away with them
in a white chaos

Two fires in-
formed me,
(each refuge fails
us; each danger
becomes a haven)

left charred marks
now around which I
try to grow

Class D901 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)
ABOUT SCHOOL - Author Unknown

He always wanted to explain things.
But no one cared.
So he drew.

Sometimes he would just draw and it wasn't anything,
He wanted to carve it in stone or write it in the sky.
He would lie out on the grass and look up in the sky.
And it would be only him and the sky and the things inside him that needed saying.

And it was after that he drew the picture.
It was a beautiful picture.
He kept it under his pillow and would let no one see it.
And he would look at it every night and think about it.

And when it was dark, and his eyes were closed, he could see it still.
And it was all of him and he loved it.

When he started school he brought it with him.
Not to show to anyone, but just to have with him like a friend.

It was funny about school.
He sat in a square brown desk just like all the other square
brown desks and he thought it should be red.
And his room was a square brown room.
Like all the other rooms.
And it was tight and close. And stiff.

He hated to hold the pencil and chalk, with his arm stiff and
his feet flat on the floor, stiff, with the teacher watching and watching.

The teacher came and spoke to him..
She told him to wear a tie like all the other boys.
He said he didn't like them and she said it didn't matter.

After that they drew. And he drew all yellow and it was the way he
felt about morning. And it was beautiful.

The teacher came and smiled at him
"What's this?" she said.
"Why don't you draw something like Ken's drawing?
Isn't that beautiful?"

After that his mother bought him a tie and he always drew
airplanes and rocket-ships like everyone else.

And he threw the old picture away.

And when he lay out alone looking up at the sky, it was big and blue,
and all of everything, but he wasn't anyone.

He was square and brown inside and his hands were stiff.
And he was like everyone else. All the things inside him that
needed saying didn't need it anymore.

It had stopped pushing. It was crushed.
Stiff.

Like everything else.

Class D901 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

THE EXECUTION - Alden Nowlan

On the night of the execution
a man at the door
mistook me for the coroner.
"Press," I said.

But he didn't understand. He led me
into the wrong room
where the sheriff greeted me:
"You're late, Padre."

"You're wrong," I told him. "I'm Press."
"Yes, of course, Reverend Press."
We went down a stairway.

"Ah, Mr. Ellis," said the Deputy.
"Press!" I shouted. But he shoved me
through a black curtain.
The lights were so bright
I couldn't see the faces
of the men sitting
opposite. But, thank God, I thought
they can see me!

"Look!" I cried. "Look at my face!
Doesn't anybody know me?"

Then a hood covered my head.
"Don't make it harder for us," the hangman whispered.

Class D901 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

Class D902 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 9 and 10

THE DEATH OF ROMEO AND JULIET - Anonymous

Romeo rode to the sepulchre, 'mong dead folks, bats, and creepers;
And swallowed down the burning dose - when Juliet oped her peepers.
"Are you alive? Or is't your ghost? Speak quick, before I go."
"Alive!" she cried, "and kicking too; art thou my Romeo?"
"It is your Romeo, my faded little blossom;
O Juliet! is it possible that you were acting possum?"
"I was indeed; now let's go home; pa's spite will have abated;
What ails you, love, you stagger so; are you intoxicated?"
"No, no, my duck; I took some stuff that caused a little fit;"
He struggled hard to tell her all, but couldn't, so he quit.
In shorter time than't takes a lamb to wag his tail, or jump,
Poor Romeo was stiff and pale as any whitewashed pump.
Then Juliet seized that awful knife, and in her bosom stuck it,
Let out a most terrific yell, fell down, and kicked the bucket.

Class D902 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

A TRIP TO MORROW - Anonymous

I started on a journey just about a week ago
For the little town of Morrow in the State of Ohio.
I never was a traveler and really didn't know
That Morrow had been ridiculed a century or so.
I went down to the depot for my ticket and applied
For tips regarding Morrow, interviewed the station guide.
Said I, "My friend, I want to go to Morrow and return
Not later than to-morrow, for I haven't time to burn."

Said he to me, "Now let me see, if I have heard you right,
You want to go to Morrow and come back to-morrow night,
You should have gone to Morrow yesterday and back to-day,
For if you started yesterday to Morrow, don't you see
You should have got to Morrow and returned to-day at three.
The train that started yesterday, now understand me right,
To-day it gets to Morrow and returns to-morrow night. "

"Now if you start to Morrow, you will surely land
To-morrow into Morrow, not to-day you understand,
For the train to-day to Morrow, if the schedule is right
Will get you into Morrow by about to-morrow night."
Said I, "I guess you know it all, but kindly let me say,
How can I go to Morrow if I leave the town to-day ?"
Said he, "You cannot go to Morrow any more to-day,
For the train that goes to Morrow is a mile upon its way.

Class D902 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

ANYONE LIVED IN A PRETTY HOW TOWN – e.e. cummings

Anyone lived in a pretty how town
(with up so floating many bells down)
spring summer autumn winter
he sang his didn't he danced his did.

Women and men (both little and small)
cared for anyone not at all
they sowed their isn't they reaped their same
sun moon stars rain

children guessed (but only a few
and down they forgot as up they grew
autumn winter spring summer)
that noone loved him more by more

when by now and tree by leaf
she laughed his joy she cried his grief
bird by snow and stir by still
anyone's any was all to her

someones married their everyones
laughed their cryings and did their dance
(sleep wake hope and then) they
said their nevers they slept their dream

stars rain sun moon
(and only the snow can begin to explain
How children are apt to forget to remember
With up so floating many bells down)

One day anyone died I guess
(and noone stooped to kiss his face)
busy folk buried them side by side
little by little and was by was

all by all and deep by deep
and more by more they dream their sleep
noone and anyone earth by april
wish by spirit and if by yes.

Women and men (both dong and ding)
summer autumn winter spring
reaped their sowing and went their came
sun moon stars rain

Class D902 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

ROBINSON CRUSOE’S STORY - Charles E. Carryl

The night was thick and hazy
When the "Piccadilly Daisy"
Carried down the crew and captain in the sea;
And I think the water drowned 'em;
For they never, never found 'em,
And I know they didn't come ashore with me.

Oh! 'twas very sad and lonely
When I found myself the only
Population on this cultivated shore;
But I've made a little tavern
In a rocky little cavern,
And I sit and watch for people at the door.

I spent no time in looking
For a girl to do my cooking,
As I'm quite a clever hand at making stews;
But I had that fellow Friday,
Just to keep the tavern tidy,
And to put a Sunday polish on my shoes.

I have a little garden
That I'm cultivating lard in,
As the things I eat are rather tough and dry;
For I live on toasted lizards,
Prickly pears, and parrot gizzards,
And I'm really very fond of beetle-pie.

The clothes I had were furry,
And it made me fret and worry
When I found the moths were eating off the hair;
And I had to scrape and sand 'em,
And I boiled 'em and I tanned 'em,
Till I got the fine morocco suit I wear.

I sometimes seek diversion
In a family excursion
With the few domestic animals you see;
And we take along a carrot
As refreshment for the parrot,
And a little can of jungleberry tea.

Then we gather as we travel,
Bits of moss and dirty gravel,
And we chip off little specimens of stone;

And we carry home as prizes
Funny bugs, of handy sizes
Just to give the day a scientific tone.

If the roads are wet and muddy
We remain at home and study,
For the Goat is very clever at a sum
And the dog, instead of fighting,
Studies ornamental writing,
While the cat is taking lessons on the drum.

We retire at eleven,
And we rise again at seven;
And I wish to call attention, as I close,
To the fact that all the scholars
Are correct about their collars,
And particular in turning out their toes.

Class D902 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)
THE OLYMPIAN – Gordon Korman

I'm going to practice every day,
I'm going to train like mad,
I'll be the best Olympian my country ever had.
I've got the guts, the will to win,
Tenacity, I think.
There's just one thing to hold me back
At every sport I stink.

I'll start with gold in pole vault,
Run and plant the stick and fly
(I'm asking the officials not to put the bar so high.)
And then I'll throw the discus,
I've got confidence galore.
Why, just last week when practicing
I shattered our glass door .

And for the pool I'm eating right,
And keeping fit and trim.
To get that breaststroke medal, I might even learn to swim.

Of course, I'll sweep the track events
Just like a shooting star,
I'll even win the marathon
I hope it's not too far!

I'm trying out for basketball
'Cause it's my favourite sport.

I know that I can help the team-although I'm very short

In boxing I'll accept a bronze,
I don't expect the gold.
My sister knocked me out last week;
She's only three years old.

I'll win the weight-lifting events
Although I'm not too strong,
Those medals are so heavy, I'll be *huge* before too long.

As for fencing, all opponents
better be "en garde",
I almost stabbed my dad last week
While training in the yard.

I'll shatter the cycling records.
My opponents, to their sorrow,
Don't realize my training wheels
are coming off tomorrow.

And to this stack of medals,
I'll just have to add one more:
Decathlon-1 can't miss, since I've
Won every sport before.

I'll be a hit. There's just one snag
I have to work out first.
Of all the people trying out,
I know I'll be the worst.
I almost hear the anthem,
Yes, my life's in perfect synch,
Except for that one tiny flaw
At every sport I stink.

Class D902 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

YAWN - Sean O. Huigan

you know
i think
my favourite
thing in
the world
is
a
YAWN
i mean
everybody

does it
even
lizards
and
crocodiles
and i bet
if we only
knew
how
trees and
dandelions
do it too

as a matter
of fact
i bet
that when
all those
little
dandelion
fluffs blow
away
it's
because
the dandelion
parent had
a great
big YAWN

and do you
know what
else is
great
YAWNS
are catching
i mean
when you
YAWN
then everybody
(or just about)
around you
YAWNS
and it
doesn't even
hurt
what a great
thing to give
to the world

a
YAWN

i bet
if all those
soldiers lined
up
facing each
other from
all the
countries
everywhere
in the world
and they were
all mad at
each other
i bet that
if just one
of them
YAWNED
the whole
world would be
safe

or
just imagine
if some bully
comes up
to you and
wants to
start a fight
just imagine
after all
the tough
stuff
all the
pushing
and making
faces
just imagine
if
just when he
was going to
pound you
you let out
a great big
YAWN

well
if that
didn't stop
him then
even if
he hit you
his fist
would go
right into
the middle
of your
YAWN and if you
wanted to
you could bite
it off
of course
you wouldn't
have to
'cause everybody
would be
laughing so
hard
the fight would
be over

now
if you sneezed
at the same
time
imagine what
might
happen

Class D902 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

A THRENODY – George T. Lanigan

The Ahkoond of Swat is dead. – London Papers

WHAT, what, what,
What's the news from Swat?
Sad news,
Bad news,
Comes by the cable led
Through the Indian Ocean's bed
Through the Persian Gulf, the Red
Sea and the Med—
Iterranean—he's dead;
The Ahkoond is dead!

For the Ahkoond I mourn.
Who wouldn't?
He strove to disregard the message stern,
But he Ahkoondn't.
Dead, dead, dead;
(Sorrow, Swats!)
Swats wha' hae wi' Ahkoond bled,
Swats whom he had often led
Onward to a gory bed,
Or to victory,
As the case might be,
Sorrow Swats!
Tears shed,
Shed tears like water,
Your great Ahkoond is dead!
That's Swat's the matter!

Mourn city of Swat!
Your great Ahkoond is not,
But lain 'mid worms to rot:
His mortal part alone, his soul was caught
(Because he was a good Ahkoond)
Up to the bosom of Mahound.
Though earthly walls his frame surround
(Forever hallowed be the ground!)
And skeptics mock the lowly mound
And say, "He's now of no Ahkoond!"
(His soul is in the skies!)
The azure skies that bend about his loved
Metropolis of Swat
He sees with larger, other eyes,
Athwart all earthly mysteries—
He knows what's Swat.

Let Swat bury the great Ahkoond
With a noise of mourning and lamentation!
Let Swat bury the great Ahkoond
With the noise of mourning the Swattish nation!
Fallen is at length
Its tower of strength,
Its sun is dimmed ere it had nooned:
Dead lies the great Ahkoond,
The great Ahkoond of Swat
is not!

Class D902 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

MIA CARLOTTA - T. A. Daley

Giuseppe, da barber, ees greata for 'mash,
He gotta da bigga, da blacka mustache,
Good clo'es an' good styła an' playnta good cash.

W'enevra Giuseppe ees walk on da street,
Da people dey talka, 'how nobby! how neat!
How softa da handa, how smalla da feet.

He raisa hees hat an' he shaka hees curls,
An' smila weeth teetha so shiny like pearls;
O! many da heart of da seelly young girls
 He gotta.
 Yes, playnta he gotta--
 But notta
 Carlotta!

Giuseppe, da barber, he maka da eye,
An' lika de steam engine puffa ani sigh,
For catcha Carlotta wren she ees go by.
Carlotta she waka weeth nose in da air,
An' look through Giuseppe weeth far-away stare,
As eff she no see dere ees somebody dere..

Giuseppe, da barber, he gotta da cash,
He gotta da clo'es and da bigga mustache,
He gotta da seelly young girls for da 'mash,
 But notta--
 You bat my life, notta-
 Carlotta
 I gotta!

Class D902 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

Class D904 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 9 and 10
MY DECLARATION OF SELF-ESTEEM - Virginia Satir

I am me.

In all the world, there is no one else exactly like me. There are people who have some parts like me but no one adds up exactly like me. Therefore, everything that comes out of me is authentically mine because I alone choose it.

I own everything about me - my body, including everything it does; my mind, including all my thoughts and ideas; my eyes, including the images of all they behold; my feelings, whatever they might be - anger, joy, frustration, love, disappointment, excitement; my mouth and all the words that come out of it - polite, sweet and rough, correct or incorrect; my voice, loud and soft; all my actions, whether they be to others or myself.

I own my fantasies, my dreams, my hopes, my fears.

I own all my triumphs and successes, all my failures and mistakes.

Because I own all of me, I can become intimately acquainted with me. By so doing, I can love me and be friendly with me in all my parts. I can then make it possible for all of me to work in my best interests.

I know there are aspects about myself that puzzle me, and other aspects that I do not know. But as long as I am friendly and loving to myself, I can courageously and hopefully look for the solutions to the puzzles and for ways to find out more about me.

However I look and sound, whatever I say and do, and whatever I think and feel at a given moment in time is me. This is authentic and represents where I am at that moment in time.

When I review later how I looked and sounded, what I said and did, and how I thought and felt, some parts may turn out to be unfitting. I can discard that which is unfitting and keep that which proved fitting, and invent something new for that which I discarded.

I can see, hear, feel, think, say and do. I have the tools to survive, to be close to others, to be productive, to make sense and order out of the world of people and things outside of me.

I own me and therefore I can engineer me.

I am me and I am okay.

Class D904 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

Excerpt from **TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD** - Harper Lee

Atticus was in the middle of Windy Seaton's column one evening when the telephone rang.

He answered it, then went to the hat rack in the hall. "I'm going down to Mrs. Dubose's for a while," he said. "I won't be long."

But Atticus stayed away until long past my bedtime. When he returned he was carrying a candy box. Atticus sat down in the livingroom and put the box on the floor beside his chair.

"What'd she want?" asked Jem.

We had not seen Mrs. Dubose for over a month. She was never on the porch any more when we passed.

"She's dead, son," said Atticus. "She died a few minutes ago."

"Oh," said Jem. "Well."

"Well is right," said Atticus. "She's not suffering any more. She was sick for a long time. Son, didn't you know what her fits were?"

Jem shook his head.

"Mrs. Dubose was a morphine addict," said Atticus. "She took it as a pain-killer for years. The doctor put her on it. She'd have spent the rest of her life on it and died without so much agony, but she was too contrary - "

"Sir?" said Jem.

Atticus said, "Just before your escapade she called me to make her will. Dr. Reynolds told her she had only a few months left. Her business affairs were in perfect order but she said, 'There's still one thing out of order.'"

"What was that?" Jem was perplexed.

"She said she was going to leave this world beholden to nothing and nobody. Jem, when you're sick as she was, it's all right to take anything to make it easier, but it wasn't all right for her. She said she meant to break herself of it before she died, and that's what she did."

Jem said, "You mean that's what her fits were?"

"Yes, that's what they were. Most of the time you were reading to her I doubt if she heard a word you said. Her whole mind and body were concentrated on that alarm clock.

If you hadn't fallen into her hands, I'd have made you go read to her anyway. It may have been some distraction. There was another reason - "

"Did she die free?" asked Jem.

"As the mountain air," said Atticus. "She was conscious to the last, almost. Conscious," he smiled, "and cantankerous. She still disapproved heartily of my doings, and said I'd probably spend the rest of my life bailing you out of jail. She had Jessie fix you this box - "

Atticus reached down and picked up the candy box. He handed it to Jem.

Jem opened the box. Inside, surrounded by wads of damp cotton, was a white, waxy, perfect camellia. It was a Snow-on-the-Mountain.

Jem's eyes nearly popped out of his head. "Old helldevil, old hell-devil!" he screamed, flinging it down. "Why can't she leave me alone?"

In a flash Atticus was up and standing over him. Jem buried his face in Atticus's shirt front. "Sh-h," he said. "I think that was her way of telling you - everything's all right now, Jem, everything's all right. You know, she was a great lady."

"A lady?" Jem raised his head. His face was scarlet. "After all those things she said about you, a lady?"

"She was. She had her own views about things, a lot different from mine, maybe . . . son, I told you that if you hadn't lost your head I'd have made you go read to her. I wanted you to see something about her - I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes you do. Mrs. Dubose won, all ninety-eight pounds of her. According to her views, she died beholden to nothing and nobody. She was the bravest person I ever knew."

Class D904 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)
Excerpt from ORYX AND CRAKE - Margaret Atwood

"What's that for?" said the voice of Jimmy's mother. She meant the champagne.

"We've done it," said Jimmy's father's voice. "I think a little celebration is in order." A scuffle: maybe he'd tried to kiss her.

"Done what?"

Pop of the champagne cork. "Come on, it won't bite you." A pause: he must be pouring it out. Yes: the clink of glasses. "Here's to us."

"Done what? I need to know what I'm drinking to."

Another pause: Jimmy pictured his father swallowing, his Adam's apple going up and down, bobbity-bobble. "It's the neuro-regeneration project. We now have genuine human neo-cortex tissue growing in the pigeon. Finally, after all those duds! Think of the possibilities, for stroke victims, and..."

"That's all we need," said Jimmy's mother. "More people with the brains of pigs. Don't we have enough of those already?"

"Can't you be positive, just for once? All this negative stuff, *this is no good, that's no good*, nothing's ever good enough, according to you!"

"Positive about what? That you've thought up yet another way to rip off a bunch of desperate people?" said Jimmy's mother in that new slow, anger-free voice.

"God, you're cynical!"

"No, you are. You and your smart partners. Your colleagues. It's wrong, the whole organization is wrong, it's a moral cesspool and you know it."

"We can give people hope. Hope isn't ripping off!"

"At NooSkins prices it is. You hype your wares and take all their money and then they run out of cash, and it's no more treatments for them. They can rot as far as you and your pals are concerned. Don't you remember the way we used to talk, everything we wanted to do? Making life better for people – not just people with money. You used to be so... you had ideals, then."

"Sure," said Jimmy's father in a tired voice, "I've still got them. I just can't afford them."

A pause. Jimmy's mother must've been mulling that over. "Be that as it may," she said - a sign that she wasn't going to give in. "Be that as it may, there's research and there's research. What you're doing – this pig brain thing. You're interfering with the building blocks of life. It's immoral. It's... sacrilegious."

Bang, on the table. Not his hand. The bottle? "I don't believe I'm hearing this! Who've you been listening to? You're an educated person, you did this stuff yourself! It's just proteins, you know that! There's nothing sacred about cells and tissue, it's just..."

"I'm familiar with the theory."

"Anyway it's been paying for your room and board, it's been putting food on your table. You're hardly in a position to take the high ground."

"I know," said Jimmy's mother's voice. "Believe me, that is one thing I really do know. Why can't you get a job doing something honest? Something basic."

"Like what and like where? You want me to dig ditches?"...

Maybe there would be action, broken glass. He felt afraid – that cold lump in his stomach was back again – but he also felt compelled to listen. If there was going to be a catastrophe, some final collapse, he needed to witness it.

Nothing happened though, there was just the sound of footsteps going out of the room. Which one of them? Whoever it was could now come upstairs and check to make sure Jimmy was asleep and hadn't heard. Then they could tick off that item on the Terrific Parenting checklist they both carted around inside their heads. It wasn't the bad stuff they did that made Jimmy so angry, it was the good stuff. The stuff that was supposed to be good, or good enough for him. The stuff they patted themselves on the backs for. They knew nothing about him, what he liked, what he hated, what he longed for. They thought he was only what they could see. A nice boy but a bit of a goof, a bit of a show-off. Not the brightest star in the universe, not a numbers person, but you couldn't have everything you wanted and at least he wasn't a total washout. At least he wasn't a drunk or an addict like a lot of boys his age, so touch wood. He'd actually heard his dad say that: *touch wood*, as if Jimmy was bound to... wander off the tracks, but he just hadn't got around to it yet. About the different, secret person living inside him they knew nothing at all.

Class D904 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

Excerpt from **JONATHAN LIVINGSTON SEAGULL** - Richard Bach

By sunup, Jonathan Gull was practicing again. From five thousand feet the fishing boats were specks in the flat blue water, Breakfast Flock was a faint cloud of dust motes, circling.

He was alive, trembling ever so slightly with delight, proud that his fear was under control. Then without ceremony he hugged in his forewings, extended his short, angled wingtips, and plunged directly toward the sea. By the time he passed four thousand feet he had reached terminal velocity, the wind was a solid beating wall of sound against which he could move no faster. He was flying now straight down, at two hundred fourteen miles per hour. He swallowed, knowing that if his wings unfolded at that speed he'd be blown into a million tiny shreds of seagull. But the speed was power, and the speed was joy, and the speed was pure beauty.

He began his pullout at a thousand feet, wingtips thudding and blurring in that gigantic wind, the boat and the crowd of gulfs tilting and growing meteor-fast, directly in his path.

He couldn't stop; he didn't know yet even how to turn at that speed.

Collision would be instant death.

And so he shut his eyes.

It happened that morning, then, just after sunrise, that Jonathan Livingston Seagull fired directly through the centre of Breakfast Flock, ticking off two hundred twelve miles per hour, eyes closed, in a great roaring shriek of wind and feathers. The Gull of Fortune smiled upon him this once, and no one was killed.

By the time he had pulled his beak straight up into the sky he was still scorching along at a hundred and sixty miles per hour. When he had slowed to twenty and stretched

his wings again at last, the boat was a crumb on the sea, four thousand feet below.

His thought was triumph. Terminal velocity! A seagull at *two hundred fourteen miles per hour*! It was a breakthrough, the greatest single moment in the history of the Flock, and in that moment a new age opened for Jonathan Gull.

Class D904 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

Excerpt from **THE CALL OF THE WILD** - Chapter VI - For the Love of a Man - Jack London

He was older than the days he had seen and the breaths he had drawn. He linked the past with the present, and the eternity behind him throbbed through him in a mighty rhythm to which he swayed as the tides and seasons swayed. He sat by John Thornton's fire, a broad-breasted dog, white-fanged and long-furred; but behind him were the shades of all manner of dogs, half-wolves and wild wolves, urgent and prompting, tasting the savor of the meat he ate, thirsting for the water he drank, scenting the wind with him, listening with him and telling him the sounds made by the wild life in the forest, dictating his moods, directing his actions, lying down to sleep with him when he lay down, and dreaming with him and beyond him and becoming themselves the stuff of his dreams.

So peremptorily did these shades beckon him, that each day mankind and the claims of mankind slipped farther from him. Deep in the forest a call was sounding, and as often as he heard this call, mysteriously thrilling and luring, he felt compelled to turn his back upon the fire and the beaten earth around it, and to plunge into the forest, and on and on, he knew not where or why; nor did he wonder where or why, the call sounding imperiously, deep in the forest. But as often as he gained the soft unbroken earth and the green shade, the love for John Thornton drew him back to the fire again.

Thornton alone held him. The rest of mankind was as nothing. Chance travellers might praise or pet him; but he was cold under it all, and from a too demonstrative man he would get up and walk away. When Thornton's partners, Hans and Pete, arrived on the long-expected raft, Buck refused to notice them till he learned they were close to Thornton; after that he tolerated them in a passive sort of way, accepting favors from them as though he favored them by accepting....

For Thornton, however, his love seemed to grow and grow. He, alone among men, could put a pack upon Buck's back in the summer travelling. Nothing was too great for Buck to do, when Thornton commanded. One day... the men and dogs were sitting on the crest of a cliff which fell away, straight down, to naked bed-rock three hundred feet below. John Thornton was sitting near the edge, Buck at his shoulder. A thoughtless whim seized Thornton, and he drew the attention of Hans and Pete to the experiment he had in mind. "Jump, Buck!" he commanded, sweeping his arm out over the chasm. The next instant he was grappling with Buck on the extreme edge, while Hans and Pete were dragging them back into safety.

"It's uncanny," Pete said, after it was over and they had caught their speech.

Thornton shook his head. "No, it is splendid, and it is terrible, too. Do you know, it sometimes makes me afraid."

"I'm not hankering to be the man that lays hands on you while he's around," Pete announced conclusively, nodding his head toward Buck.

Class D904 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

Excerpt from **THE GRAPES OF WRATH** - John Steinbeck

To the red country and part of the gray country of Oklahoma the last rains came gently, and they did not cut the scarred earth. The plows crossed and recrossed the rivulet marks. The last rains lifted the corn quickly and scattered weed colonies and grass along the sides of the roads so that the gray country and the dark red country began to disappear under a green cover. In the last part of May the sky grew pale and the clouds that had hung in high puffs for so long in the spring were dissipated. The sun flared down on the growing corn day after day until a line of brown spread along the edge of each green bayonet. The clouds appeared, and went away, and in a while they did not try any more. The weeds grew darker green to protect themselves, and they did not spread any more. The surface of the earth crusted, a thin hard crust, and as the sky became pale, so the earth became pale, pink in the red country and white in the gray country.

In the water-cut gullies the earth dusted down in dry little streams. Gophers and ant lions started small avalanches. And as the sharp sun struck day after day, the leaves of the young corn became less stiff and erect; they bent in a curve at first, and then, as the central ribs of strength grew weak, each leaf tilted downward. Then it was June, and the sun shone more fiercely. The brown lines on the corn leaves widened and moved in on the central ribs. The weeds frayed and edged back toward their roots. The air was thin and the sky more pale; and every day the earth paled.

In the roads where the teams moved, where the wheels milled the ground and the hooves of the horses beat the ground, the dirt crust broke and the dust formed. Every moving thing lifted the dust into the air: a walking man lifted a thin layer as high as his waist, and a wagon lifted the dust as high as the fence tops, and an automobile boiled a cloud behind it. The dust was long in settling back again.

When June was half gone, the big clouds moved up out of Texas and the Gulf, high heavy clouds, rain-heads. The men in the fields looked up at the clouds and sniffed at them and held wet fingers up to sense the wind. And the horses were nervous while the clouds were up. The rain-heads dropped a little spattering and hurried on to some other country. Behind them the sky was pale again and the sun flared. In the dust there were drop craters where the rain had fallen, and there were clean splashes on the corn, and that was all.

A gentle wind followed the rain clouds, driving them on northward, a wind that softly clashed the drying corn. A day went by and the wind increased, steady, unbroken by gusts. The dust from the roads fluffed up and spread out and fell on the weeds beside the fields, and fell into the fields a little way. Now the wind grew strong and hard and it worked at the rain crust in the corn fields. Little by little the sky was darkened by the mixing dust, and the wind felt over the earth, loosened the dust, and carried it away. The wind grew stronger. The rain crust broke and the dust lifted up out of the fields and drove gray plumes into the air like sluggish smoke. The corn threshed the wind and made a dry, rushing sound. The finest dust did not settle back to earth now, but disappeared into the darkening sky.

The wind grew stronger, whisked under stones, carried up straws and old leaves, and even little clods, marking its course as it sailed across the fields. The air and the sky darkened and through them the sun shone redly, and there was a raw sting in the air. During the night the wind raced faster over the land, dug cunningly among the rootlets of the corn, and the corn fought the wind with its weakened leaves until the roots were freed by the prying wind and then each stalk settled wearily sideways toward the earth and pointed the direction of the wind.

The dawn came, but no day. In the gray sky a red sun appeared, a dim red circle that gave a little light, like dusk; and as that day advanced, the dusk slipped back toward darkness, and the wind cried and whimpered over the fallen corn.

Class D904 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

THE YELLOW WALLPAPER – Charlotte Perkins Gilman

It is the strangest yellow, that wallpaper! It makes me think of all the yellow things I ever saw – not beautiful ones like buttercups, but old, foul, bad yellow things.

But there is something else about that paper - the smell! I noticed it the moment we came into the room but with so much air and sun it was not bad. Now we have had a week of fog and rain, and whether the windows are open or not, the smell is here.

It creeps all over the house.

I find it hovering in the dining-room, skulking in the parlour, hiding in the hall, lying in wait for me in the stairs.

It gets into my hair.

Even when I go to ride, if I turn my head suddenly and surprise it – there is that smell! Such a peculiar odour, too! I have spent hours in trying to analyze it, to find what it smelled like.

It is not bad – at first – and very gentle, but quite the subtlest, most enduring odour I ever met.

In this damp weather it is awful. I wake up in the night and find it hanging over me. It used to disturb me at first. I thought seriously of burning the house – to reach the smell!

But now I am used to it. The only thing I can think of that it is like is the *color* of the paper! A yellow smell.

There is a very funny mark on this wall, low down, near the mopboard. A streak that runs round the room. It goes behind every piece of furniture, except the bed, a long straight, even *smooch*, as if it had been rubbed over and over.

I wonder how it was done and who did it. And what they did it for. Round and round and round – round and round and round – it makes me dizzy!

I really have discovered something at last.
Through watching so much at night, when it changes so, I have finally found out.

The front pattern *does* move – and no wonder! The woman behind shakes it!

Sometimes I think there are a great many women behind, and sometimes only one, and she crawls around fast, and her crawling shakes it all over.

Then in the very bright spots she keeps still, and in the very shady spots she just takes hold of the bars and shakes them hard.

And she is all the time trying to climb through. But nobody could climb through that pattern - it strangles so; I think that is why it has so many heads.

They get through, and then the pattern strangles them off and turns them upside down, and makes their eyes white!

If those heads were covered or taken off it would not be half so bad.

I think that woman gets out in the daytime!

Class D904 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D905 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 9 and 10
MAN, YOU'RE A GREAT PLAYER - Gary Lautens

Occasionally I run into sports figures at cocktail parties, on the street, or on their way to the bank.

"Nice game the other night," I said to an old hockey-player pal.

"Think so?" he replied.

"You've come a long way since I knew you as a junior."

"How's that?"

"Well, you high-stick better for one thing - and I think the way you clutch sweaters is really superb. You may be the best in the league."

He blushed modestly. "For a time," I confessed, "I never thought you'd get the hang of it."

"It wasn't easy," he confided. "It took practice and encouragement. You know something like spearing doesn't come naturally. It has to be developed."

"I'm not inclined to flattery but, in my book, you've got it made. You're a dirty player."

"Stop kidding."

"No, no," I insisted. "I'm not trying to butter you up. I mean it. When you broke in, there were flashes of dirty play - but you weren't consistent. That's the difference between a dirty player and merely a colourful one."

"I wish my father were alive to hear you say that," he said quietly. "He would have been proud."

"Well, it's true. There isn't a player in the league who knows as many obscene gestures."

"I admit I have been given a few increases in pay in recent years. Management seems to be treating me with new respect."

"You're selling tickets," I said. "You're a gate attraction now - not some bum who only can skate and shoot and the rest of it. Your profanity is beautiful."

"C'mon."

"No, I'm serious. I don't think anyone in the league can incite a riot the way you can."

"I've had a lot of help along the way. You can't make it alone," he stated generously.

"No one does," I said.

"Take that play where I skate up to the referee and stand nose-to-nose with my face turning red. It was my old junior coach who taught me that. He was the one who used to toss all the sticks on the ice and throw his hat into the stands and pound his fist on the boards."

"You were lucky to get that sort of training. A lot of players never learn the fundamentals."

"I think there are a few boys in the league who can spit better than me."

"Farther, perhaps, but not more accurately," I corrected.

"Well, thanks anyway. I've always considered it one of my weaknesses."

"That last brawl of yours was perfectly executed. Your sweater was torn off, you taunted the crowd, you smashed your stick across the goal posts. Really a picture Donnybrook."

"The papers gave me a break. The coverage was outstanding."

"Do you ever look back to the days when you couldn't cut a forehead or puff a lip or insult an official?"

"Everyone gets nostalgic," he confessed. "It's a good thing I got away from home by the time I was fifteen. I might never have been any more than a ham-and-egger, you know, a twenty-goal man who drifts through life unnoticed."

"What was the turning point?"

"I had heard prominent sportsmen say that nice guys finish last, and that you have to beat them in the alley if you hope to beat them in the rink. But it didn't sink in."

"Nobody learns overnight."

"I wasted a few years learning to play my wing and to check without using the butt of the stick. But I noticed I was being passed by. I skated summers to keep in shape, exercised, kept curfew."

"Don't tell me. They said you were dull."

"Worse than that. They said I was clean. It's tough to live down that sort of reputation."

I nodded.

"Anyway, during a game in the sticks, I was skating off the ice - we had won five - one and I had scored three goals. The home crowd was pretty listless and there was some booing. Then it happened."

"What?"

"My big break. My mother was in the stands and she shouted to me. I turned to wave at her with my hockey stick and I accidentally caught the referee across the face. He bled a lot - took ten stitches later."

"Is that all?"

"Well someone pushed me and I lost my balance and fell on the poor man. A real brawl started. Luckily, I got credit for the whole thing - went to jail overnight, got a suspension. And, talk about fate! A big league scout was in the arena. He offered me a contract right away."

"It's quite a success story," I said.

"You've got to get the breaks," he replied humbly.

Class D905 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

Excerpt from **WHEN YOU LOOK LIKE YOUR PASSPORT PHOTO, IT'S TIME TO GO HOME** - Erma Bombeck

Vacations fade fast. Their memories are obliterated by little things. You arrive home to discover your car has died. Neighbours inform you the power went off while you were gone and your freezer will smell like a fertilizer plant when you open the door. Somehow, it escaped someone's attention that your garden hose was left running and floated your house to a new zip code.

If all that doesn't take the hats and horns out of your trip, distribution of the souvenirs will.

Rarely does anyone appreciate what you have gone through to get these gifts home. They have no meaning. The primitive necklace that you bargained for in Tanzania is held at arm's length by a friend who sniffs, "Is this another one of these things that I have to put in the freezer first to kill bugs?"

Children are the worst. I once babied a large Mexican hat the size of a satellite dish. It wouldn't fit under the seat on the plane or in the overhead bin. I had to wear it most of the time. Our son looked at it, said it smelled, and kicked it under his bed.

The fur drum we dragged home for one of them from the Bahamas literally came alive when we turned the furnace on. We saw it scaling the wall one day.

A couple of years ago when we returned from the Orient, I spread all my souvenirs out on the dining room table and circled it slowly for hours trying to figure out who deserved any of it.

My husband came into the room and said, "Did you give the silk kimono to your mother yet?"

"You know," I said slowly, "I have to think about that. She likes to get dressed as soon as she rolls out of bed. It would just hang there in her closet. Besides, it's not her colour so I'm keeping it for myself."

"You could give her the tea set."

"I could, but I'm not. I don't have a nice tea set, and besides, I heard her say once that tea upsets her stomach."

"So you're going with the woodblock print," he said.

"I was until I got to thinking you would have to have been at the factory to appreciate all the work that goes into them. Actually, I've got the perfect spot for it in the living room."

"How about the glass necklace?"

"You really think so? I don't think Mother has the chest for it. I'll keep that for myself. I'm leaning toward the T-shirt."

"I thought you bought those for your aunts."

"We never see them," I said, "so I kept three for myself and decided to give each of them a pair of chopsticks."

"Smart idea. They're nice ones. They were expensive."

"On the other hand, I might have a dinner party with a theme some night. Maybe I'll give them a Christmas ornament and brochure on the history of the silkworm."

"They'll be choked up."

"What kind of a crack is that! Maybe I'll keep all of the T-shirts and give Mother a fan."

"I thought you were giving the fan to Brenda who watered your plants and brought in our mail."

"She's down to boxes of matches from the hotel. Look, it's not how much something cost, it's the thought that counts."

"So you're still looking for something for your mother."

I took the fan out of the box and opened it. It would just fit into my purse and I could . . .

I saw my husband looking at me. "Is that the best you can do for a woman who gave you life, raised you, and stood by you during the good times and the bad times of your life?"

I threw in a panda bear entwined around a pencil. "Now are you happy?" I asked.

Class D905 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)
ALWAYS DO A CANNONBALL - Gary Dunford

Have you ever stuck your big toe in a lake to test how cold it was?

Ever sit on the edge of a dock, lazily let your foot touch the water?

If the answer is yes, you are most certainly dead and not reading this. Huge killer muskies patrol Ontario's creepy blue-black deeps, just waiting to grab a toe or digit and tug you out to a watery grave. The muskellunge – Algonquin for "hideous killer pike that lives under the dock" – is a large, predacious, soft-rayed, fresh-water fish, featuring "an oval body with a duck-billed snout full of large teeth." Countless tourists are taken by muskie each summer, their cars and coolers of beer quietly distributed among park rangers. Woodsmen rightly fear them as the Piranha of the north.

If you *must* swim in Ontario's lakes, obey my two rules:

1. Do a really big cannonball to scare them away.
2. Get the hell out of the water within two minutes.

Even then, I cannot guarantee you will not be "tasted." That funny tingle? You swear something touched you? It was not a stick. It was not a weed. It was...them. Muskie have a peculiar fondness for tourists from Ohio. Put an orange life vest on a toddler and you might just as well write "Appetizer" on his feet. I will not enter any body of water in Ontario without an old pair of tennis shoes on my feet and my trusty Muskie-Proof Oven Mittens. Offer no target these hateful, duck-billed murderers can fit into their mouths. Even protected, I still have bad dreams. I sleep in my socks in summer. Many experts – well, okay, me – believe the Loch Ness Monster is a muskie. You cannot argue with science.

My own obsession with muskie stems straight from childhood. Relatives—especially my cousins – spent most of their summers trying to kill me. I was a city kid and they were country people, a meaner strain of the rubes you may have seen in *Deliverance*. By day, they lured me ever higher up skyscraper trees, or encouraged me to dive head-first into six-inch-deep swimming holes. They delighted in putting worms, leeches and crayfish on me. But night was far, far worse. At dark, they took me fishing.

They'd row a boat down into Crappers' Swamp, a featureless, fetid stinkhole, there to look for huge, slug-eyed catfish by flashlight. "Don't touch their whiskers!" cousin Booger would yell when they got one in the boat. "The spikes will go right thru ya! Even pliers won't get them out!"

Sometimes we'd catch a blowfish. "Don't touch it!" Booger would howl, as a demon object would heave about my feet, first as big as a football, then a basketball, then a bean-bag chair. "They got poison skin!"

But bless him Booger let me keep my 10 fingers, 10 little toes. "Don't ever put your hand over the side," he warned. "Muskies will take a finger right off ya. And you

better pray your finger snaps off: otherwise a big one will drag ya right outta the boat.” He put the flashlight at his chin and beamed it up his nose, mugged an awful death face: Man Eaten by Muskies.

That was the summer I started swimming in shoes and mittens. It was the same year I stopped snorkeling.

Sun snakes shimmered on the sand bottom, that last day I scuba’d along the lake shore. It was a watery wonder world, until I saw...the bones. Right by a big cement block that safely held the neighbor’s sailboat. The little rib cage was still intact, a hideous hunk of moss or fluff bobbing in the current. It was a partially-decomposed skeleton.

“Ye gods!” I howled, clawing my way out of the water back to the dock. “It’s muskies! They’re grabbing rabbits!” Some poor Petey Cottontail – probably down to the shore for a first drink that spring–snatched by his little pink nose and dragged out to sea by the greedy duckbills.

Damn them.

If I can save one reader a finger this summer, this message won’t have been in vain. Always do a cannonball. Don’t stay in the water more than a minute. Warn your friends! Muskies are a menace. I AM NOT KIDDING.

Class D905 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)
DON'T JUST STAND THERE - Eric Nicol

Every article about Vancouver mentions that you can swim at a fine bathing beach and half an hour later be skiing up the mountain.

My pride in this remarkable civic achievement has always been nagged by the fact that I can neither swim nor ski. The things I do (eating, sleeping, swearing, etc.) I could do just as well in Big Muddy, Saskatchewan. For years I have felt like a traitor to my environment, and when people asked me if I swam or skied I have had to give them an evasive answer, such as "Yes."

Last summer I decided to learn to swim and to ski. It was too late in the season to learn to swim, but I got busy telling everybody I was going to learn to ski this winter. I talked this up so much during the fall that by the beginning of the year I felt I had skied, and I became critical of the other skiers I saw, in the newsreels.

But a couple of weeks ago at the Badminton Club, when I was enjoying the glow of well-being that always followed my telling somebody I was going to learn to ski, George, one of my audience, said:

"How about coming up Hollyburn with me Wednesday?"

I may have flinched a bit, but months of ski talk had given me a certain verbal agility, and I was able to reply smoothly:

"Well, that sounds like fun, George. Unfortunately I haven't any skis, otherwise--"

"I can lend you skis," George said.

"I haven't any boots," I said. "Otherwise--"

"I can lend you boots, everything you need," George said.

Livid at the monstrous generosity of the man, who after all barely knew me, I attacked his qualifications.

"I didn't know you could ski, George," I said.

"I'm an instructor for The Daily Province ski classes," he said.

That night I went home from badminton feeling much more tired than usual.

The next Wednesday morning it was raining. I phoned George.

"Raining, George," I said. "Rotten day for skiing, I guess, eh?"

“That’s right. Next Wednesday then, okay?”

The next Wednesday brought a fine, horrible, sunny morning. George picked me up in his car and we drove to the base of the Hollyburn ski lift. He handed me my skis, which looked much lighter when he was carrying them, and we joined the cluster of skiers waiting for chairs.

When my turn came, instead of a chair whirling around the platform there came a sort of opened basket. George held me back, saying:

“That one’s for the stretcher cases.”

I caught the chair behind the empty stretcher basket, which preceded me slowly and confidently up the hill. Swinging 20 to 30 feet above jagged stumps, the sky-hung tumbril gave me plenty of time to brood about the blind confidence people put in mechanical engineers.

“Look at the view of the city,” George shouted behind me.

Turning, I saw a magnificent panorama of the city I had been fool enough to leave. I could pick out the General Hospital very easily. I turned back and found a man waiting to catch me.

In the handsome lodge I put on the ski boots, and a Province photographer who happened to be up looking for funny pictures suggested he take one of me lying on my back with my skis in the air. I said I didn't want my picture taken like that, so we went out to the snow, George put on my skis, I tried to move, fell on my back with my skis in the air, and the photographer took my picture.

A few attempts to keep my balance on the skis persuaded me that if skiing wasn't harder than I had thought the snow certainly was.

After I had fallen enough times to satisfy everybody around that needed a good laugh, George and I took off our skis for the hike to the Hollyburn Ski Lodge, where his class was waiting. His class was all women. The hills swarmed with women, swooping about and hammering a few more nails into the coffin of the expression “weaker sex.”

Having experienced some difficulty in getting up on skis once my enormous weight hit the snow, I declined to provide burlesque comedy for a bunch of refrigerated Amazons. I retired to the cozy interior of the lodge, supplementing the group of fair, bronzed athletes with my pouchy pallor.

The young lady who gave me my coffee, with the friendliness of the fraternity said:

“There’s one thing about skiing, you’re never too old to learn. We have ladies of sixty up here skiing.”

I said: “Uh-huh,” and made a mental note to hate ladies of sixty.

As George and I started back down the trail, my legs rubbering puckishly, I took a last look at the snowy splendour of the mountainside, breathed in the deep silence that was broken only by the squeak of my vertebrae, and swore to speak of learning to swim to none but the heaviest anchors.

Class D905 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

Excerpt from **ALL I KNOW ABOUT ANIMAL BEHAVIOR** – Erma Bombeck

Wherever lost women gather-- at service stations, in obscure cornfields, and on exit ramps-- we talk about this thing men have about giving directions.

One woman told an unbelievable story one day about being lost. She stopped at a service station and said, 'I'm trying to find where my son's baseball team is practicing. I'm looking for Prindle's Field.'

The man stroked his chin and said, "Prindle's Field is about three miles west of Dake's Comers off the Hans Expressway using the Mill Road exit. You go by two stop signs, make a right at the overhead, and there's a church on the corner that used to be Presbyterian but was bought out by the Methodists. You take a jog in the road and follow through a dead end, then turn left and you'll see a little filling station called Fred's."

She looked up and observed, "That's the name of this station. Where's Prindle's Field?"

"That's what I'm getting around to telling you. You're there. It's behind the station."

The male species has a superiority complex about driving. I wish I had a dime for every joke about women drivers I've been assaulted with. They relish telling about the woman in driving school who consistently flunked her test because she couldn't be sure which was her right hand and which was her left.

Years later she met her old driving instructor, who asked if she ever figured it out.

"Certainly," she said proudly. "I drive every day now." She held up both hands. "Ruby ring, right, and diamond ring, left."

Women have their jokes about men who drive. My favorite is: If a man and a woman jumped off a building at the same time, who would reach the ground first? Answer? The woman. The man would get lost.

Douglas Corrigan never asked for directions. He just announced to a crowd of reporters and cameras in 1938 that he was headed to California, hopped into his monoplane, and to the horror of the people on the ground, made a wide circle and ended up in Dublin, Ireland.

Roy Riegels never asked. He was the USC center who was pitted against Georgia in the Rose Bowl game in 1929. When a Georgia player fumbled, Riegels came up with the ball and started a dash to the goal line.

Unfortunately, it was the wrong one. His own man finally stopped him on the three-yard line.

And while we're talking about heroes, Christopher Columbus wasn't all that swift.

Turn the guy around in the Bahamas a couple of times and he couldn't find America if it was on fire.

You can say what you want about women's lack of direction, but it was a man who was found by a police officer recently sitting in his car along Interstate 8 where it stops at Ocean Beach in San Diego. He had a map on his lap and a perplexed look on his face. The motorist told the officer he had come from New Mexico and was looking for Arizona. He said he must have missed it.

I don't care what they say about animals having great sonar powers and whales showing up in Baja every year. How do we know they want to go to Mexico? For all we know, they were headed for Hawaii but the male was too proud to ask for directions.

Class D905 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)
I DUB THIS DOMINION...MESOPELAGIA – Arthur Black

Let me run some possible names past you. How do you feel about It . . . Alhertonia? Victoracia? Alexandrina? No? Then how about Alhonia or Niagarcntia? Nothing tickle your fancy there? Then what do you say to Transatlantia? Laurentia? Colonia? Or--and this may give it all away--Canadensia?

You guessed it. One tiny modification in the history of British North America and Any of the Above might have been the name of your country . Yep. . . if they'd passed around one more bottle of Scotch at that table during the Confederation conference, any one of those might be stamped on your passport today. They were all at one time or another seriously put forward as possible names for this country--and I haven't even mentioned the really weird candidates like Efisga, Tuponia, and Mesopelagia.

Names are fascinating - even more so when you realize how some of the more famous ones are firmly rooted in pure human confusion. The name we finally ended up with, for instance. One theory has it that we're all called Canadians because of a misunderstanding between Jacques Cartier and an Indian chief. Story goes that Cartier asked the chief what this place was called. The chief, thinking Cartier meant the Indian encampment on the shore, replied, "Kanata."

"Kanata" it is, Cartier decided, not realizing he'd just saddled a continent with the Huron/Iroquois word that means "a collection of huts."

Much the same story for the Yucatan peninsula, down in Mexico. A sixteenth-century Spanish captain asked the natives he found on shore what they called their country. "*Yuc a tan*," he heard one mutter. He thought it sounded like a pretty good name and wrote it down. It was actually Mayan dialect for "Anybody here know what this guy is talking about?"

Ah, well. As Humpty Dumpty said in through the Looking Glass, "when I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean --neither more nor less!"

John Desmond Lewis worked a variation on that theme. Mr. Lewis was a candidate in a British Parliamentary by-election in Liverpool recently, who decided to liven up an otherwise dull campaign by changing his name. So he did--to. . . Tarquin Fintimlinbinwhin bim lin Bus Stop-F Tang Olé Biscuit Barrel. Mr. Lewis never fully

explained why he changed his name to that. . .and I guess it won't matter a great deal to posterity , because Tarquin Fintimlinbinwhin bim lin Bus Stop-F Tang ole Biscuit Barrel lost the election. Though he did pull in 223 votes. . . which proves, I suppose, that eccentricity is alive and well and living in darkened ballot boxes in Liverpool.

In any case, John Desmond Lewis's name change for election purposes was not the most inspired in the annals of world politics. I believe that honour must go to Luther D. Knox of Louisiana.

I don't know much first-hand about Luther, but I wouldn't be surprised to learn that he's doing well in advertising. Or used cars. I know that he's a first-rate judge of voter disaffection.

In 1979, while a candidate for municipal office, Luther applied to have his name entered at the bottom of the election ballot.

His new name, that is. Luther had had it officially changed.

To. . . None of the Above. That's right--Luther D. Knox's new name was None of the Above. His election opponents protested and the Louisiana attorney general agreed with them, ruling that the state has a right to protect itself against candidates who were "fraudulent, confusing, and frivolous." Of course I don't have to tell you that the ruse didn't work--if it had, None of the Above would be governor of Louisiana today--if not President of the United States.

When you think of it, it's a good job Luther Knox's brainstorm didn't occur to our own Fathers of Confederation sitting around in Charlottetown 120-odd years ago. They might have gone for it. And it's traumatic enough travelling abroad without having to deal with questions like "Country of origin, sir:" "Ahh . . . None of the Above."

I think I'd rather be known as a Mesopelagian.

Class D905 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)

Excerpt from **THE MOUSE THAT ROARED** - Leonard Wibberley

"Mr. Bascomb," said Gloriana suddenly, "how did my father propose to my mother?"

"Well," said Pierce surprised, "I wasn't there, but that doesn't make much difference because plenty of other people were. It was at the annual archery contest, and your mother, who came, as you know, from the southern end of the duchy, was a competitor. She did so well that in the mixed finals she was matched against your father. Your father knew your mother by sight, as everybody is known in Grand Fenwick, though they had not been formally introduced until the day of the contest. Your father was to shoot first for the grand prize, and his arrow pierced the butt in the dead center of the bull's eye. Your mother's arrow, however, was so well aimed that it split his, and according to the rules of the contest, she was awarded the prize of the silver bow. When it was presented to her, he came down from his chair, picked her up and, holding her aloft before all the people, cried out, 'Gloriana has won one prize, but I claim two. I vow before you all that I shall marry her.' That was the way it was.

"But I couldn't possible lift Tully," Gloriana said, half to herself. If Pierce heard, he made no comment, but there was the suggestion of a twinkle in his eyes.

"Mr. Bascomb, please don't think me rude, but how did you propose to Mrs.

Bascomb?"

"To tell you the truth," Pierce replied with a smile, "I never did. She proposed to me."

"How did she do it?" Gloriana asked eagerly.

"I'm not quite sure of the details. I was busy writing my first book at the time. I loved her, of course, but I didn't realize that I loved her. I had got to a chapter on robins and was having some difficulty because I was not sure of the incubation period of the eggs. I have always found with writing that when I get to a difficult part, it is better to just walk away for a while and the difficulty will resolve itself. I decided to call on Elizabeth's father, and went over to his house. We talked about a few trifling things and then he said, 'By the way, Pierce, I have been asked by my daughter whether I would consent to become your father-in-law. I welcome the proposal myself provided it coincides with your desires.' I did not quite grasp what he was saying and the poor man had to repeat the phrase two or three times before I caught his meaning. Then, of course, I was delighted - so delighted indeed that I kissed him, as I recall it, and shook his daughter's hand."

He laughed so heartily that he had to wipe his eyes and while he was still laughing Tully came in. He hesitated, stooping in the doorway which he filled with his bulk, on seeing Gloriana.

"Come in, son," said Pierce. "Gloriana has called to see you."

"Oh," said Tully. He entered and went over to the fireplace, where he stood with an arm upon the mantelpiece.

Gloriana had a feeling of panic. She did not know what to say, how to begin, what conversational route to follow to lead up to the important object of her visit. She wanted to fly from the room, and was almost on the verge of doing so when Tully said gently, "If there is any way I can be of service, your Grace, I am yours to command."

"I have an important matter to discuss with you," Gloriana whispered, feeling completely wretched. "It's a matter of state. But it's something personal too. It's more personal really than it is a matter of state."

"Whatever it may be," said Tully, "I will do all in my power to help."

"It's not really a matter of helping. It's a matter of cooperating - of working with me."

"Working with you."

"Yes. Well, not exactly that." She looked appealingly at the older Bascomb.

"You say it," she pleaded. "You say it, like they said it for you."

Pierce looked from her to his son. "Gloriana wants me to become her father-in-law - that's it, isn't it?"

"Yes," Gloriana whispered.

"Her what?" asked Tully.

Her father-in-law."

"Father-in-law! But you're my father."

"Precisely, and you are my only son."

Tully looked for a second from one to the other and then walked over to Gloriana and, taking her two hands, raised her to her feet.

"My father accepts proudly," he said, "his son humbly."

Class D905 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)
MACKENZIE KING REPLIES - W. L. Mackenzie King

The Prime Minister, for all his difficulties at the time, could still be whimsical when he felt so inclined. The sober intensity of the dedicated public servant was occasionally belied by a lighter touch in his private correspondence. While the Petersen contract was still being debated in the House, King received an awkwardly printed letter addressed to "Dear Government" from a little girl in South Africa who was worried about the redskins being locked upon reserves and not being allowed to shoot "Grizzily Bears." King's reply was worthy of A. A. Milne:

Ottawa, March 28th, 1925.

Dear Elizabeth:

I cannot begin to tell you how very pleased the members of the Government of Canada were when they received your letter.

Some of the letters they receive are so very hard to read—not beautifully written as yours was—and sometimes people ask for the most extraordinary things! You would hardly believe me, I am sure, were I to tell you all the things the people in Canada ask for!

The only difficulty about your letter was that each Minister thought he should answer it. However, I was very firm and told them I was the one to do it.

I then spoke, at once, to the Minister of the Interior, who looks after Indians, and he tells me, Elizabeth, that there is nothing you need worry about. It's like this. Supposing the Indians had all gone a-hunting, someone might come and settle on their lands or steal their tents—all kinds of dreadful things—while they were away. So the Government just puts up big signs "This land is reserved for our Indians"—and no one dares to touch anything. But the Indians are never shut up, Elizabeth, and if any Grizzly Bears come, they can always shoot them if they feel like doing so. You say you are coming to Canada when you are fifteen. That is splendid. The Minister of the Interior says that if he is still Minister of the Interior (you never can be quite sure), he will see that we have a good supply of Indians on hand.

The Minister of Defence says that if he is still Minister of Defence, he will give them plenty of ammunition with which to shoot the bears. And I feel sure that someone else—probably the Minister of Agriculture—will arrange for the Grizzly Bears—so that's all right, Elizabeth.

But there is something I want you to tell me—about South Africa. This Government has never been there but perhaps some day they might feel like going. Now is it true, Elizabeth, that when you have your tea in the garden, lions sometimes come and sit down beside you?

And when you go for a walk, do you have to be very careful, for fear a rhinoceros

or a hippopotamus might want to walk with you?

It would be apt to make the Government very nervous. There is so much you must tell me when you come. Of course, I know you always ride on elephants.

But I shall have to say good-bye for now. It was very nice of your to write (we all thought the letter paper beautiful!) Will you let me thank you again for the Government and, with all good wishes, say at present good-bye Elizabeth.

Yours sincerely,
W. L. Mackenzie King.

Class D905 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 9 and 10 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D907 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grades Nine and Ten
Psalm 146

Class D907 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grades Nine and Ten (Continued)
Exodus 2:11-22

Class D907 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grades Nine and Ten (Continued)
Luke 3:41-52

Class D907 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grades Nine and Ten (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

ENGLISH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR

GRADES ELEVEN AND TWELVE

When choosing their pieces, it is recommended that entrants consider consulting the following excellent sources of poetry:

- 1) the RRDFPA suggested selections starting on page 248 of this Resource Manual
- 2) the tables of suggested 20th/21st Century and pre-20th Century selections on this page
- 3) the AMAF (Manitoba) 2024 Speech Arts Suggested Repertoire Lists
- 4) *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, or any published anthology of comparable literary merit
- 5) reliable and trustworthy literary websites such as:
 - a. Poetry in Voice <https://poetryinvoice.ca/read/poems>
 - b. Poetry 180 <https://www.loc.gov/programs/poetry-and-literature/poet-laureate/poet-laureate-projects/poetry-180/all-poems/>

Selections will NOT be accepted if:

- the work is unpublished and/or of unknown origin.
- the work does not meet the criteria / difficulty level of the entrant's class
- the intent of the work is to disseminate racist, sexist, political, or any otherwise inappropriate propaganda.

SPOKEN POETRY, PRE-20th CENTURY, GRADE 9-ADULT

Title	Author	Book Title	Publisher
"The Passionate Shepherd to His Love"	Christopher Marlowe	<i>Approaching Literature</i> , 2 nd ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"To His Coy Mistress"	Andrew Marvell	<i>Approaching Literature</i> , 2 nd ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd"	Sir Walter Raleigh	<i>Approaching Literature</i> , 2 nd ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"A Valediction Forbidding Mourning"	John Donne	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"The Flea"	John Donne	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Ode to a Nightingale"	John Keats	<i>The Norton Anthology of English Literature</i> , 8 th ed	W.W. Norton and Company
"Frost at Midnight"	Samuel Taylor Coleridge	<i>The Norton Anthology of English Literature</i> , 8 th ed	W.W. Norton and Company
"I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud"	William Wordsworth	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Dover Beach"	Matthew Arnold	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"How Do I Love Thee?"	Elizabeth Barrett Browning	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada

“My Last Duchess”	Robert Browning	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
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SPOKEN POETRY, 20th/21st CENTURY, GRADE 9-ADULT

Title	Author	Book Title	Publisher
“Hiroshima Exit”	Joy Kogawa	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
“A Call to Tea”	Maxine Tynes	<i>Woman Talking Woman</i>	Pottersfield Press
“Barbie Doll”	Marge Piercy	<i>To Be of Use</i>	Doubleday
“Hate Poem”	Julie Sheehan	<i>Orient Point</i>	W. W. Norton
“i carry your heart with me”	e.e. cummings	<i>Complete Poems: 1904-1962</i>	Liveright Publishing
“Diving into the Wreck”	Adriene Rich	<i>Approaching Literature, 2nd ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin’s
“Bored”	Margaret Atwood	<i>The Bedford Introd’n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin’s
“February”	Margaret Atwood	<i>The Bedford Introd’n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin’s
“Eighteen Months”	Joelle Barron	<i>Ritual Lights</i>	Goose Lane Editions
“The Larynx”	Alice Jones	<i>The Bedford Introd’n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin’s
“Machines”	Michael Donaghy	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
“Degrees of Green”	Jeannette Armstrong	<i>Breath Tracks</i>	Theytus Books
“Did I Miss Anything?”	Tom Wayman	<i>Did I Miss Anything?: Selected Poems 1973-1993</i>	Harbour Publishing
“Please Come Late”	Hugo Williams	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
“Bedecked”	Victoria Redel	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
“Dinner Out”	Christopher Howell	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
“Smoking”	Elton Glaser	<i>The Best American Poetry 1997</i>	Scribner
“Onions”	William Matthews	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
“The Dover Bitch”	Anthony Hecht	<i>The Bedford Introd’n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin’s

Class D1101 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 11 and 12
ULYSSES - Alfred Tennyson

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail;
There gloom the dark, broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me,--
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads,-- you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honor and his toil.
Death closes all; but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks;
The long day wanes; the slow moon climbs; the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends.
'T is not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are,--
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

THE IDENTIFICATION - Roger McGough

So you think it's Stephen?
Then I'd best make sure
Be on the safe side as it were.
Ah, there's been a mistake. The hair
you see, its black, now Stephen's fair. . .
What's that? The explosion?
Of course, burnt black. Silly of me.
I should have known. Then let's get on.

The face, is that the face I ask?
That mask of charred wood
blistered, scarred could
that have been a child's face?
The sweater, where intact, looks
in fact all too familiar.
But one must be sure.

The scoutbelt. Yes that's his.
I recognise the studs he hammered in
not a week ago. At the age
when boys get clothes-conscious
now you know. It's almost
certainly Stephen. But one must
be sure. Remove all trace of doubt.
Pull out every splinter of hope.

Pockets. Empty the pockets.
Handkerchief? Could be any schoolboy's.
Dirty enough. Cigarettes?
Oh this can't be Stephen.
I don't allow him to smoke you see.
He wouldn't disobey me. Not his father.

But that's his penknife. That's his alright.
And that's his key on the keyring
Gran gave him just the other night.
So this must be him.

I think I know what happened
.about the cigarettes
No doubt he was minding them
for one of the older boys.
Yes that's it.
That's him.
That's our Stephen.

Class D1101 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)

PHENOMENAL WOMAN - Maya Angelou

Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.
I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size
But when I start to tell them,
They think I'm telling lies.
I say,
It's in the reach of my arms,
The span of my hips,
The stride of my step,
The curl of my lips.
I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

I walk into a room
Just as cool as you please,
And to a man,
The fellows stand or
Fall down on their knees.
Then they swarm around me,
A hive of honey bees.
I say,
It's the fire in my eyes,
And the flash of my teeth,
The swing in my waist,
And the joy in my feet.
I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

Men themselves have wondered
What they see in me.
They try so much
But they can't touch
My inner mystery.
When I try to show them,
They say they still can't see.
I say,
It's in the arch of my back,
The sun of my smile,
The ride of my breasts,
The grace of my style.
I'm a woman
Phenomenally.

Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

Now you understand
Just why my head's not bowed.
I don't shout or jump about
Or have to talk real loud.
When you see me passing,
It ought to make you proud.
I say,
It's in the click of my heels,
The bend of my hair,
The palm of my hand,
The need for my care.
'Cause I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

Class D1101 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)

THE BULL CALF - Irving Layton

The thing could barely stand. Yet taken
from his mother and the barn smells
he still impressed with his pride,
With the promise of sovereignty in the way
his head moved to take us in.
The fierce sunlight tugging the maize from the ground
licked at his shapely flanks.
He was too young for all that pride.
I thought of the deposed Richard II.

"No money in bull calves," Freeman had said.
The visiting clergyman rubbed the nostrils
now snuffing pathetically at the windless day.
"A pity," he sighed.
My gaze slipped off his hat toward the empty sky
that circled over the black knot of men,
over us and the calf, waiting for the first blow.

Struck
the bull calf drew in his thin forelegs
as if gathering strength for a mad rush...
tottered... raised his darkening eyes to us,
and I saw we were at the far end
of his frightened look, growing smaller and smaller
till we were only the ponderous mallet
that flicked his bleeding ear
and pushed him over on his side, stiffly,
like a block of wood.

Below the hill's crest
the river snuffled on the improvised beach.
We dug a deep pit and threw the dead calf into it.
It made a wet sound, a sepulchral gurgle,
as the warm sides bulged and flattened.
Settled, the bull calf lay as if asleep,
one foreleg over the other,
bereft of pride and so beautiful now,
without movement, perfectly still in the cool pit,
I turned away and wept.

Class D1101 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)
THE TRAP - William Beyer

"That red fox,
Back in the furthest field,
Caught in my hidden trap,
Was half mad with fear.
During the night
He must have ripped his foot
From the cold steel.
I saw him early this morning,
Dragging his hurt leg,
Bleeding a path across the gold wheat,
Whining with the pain;
His eyes like cracked marbles.
I followed as he moved,
His thin body pulled to one side
In a weird helplessness.
He hit the wire fence,
Pushing through it
Into the deep, morning corn,
And was gone."
The old man looked around the kitchen
To see if anyone was listening.
"Crazy red fox,
Will kill my chickens no longer.
Will die somewhere in hiding."

He lit the brown tobacco carefully,
Watching the blue smoke rise and disappear
In the movement of the air.
Scratching his red nose slowly,
Thinking something grave for a long moment,
He stared out of the bright window.
"He won't last long with that leg," he said.
The old man turned his head
To see if his wife was listening.
But she was deep in thought,
Her stained fingers
Pressing red berries in a pie.
He turned his white head
Toward the open window again.
"Guess I'll ride into the back field, first thing.
Some mighty big corn back there this year.
Mighty big corn."
His wife looked up from her work,
Smiled almost secretly to herself,

And finished packing the ripe berries
Into the pale crust.

Class D1101 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)

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.

Class D1101 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)
IN THE NIGHT WATCHES - Charles G. D. Roberts

When the little spent winds are at rest in the tamarack tree
In the still of the night,
And the moon in her waning is wan and misshapen,
And out on the lake
The loon floats in a glimmer of light,
And the solitude sleeps,--
Then I lie in my bunk wide awake,
And my long thoughts stab me with longing,
Alone in my shack by the marshes of lone Margaree.

Far, oh so far in the forests of silence they lie,
The lake and the marshes of lone Margaree,
And no man comes my way.
Of spruce logs my cabin is builded securely;
With slender spruce saplings its bark roof is battened down surely;
In its rafters the mice are at play,
With rustlings furtive and shy, In the still of the night.

Awake, wide-eyed, I watch my window-square,
Pallid and grey.
(O Memory, pierce me not! O Longing, stab me not!
O ache of longing memory, pass me by, and spare,
And let me sleep!)

Once and again the loon cries from the lake.
Though no breath stirs
The ghostly tamaracks and the brooding firs,
Something as light as air leans on my door.

Is it an owl's wing brushes at my latch?
Are they of foxes, those light feet that creep
Outside, light as fall'n leaves
On the forest floor?
From the still lake I hear
A feeding trout rise to some small night fly.
The splash, how sharply clear!

Almost I see the wide, slow ripple circling to the shore.

The spent winds are at rest. But my heart, spent and faint, is unresting.
Long, long a stranger to peace. . .
O so Dear, O so Far, O so Unforgotten-in-dream,
Somewhere in the world, somewhere beyond reach of my questing.
Beyond seas, beyond years,
You will hear my heart in your sleep, and you will stir restlessly;
You will stir at the touch of my hand on your hair;
You will wake with a start,
With my voice in your ears
And an old, old ache at your heart,
(In the still of the night)
And your pillow wet with tears.

Class D1101 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)
TO A WATER FOWL - William Cullen Bryant

Whither, 'midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,--
The desert and illimitable air,--
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fann'd
At that far height, the cold thin atmosphere:
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end,
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reed shall bend
Soon o'er thy sheltered nest.

Class D1101 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D1102 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 11 and 12
MACAVITY: THE MYSTERY CAT - T. S. Eliot

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

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

Macavity's a ginger cat, he's very tall and thin;
You would know him if you saw him, for his eyes are sunken in.
His brow is deeply lined with thought, his head is highly domed;
His coat is dusty from neglect, his whiskers are uncombed.
He sways his head from side to side, with movements like a snake;
And when you think he's half asleep, he's always wide awake.
Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
For he's a fiend in feline shape, a monster of depravity.
You may meet him in a by-street, you may see him in the square
But when a crime's discovered, then *Macavity's not there!*

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

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

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
There never was a Cat of such deceitfulness and suavity.

He always has an alibi, and one or two to spare:
At whatever time the deed took place-MACAVITY WASN'T THERE!
And they say that all the Cats whose wicked deeds are widely known
(I might mention Mungojerrie, I might mention Griddlebone}
Are nothing more than agents for the Cat who all the time
Just controls their operations: the Napoleon of Crime!

Class D1102 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)
CASEY AT THE BAT - Ernest L. Thayer

It looked extremely rocky for the Mudville nine that day;
The score stood two to four, with but an inning left to play.
So, when Cooney died at second, and Burrows did the same,
A pallor wreathed the features of the patrons of the game.

A straggling few got up to go, leaving there the rest,
With that hope which springs eternal within the human breast.
for they thought: "If only Casey could get a whack at that,"
they'd put even money now, with Casey at the bat.

But Flynn preceded Casey, and likewise so did Blake,
And the former was a pudd'n and the latter was a fake.
So on that stricken multitude a deathlike silence sat;
For there seemed but little chance of Casey's getting to the bat.

But Flynn let drive a "single," to the wonderment of all.
And the much-despised Blakey "tore the cover off the ball."
And when the dust had lifted, and they saw what had occurred,
There was Blakey safe at second, and Flynn a-huggin' third.

Then from the gladdened multitude went up a joyous yell--
It rumbled in the mountaintops, it rattled in the dell;
It struck upon the hillside and rebounded on the flat;
For Casey, mighty Casey was advancing to the bat.

There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place,
There was pride in Casey's bearing and a smile on Casey's face;
And when responding to the cheers he lightly doffed his hat.
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat."

Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt,
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt;
Then when the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
Defiance glanced in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.

And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,
And Casey stood a watching it in haughty grandeur there.
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped;

"That ain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one," the umpire said.

From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,
Like the beating of the storm waves on the stern and distant shore.
"Kill him! kill the umpire!" shouted someone on the stand;
And it's likely they'd have killed him had not Casey raised his hand.

With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage shone;
He stilled the rising tumult, he made the game go on;
He signalled to the pitcher, and once more the spheroid flew;
But Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said, "Strike Two."

"Fraud!" cried the maddened thousands, and the echo answered "Fraud!"
But one scornful look from Casey and the audience was awed;
They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles strain,
And they knew that Casey wouldn't let the ball go by again.
The sneer is gone from Casey's lips, his teeth are clenched in hate,
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate;
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow.

Oh, somewhere in this favoured land the sun is shining bright,
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light;
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout,
But there is no joy in Mudville--Mighty Casey has struck out.

Class D1102 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)

HOUSEWORK - Sheldon Harnick

You know, there are times when we happen to be
just sitting there quietly watching TV,
when the program we're watching will stop for awhile
and suddenly someone appears with a smile,
and starts to show us how terribly urgent
it is to buy some brand of detergent,
or soap or cleanser or cleaner or powder or paste or wax or bleach,
to help with the housework.

Now most of the time it's a lady we see,
who's doing the housework on TV.
She's cheerfully scouring a skillet or two,
or she's polishing pots 'till they gleam like new,
or she's scrubbing the tub or she's mopping the floors,
or she's wiping the stains from the walls and the doors,
or she's washing the windows, the dishes, the clothes,
or waxing the furniture 'till it just glows,
or cleaning the "fridge" or the stove or the sink,
with a light-hearted smile, and a friendly wink.

And she's doing her best to make us think
that her soap, or detergent or cleanser or cleaner or powder or paste or wax or bleach,
is the best kind of soap, or detergent or cleanser or cleaner or powder or paste or wax or
bleach,
that there is in the whole wide world!

And maybe it is...
and maybe it isn't...
and maybe it does what they say it will do...
but I'll tell you one thing I KNOW is true:
The lady we see when we're watching TV
The lady who smiles as she scours or scrubs or rubs or washes or wipes or mops or dusts
or cleans,
or whatever she does on our TV screens—
that lady is smiling because she's an actress.
And she's earning money for learning those speeches
that mention those wonderful soaps and detergents and cleansers and cleaners and
powders and pastes and waxes and bleaches.

So the very next time you happen to be
just sitting there quietly watching TV,
and you see some nice lady who smiles
as she scours or scrubs or rubs or washes or wipes or mops or dusts or cleans,
REMEMBER:

Nobody smiles doing housework but those ladies you see on TV.
Because even if the soap, the detergent or cleanser or cleaner or powder or paste or wax
or bleach
that you use is the very best one—
housework is just no fun.

Children,
when you have a house of your own
make sure, when there's housework to do,
that you won't have to do it alone.
Little boys, little girls,
when you're big husbands and wives,
if you want all the days of your lives
to seem sunny as summer weather
make sure, when there's housework to do,
that you do it together.

Class D1102 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)

PYGMALION - Albert G. Miller

Pygmalion thought that women were a great abomination.
What little charm they had, he thought, was always on vacation.
He swore he'd never say "I do" before the bridal altar
And said he'd rather hammer stones than wear a husband's halter.

He took a block of ivory and many months he sculpted,
And what he had when he got done impressed him so he gulped.
For Pyg had carved a woman, an extremely lovely creature,
And doggone realistic, every hillock, curve, and feature.

The figure was his masterpiece. He kissed it and caressed it
And gave it pearls and emeralds, but first of course, he dressed it.
He spoke of her as "Mrs." and he played the good provider.
He tucked her into bed at night and hopped right in beside her .

The folks at Venus' Festival heard young Pygmalion urgin'
The Goddess to create a woman like his ivory virgin.
He rated high with Venus, so she simply up and took
Her wand and mumbled something, and said, "Go right home and look."

But why go any further? It would be undignified,
For Venus blessed the nuptials, and the family multiplied.
Now this is pretty fiction, but don't let your Mrs. catch you
In the parlor after midnight making sheep's eyes at a statue.

Class D1102 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)

WARTY BLIGGENS THE TOAD – Don Marquis

i met a toad
the other day by the name
of warty bliggens
he was sitting under
a toadstool
feeling contented
he explained that when the cosmos
was created
that toadstool was especially
planned for his personal
shelter from sun and rain
thought out and prepared
for him

do not tell me
said warty bliggens
that there is not a purpose

in the universe
the thought is blasphemy

a little more
conversation revealed
that warty bliggens
considers himself to be
the center of the said
universe
the earth exists
to grow toadstools for him
to sit under
the sun to give him light
by day and the moon
and wheeling constellations
to make beautiful
the night for the sake of
warty bliggens

to what act of yours
do you impute
this interest on the part
of the creator
of the universe
i asked him
why is it that you
are so greatly favoured

ask rather
said warty bliggens
what the universe
has done to deserve me
if i were a
human being i would
not laugh
too complacently
at poor warty bliggens
or similar
absurdities
have only too often
lodged in the crinkles
of the human cerebrum
archy

Class D1102 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)

THE DAY THE MOSQUITOES ATE ANGELA JANE – Sean O’Huigin

Angela Jane
was a mean
little kid
she bit and
she spit
then she ran
and she hid
she yelled at
her mother
she screamed
at her dad
oh
Angela Jane
was awfully
bad
she’d go in
the garden and
eat all the
weeds
she pulled up
the flowers
and stomped on
their seeds
she chopped
all the trees
and poured paint
on their roots
she bit all
the butterflies
put on her boots
and ran through
the garden
kicking about
pulling up
vegetables
then she would
shout
“I’m bad and
I’m horrid
I like it
that way”
she yelled that
quite loudly
one certain
fall day

when the
queen of
mosquitoes
was trying
to sleep
the shouts
woke her up
and she started
to creep
up the leaf
she’d been
sleeping on
looking around
to locate
the source of
that horrible
sound
her eyes fell
on Angela
red in the face
sweat pouring
off her
all over the
place
the queen of
mosquitoes
listened and
looked
she sharpened
her stickler
made sure
it was hooked
on quite firmly
then buzzed
all the rest
of her clan
they met in
the trees and
started to plan
the queen said
“that child
issss awfully
mean
sssshe’sss
full of more

blood
than I've ever
ssseen and
it'ssss sssscertain
her blood
isss nasssty and
bad
the kind to
make any
mossssquito
quite glad
i ssssuggessst
we get her
and drink her
quite dry
that horrible
blood will
help ussss to
fly and to
ssssting with
more power
than ever before
then we'll
have the
sssstrength
to
go after more
we'll bit all
the people
all over the world
mosssquitoes
ssshall rule
thanksss to that
horrid girl"
the sky soon
was darkened
by billions
of wings
mosquitoes
were everywhere
sharpening their
stings
the sound was
so loud
it roared through
the land

people below
did not understand
what all of those
bugs were planning
to do
that they wanted
to conquer the
world
even you
the bugs
swirled and
crowded
they flew towards
the yard
where Angela Jane
was working
so hard
pulling tails
off the cats
and pinching
their ears
she was laughing
so loudly that
she didn't
hear
the thunder
of bugs descending
on her
she just yelled

Class D1102 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)
THE UNKNOWN CITIZEN - W. H. Auden

He was found by the Bureau of Statistics to be
One against whom there was no official complaint,
And all the reports on his conduct agree
That, in the modern sense of an old-fashioned word, he was a saint,
For in everything he did he served the "Greater Community
Except for the War, till the day he retired
He worked in a factory and never got fired,
But satisfied his employers, Fudge Motors Inc.
Yet he wasn't a scab or odd in his views,
For his Union reports that he paid his dues,
(Our report on his Union shows it was sound)
And Our Social Psychology workers found
That he was popular with his mates and liked a drink.
The Press are convinced that he bought a paper every day
And that his reactions to advertisements were normal in every way.
Policies taken out in his name prove that he was fully insured,
And his Health-card shows he was once in hospital but left it cured.
Both Producers Research and High-Grade Living declare
He was fully sensible to the advantages of the Installment Plan
And had everything necessary to the Modern Man,
A Phonograph, a radio, a car and a frigidaire.
Our researchers into Public Opinion are content
That he held the Proper opinions for the time of year;
When there was peace, he was for peace; when there was war, he went.
He was married and added five children to the population,
Which our Eugenist says was the right number for a parent of his generation,
And our teachers report that he never interfered with their education.
Was he free? Was he happy? The question is absurd:
Had anything been wrong, we should certainly have heard.

Class D1102 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)
NOAH - Roy Daniells

They gathered around and told him not to do it,
They formed a committee and tried to take control,
They cancelled his building permit and they stole
His plans. I sometimes wonder he got through it.
He told them wrath was coming, they would rue it,
He begged them to believe the tides would roll,
He offered them passage to his destined goal,
A new world. They were finished and he knew it.
All to no end.
And then the rain began.

A spatter at first that barely wet the soil,
Then showers, quick rivulets lacing the town,
Then deluge universal. The old man
Arthritic from his years of scorn and toil
Leaned from the admiral's walk and watched them drown.

Class D1102 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D1104 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 11 and 12

Excerpt from **THE BLACKWATER POT** - Charles G. D. Roberts

The log to which he was bound was on the extreme outer edge of the procession, and Henderson realized that there was every probability of its being at once crowded out the moment it came to the exit. With a desperate effort he succeeded in catching the log nearest to him, pushing it ahead, and at last, just as they came opposite the cleft, steering his own log into its place. The next second it shot quivering forth into the sluice, and Henderson with a sudden cold sweat jumping out all over him, circled slowly past the awful cleft. A shout of ironical congratulation came to him from the watchers on the brink above. But he hardly heard it, and heeded it not at all. He was striving frantically, paddling forward with one hand and backward with the other, to steer his sluggish, deep-floating log from the outer to the inner circle. He had already observed that to be on the outer edge would mean instant doom for him, because the outward suction was stronger underneath than on the surface, and his weighted log caught its force before the others did. His arms were so bound that only from the elbows down could he move them freely. He did, however, by a struggle which left him gasping, succeed in working in behind another log - just in time to see that log, too, sucked out into the abyss, and himself once more on the deadly outer flank of the circling procession.

This time Henderson did not know whether the watchers on the brink laughed or not as he won past the cleft. He was scheming desperately to devise some less exhausting tactics. Steadily and rhythmically, but with his utmost force, he back-paddled with both hands and feet, till the progress of his log was almost stopped. Then he succeeded in catching yet another log as it passed and manoeuvring in behind it. By this time he was halfway around the pot again. Yet again, by his desperate backpaddling, he checked his progress, and presently, by most cunning manipulation, managed to edge in behind yet another log, so that when he again came round to the cleft there were two logs between him and doom. The outermost of these, however, was dragged instantly forth into the fury of the sluice, thrust forward, as it was, by the grip of the suction upon Henderson's own deep log. Feeling himself on the point of utter exhaustion, he nevertheless continued back-paddling, and steering and working inward, till he had succeeded in getting three files of logs between himself and the outer edge. Then, almost blind and with the blood roaring so loud in his ears that he could hardly hear the trampling of the falls, he hung on his log, praying that strength might flow back speedily into his veins and nerves.

Not till he had twice more made the circuit of the pot, and twice more seen a log sucked out from his very elbow to leap into the white horror of the abyss, did Henderson stir. The brief stillness, controlled by his will, had rested him for the moment. He was cool now, keen to plan, cunning to husband his forces. Up to the very last second that he could he would maintain his hold on life, counting always on the chance of the unexpected.

With now just one log remaining between himself and death, he let himself go past the cleft, and saw that one log go out. Then, being close to the wall of the pot, he tried to delay his progress by clutching at the stone with his left hand and by dragging upon it with his foot. But the stone surface was worn so smooth by the age-long polishing of the eddy that these efforts availed him little. Before he realized it he was almost round again, and only by the most desperate struggle did he succeed in saving himself. There was no other log near by this time for him to seize and thrust forward in his place. It was simply a question of his restricted paddling, with hands and feet, against the outward draught of the current. For nearly a minute the log hung in doubt just before the opening, the current sucking at its head to turn it outward, and Henderson paddling against it not only with hands and feet, but with every ounce of will and nerve that his body contained. At last, inch lay inch, he conquered. His log moved past the gate of death; and dimly, again, that ironical voice came down to him, piercing the roar.

Once past, Henderson fell to back-paddling again - not so violently now - till other logs came by within his reach and he could work himself into temporary safety behind them. He was soon forced to the conviction that if he strove at just a shade under his utmost he was able to hold his own and keep one log always between himself and the opening. But what was now his utmost, he realized, would very soon be far beyond his powers. Well, there was nothing to do but to keep on trying. Around and around, and again and again around the terrible, smooth, deliberate circuit he went, sparing himself every ounce of effort that he could, and always shutting his eyes as the log beside him plunged out into the sluice. Gradually, then, he felt himself becoming stupefied by the ceaselessly recurring horror, with the prolonged suspense between. He must sting himself back to the full possession of his faculties by another burst of fierce effort. Fiercely he caught at log after log, without a let-up, till, luck having favoured him for once, he found himself on the inner instead of the outer edge of the procession. Then an idea flashed into his fast-clouding brain, and he cursed himself for not having thought of it before. At the very centre of the eddy, of course, there must be a sort of core of stillness. By a vehement struggle he attained it and avoided crossing it. Working gently and warily he kept the log right across the axis of the eddy, where huddled a crowd of chips and sticks. Here the log turned slowly, very slowly, on its own centre; and for a few seconds of exquisite relief Henderson let himself sink into a sort of lethargy. He was roused by a sudden shot, and the spat of a heavy bullet into the log about three inches before his head.

Class D1104 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)

Excerpt from **THE GRAPES OF WRATH** - John Steinbeck

"Come on," said Pa, "come on in now. She got to see you. I got to see her face when she sees you. Come on. She'll yell breakfast in a minute. I heard her slap the salt pork in the pan a good time ago." He led the way across the fine-dusted ground. There was no porch on this house, just a step and then the door; a chopping block beside the door, its surface matted and soft from years of chopping. The graining in the sheathing wood was high, for the dust had cut down the softer wood. The smell of burning willow was in the air, and, as the three men neared the door, the smell of frying side meat and the smell of high brown biscuits and the sharp smell of coffee rolling in the pot. Pa stepped up into the open doorway and stood there blocking it with his wide short body. He said, "Ma, there's a coupla fellas jus' come along the road, an' they wonder if we could spare a bite."

Tom heard his mother's voice, the remembered cool, calm drawl, friendly and humble. "Let 'em come," she said. "We got a'plenty. Tell 'em they got to wash their han's. The bread is done. I'm jus' takin' up the side-meat now." And the sizzle of the angry grease came from the stove.

Pa stepped inside, clearing the door, and Tom looked in at his mother. She was lifting the curling slices of pork from the frying pan. The oven door was open, and a great pan of high brown biscuits stood waiting there. She looked out the door, but the sun was behind Tom, and she saw only a dark figure outlined by the bright yellow sunlight. She nodded pleasantly. "Come in," she said. "Jus' lucky I made plenty bread this morning."

Tom stood looking in. Ma was heavy, but not fat; thick with child-bearing and work. She wore a loose Mother Hubbard of gray cloth in which there had once been colored flowers, but the color was washed out now, so that the small flowered pattern was only a little lighter gray than the background. The dress came down to her ankles, and her strong, broad, bare feet moved quickly and deftly over the floor. Her thin, steel-gray hair was gathered in a sparse wispy knot at the back of her head. Strong, freckled arms were bare to the elbow, and her hands were chubby and delicate, like those of a plump little girl. She looked out into the sunshine. Her full face was not soft; it was controlled, kindly. Her hazel eyes seemed to have experienced all possible tragedy and to have mounted pain and suffering like steps into a high calm and a superhuman understanding. She seemed to know, to accept, to welcome her position, the citadel of the family, the strong place that could not be taken. And since old Tom and the children could not know hurt or fear unless she acknowledged hurt and fear, she had practiced denying them in herself. And since, when a joyful thing happened, they looked to see whether joy was on her, it was her habit to build up laughter out of inadequate materials. But better than joy was calm. Imperturbability could be depended upon. And from her great and humble position in the family she had taken dignity and a clean calm beauty. From her position as healer, her hands had grown sure and cool and quiet; from her position as arbiter she had become as remote and faultless in judgment as a goddess. She seemed to know that

if she swayed the family shook, and if she ever really deeply wavered or despaired the family would fall, the family will to function would be gone.

She looked out into the sunny yard, at the dark figure of a man. Pa stood near by, shaking with excitement. "Come in," he cried. "Come right in, mister." And Tom a little shamefacedly stepped over the doorsill.

She looked up pleasantly from the frying pan. And then her hand sank slowly to her side and the fork clattered to the wooden floor. Her eyes opened wide, and the pupils dilated. She breathed heavily through her open mouth. She closed her eyes. "Thank God," she said. "Oh, thank God!" And suddenly her face was worried. "Tommy, you ain't wanted? You didn' bust loose?"

"No, Ma. Parole. I got the papers here." He touched his breast.

She moved toward him lithely, soundlessly in her bare feet, and her face was full of wonder. Her small hand felt his arm, felt the soundness of his muscles. And then her fingers went up to his cheek as a blind man's fingers might. And her joy was nearly like sorrow. Tom pulled his underlip between his teeth and bit it. Her eyes went wonderingly to his bitten lip, and she saw the little line of blood against his teeth and the trickle of blood down his lip. Then she knew, and her control came back, and her hand dropped. Her breath came out explosively. "Well!" she cried. "We come mighty near to goin' without ya. An' we was wonderin' how in the worl' you could ever find us." She picked up the fork and combed the boiling grease and brought out a dark curl of crisp pork. And she set the pot of tumbling coffee on the back of the stove.

Class D1104 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)

Excerpt from **FAHRENHEIT 451** - Ray Bradbury

"Once, books appealed to a few people, here, there, everywhere. They could afford to be different. The world was roomy. But then the world got full of eyes and elbows and mouths. Double, triple, quadruple population. Films and radios, magazines, books leveled down to a sort of pastepudding norm, do you follow me?"

"I think so."

Beatty peered at the smoke pattern he had put out on the air. "Picture it. Nineteenth-century man with his horses, dogs, carts, slow motion. Then, in the twentieth century, speed up your camera. Books cut shorter. Condensations. Digests. Tabloids. Everything boils down to the gag, the snap ending."

"Snap ending," Mildred nodded.

"Classics cut to fit fifteen-minute radio shows, then cut again to fill a two-minute book column, winding up at last as a ten- or twelve-line dictionary resume. I exaggerate, of course. The dictionaries were for reference. But many were those whose sole

knowledge of *Hamlet* (you know the title certainly, Montag; it is probably only a faint rumor of a title to you, Mrs. Montag) whose sole knowledge, as I say, of *Hamlet* was a one-page digest in a book that claimed:
now at last you can read all the classics; keep up with your neighbors. Do you see? Out of the nursery into the college and back to the nursery; there's your intellectual pattern for the past five centuries or more...."

"Speed up the film, Montag, quick. *Click, Pic, Look, Eye, Now, Flick, Here, There, Swift, Pace, Up, Down, In, Out, Why, How, Who, What, Where, Eh? Uh! Bang! Smack! Wallop, Bing, Bong, Boom!* Digest-digests, digest-digest-digests. Politics? One column, two sentences, a headline Then, in midair, all vanishes! Whirl man's mind around about so fast under the pumping hands of publishers, exploiters, broadcasters that the centrifuge flings off all unnecessary, time-wasting thought!..."

"School is shortened, discipline relaxed, philosophies, histories, languages dropped, English and spelling gradually neglected, finally almost completely ignored. Life is immediate, the job counts, pleasure lies all about after work. Why learn anything save pressing buttons, pulling switches, fitting nuts and bolts?..."

"The zipper displaces the button and a man lacks just that much time to think while dressing at dawn, a philosophical hour, and thus a melancholy hour...."

"Life becomes one big pratfall, Montag; everything bang, boff, and wow!..."

"Empty the theatres save for clowns and furnish the rooms with glass walls and pretty colors running up and down the walls like confetti or blood or sherry or sauterne. You like baseball, don't you, Montag?"

"Baseball's a fine game."

Now Beatty was almost invisible, a voice somewhere behind a screen of smoke....

"You like bowling, don't you Montag?"

"Bowling, yes."

"And golf?"

"Golf is a fine game."

"Basketball?"

"A fine game."

"

"Billiards, pool? Football?"

“Fine games, all of them.”

“More sports for everyone, group spirit, fun, and you don’t have to think, eh? Organize and organize and superorganize super-super sports. More cartoons in books. More pictures. The mind drinks less and less. Impatience. Highways full of crowds going somewhere, somewhere, somewhere, nowhere. The gasoline refugee. Towns turn into motels, people in nomadic surges from place to place, following the moon tides, living tonight in the room where you slept this noon and I the night before....”

“Now let’s take up the minorities in our civilization, shall we? Bigger the population, the more minorities. Don’t step on the toes of the dog lovers, the cat lovers, doctors, lawyers, merchants, chiefs, Mormons, Baptists, Unitarians, second-generation Chinese, Swedes, Italians, Germans, Texans, Brooklynites, Irishmen, people from Oregon or Mexico. The people in this book, this play, this TV serial are not meant to represent any actual painters, cartographers, mechanics anywhere. The bigger your market, Montag, the less you handle controversy, remember that! All the minor minor minorities with their navels to be kept clean. Authors, full of evil thoughts, lock up your typewriters. They *did*. Magazines became a nice blend of vanilla tapioca. Books, so the damned snobbish critics said, were dishwater. No *wonder* books stopped selling, the critics said. But the public, knowing what it wanted, spinning happily, let the comic books survive. And the three-dimensional sex magazines, of course. There you have it, Montag. It didn’t come from the Government down. There was no dictum, no declaration, no censorship, to start with, no! Technology, mass exploitation, and minority pressure carried the trick, thank God. Today, thanks to them, you can stay happy all the time, you are allowed to read comics, the good old confessions, or trade journals.”

Class D1104 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)

Excerpt from **GRACEFULLY AFRAID** - Mary Anne Ashley

She was a sharp dresser. I felt good walking up the aisle with her. Not now. She is not one of those women who can throw on rags and look like a million. But one thing that makes me feel good about myself is that, embarrassed or not, I am the kind of person who does not abandon another person because of what she wears or doesn't wear. It's uphill work a lot of the time.

Sometimes though, it's fun when we go someplace nice and I'm dressed up and she's not. It's bold and defiant. I feel like people envy my courage and loyalty. Other times, it's not fun at all. It's downright humiliating. I feel she's asking too much of our long friendship. More and more I feel that way.

We're getting older and we should try our best. But she says, No, I did that for forty years. That's half my life. She said that right after she had a dream that she was going to live to be eighty-one. We tell one another our dreams. We like our dreams. We feel friendly toward them, even when they are a little frightening. It's a bond between us. We're both relaxed about what our unconscious minds might cough up during the night.

After she told me that dream, she said, Now, that's it. The next forty years are mine. I said, Good for you! I had no idea she was talking about not wearing skirts anymore, about letting herself go.

She used to have a beautiful body. Now it's hidden under those twenty extra pounds. Mine is out there, highly visible. You've got a great body, she says. Well, I ought to, I reply. I work darned hard to keep it that way. I work out in the gym every day. There's not an ounce of fat on me. I run every day. When she runs, she wets her pants. That's not her fault. I know that. She's had kidney infections since she was young. But she could do yoga. But she won't. She even likes yoga. She used to do it with her daughter-in-law. It's getting down on the floor and being out of this world that she says she doesn't like. So, she's flabby and I'm not. I'm fifty-one years old and still look great. Like it or not, we get more high marks when we look good in bathing suits.

We both read the same books, and I understand feminist principles. But what is, is. We have to get along in the here and now. This is a man's world and until that changes, we have to do certain things. We have to say certain things; we have to look a certain way. Like it or not. When she kicks up a fuss, I tell her she's just kicking the slats of her cradle.

You know, it's funny. When we first met eighteen years ago, she didn't know beans about being angry or getting revenge or having a good toe-to-toe fight. That's one of the things she liked about me. You don't pretend to any of the virtues, she said. You get even when someone does you dirt, and you don't have fits of remorse about it. I like that about you. You know that anger doesn't kill. I know it too, but I still don't know how to use it. You said *that* to *them*? she'd ask, her eyes popping.

Sure I did, I'd say. So what?

I love the way you say, So What.

When we first met, she'd never given anyone the finger. Hardly swore at all. She couldn't get mad without saying, I'm sorry. Once, when she was sick, I gave her my favorite book on anger, how to express it. She read it, and came off the couch like she was shot from guns. She loved it. She loved it that I gave that book to her. You could say I had a big hand in the kind of person she is today. She's a great one to have in your corner when there's a fight. But as we get older, I get nervous about what she'll do next. I say, Please don't make a fuss. She says, Don't call sticking up for ourselves making a fuss. Besides, even if we make a fuss, what can they do to us? They've done just about all they can do. I'll never be a history professor and you'll never be a Hollywood screen writer. We're just pokey people now, getting old, in our pokey places. For God's sake, let's not go to our graves without at least shooting our mouths off, she shouts.

And let's not go to our graves, I shout back, without you looking pretty for at least one day. I can hardly bear to look at you anymore.

Class D1104 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)

Excerpt from **SLAVE** - Mende Nazer

After the family had eaten lunch, I was sent to have mine. They had left the remains of their meal on the main table, so I took their plates and sat down to eat in my corner. Just then, Rahab came in. “*Yebit*,” she screamed at me, when she saw what I was doing, “don’t you dare eat off our plates! Put the food in your own bowl! I showed you how to do this yesterday. Didn’t I? Or are you stupid or something?” With a trembling hand, I tipped the food into my bowl. What was wrong with me? Why was she treating me like this?

And so it went on – day after day, the same drudgery, the same constant abuse. One day merged into the next, almost without my noticing. That first week, the children kept trying to play with me. The small one, Usra, would keep coming up to have her hair stroked. I so wanted to kiss her and hug her, like I used to do with the little children in my village, and when Rahab wasn’t looking I did so. I craved human affection and warmth. But when I went to stroke the hair of the older girl, Hanin, she jerked her head away.

“Don’t do that,” she snapped at me. “My mamma said I mustn’t let you touch me. She said that you’re sick and have diseases and that you’re dirty. I’ll tell on you.”

“I’m not sick,” I mumbled. “I’m not sick.” I was so upset, I felt that my heart was breaking. I looked myself up and down. I’m clean,” I said to her. “I’m not dirty.”

“Well, my mamma says you’re not allowed to touch me.” said Hanin, turning her back on me.

Now even the children were treating me like an animal. Worse than an animal: even dogs were patted and stroked. I wanted to sob my heart out, but I knew that, if I did, Rahab would come storming into the room and start shouting at me. By the end of that first week I was physically and emotionally exhausted. I was trying to hide my sadness and my pain, trying not to react to the rejection. I felt hunted and watched and deeply abused.

It was hardly surprising that something went badly wrong. I was using a duster to swipe cobwebs out of a corner in the lounge, as Rahab had shown me. But the duster caught the lip of a vase and it went crashing to the floor. For one moment I just stood there, rooted to the spot, staring down at the smashed glass and the flowers strewn across the carpet in a big pool of water. I didn’t know what to do. I felt myself starting to shake with fear.

“Idiot! Are you blind!” I heard Rahab scream, as she came rushing into the lounge. “What have you done?”

“I... I... I’ve...” I stammered, without looking round at her. I couldn’t get the words out.

“I can see what you’ve done!” she raged. “Do you know how much this cost me? This one vase is worth more than your whole filthy tribe!”

My head jerked back as she grabbed me by the hair and I felt a stinging slap across my cheek.

“*Mailesh* – I’m sorry. *Mailesh*, master Rahab” I cried. “I’m sorry. Please don’t hit me.” But she did, again and again.

“You stupid girl! Why don’t you watch what you’re doing? I’m warning you, if you break anything else, you’ll see what happens!”

“I’m, sorry. I’m sorry.” I sobbed. “I’m sorry.

“Stop crying and clear up the mess” she snapped. “I don’t want to find a single piece of broken glass. If the children cut their feet, then you’ll be sorry.”

I got down on my hands and knees and started to pick up the pieces of broken vase. I was in shock. This was the first time that I’d ever been beaten in my life.

Class D1104 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)

Excerpt from **I HEARD THE OWL CALL MY NAME** - Margaret Craven

All day long, on his way back to Kingcome, because he was alone and receptive, the little questions, the observations he had pushed deep within him, began to rise slowly toward the door of the conscious mind which was almost ready to open, to receive them, and give them words: “You are tired. You have told yourself that it was due to the winter which was hard on everyone. Deep inside haven’t you known it was more than this? When the Bishop came to the potlatch and lingered after the others had gone, and went into the church by himself, didn’t you guess then it had something to do with you? And your sister? When you took the boys down and lunched with her, did you not see the sadness in her eyes? And in the hospital, don’t you remember the doctor’s face, the look of quiet resignation upon it, and the way he hesitated an instant before answering your questions? And when the Bishop told you of the village, how carefully he did so. Did you not think, ‘He is anxious I go there. Why?’”

It was dusk when he entered Kingcome Inlet and moored the boat at the float, and climbed into the speed boat. When he entered the river, the stars were shining, the moon bright also, and he went slowly.

Soon the huge flights of snow geese would fly over the river on their way back to the nesting place, the spring swimmer would come up the river to the Clearwater, and on the river pairs of cocky, small, red-necked sawbills would rest, the father flying off when Mark passed and the mother pretending she had broken a wing to lead him away from her little ones. And each would feel the pull of the earth and know his small place upon it, as did the Indian in his village.

He went slowly up the river. In front of the vicarage he anchored the boat and waded ashore. He trudged up the black sands to the path and stopped. From the dark spruce he heard an owl call - once, and again - and the questions that had been rising all day long reached the door of his mind and opened it.

He went up the path and the steps, through the living room and into the kitchen. The lights were on. At the stove Marta was preparing his dinner.

“Marta, something strange happened tonight. On the bank of the river I heard the owl call my name, and it was a question he asked, an answer he sought.”

She did not say, “Nonsense, it was my name the owl called, and I am old and with me it does not matter.” She did not say, “It’s true you’re thin and white, but who is not? It has no importance.”

She turned, spoon still in her hand, lifting her sweet, kind face with its network of tiny wrinkles, and she answered his question as she would have answered any other.

She said, “Yes, my son.”

Class D1104 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)
THE TELLTALE HEART - Edgar Allen Poe

It is impossible to say how the idea first entered my brain. But once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! Yes, it was this! He had the eye of a vulture, a pale blue eye with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me my blood ran cold; and so by degrees, very gradually, I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.

Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. You should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded. With what caution, with what dissimulation I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him.

And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it - oh, so gently! And then, when I had made an opening sufficient for my head, I put in a dark lantern, all closed, closed so no light showed out, and then thrust in my hand. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly - very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Ha! Would a madman have been so wise as this? And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously - oh so cautiously - cautiously (for the hinges creaked) - I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights, every night just at midnight, but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work. For it was not the old man who vexed me but his Evil Eye.

Class D1104 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class D1105 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 11 and 12
OFFICER, ARREST THAT BOOK! - Gary Lautens

"Gentlemen, you've been called together to form a new squad in the police department. Our task will be to examine all bookstands and confiscate the dirty stuff. First of all, can you all read? Never mind, Smedley, you'll be travelling in pairs."

"Do we have a name, Chief?"

"Any ideas from the floor?"

"As I see it, our job is to Harass and Expurgate Lewd Literature. We could shorten that to HELL Squad."

"Hmmm. Catchy. But the people might get the wrong impression, Johnson. Forces of HELL, and that sort of thing. Good thinking though. We can leave the name till later. Right now I should mention some basic rules and hand out the equipment."

"No gun?"

"No. You each get spectacles, a library card and a dictionary. There's also an automatic scanner which picks out all four-letter words on a page with a glance. Beeps like a geiger counter. I think a good safe rule of thumb is one double entendre per chapter. Use your own judgement on innuendo."

"Could you give us some specific examples of what we're looking for, Chief?"

"Well, take Robin Hood. Now why were his men so merry? It's something we should look into. And that leads us to the business of Maid Marian. You should check to see if there is any evidence of a marriage certificate; we don't want another Tarzan scandal on our hands."

"I take it, Chief, that anyone who chops off the tails of blind nice is definitely sadistic."

"You're getting the idea, Johnson. Check into those old stories. What was the relationship between Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs? Were they just friends, or something more? Why was Red Riding Hood chased by the old wolf? Was he interested in her picnic basket or do we have an early, symbolic form of the Lolita theme? You can never be too sure."

"I have often wondered why Jack and Jill went all the way up the hill to fetch a pail

of water. Seems pretty suggestive, to me."

"Keep up the good work, Thompkins. Remember our motto: Be suspicious. I've obtained some books so that we can practise right here in class. Think of yourselves as Smut-Busters. Now read - especially between the lines."

"But . . ."

"Smedley, you'll be assigned to the picture-book division for now, so don't worry. Blue pencil the prurient and lascivious."

"I don't like this title, Chief. Black Beauty. We could get some complaints. Why not change it to Charcoal Beauty? Get the meaning across - and eliminate any hint of race."

"I'll make a note of that, Johnson. With that kind of thinking you may make sergeant. And, Johnson, explain to Smedley what I mean by prurient and lascivious."

"Wow! Hahaha."

"What is it, Thompkins?"

"It's this bit on page forty-six, sir. Positively scandalous. You see, this couple, haha, is ship-wrecked on a desert island and, haha, they . . ."

"Tear out the page and pass it around, Thompkins. I want the others to see what I mean by obscene writing. After that page has been around, send it up here. I think we should make a collection of the confiscated stuff. It might even be the beginning of a best-selling text book."

"Pretty nasty description, Chief?"

"Yes, Williams. I think we'd all better take another look at that page. No need to underline the worst bits with pencil, however. And no drawing in the margins, please, men. Perhaps I should mention now that I expect our squad to have the cleanest lavatory walls in the division."

"Here, here."

Smedley! Any objectionable, disgusting pictures yet? Don't nod. Bring them up and pass them around. I think we should get a bulletin board where these photographs could be posted so that our men will have a clear idea of what we're looking for. Sort of a 'most wanted' list."

"Look at this one, Chief. Absolutely shameful. If you hold it close, you can see all sorts of hidden meanings."

"Don't push, men. We'll all get a look. You can tell even from this distance that it's meant to arouse and ruin the young. Don't bend the corners, Wilson. Must be careful of the evidence."

"Here's an odd book, Chief. Doesn't have any pages. It's a phony with a secret compartment."

"Looks like microfilm inside, Wilson."

"Apparently it came in with that batch of books from the embassies."

"I remember. The one book had all that white powder inside and now this one with microfilm. Can't understand it. Well, throw it away. We haven't got time to waste on nonsense. There's work to be done."

"Were Adam and Eve ever churched, Chief?"

"I think we can let that one go, Johnson. All right, Smedley speak up"

Class D1105 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Cont'd)
FINDING A COFFIN FOR A DEAD SNAKE IS NO EASY MATTER - Alexander Ross

Two weeks ago, when I was lying flat on my back in a hospital bed, recovering from an appendicitis operation and bored out of my mind, I made a resolution: I will not write a column about getting my appendix out. Even when Kildare Dobbs reminisced about his appendix, I stuck to my vow. Last week, when George Bryant devoted most of his column to how he almost got his appendix out in Nepal, I was sorely tempted, but finally resisted the impulse to inform you about the state of my peritoneum.

And so I won't. Instead, I give you the actual transcript of an actual telephone conversation with an actual animal clinic right here in an actual Canadian city. It is amazing what can happen when you're lying there, with a telephone beside your bed. I dialled up a number, and a nice lady with a brisk Scottish accent answered the phone:

"Uh, this is Mr. Ross. Do you have a pet cemetery?"

"Yes we do."

"Oh. Uh, I've got this snake that, ah, seems to have died, and he's been with me a long time and I'd like to, you know, enquire about your service."

"What kind of a snake is it?"

"Well, it's an Eastern Fox Snake. That's what they told me at the museum. He's five, five and a half feet long."

"Well, I'd think the snake would possibly be the same as what a cat grave would be, and that would be \$50."

"Fifty dollars, eh . . . Well, the trouble is, I mean, he's nearly six feet long."

"What's that got to do with it?"

"Well, he wouldn't fit in a cat grave, would he?"

"Well, you don't have him stretched out six feet long. Even a dog isn't stretched out like that."

"Well, he's sort of stretched out like that right now, I mean. I've got him at home."

"Yes, I mean, a snake is just turned around. I mean, he doesn't have to lie straight out."

"Well, I'd want him to lie straight out."

"Well then, we couldn't do that."

"You couldn't. Um . . . well then what about a coffin? Do you supply those?"

"No. They go into a wooden box, and it goes to the size that we give them. But if you want your snake in a box six feet long we cannot give that, we cannot accommodate you."

"So my snake would have to be curled up?"

"That's right."

"How big is the box?"

"He would go in a box the size for a cat would be."

"I see. And how big is that?"

"I haven't measured it, sir. Maybe 14 inches by 20, something like that."

"Well, do you think he'd fit in?"

"I would think so. I can't see why not."

"My snake is. . ."

". . . A snake doesn't sleep all stretched out, does he? You'd put him into a natural

sleeping position, the same way as you would with a dog or a cat. When a dog goes into a box his legs aren't straight out. He's in a sleeping position. I mean, let's just face it, you'll have quite a difference in cost and everything else together. We just cannot give you a bigger crate."

"Well, I'd be willing to pay extra."

"Well, we can't do it. I'm sorry."

"All right then: my snake would have to be curled up."

"I think so. In a natural position."

"Well the trouble is, he's sort of pretty straight right now, and he's pretty stiff . . . Ah, what should I do - just bring him to you? Or do you . . .

"Yes, he would have to be brought to us, yes. Now how would you bring him?"

"Well, I guess in my car. I have a station wagon. But . . . how would you curl him up? I mean. I'm concerned about this, because . . .

"Well, I don't know, I think I would have to face it once I see it. I've never come across this problem before. But as far as I know, there isn't anything very particular in a snake. I mean, there's no bone structure or anything. There's no reason - I can't see why we couldn't curl him up."

"Even with rigor mortis?"

"Well, how long is he dead?"

" Well, I don't know. For a long time there, I thought he might be asleep. I mean, for about four days. You know, he didn't move and I thought, you know, it's spring or something. But then, you know, I've been looking at him, examining him, and there's no sign of life. I'm pretty sure he's dead. I'm sure he's dead. Anyway, you say it would cost \$50. Does that include a marker?"

"Yes, it does."

"What will the marker say?"

"It will just have your name on it, and the snake's name . . ."

"His name is Albert . . ."

". . . and how old he was and when he died."

"And \$50 would be the only cost, eh?"

"I would think so. You make it sound as if this was something that's almost impossible - because he's a snake, being so big, and you can't turn him around, and everything else together. If I find out there is no way of him curling up into a small box, then it will cost you much more. But we would tell you before we would get involved. Now, the only thing that you can do is bring your snake here, so we can see what is involved. Okay?"

"Thank you, ma'am."

I hereby apologize to that nice lady from the pet hospital. But it's amazing what you're driven to when you're laid up with appendicitis and have taken a vow not to write about it.

Class D1105 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Cont'd)
THIS MAY HURT A LITTLE - Eric Nicol

The nurse leads me to the Chair, keeping up a chatter intended to distract the patient. Avoiding looking into the marble spit-basin to my immediate left, I ease into the Chair. My teeth seem to be chattering slightly. Fine, go ahead, fellows, it may be your last chance.

Dr. Burcher comes in while Nurse is bibbing me for the slaughter. We engage in gay banter, just as if I hadn't any idea he was going to crawl into my mouth to dynamite the old roots. Jittery, I open my mouth too soon and too wide. I shut it again while Dr. Burcher messes around in a drawer that clinks ominously. I don't know what he's after, but I'll bet it's the biggest of its kind.

Now he peers into my mouth with the little mirror. Poking around with a sharp instrument, he sees something he likes. He tries to drag it out. It puts up a battle; it likes it in there. Dr. Burcher plays it for a while, then throws a gaff into it. Something breaks off and I study his face carefully for confirmation that it is my jawbone.

"Quite a lot of tartar on your teeth," he says, and squelches my rebuttal by syringing water into my mouth. I spit, none too successfully, into the marble basin, and wipe off my chin for Round Two.

"I think I'll take a picture of those," he says, manipulating a fantastic machine which rears over me from the left. So, he's going to take a picture. For his file of Horrible Examples, no doubt.

Dr. Burcher wheels the machine over so that its snout is pointing into the side of my head.

"That's not my best side," I mumble, but already he's stuffing a negative into my

mouth.

"Clench it between your teeth," he says, "and keep your tongue down."

My tongue doesn't want to keep down. Every instinct tells it to push the negative out of my mouth before it's too late, before the X-ray has a chance to record the fact that my gums are coming away from my face, or that my molars are all hollow and occupied by tiny animals.

But the camera buzzes briefly and Dr. Burcher has his pinkies in my mouth again, fishing for the negative. Now's the time to bite his fingers off. Nope, lost my nerve.

"I think I'd better fill that one at the back before it goes any further," says Dr. Burcher.

To back up this statement, he throws a pick into the young cave behind the last molar on the left lower side. I wonder what Pockle is doing now. Cooing over his young, probably, the yellow rat.

Here comes the local.

"This may hurt a little," says Dr. Burcher.

I know what that means. Dentists give you that "may hurt a little" routine just to make you feel foolish when you jump onto the ceiling.

Dr. Burcher eases the hypo into the gum in easy stages, about half as easy and twice as many stages as I'd prefer. Hey. When's he going to stop? A little farther and he'll blunt that thing on my back collar button. Ah, now he's easing it out again, evidently with several nerves coiled around it.

Pretty soon my mouth is frozen and Dr. Burcher is digging his thumb into my chin, asking if I can feel it. I say, yes, I can feel it, so he starts anyway.

Here comes the drill, that evil, skinny, twisted steel arm. My tongue huddles in one corner of my mouth and a light dew springs out of my forehead. This is it, men. . . .

Half an hour later Dr. Burcher has been excavating with everything but a steam shovel. But the worst is over, he says, stuffing wads of cotton into my mouth. These wads soak up the blood, so that you can quietly bleed to death without realizing it.

Setting the nurse to mixing cement-apparently enough to lay a small sidewalk-he fits a clamp over the molar and under the gum, and screws it tight. If he hadn't assured me that the worst is over I'd swear this was it. Now he's jamming in the cement, tamping it down, scratching his initials on it.

"There," he says finally. "That should do it."

He holds up a mirror and I have a brief, horrifying glimpse of the inside of my mouth. What a ghastly thing to have handling my food!

But as I surge out of the Chair I feel the special satisfaction that comes only with a tooth well filled and a face still too frozen to feel it. I leave by the special exit, head high, a worthy successor to Johnny Adams. I could even forgive Old Man Pockle. In fact, I haven't a thing to worry about until a week from Wednesday, when I go back to have two more filled. A week to live!

Class D1105 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Cont'd)
THE MISERY INDEX - Arthur Black

Edmonton's bad, but not as bad as Regina. Newfoundland's capital, St. John's, is pretty crummy too, but Chicoutimi-Jonquiere is crummier. Victoria and Vancouver? Leave those two wimps out of this. They don't even rate. We're talking real Canadian cities. Cities like, well, Winnipeg. Now there's a Canuck burg for ya! Winnipeg's the absolute top of the list.

Misery is what we're measuring here. As in urban winter misery, and it's official: when it comes to Canadian cities, Winnipeg is the worst one to spend the winter in.

The trouble with Canadian winters is that there really is no such animal. Winters here are very different, depending on where in the Great White North you choose to plant your mukluks. A Prairie winter is not like a Maritime winter, just as a winter in Prince Rupert would seem a little weird to a Mennonite farmer from Elmira, Ontario.

Except for one thing. There is one commodity that virtually all Canadian winters have in common.

Misery. It is safe to say that a Canadian winter is a miserable winter, one way or another.

Which is where David Phillips comes in. Mr. Phillips is a climatologist who toils for the Atmospheric Environment Service in Toronto. Looking out his office window one winter morning, across a scabby snowscape of dirty, salt-encrusted banks interspersed with ice patches, Mr. Phillips had a revelation. "What this country needs," he realized, "is a good Winter Misery Index."

So David Phillips designed one. He came up with a list of eleven pointed questions that he could ask about any city's winter experience, questions like: how much snow do you get, how many sunny days, how many times does the thermometer dip under 20 below, how much wind-- questions like that. By assigning a numerical value to each answer, Phillips had a method of plotting any Canadian city's position on the Misery Map.

Winnipeg won, mittens down. On a scale of 100, Manitoba's capital copped a frosty 62. Regina wasn't far behind with a 61, and Chicoutimi- Jonquiere was nipping at both their heels with a rating of 60. That was Win, Place, and Show for David Phillips's Misery Sweepstakes. You'll be happy to learn that all other Canadian cities were way back in the pack.

Edmonton for instance, which I thought would rate pretty rotten, pulled a respectable 49. Toronto, which has never been my first choice for a January tryst, got a 34. A little farther south, Windsor scored a semitropical 29. As for equatorial hangouts like Vancouver and Victoria? Ten and 8 on the scale respectively. (I know, I know -- I said I wouldn't talk about them, but I thought you should know just how bizarre things get in this country, winter-weather-wise.)

I'm glad we have David Phillips's Winter Misery Index. It's a stroke of genius that was long overdue. Especially when our only alternatives were the Druidic pronouncements emanating from Environment Canada--what in the name of heaven is an average mortal to make of a wind chill that is measured in *watts per square metre*?

And yet. . . the existence of the David Phillips's Misery Index begs one unignorable question: now that we know how miserable our winters are, what are we going to do about it?

Most of us would have trouble finding permanent work in the Greek islands, and retsina is an inferior substitute for Canadian lager.

Victoria's not big enough to take us all in. Besides, trading snowshoes for swim flippers is a dubious bargain at best.

Given the climate of economic restraint, I doubt that Ottawa will seriously consider financing a retractable dome stretching from the Queen Charlottes to Conception Bay.

And anyway, just think of the bill for windshield solvent.

Nope, let's face it. Dave Phillips's Misery Index only illustrates something that every Canadian knows in his permafrosted soul--we have lousy winters.

The thing is not to whine about it. Just accept it. If it makes you feel better, you can go around reciting the words of the English poet Shelley: "If winter comes, can spring be far behind?"

Easy for Shelley to say, of course.

He'd never visited Winnipeg.

Class D1105 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Cont'd)
ANIMALS from “I Am America (And So Can You!)” - Stephen Colbert

Some would have our children believe that animals are cute and cuddly. It starts the day we bring baby Kyle or Kayla or Kaitlyn or Kelsie home from the hospital to a room wallpapered in adorable little yellow ducks. Why aren't these ducks being pursued by adorable little yellow hunters? I don't know, but I'm willing to bet that it has something to do with the Far Left media's control of the wallpaper industry. (Yes, I consider the wallpaper industry part of the media. It has the word “paper” in it.)

What's the very first book most children own? A bit of blatant propaganda called *Pat the Bunny*. I'm not saying *Pat the Bunny* isn't a good book. There's that soft patch of fur on page one for you to pat. And then there's the smooth part and scratchy part and don't get me started on the mirror! There is so much to do, and you don't even need to know how to read. That's the perfect book. But a pro-bunny manifesto with that kind of sensory stimulation? What chance do our children have?

Then there are the nursery rhymes. What's a cuter image than three little kittens that have lost their mittens? Well, brace yourself: Kittens don't wear mittens. I'm going to let that sink in. And why don't they wear mittens? Because they'd just get caught on their razor-sharp claws.

Personally I prefer the Three Blind Mice, because 1) they're already handicapped when the song starts – as a result, no doubt of some anti-human scheme that blew up in their faces, and 2) they're further maimed in the course of the rhyme.

The list is endless. The cartoon characters: dog, cats, rabbits, ducks, horses, squirrels, gorillas, all of them talking, all of them so very human. Of course, the most famous offender is Bambi, which, for reasons that escape me, portrays the death of a deer negatively. You can bet you'll never see an animated classic about what Bambi's mom devoured for her last meal- my defenseless oakleaf hydrangea!

My point is this: if America is ever to stop cowering to the animal-petters, we have to get to our youth before they do; Children have to learn that these animals aren't our buddies. Sometimes it's a tough lesson.

When I was a kid, I had a dog named Shasta. We were inseparable. We'd play in the backyard, maybe chase a ball, or just go splashin' around the ol' creek. Shasta was my best friend.

Then after fourteen happy years together, I came home from school one day and Shasta didn't greet me at the door. My mom and dad sat me down and told me the terrible news: Shasta had gone to live on a big beautiful farm upstate. I couldn't believe it. I never felt so betrayed in my life. I thought Shasta and I were a team. But as soon as some smooth-talking stranger came along with the promise of bigger field, she was gone. And that's how it is with animals. Always looking for a better offer.

Sorry I wasn't a farmer, Shasta. The suburb had zoning laws – we couldn't grow crops in the yard. How could you?

I pressed my parents for answers, but my mom wouldn't stop crying, and my Dad [sic] just kept saying that she was chasing rabbits. Chasing rabbits? I guess Shasta was lying to me about that degenerative hip disease too.

So Wake up America.

Pets. Don't. Care. About. You. They're just using you for food, and for the social networking you provide when you walk them.

But the joke's on you Shasta. If you're reading this (or having your farmer friend read it to you), you should know that I have a new dog. Gipper. And Gipper is twice the dog you'll ever be. His coat is shinier than yours, and he doesn't chew up my comic books. And he hates farms. Gipper will never betray me, and he's never going to leave me. He's been right by my side for the last fifteen years, and he'll be there for the next fifty.

So if animals aren't our friends, then what are they?

The answer can be summed up between two buns.

Class D1105 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Cont'd)
MY FINANCIAL CAREER – Stephen Leacock

When I go into a bank I get rattled. The clerks rattle me; the wickets rattle me; the sight of the money rattles me; everything rattles me.

The moment I cross the threshold of a bank and attempt to transact business there, I become an irresponsible idiot.

I knew this beforehand, but my salary had been raised to fifty dollars a month and I felt that the bank was the only place for it.

So I shambled in and looked timidly round at the clerks. I had an idea that a person about to open an account must needs consult the manager.

I went up to a wicket marked "Accountant." The accountant was a tall, cool devil. The very sight of him rattled me. My voice was sepulchral.

"Can I see the manager?" I said, and added solemnly, "alone." I don't know why I said "alone."

"Certainly," said the accountant, and fetched him.

The manager was a grave, calm man. I held my fifty-six dollars clutched in a crumpled ball in my pocket.

"Are you the manager?" I said. God knows I didn't doubt it.

"Yes," he said.

"Can I see you," I asked, "alone?" I didn't want to say "alone" again, but without it the thing seemed self-evident.

The manager looked at me in some alarm. He felt that I had an awful secret to reveal.

"Come in here," he said, and led the way to a private room. He turned the key in the lock.

"We are safe from interruption here," he said; "sit down."

We both sat down and looked at each other. I found no voice to speak.

"You are one of Pinkerton's men, I presume," he said.

He had gathered from my mysterious manner that I was a detective. I knew what he was thinking, and it made me worse.

"No, not from Pinkerton's," I said, seeming to imply that I came from a rival agency. .

"To tell the truth," I went on, as if I had been prompted to lie about it, "I am not a detective at all. I have come to open an account. I intend to keep all my money in this bank."

The manager looked relieved but still serious; he concluded now that I was a son of Baron Rothschild or a young Gould.

"A large account, I suppose," he said.

"Fairly large," I whispered, "I propose to deposit fifty-six dollars no-w and fifty dollars a month regularly."

The manager got up and opened the door. He called to the accountant.

"Mr. Montgomery," he said unkindly loud, "this gentleman is opening an account; he will deposit fifty-six dollars. Good morning."

I rose.

A big iron door stood open at the side of the room.

"Good morning," I said, and stepped into the safe.

"Come out," said the manager coldly, and showed me the other way.

I went up to the accountant's wicket and poked the ball of money at him with a quick convulsive movement as if I were doing a conjuring trick.

My face was ghastly pale.

"Here," I said, "deposit it." The tone of the words seemed to mean, "Let us do this painful thing while the fit is on us."

He took the money and gave it to another clerk.

He made me write the sum on a slip and sign my name in a book. I no longer

knew what I was doing. The bank swam before my eyes.

"Is it deposited ?" I asked in a hollow, vibrating voice.

"It is," said the accountant.

"Then I want to draw a cheque."

My idea was to draw out six dollars of it for present use. Someone gave me a cheque book through a wicket and someone else began telling me how to write it out. The people in the bank had the impression that I was an invalid millionaire. I wrote something on the cheque and thrust it in at the clerk. He looked at it.

"What! are you drawing it all out again ?" he asked in surprise. Then I realized that I had written fifty-six instead of six. I was too far gone to reason now. I had a feeling that it was impossible to explain the thing. All the clerks had stopped writing to look at me.

Reckless with misery, I made a plunge.

"Yes, the whole thing."

"You withdraw your money from the bank ?"

"Every cent of it."

"Are you not going to deposit any more?" said the clerk, astonished.

"Never."

An idiot hope struck me that they might think something had insulted me while I was writing the cheque and that I had changed my mind. I made a wretched attempt to look like a man with a fearfully quick temper.

The clerk prepared to pay the money.

"How will you have it ?" he said.

"What ?"

"How will you have it ?"

"Oh"--I caught his meaning and answered without even trying to think—in fifties." He gave me a fifty-dollar bill.

"And the six ?" he asked dryly.

"In sixes," I said.

He gave it to me and I rushed out.

As the big door swung behind me I caught the echo of a roar of laughter that went up to the ceiling of the bank. Since then I bank no more. I keep my money in cash in my trousers' pocket and my savings in silver dollars in a sock.

Class D1105 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Cont'd)
JOAN OF - Judith Wilkie

Once very long ago, there was a young girl named Joan who lived in France. Her parents had a terrible time with her as she was forever hearing voices which she said told her to put on mens clothing and go help save France for the King. They took Joan many times to the local healer who fed her herb teas and said spells over her, but to no avail, Joan persisted in her obsession. Finally her parents gave up in disgust and givjng Joan a horse and some of her brothers clothing told her never to darken their doorstep again. Crazy girl.

Joan, finally freed of dull village life set off joyfully to join her King who was having a really difficult time trying to convince his enemies that he had squatters rights to the throne.

On her way, Joan stopped at many villages and spent the night as a guest in many homes. Most of the men were shocked at her appearance, but tolerantly listened to her tale, taking her for just another crazy woman who didn't know her rightful place. The women paid rapt attention to her and many envied her freedom and thought that it might be nice to travel around France fancy free. Each morning as Joan left the villages, she was followed by a growing number of women who had stolen their husbands clothing and horses and decided to opt for a life of adventure. By the time Joan joined the King, she was equipped with a sizeable army herself.

Things weren't going very well with the war and it had reached a stalemate with neither side gaining or losing very much. The men on both sides were tired and hungry, mostly hungry, as everyone knows what army rations taste like.

Joan decided that these silly men were too stubborn to call a truce and as she really had no taste for bloodshed, decided on a brilliant scheme. When evening came and luck being on her side, with the wind blowing towards the enemy, Joan instructed her women to start cooking some of the good food they had brought with them. Of course the delicious smells drifted quickly over to the enemies' noses and before you could say bonn appetite, the enemy soldiers were rushing over to the other side. Now with all the soldiers on the same side there could hardly be a war, could there, and the King managed to keep the throne. Of course, being the ungrateful wretch that he was, he took all the credit, even trying to make Joan out as a witch and suggesting she be burned at the stake. The women of Joan's army, however, would have none of that business, thank you sir, and let the King know in no uncertain terms that what had been given could also be taken away. If the King persisted in his folly they would refuse to cook for his armies any longer and he possibly would end up burning right along with Joan. The King decided, rather prudently, that he would stop hassling Joan, and instead, granted her wish to be set up in a nice little cooking school in Paris, which in no time at all was to become world famous. Contrary to conflicting reports, Joan did not burn at the stake but went up in flames trying to teach a clumsy young chef to make cherries flambé.

Class D1105 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Grades 11 and 12 (Cont’d)
OWN CHOICE

Class D1107 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grades Eleven and Twelve
Psalm 19

Class D1107 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grades Eleven and Twelve (Cont’d)
Jonah 2:1-10

Class D1107 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grades Eleven and Twelve (Cont’d)
Luke 22:39-48

Class D1107 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Grades Eleven and Twelve (Cont’d)
OWN CHOICE

ENGLISH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR ADULTS

When choosing their pieces, it is recommended that entrants consider consulting the following excellent sources of poetry:

- 1) the RRDFPA suggested selections starting on page 293 of this Resource Manual
- 2) the tables of suggested 20th/21st Century and pre-20th Century selections on this page
- 3) the AMAF (Manitoba) 2024 Speech Arts Suggested Repertoire Lists
- 4) *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, or any published anthology of comparable literary merit
- 5) reliable and trustworthy literary websites such as:
 - a. Poetry in Voice <https://poetryinvoice.ca/read/poems>
 - b. Poetry 180 <https://www.loc.gov/programs/poetry-and-literature/poet-laureate/poet-laureate-projects/poetry-180/all-poems/>

Selections will NOT be accepted if:

- the work is unpublished and/or of unknown origin.
- the work does not meet the criteria / difficulty level of the entrant's class
- the intent of the work is to disseminate racist, sexist, political, or any otherwise inappropriate propaganda.

SPOKEN POETRY, PRE-20th CENTURY, GRADE 9-ADULT

Title	Author	Book Title	Publisher
"The Passionate Shepherd to His Love"	Christopher Marlowe	<i>Approaching Literature</i> , 2 nd ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"To His Coy Mistress"	Andrew Marvell	<i>Approaching Literature</i> , 2 nd ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd"	Sir Walter Raleigh	<i>Approaching Literature</i> , 2 nd ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"A Valediction Forbidding Mourning"	John Donne	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"The Flea"	John Donne	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Ode to a Nightingale"	John Keats	<i>The Norton Anthology of English Literature</i> , 8 th ed	W.W. Norton and Company
"Frost at Midnight"	Samuel Taylor Coleridge	<i>The Norton Anthology of English Literature</i> , 8 th ed	W.W. Norton and Company
"I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud"	William Wordsworth	<i>The Bedford Introd'n to Literature</i> , 8 th ed.	Bedford/St. Martin's
"Dover Beach"	Matthew Arnold	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
"How Do I Love Thee?"	Elizabeth Barrett Browning	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada

“My Last Duchess”	Robert Browning	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
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SPOKEN POETRY, 20th/21st CENTURY, GRADE 9-ADULT

Title	Author	Book Title	Publisher
“Hiroshima Exit”	Joy Kogawa	<i>Themes on the Journey</i>	Nelson Canada
“A Call to Tea”	Maxine Tynes	<i>Woman Talking Woman</i>	Pottersfield Press
“Barbie Doll”	Marge Piercy	<i>To Be of Use</i>	Doubleday
“Hate Poem”	Julie Sheehan	<i>Orient Point</i>	W. W. Norton
“i carry your heart with me”	e.e. cummings	<i>Complete Poems: 1904-1962</i>	Liveright Publishing
“Diving into the Wreck”	Adriene Rich	<i>Approaching Literature, 2nd ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin’s
“Bored”	Margaret Atwood	<i>The Bedford Introd’n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin’s
“February”	Margaret Atwood	<i>The Bedford Introd’n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin’s
“Eighteen Months”	Joelle Barron	<i>Ritual Lights</i>	Goose Lane Editions
“The Larynx”	Alice Jones	<i>The Bedford Introd’n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin’s
“Machines”	Michael Donaghy	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
“Degrees of Green”	Jeannette Armstrong	<i>Breath Tracks</i>	Theytus Books
“Did I Miss Anything?”	Tom Wayman	<i>Did I Miss Anything?: Selected Poems 1973-1993</i>	Harbour Publishing
“Please Come Late”	Hugo Williams	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
“Bedecked”	Victoria Redel	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
“Dinner Out”	Christopher Howell	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
“Smoking”	Elton Glaser	<i>The Best American Poetry 1997</i>	Scribner
“Onions”	William Matthews	<i>180 More Poems for Everyday</i>	Random House
“The Dover Bitch”	Anthony Hecht	<i>The Bedford Introd’n to Literature, 8th ed.</i>	Bedford/St. Martin’s

Class D1301 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Adult
THE IDEAL OF ANCESTRY - Etheridge Knight

Taped to the wall of my cell are 47 pictures: 47 black faces: my father, mother, grandmothers (1 dead), grandfathers (both dead), brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins (1st & 2nd), nieces, and nephews. They stare across the space at me sprawling on my bunk. I know their dark eyes, they know mine. I know their style, they know mine. I am all of them, they are all of me; they are farmers, I am a thief, I am me, they are thee.

I have at one time or another been in love with my mother, 1 grandmother, 2 sisters, 2 aunts (1 went to the asylum), and 5 cousins. I am now in love with a 7 year old niece (she sends me letters written in large block print, and her picture is the only one that smiles at me).

I have the same name as 1 grandfather, 3 cousins, 3 nephews, and 1 uncle. The uncle disappeared when he was 15, just took off and caught a freight (they say). He's discussed each year when the family has a reunion, he causes uneasiness in the clan, he is an empty space. My father's mother, who is 93 and who keeps the Family Bible with everybody's birth dates (and death dates) in it, always mentions him. There is no place in her Bible for "whereabouts unknown." Each fall the graves of my grandfathers call me, the brown hills and red gullies of Mississippi send out their electric messages, galvanizing my genes. Last year / like a salmon quitting the cold ocean-leaping and bucking up his birthstream / I hitchhiked my way from L.A. with 16 caps in my pocket and a monkey on my back. And I almost kicked it with the kinfolks. I walked barefooted in my grandmother's backyard / I smelled the old land and the woods / I sipped cornwhiskey from fruit jars with the men /

I flirted with the women / I had a ball till the caps ran out and my habit came down. That night I looked at my grandmother and split / my guts were screaming for junk / but I was almost contented / I had almost caught up with me.
(The next day in Memphis I cracked a croaker's crib for a fix.)

This year there is a gray stone wall damming my stream, and when the falling leaves stir my genes, I pace my cell or flop on my bunk and stare at 47 black faces across the space. I am all of them, they are all of me, I am me, they are thee, and I have no children

to float in the space between.

Class DI301 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Adult (Continued)

ITHAKA - Cavafy

When you set out for Ithaka
ask that your way be long,
full of adventure, full of instruction.
The Laistrygonians and the Cyclops,
angry Poseidon-do not fear them:
such as these you will never find
as long as your thought is lofty, as long as a rare
emotion touch your spirit and your body.
The Laistrygonians and the Cyclops,
angry Poseidon-you will not meet them
unless you carry them in your soul,
unless your soul raise them up before you.

Ask that your way be long.
At many a summer dawn to enter
--with what gratitude, what joy--
ports seen for the first time;
to stop at Phoenician trading centres,
and to buy good merchandise,
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,
and sensuous perfumes of every kind,
sensuous perfumes as lavishly as you can;
to visit many Egyptian cities,
to gather stores of knowledge from the learned.

Have Ithaka always in your mind.
Your arrival there is what you are destined for.
But do not in the least hurry the journey.
Better that it last for years,
so that when you reach the island you are old,
rich with all you have gained on the way,
not expecting Ithaka to give you wealth.

Ithaka gave you the splendid journey.
Without her you would not have set out.
She hasn't anything else to give you.

And if you find her poor, Ithaka has not deceived you.
So wise have you become, of such experience,
that already you will have understood what these Ithakas mean.

***Class D1301 SOLO POETRY – Serious Poetry, Adult
OWN CHOICE***

***Class D1302 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Adult
DEAR PAUL NEWMAN - Marie Kennedy Robins***

After all these years
it's over between you and me.
There's a younger man.
I get to see him five times a week
and he tries to bring me the world.
I worried a lot about your racing
in them fast cars, your beer drinking,
the fact that the color of your eyes
is fading a little with age.
Them eyes always reminded me of Ed Kozelka
who sat next to me in American History.
When you and Ed turned them blues on me,
it sure made my pilot light blaze up.
When reporters asked why you was
faithful to Joanne, you once said,
"Why should I go out for hamburger
when I can have steak at home?"
Now that Joanne is looking so plain,
I wonder if you are going to Wendy's.
Paul Baby, it was fun, and
I'll never forget your spaghetti sauce.
I just gotta move on.
I'm the same age as you, but in the dark
Peter Jennings will never notice.

***Class D1302 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Adult
WARNING - Jenny Joseph***

When I am an old woman, I shall wear purple
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.
And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves
And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.
I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells
And run my stick along the public railings
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain
And pick the flowers in other peoples' gardens

And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go
Or only bread and pickle for a week
And hoard pens and pencils and beermats and things in boxes.

But now we must have clothes that keep us dry
And pay our rent and not swear in the street
And set a good example for the children.
We must have friends to dinner and read the papers.

But maybe I ought to practise a little now?
So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised
When suddenly I am old, and start to wear purple.

***Class D1302 SOLO POETRY – Humorous Poetry, Adult
OWN CHOICE***

***Class D1304 PROSE READING – Serious Reading, Adult
OWN CHOICE***

***Class D1305 PROSE READING – Humorous Reading, Adult
OWN CHOICE***

***Class D1307 PROSE READING – Religious Reading, Adult
OWN CHOICE***

FRENCH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR KINDERGARTEN

Class F001 - French Poetry - Kindergarten

LES OIGNONS - Sylvie Dufresne

Oui, je pleure amèrement
Non, je ne suis pas triste, voyons!
C'est que, je coupe des oignons,
Tout bonnement.

Class F001 - French Poetry - Kindergarten (Continued)

SAUTERELLE - André Vigeant

Vite, vite sauterelle
Minuscule gazelle
Fais battre tes ailes
Avec plus de zèle
Sinon l'hirondelle
Te gobera sans appel...

Class F001 - French Poetry - Kindergarten (Continued)

(Untitled) - André Rochedy

Patte pelée, patte pelue
le mille-pattes boîte, boîte
Patte pelée, patte tordue
le mille-pattes trotte menu.

Class F001 - French Poetry - Kindergarten (Continued)

GRAND-MERE - Suzanne Marot

Grand-maman
Aux cheveux d'argent

M'a raconté
de beaux contes...

Elle aussi
Est une fée jolie!

Class F001 - French Poetry - Kindergarten (Continued)
LA NEIGE - G. Illberg

Tombez, tombez, flocons blancs,
Tournez, valsez gentiment;
Sur le toit et sur la branche,
Tombe, tombe, neige blanche.

Class F001 - French Poetry - Kindergarten (Continued)
(Untitled) - Georges Kalebka

J'ai baissé les yeux:
en bas il y avait mes pieds.
Ils m'attendaient
comme deux amis
pour aller se promener.

Class F001 - French Poetry - Kindergarten (Continued)
JEANNOT-LAPIN - Author unknown

Jeannot-Lapin est malade;
Il lui faut
Un p'tit coeur de salade.
Jeannot-Lapin est au lit;
Il lui faut
Une fleur de pissenlit.

Class F001 - French Poetry - Kindergarten (Continued)
UNE POULE SUR UN MUR - André Rochedy

Une poule sur un mur
crie que le pain est trop dur
qu'elle s'est cassé une dent
que son mari n'est pas content
qu'elle ne pondra plus d'oeuf blanc.

Class F001 - French Poetry - Kindergarten (Continued)
MA SOEUR LAURA - Spike Milligan

Ma petite soeur Laura
Est plus grosse que moi.
Elle me soulève d'une seule main.
Moi, quand j'essaie, il ne se passe rien.
Elle doit avoir, j'en ai peur,
Quelque chose de lourd à l'intérieur.

Class F001 - French Poetry - Kindergarten (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class F008 - French Choral Speaking – Kindergarten
OWN CHOICE

FRENCH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADES 1 AND 2

Class F101 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 1 and 2

FRAMBOISINE - Chantal Dion

si j'étais un fruit
je serais une framboise
rouge rubis
globuleuse et gonflée
juteuse et sucrée
je me tiendrais cachée
sous une feuille fraîche
à l'abri du gosier serré
de l'oiseau effronté

Class F101 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 1 and 2 (Continued)

BONBONS - Ernest Pallascio-Morin

Je ne suis pas gourmand
mais je dis franchement
que j'aime les bonbons:
c'est si bon des bonbons!

Et puis, quand on est sage,
je crois qu'il est d'usage
que l'on nous récompense.

Notre comportement,
plaisant à nos parents,
vaut bien cette dépense!

Class F101 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 1 and 2 (Continued)

TROIS PETITS OISEAUX - Marie Vaucalys

Trois petits oiseaux dans une cage,
Le chat est bien sage.

Trois petits oiseaux endormis,
Le chat qui sourit.

Trois petits oiseaux réveillés,
Le chat va les manger.

Le jet d'eau s'élance
Il fouette le chat.
Allons, en bas, plus vite que ça!

Les oiseaux sont sauvés,
Le chat est tout mouillé,
C'est bien fait!

Class F101 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 1 and 2 (Continued)

L'AN PASSÉ - Caumont

L'an passé, cela va sans dire,
J'étais petit; mais à présent
Que je sais compter, lire, écrire,
C'est bien certain que je suis grand

Class F101 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 1 and 2 (Continued)

LES CHAMPIGNONS - Anne-Marie Chapouton

Sur la mousse
poussent
les champignons

ils sont assis
tout petits
en rond

sous leur chapeau
tout frais
tout rond
ils bavardent
les champignons.

Class F101 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 1 and 2 (Continued)
UN BON DESSIN - Simone Beaulac

Sur mon tableau,
J'ai dessiné
Un beau château.

Dans le château,
On a trouvé
Un p'tit bateau.

Dans le bateau,
Était caché
Un gros gâteau,

Et, sans couteau,
J'ai dévoré
Tout le gâteau!

Class F101 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 1 and 2 (Continued)
BEAU SOLEIL - Edmée Matthey-Dupra

Beau soleil
qui se couche,
tu as posé sur le lac
un long ruban
d'or et d'argent.

Beau soleil
qui s'est couché
tu as peint les nuages
de jaune, d'orangé
et de rouge léger.

Class F101 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 1 and 2 (Continued)
LA FOURMI ET LA PIE - Simone Bussièrès

Il était une fourmi
grosse comme un grain de mil.
Elle avait bâti son nid
près de celui d'une pie.

-Que fais-tu là?
lui demanda

cet oiseau-là.

-Je me mets à l'abri,
répondit la fourmi,
car j'ai peur des souris
beaucoup plus que des pies.

Cet oiseau-là
se retourna
et la mangea!

Class F101 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 1 and 2 (Continued)
LES QUATRE SAISONS - Ella Roller

Quatre saisons
tournent la ronde
autour du monde.
C'est le printemps
vêtu de blanc.
Voici l'été
clair et doré.

Puis vient l'automne,
rouge comme une pomme.
Gare à l'hiver,
il a ses bottes
et une hotte!

Class F101 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 1 and 2 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class F108 - French Choral Speaking – Grades 1 and 2
OWN CHOICE

FRENCH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADES 3 AND 4

Class F301 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 3 and 4

MON CHAT - Simone Bussi res

J'ai un chat gris bleu,
qui aime les oeufs,
et c'est bien curieux,
il n'a pas de queue.

Mon petit chat bleu,
qui aime les oeufs,
a de beaux grands yeux
bien affectueux.

J'ai un chat gris bleu
qui aime les oeufs;
il est silencieux,
mais non paresseux.

S'il aime les oeufs,
mon petit chat bleu,
il aime encore mieux
du bon lait cr meux.

Class F301 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)

LE BROUILLARD - Maurice Car me

Le brouillard a tout mis
Dans son sac de coton;
Le brouillard a tout pris
Autour de ma maison.

Plus de fleurs au jardin
Plus d'arbres dans l'all e;
La serre du voisin
Semble s' tre envol e.

Et je ne sais vraiment
O  peut s' tre pos 
Le moineau que j'entends
Si tristement crier.

Class F301 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
POURQUOI? - Sylvie Dufresne

Pourquoi les parents disent-ils, ennuyés,
"Va te coucher, on est fatigués!"
Quand il est huit heures bien sonnées
Et que nous n'avons pas fini de jouer?

Pourquoi derrière les oreilles faut-il se laver
Quand, par les cheveux, tout est caché?

Pourquoi faut-il manger
Toute notre viande, sans hésiter,
Pour avoir un dessert sucré?

Pourquoi faut-il prendre notre bain
Si on est pour se salir le lendemain?

Pourquoi on ne doit jamais bouger,
Ni se chicaner,
Quand on visite la parenté?

Pourquoi faut-il se brosser les dents
Si on doit manger si souvent?

Pourquoi les grands
N'écoutent pas plus souvent...
Les enfants?

Class F301 -

French Solo Poetry – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
MON PETIT CHAT - Maurice Carême

J'ai un petit chat,
Petit comme ça.
Je l'appelle Orange.

Je ne sais pourquoi
Jamais il ne mange
Ni souris ni rat.

C'est un chat étrange
Aimant le nougat
Et le chocolat.

Mais c'est pour cela,
Dit tante Solange,
Qu'il ne grandit pas!

Class F301 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
BONBONS - Ernest Pallascio-Morin

Je ne suis pas gourmand
mais je dis franchement
que j'aime les bonbons:
c'est si bon des bonbons!

Et puis, quand on est sage,
je crois qu'il est d'usage
que l'on nous récompense.

Notre comportement,
plaisant à nos parents,
vaut bien cette dépense!

Class F301 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
DEVINETTE - Raynald Talbot

Je ne suis pas plus gros,
Oh! que ça...

J'ai des courtes oreilles,
Comme ça...

Ma longue queue se roule,
Comme ça...

Je dors toujours en boule,
Comme ça....

Je ne bois que du lait,
Comme ça...

J'ai une moustachette,
Comme ça...

Et de petites dents,
Comme ça...

Qui croquent les souris,
Comme ça...

Peux-tu dire mon nom,
Comme ça...

Il n'est guère plus long,
Oh! que ça!

Class F301 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
LE CADEAU - Sylvie Dufresne

Le pigeon et l'hirondelle ai vus
La pie et l'alouette ai entendus.

Quand la pie s'est envolée
Son bavardage, elle m'a laissé.

Quand l'hirondelle s'est envolée,
le goût de l'aventure, elle m'a laissé.

Quand l'alouette s'est envolée
Son chant, elle m'a laissé.

Quand le pigeon s'est envolé,
Une tache blanche sur l'épaule, il m'a laissé.

Class F301 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
T'ES FOU - Jean-Louis Béland

Maman me répète souvent:
"T'es fou, mon enfant..."
C'est qu'elle me trouve comique!
On dit aussi que j'ai de la mimique...
Alors, ceux qui ne sont ni comiques
Et qui n'ont pas de mimique,
ceux-là, ne seraient pas fous?
Pourtant, j'ai entendu maman
dire à quelqu'un: "Il n'est pas fou, mon enfant,
Il comprend tout ce qu'on lui dit!"
J'avoue avoir été un peu surpris,
Car, cette fois-là, je n'avais rien compris.

Class F301 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
AH! QUE LA TERRE EST BELLE - Pierre Menanteau

Ah! que la terre est belle
Crie une voix, là-haut,
Ah! que la terre est belle
Sous le beau soleil chaud!

Elle est encore plus belle,
Bougonne l'escargot,

Elle est encore plus belle
Quand il tombe de l'eau.

Vue d'en bas, vue d'en haut,
La terre est toujours belle
Et vive l'hirondelle
Et vive l'escargot.

Class F301 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class F304 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 3 and 4
UNE VIE DE CHIEN - Marie-Noëlle Blin

- Uranus, appelle discrètement Jérémie. Viens, mon chien!

Depuis quelques jours, Jérémie connaît son nom.

Le chien le suit jusque dans la maison. Jérémie monte l'escalier qui mène à sa chambre: c'est derrière son bureau qu'il cache les provisions pour chiens. Le petit chiot grimpe les marches avec difficulté. Finalement, Jérémie le prend sous son bras et l'amène ainsi jusqu'au second étage.

Dans la chambre, il lui lance une de ces petites balles de caoutchouc qui ressemblent à des billes en verre, puis une balle de base-ball, et une balle de tennis. Le chien ne sait plus laquelle poursuivre, laquelle ramener. Il danse sur place en roulant des yeux fous. Jérémie est mort de rire.

Class F304 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
BARBOTTE ET LÉOPOLD - Pierre Roy

Comme maman a la clé de la maison, elle décide d'entrer jeter un coup d'oeil. Pendant qu'elle ouvre la porte, je me penche pour flatter Barbotte qui se faufile aussitôt à l'intérieur. Il fait le tour de toutes les pièces, puis, voyant qu'il n'y a personne, il va se coucher en rond sur son vieux tapis. Mais il ne ferme pas les yeux. Ses oreilles pointues sont relevées. Je crois qu'il se doute qu'il y a quelque chose d'anormal.

Pendant ce temps, maman ramasse les plats que mon grand-père utilisait pour le chat. C'est écrit BARBOTTE sur chacun d'eux. Elle les lave et les met dans un sac avec des boîtes de nourriture.

- Enroule Barbotte dans son vieux tapis. On le ramène à la maison.

Class F304 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
SOPHIE LANCE ET COMPTE - Louise Leblanc

Ca y est! Je suis au sommet de ma forme. Depuis deux semaines, je m'entraîne tous les jours. La partie de hockey la plus importante de ma vie a lieu demain matin. Et j'ai décidé de prendre un peu de repos.

Et puis, il faut que j'essaie l'équipement de Laurent pendant qu'il joue avec ses copains. Je ne lui ai pas encore dit que je le remplaçais dans le but des Lutins rouges.

J'espérais qu'il tomberait malade. Avec le froid qu'il fait! Je ne suis vraiment pas chanceuse, parce qu'il n'a jamais été en aussi bonne santé.

S'il n'attrape pas un rhume, les oreillons ou la rougeole avant ce soir, il va falloir que je trouve une autre idée.

Class F304 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
LE CHIEN D'ARTHUR - Ginette Anfousse

Le lendemain matin, après une nuit bien courte, Arthur se réveille ou plutôt se fait réveiller comme la veille. Il se souvient à quel point il s'était amusé.

D'abord, Dimanche lui avait arraché les couvertures pour lui renifler les orteils. Puis il lui avait piétiné le dos, mordillé le cou et léché les oreilles.

C'était si drôle et ça chatouillait tellement qu'Arthur avait décidé de faire le mort. De faire comme s'il dormait encore. Mais ce matin, Arthur se souvient que c'est comme ça, exactement comme ça, que son Dimanche avait fait pipi dans son lit.

Class F304 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
DES HOT DOGS SOUS LE SOLEIL - Raymond Plante, pp. 13 - 14

Lété, mon été des hot dogs, a véritablement commencé un samedi avant-midi du milieu de mai. Je portais des shorts pour la première fois de l'année. J'aime avoir les jambes à l'air... sauf les trois ou quatre premières fois de la saison où, comme tout le monde, je ressemble à un touriste en quête de soleil. Deux longues jambes blanches et moyennement poilues qui sortent d'une paire de culottes courtes donnent une allure ridicule à l'individu au complet. Et puis, elles sont maigres, mes jambes, deux manches à balai. Chez les filles, ce n'est pas pareil. Elles ont les jambes faites pour porter des shorts.

Class F304 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
UN CROCODILE DANS LA BAIGNOIRE – M.-F. Hébert , pp. 25 – 27

Impossible! Ce que je vois n'est pas une queue de crocodile. Ni une, deux, trois, quatre pattes de crocodile.

Il ne peut pas y avoir de crocodile dans la baignoire. Pas plus que dans la maison. Il n'y en a jamais eu dans la ville. Ni même au pays. Cet animal vit dans des régions lointaines.

C'est écrit dans mon livre sur les reptiles!

Qu'est-ce que c'est, alors? Pour m'aider à réfléchir, je me gratte le front. Comme mes parents quand ils trouvent que la vie coûte trop cher.

C'est le choc! Ma peau est bosselée et rugueuse, alors que, normalement, elle est lisse et douce.

Pas de panique! La boue a fait une croûte en séchant sur mon corps. Voilà tout! Un peu de savon et le tour sera joué.

J'ai beau frotter, frotter, rien n'y fait.

Class F304 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 3 and 4 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class F308 - French Choral Speaking – Grades 3 and 4
OWN CHOICE

FRENCH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADES 5 AND 6

Class F501 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 5 and 6

LE GROS BONHOMME - Maurice Carême

Jeudi matin, pour m'amuser,
J'avais dessiné un bonhomme
Aussi rouge qu'un géranium.
A peine l'avais-je achevé,
Il a demandé un voilier,
Des poissons dans un aquarium,
Un jardin rempli de rosiers.
Alors, j'ai pris ma gomme
Pour effacer le mobilier
Décoré de tiroirs dorés
Que je lui avais crayonné.
Il voulut encore un verger
Avec, au milieu, des pommiers
Et, dessous, des paniers de pommes.
Mais, soudainement agacé
Par ses demandes répétées,
Je l'ai effacé, lui aussi,
Pour ne plus avoir de souci.

Class F501 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)

LA POULE NOIRE - Octave Aubert

La poule noire de grand-mère
A douze petits poulets gris.
La pauvre poule a fort à faire
Pour nourrir ses poussins chéris.

Lorsque dans son bec elle porte
Un peu de graine pour chacun,
Le gros chat, tapi sous la porte,
Voudrait, bien sûr, en croquer un.

Mais la poule noire le guette
Et le chat craint son bec pointu.
Elle est très forte, la poulette;
Le chat a peur d'être battu.

Douze poulets n'ont qu'une mère

Pour les défendre et les nourrir.
Moi j'ai ma mère et mon père...
Ah! combien je dois les chérir!

Class F501 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)

MATHIEU LE PEUREUX - Sylvie Dufresne

Mathieu le peureux a peur de tout.
Depuis qu'il est né, il se cache partout
Et ne veut rien essayer du tout.

Il marche à côté de sa bicyclette dorée,
De peur de tomber.

A tous les jours, debout il doit manger,
De peur de s'asseoir sur une chaise cassée.

Il ne se lave pas, malgré tous les bons conseils,
De peur de ne pas trouver son gant noir.

Il ne lit jamais trop,
De peur de ne pas comprendre certains mots.

Jamais il ne s'amuse quand il doit sortir,
De peur d'avoir trop de plaisir.

Il ne parle pas (et chaque jour est pire),
De peur de ne pas savoir quoi dire.

Mathieu le peureux
Est bien malheureux.

Class F501 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)

LE BONHOMME DE NEIGE - A. Atzenwiler

Un jour, un bonhomme de neige
Eut envie de voyager.

Il prit sa belle écharpe beige
Et son bâton de noisetier.

A peine arrivé en Afrique,
Il se sentit très fatigué.

Il fut piqué par un moustique
A l'ombre d'un grand cocotier.

Il fut pris d'une forte fièvre
Et soudain se mit à trembler,

Comme tremblent lapins et lièvres
Quand la chasse va commencer.

Il transpirait à grosses gouttes,
Il fondait de la tête aux pieds...

Class F501 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)

L'ÉPOUVANTAIL - Edmée Matthey-Dupra

Dans la vigne de grand-père,
Depuis hier, s'est installé
Un homme de mauvais air
Dont je voudrais vous parler.

De grand-père il a la veste
Et m'a chipé mon chapeau.
Je connais son nom, du reste:
Épouvantail à moineaux.

Les oiseaux du voisinage
Ont sans doute reconnu
Nos vêtements hors d'usage,
Car ils sont tous accourus.

Mais moi, je passe à distance
Car je suis bien plus malin
Que les bons oiseaux qui pensent
Qu'il va leur donner du pain...

Class F501 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)

LES DOIGTS DE MA MAIN - Octave Aubert

Voici ma main: elle a cinq doigts.
En voici deux, en voici trois.
Celui-ci, le petit bonhomme,
C'est mon gros pouce qu'il se nomme.
L'index, qui montre le chemin,
C'est le second doigt de ma main.

Entre l'index et l'annulaire,
Le majeur paraît un grand frère.
L'annulaire porte un anneau.

Avec ma bague il fait le beau!
Le minuscule auriculaire
Marche à côté de l'annulaire.

Regardez les doigts travailler!
Chacun fait son petit métier.

Class F501 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)

LE DENTIER DE GRAND-PAPA - Sylvie Dufresne

L'autre jour, grand-papa
Est arrivé en trombe, tout énervé,
Dans la cuisine, à l'heure du repas,
En criant: "J'ai perdu mon dentier!"

C'était le branle-bas de combat.
Tous et chacun cherchait
Ici et là, encore ici et puis là-bas.
Aucun résultat concret.

Alors, l'évidence me vint à l'esprit,
Et ce, après avoir cherché jusque dans ses souliers,
Grand-papa, de toute sa vie,
N'avait jamais eu de dentier.

Class F501 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)

LES MOUSTACHES - Raymond Plante

Quand on la dessine au crayon
Une moustache
Ça tache quand tu l'embrasses
Quand elle est faite de carton
Une moustache
S'attache bien à sa place

Si tous les chats ont des moustaches
Toutes les vaches, elles, n'en ont pas
Moustaches de laine ou bien de soie
Mais il n'y a pas de moustaches en bois

Quand elle est raide comme un balai
Une moustache
Te pique avec regret
Quand elle est faite avec du lait
Une moustache
S'essuie et disparaît

Class F501 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)

LE NID SOUS LES ROSES - Annaïk Le Léard

J'ai trouvé la plus belle chose
De ce printemps:
Un nid caché sous une rose,
Quatre oeufs dedans!
Quel joli nid! Boule de mousse
Où l'oiselet
A mis le crin, la laine douce;
Quel nid douillet!
Les oeufs bleutés, perles fragiles,
Sont tout au fond,
Et les pinsons pressés, agiles,
Viennent et vont.
Pour garder sous les fleurs écloses
Le nid joli,
Je ne vais pas cueillir mes roses
Ce printemps-ci!

Class F501 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

Class F504 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 5 and 6
VALENTINE PICOTÉE - Dominique Demers

Elle a de longs cheveux noirs qui coulent comme une rivière sur ses épaules et dans son dos en faisant des vagues. Je gage qu'ils sont encore plus soyeux que les poils de Boboule, notre gros minou.

Ses yeux bruns chocolat brillent comme des billes. Et son sourire est aussi éclatant qu'un soleil de vacances.

Pendant que tous les zozos de la classe apprenaient qu'il faut traverser l'océan Atlantique pour passer de l'Espagne au Canada, Katarina m'a regardé. Et elle a compris que je suis le plus gentil, le plus intelligent et le plus beau de tous les garçons de la classe.

La preuve? Elle m'a souri.

Quand j'y pense, ça me fait drôle. J'ai comme de chatouilles dans l'estomac.

Class F504 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)
CHALET, SECRET ET GROS BILLETS - Sonia Sarfati

A vrai dire, la simple vue de patins donne la chair de poule à Raphaël.

Pour la bonne raison que personne ne lui a appris à se déplacer avec ces engins bizarres aux pieds.

Son père ne patine pas. Sa mère patine comme si elle avait trois jambes de bois. Sa petite soeur Sarah hurle à la seule vue d'une patinoire. Sa chienne Taxi se transforme en tapis dès qu'elle pose une patte sur une surface glacée.

- Voilà! dit-il à son amie en soupirant, après lui avoir révélé ce lourd secret.

Myriam n'en revient pas. Elle a toujours cru que patiner, c'était comme monter à vélo: tout le monde apprend ça de ses parents avant d'entrer à l'école! Cela fait partie de leur rôle, non?

Class F504 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)
LA COURSE AU BOUT DE LA TERRE - Louise-Michelle Sauriol

Premier samedi de mars: c'est la course en Alaska, la course de chiens la plus longue du monde! Yaani attend le signal, le corps tendu, les yeux brillants. Il a de la peine à retenir son attelage. Des amis l'aident à contenir ses bêtes, nerveuses, impatientes. Anouk, sa chienne husky, tire déjà pour entraîner les autres. Sitka, Kadlouk, les pattes fébriles, piétinent la neige; Amarok jappe sans arrêt; des buées blanches s'élèvent au-dessus de toutes les têtes.

Le mercure descend depuis ce matin, le froid crispe les visages et fait grelotter jusqu'aux os. La foule crie des noms, se réchauffe en tapant des pieds, des mains. Un brouhaha monstre jaillit de partout.

Class F504 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)
QUI A PEUR DES FANTOMES? - Sylvie Desrosiers

John trouve que finalement les opérations de l'agence débutent bien. Il décide de rester au bureau, pendant que les filles accomplissent leur mission, au cas où quelque chose d'autre se présenterait.

Elles partent donc chacune de leur côté.

Agnès fait la route lentement, profite un peu du soleil chaud de ce début d'été. Arrivée en vue de l'église, elle aperçoit une voiture neuve, grise et étincelante.

Instinctivement, elle descend de sa bicyclette, s'approche sans bruit et va se poster près d'une fenêtre ouverte, sans se faire voir.

A l'intérieur, le vieux Labrosse a une conversation animée. Son interlocuteur est nul autre que Jean Caisse, le gérant de la caisse populaire de la rue Principale.

Class F504 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)
LE PARI D'AGATHE - Sonia Sarfati, pp. 74 - 75

Les larmes lui étaient montées aux yeux tellement elle voulait convaincre son ami de sa bonne foi. Car les paroles qu'elle avait énoncées à ce moment-là venaient directement de son cœur. Et en les prononçant, elle avait soudain compris pourquoi elle s'occupait ainsi de Clovis. Le pari, les médailles, tout cela était à présent bien loin de ses préoccupations. Son véritable défi, c'était de pouvoir aider son ami à se sentir mieux dans sa peau.

Clovis avait senti la sincérité d'Agathe. Lentement, il était retourné vers elle. Ils s'étaient regardé pendant un long moment en silence puis avaient échangé un timide

sourire. Et Agathe s'était sentie soulagée. Comme si on lui avait enlevé un gros poids de sur le coeur.

-Tu sais, j'ai une troisième boîte dans mon sac, avait-elle dit en faisant un clin d'oeil à son ami.

-Une boîte de Smarties pleine de Smarties? avait-il prudemment demandé.

-Là, tu as vraiment compris! Il ne te reste plus qu'à gagner la prochaine course pour pouvoir...te régaler! D'accord?

-Et c'est quoi, la prochaine course?

-C'est cinq fois les escaliers.

Class F504 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)

MÉFIEZ-VOUS DES MONSTRES MARINS - Sylvie Desrosiers, pp. 54 – 56

Un craquement de branche se fait entendre. Puis, le chich, chich, chich! de quelque chose qui s'avance en frôlant des feuilles.

C'est Notdog qui voit en premier l'animal attiré par l'odeur des os. "Ah non, encore un porc-épic!" pense-t-il. Cette fois-ci, il décide de faire volte-face et se met à aboyer en s'élançant vers lui pour lui faire peur.

John et Jocelyne ont une demi-seconde à peine pour rouler sous la galerie. Car les deux hommes sortent précipitamment de la maison.

Ils en font le tour. Et leurs pieds s'arrêtent juste devant les inséparables qui cessent de respirer. Le secrétaire aperçoit Notdog et le porc-épic:

-C'est le chien affreusement laid que j'ai vu à l'agence de ces enfants détestables! Dis-moi pas qu'ils sont ici!

Furieux, ils se mettent à chercher partout. Sous la galerie, quelques souris passent et repassent devant John et Jocelyne. "S'il vous plaît, ne faites pas de bruits", supplient-ils en silence.

Les deux hommes vont voir dans la remise atténuante. Ils soulèvent ensuite une porte qui traîne. Puis, Allistair A. Tair se penche pour regarder sous la galerie.

Class F504 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 5 and 6 (Continued)

OWN CHOICE

Class F508 - French Choral Speaking – Grades 5 and 6
OWN CHOICE

Class F512 - French Story Telling – Grades 5 and 6
OWN CHOICE (2-3 minutes)

FRENCH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADES 7 AND 8

Class F701 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 7 and 8

LE MONSTRE DE MA CHAMBRE - Sylvie Dufresne

A chaque soir,
Quand il fait noir
Dans ma chambre, petite et coquette,
Le monstre sort de sa cachette.

Il prend un malin plaisir
A grimacer pour m'empêcher de dormir.
De ses treize doigts très longs,
Il semble venir me prendre pour de bon.

Il a une grosse queue fourchue,
Trois cornes assez pointues
Et des yeux exorbitants
Qui me laissent tout de peur tremblant.

De le faire partir, j'ai bien essayé
Caché sous les couvertures, j'ai crié.
J'ai appelé ma mère, prié, bu de l'eau.
Rien n'y a fait...même me coucher sur le dos.

Mais l'autre jour, j'ai trouvé
Le moyen de m'en débarrasser.
J'ai fermé les yeux, couché dans mon lit
Et me suis endormi.

Class F701 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

MÉDITATION - Jacques Charpentreau

On m'a conté qu'autrefois,
En des temps pourtant austères,
Les gens biens crachaient par terre
Et se mouchaient dans leurs doigts.

Aujourd'hui mon petit frère,
Culotte comme il se doit,
A sa couche au bon endroit,
Bien serrée devant-derrrière,

Mais je constate parfois
Qu'un grand progrès reste à faire
Car il crache encore par terre
Et se mouche dans ses doigts.

Comme disait ma grand-mère,
On bouche un coin, et l'on voit
Tout fuir par un autre endroit.
Ah! La vie est bien amère!

Class F701 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
LE TEMPS A LAISSÉ SON MANTEAU - Charles d'Orléans

Le temps a laissé son manteau
De vent, de froidure et de pluie,
Et s'est vêtu de broderie,
De soleil luisant, clair et beau.

Il n'y a bête ni oiseau
Qu'en son jargon ne chante ou crie:
"Le temps a laissé son manteau
De vent, de froidure et de pluie."

Rivière, fontaine et ruisseau
Portent, en livrée jolie,
Gouttes d'argent d'orfèvrerie
Chacun s'habille de nouveau:
Le temps a laissé son manteau.

Class F701 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
LA MARMITE - Georges Gaudion

Notre dame la marmite,
Accroupie comme le chaudron,
Aux fourches de feu des tisons,
Siffle.
Notre Dame la marmite,
Sainte-Mère du pot-au-feu,
A trois pattes comme les vieux,
A trois pattes boiteuses,
Debout ou bien accroupie
Et les poings sur les hanches,
Avec des grimaces gourmandes
Notre Dame la marmite
Ronfle et chante des légendes
Sur le feu.

Class F701 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
LE PETIT INVENTEUR - Jacques Charpentreau

J'ai pris la perruque
De mon oncle Luc
Et j'ai fait un nid
Pour mon canari.

Avec le dentier
Du cousin Xavier
J'ai fait deux sonnettes
Et trois castagnettes.

Avec les bretelles
De Pantagruel,
J'ai fait un bougeoir
Et ma balançoire.

Avec la ceinture
De mon frère Arthur,
J'ai fait la cravate
Que porte ma chatte.

Avec les lunettes
De ma tante Huguette,
J'ai fait deux soucoupes
Pour manger ma soupe.

Avec la culotte
De ma sœur Charlotte,
J'ai fait un coussin
Pour mon chien.

Avec ma cervelle
De Polichinelle,
Déception amère,
Je n'ai rien pu faire.

Class F701 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
LA MORT DES OISEAUX - François Coppée

Le soir, au coin du feu, j'ai pensé, bien des fois,
A la mort d'un oiseau, quelque part, dans les bois.

Pendant les tristes jours de l'hiver monotone,
Les pauvres nids déserts, les nids qu'on abandonne,
Se balancent au vent, sur le ciel gris de fer.
Oh! comme les oiseaux doivent mourir, l'hiver!

Pourtant, lorsque viendra le temps des violettes,
Nous ne trouverons pas leurs délicats squelettes,
Dans le gazon d'avril où nous irons courir:
Est-ce que les oiseaux se cachent pour mourir?

Class F701 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
LE CORBEAU ET LE RENARD - Jean de La Fontaine

Maître corbeau, sur un arbre perché,
Tenait en son bec un fromage.
Maître renard, par l'odeur alléché,
Lui tint à peu près ce langage;
"Hé! bonjour, Monsieur du Corbeau,
Que vous êtes joli! que vous me semblez beau!
Sans mentir, si votre ramage
Se rapporte à votre plumage,
Vous êtes le phénix des hôtes de ces bois"
A ces mots le corbeau ne se sent pas de joie;
Et pour montrer sa belle voix,
Il ouvre un large bec, laisse tomber sa proie.
Le renard s'en saisit, et dit: "Mon bon Monsieur,
Apprenez que tout flatteur

Vit aux dépens de celui que l'écoute:
Cette leçon vaut bien un fromage, sans doute."
Le corbeau, honteux et confus,
Jura, mais un peu tard, qu'on ne l'y prendrait plus.

Class F701 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
LE CHAT ET L'OISEAU - Jacques Prévert

Un village écoute désolé
Le chant d'un oiseau blessé
C'est le seul oiseau du village
Et c'est le seul chat du village
Qui l'a à moitié dévoré
Et l'oiseau cesse de chanter
Le chat cesse de ronronner
Et de se lécher le museau
Et le village fait à l'oiseau
De merveilleuses funérailles
Et le chat qui est invité
Marche derrière le petit cercueil de paille
Où l'oiseau mort est allongé
Porté par la petite fille
Qui n'arrête pas de pleurer
Si j'avais su que cela te fasse tant de peine
Lui dit le chat
Je l'aurais mangé tout entier
Et puis je t'aurais raconté
Que je l'avais vu s'envoler
S'envoler jusqu'au bout du monde
Là-bas où c'est tellement loin
Que jamais on n'en revient
Tu aurais eu moins de chagrin
Simplement de la tristesse et des regrets.

Il ne faut jamais faire les choses à moitié.

Class F701 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
LA MARGUERITE - Eugène Rambert

Un frais bouton de marguerite
 En s'éveillant
Dit au soleil: "Lève-toi vite,
 Soleil brillant.

Viens réchauffer ma coiffe verte
 Dans le gazon;
Il ne lui faut pour être ouverte
 Qu'un seul rayon."

Elle dit, le soleil se lève
 Brillant et chaud,
Et le bouton, gonflé de sève,
 S'ouvre aussitôt.

"Merci:" lui dit la marguerite
 Au teint pourpré,
"Je suis, je crois, la plus petite
 Des fleurs du pré.

Mais il n'en est point, je parie,
 Qui pense à toi,
Point qui t'aime, dans la prairie,
 Autant que moi."

Class F701 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class F704 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 7 and 8
LES YEUX D'ÉMERAUDE - Denis Côté

Pendant que je bâchais un problème de maths, la chatte s'est enfin décidée à manger. Elle a nettoyé l'assiette de poulet en un temps record, avant de régler son compte au bol de lait.

Elle a passé l'heure suivante à m'observer du coin de l'oeil. Son repas semblait l'avoir revigorée.

Lorsque je lui ai souhaité bonne nuit, son dos est venu rencontrer mes caresses. J'ai éteint et je me suis couché.

A vrai dire, je ne me reconnaissais plus tout à fait moi-même.

Pourquoi est-ce que j'imposais ce chat à mon père allergique? Pourquoi était-ce si important que je m'en occupe?

J'ignorais aussi où j'avais pris cette autre résolution saugrenue: cacher à Jo et à Pouce l'existence de cet animal.

Tandis que je m'endormais, son doux ronronnement chatouillait le silence.

Je me suis réveillé en sursaut. J'ai tourné la tête.

En pleine obscurité, les yeux de la chatte faisaient deux taches lumineuses!

Je savais que, la nuit, les yeux d'un chat peuvent refléter la lumière. Celle des phares d'une voiture, par exemple.

Autour de moi pourtant, il n'y avait aucune lumière à refléter.

Les yeux se sont éteints au bout de quelques secondes.

Class F704 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
LA COMÉDIENNE DISPARUE - Sonia Sarfati

Ce qui m'a coupé le souffle, en sortant de l'aéroport, c'est la couleur du ciel. D'un bleu plus bleu que bleu. Un bleu brillant, un bleu de vacances. Je me demande d'ailleurs pourquoi certaines personnes disent "J'ai les bleus" pour exprimer leur mélancholie, leur tristesse

Le bleu est en fait une couleur de joie. Surtout celui de la Côte d'Azur, qui borde la mer Méditerranée, en France. Ce bleu-là, celui du ciel dans lequel je volais tout à l'heure et celui de la mer que je survolais, est extraordinaire.

Sébastien et Jocelyne, mes parents, partagent mon avis...même si mon père semble déjà avoir la tête ailleurs. Pas qu'il soit particulièrement distrait de nature. C'est plutôt que ce voyage signifie beaucoup pour lui.

Sébastien est comédien. Un super bon comédien, même. Pas encore très connu, mais les choses vont bientôt changer. Il y a quelque temps, il a joué dans un film intitulé Tristan et Iseult, inspiré de la légende qui porte ce nom.

Or, ce long métrage est présenté au Festival international des films de Cannes. Et il a des chances de remporter la Palme d'or, le premier prix, quoi!

Class F704 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
JESSIE LA PARFAITE - Andrea Balis - Robert Reiser

Madame, Monsieur,

Jusqu'ici, Jessica avait été une élève exemplaire, mais depuis quelque temps, son comportement semble avoir changé. Plusieurs incidents mineurs m'avaient déjà alertée, mais aujourd'hui elle s'est laissée entraîner dans une bagarre avec un condisciple. Ce n'est plus la Jessica que j'ai connue au début de l'année, et je crois de mon devoir de vous faire part de ma préoccupation à son sujet. N'hésitez pas à prendre contact avec moi afin que nous puissions débattre ensemble de ce problème.

Avec mes meilleurs sentiments,

Bernice Rogers

Jessie parcourt ces lignes une fois, deux fois, trois fois. Jamais encore elle n'a rapporté de billet à la maison. Jamais encore elle n'a eu de "comportement". Et tout ça, par la faute de Ben. C'est injuste. Les adultes s'accordent à dire qu'il ne faut surtout pas se laisser marcher sur les pieds, qu'il est très important d'apprendre à se défendre. Jessie n'a fait que défendre son tapis, rien de plus. Elle ne devrait pas se retrouver avec un billet à faire signer de ses parents. Elle espère de tout son coeur que ses parents seront de son avis, mais rien ne lui paraît moins sûr.

Class F704 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
UNE HISTOIRE A FAIRE JAPPER - Yves Beauchemin

Pantoufle était un golden retriever au magnifique pelage doré, avec de longues oreilles pendantes, des pattes courtes et solides, un regard exalté et une langue qui pouvait vous atteindre le creux de l'oreille ou l'intérieur des narines avec une habileté stupéfiante. Bien sûr, il existe des milliers et des milliers de chiens semblables et vous en avez sûrement vu des tas. Mais si j'ai pris la peine d'écrire son histoire et celle de son jeune maître Guillaume, c'est qu'elle possédait quelque chose de très particulier.

Au début, personne ne le remarqua. Il fallut même quelques mois pour qu'on se doute de quelque chose. Ce fut tout d'abord la vieille mademoiselle Jeanson, qui habitait une jolie maison de brique près de chez Guillaume et faisait pousser tant de rhubarbe dans son potager. Mais sa timidité l'empêcha d'ouvrir la bouche, car elle craignit de passer pour folle.

Pantoufle grandit très vite. A six mois, elle avait presque atteint sa taille adulte.

- Ma foi! on dirait que quelqu'un la gonfle avec une pompe à bicyclette, plaisantait parfois Raymond.

Elle avait toujours faim et mangeait tout ce qu'on lui donnait: des cornichons à l'aneth, des sandwiches à la moutarde, du beurre d'arachide, etc.

Class F704 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

LE COEUR EN BATAILLE - Marie-Francine Hébert pp.37 - 38

Je cours sans vraiment savoir où je vais, martelant le trottoir au rythme incessant de ma frustration et de mon désarroi. La première chose que je sais, je me retrouve devant l'hôpital où travaille ma mère.

Je vois une grande femme blonde entrer avec une fillette de quatre ans dans les bras. Elle presse son enfant fiévreux sur son cœur comme s'il s'agissait du trésor le plus précieux. Le père n'a d'yeux que pour leur être agréable.

Je donnerais n'importe quoi pour avoir quatre ans, être malade et courir me jeter dans les bras de ma mère devant mon père attendri qui me regarderait comme si j'étais la huitième merveille du monde.

Mais je les ai perdus depuis longtemps, mes quatre ans, et tout ce qui me reste c'est l'interdiction de déranger "pour rien" ma grande pédiatre de mère à son travail.

Il me semble que si j'étais ma mère et que ma fille arrivait dans cet état-là, je sentirais aussitôt ce qu'elle vit et je la prendrais dans mes bras...car elle compterait plus que tout.

J'entre et je me faufile jusqu'à l'escalier menant à l'étage de la pédiatrie, le cœur battant.

Class F704 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)

LE JEUNE MAGICIEN - Viviane Julien, pp. 41 - 42

Le lendemain matin, Pierre se réveille très fatigué. Il a passé une nuit mouvementée. Tout lui revient en mémoire instantanément, et il commence à se sentir plutôt effrayé. Se pourrait-il qu'il ait vraiment fait éclater le verre et fait dégringoler les jouets du mur...seulement avec son regard? Il n'ose pas en parler à ses parents ou à ses amis. Tout le monde rirait de lui! Il passe une matinée pénible à l'école et il est particulièrement heureux lorsque la sonnerie vient le délivrer. En se dirigeant vers l'autobus scolaire, il voit Marc qui, comme toujours, se faufile pour arriver le premier. Il est avec Jacques, un autre camarade de classe. Aussitôt arrivé à l'autobus, Jacques saute sur le marche-pied et s'arrête un instant. Il se retourne vers ses copains:

-Eh! les amis, tout le monde est invité chez moi samedi soir. C'est mon anniversaire!

-Hourra! Hourra!

Pierre prête à peine attention à l'invitation de Jacques. Il est plus occupé à trouver deux sièges vides en espérant que Margot viendra peut-être s'asseoir près de lui. La chance lui sourit. Il s'installe sur le siège près de la fenêtre. Et son truc marche! Margot s'arrête près de lui:

-La place est libre?

-Oui, oui, s'empresse de répondre Pierre.

Elle va s'asseoir, lorsque Marc l'interpelle de fond de l'autobus.

-Eh! Margot, viens ici une minute!

Margot adresse un petit sourire à Pierre et s'éloigne vers Marc et sa bande.

Class F704 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 7 and 8 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class F708 - French Choral Speaking – Grades 7 and 8

Class F712 - French Story Telling – Grades 7 and 8
OWN CHOICE (2-4 minutes)

FRENCH DRAMA

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR GRADES 9-12

Class F901 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 9-12

LES BONNES MANIERES - Jacques Charpentreau

Oui, ma petite Marianne,
Tu peux manger ta banane
A la moutarde,
Mais prends garde,
Une petite fille comme il faut
Ne trempe pas sa banane
Directement dans le pot.
Elle enlève d'abord la peau,
Puis, elle prend un peu de moutarde
Sur son assiette
- Pas trop -
Elle tient sa banane avec sa fourchette,
Elle l'enduit de moutarde avec son couteau,
Elle en coupe de petits morceaux,
La petite fille comme il faut.

Non, ma petite Marianne,
Même après la tisane,
Jamais on ne se hasarde
A fourrer de la moutarde
Dans les narines de grand-père
Pour le voir se mettre en colère
En lui faisant monter
La moutarde au nez;
Une petite fille comme il faut
Doit être une bonne ménagère
Et savoir que la moutarde est trop chère
Pour être ainsi gaspillée.

Class F901 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 9-12 (Continued)
AIR TRISTE ET CONNU - René Guy Cadou

Un caillou lancé
Une vitre saute
Un homme qui tombe
Le cœur fracassé

Celui-ci chantait
Pour ne pas entendre
Le pas de la mort
Dans son escalier

Celui-là mourait
De ne pas comprendre
Les ordres brutaux
Dits en étranger

Celui-ci vivait
Mais de son mensonge
Celui-là est mort
Au lieu de parler

De tous les vivants
Pas deux ne s'accordent
Sur le nom secret
De la liberté

Un caillou lancé
Une vitre saute
Un autre homme tombe
Ah c'en est assez.

Class F901 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 9-12 (Continued)

LE JEU - Sylvain Garneau

J'ai nagé jusqu'à l'autre rive
Pour y chercher des jeux nouveaux.
Je n'ai trouvé qu'un nid de grives
Caché à l'ombre d'un ormeau.

J'ai marché le long de la rive
Pour y chercher des cailloux bleus.
J'ai trouvé quatre sources vives
Et j'ai recommencé le jeu.

J'ai traversé le marécage
Pour faire des tresses d'osier.
Les poissons parmi les herbages
Me prenaient pour un échassier.

Au soleil couchant, quatre grues
Ont essayé de m'entraîner
J'aimais leurs mines incongrues
Mais je voulais m'en retourner.

J'ai raconté ce long voyage
Le même soir à mes voisins.
Ils ne m'ont pas cru. C'est dommage.
C'est dommage pour mes cousins

Qui sont si fiers de leur famille
Mais qui ont si peur de leurs fous.
Et tant pis pour la belle fille.
On devait se marier, en août.

Demain matin, sur l'autre rive,
J'irai recommencer le jeu.
Ceux qui n'ont pas peur, qu'ils me suivent.
Ça fera moins de malheureux.

Class F901 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 9-12 (Continued)
A QUOI JOUAIS-TU? - Maurice Carême

A quoi jouais-tu, ma mère,
Lorsque tu avais sept ans?
Quelle ronde chantaient-tu, ma mère,
Quand revenait le mois d'avril?

Car tu as été une enfant,
Tu as bondi à travers champs,
Tu avais des sabots à fleurs
Et un tablier de couleur,
Tu aimais voler des groseilles
Et tu fuyais souvent l'école
Pour flâner le long du ruisseau.
On me l'a dit encore tantôt...

Et malgré tout ce qu'on m'a dit,
Je te vois mal en ce temps-là.
Je m'imaginais chaque fois,
Tant je t'ai connue grave et bonne,
Que tu n'as pas été enfant

Et que Dieu te créa maman
Du premier geste de la main
Comme il créa l'épi de blé
Et l'humble étoile du berger.

Class F901 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 9-12 (Continued)

COMMENT DÉGUSTER UNE GLACE EN CORNET - Jacqueline Barral

Choisir une glace à la vanille
A la fraise et à la pistache
La faire briller un instant au soleil
Les trois boules en équilibre
Dans l'ouverture du cornet

Lécher la vanille d'or pâle
Mordre un petit peu dans le vert pistache
Se frotter les lèvres sur la fraise rose vif
Se lécher les babines

Faire tourner la glace et recommencer
Un coup de dent à la vanille
Un baiser barbouillé à la pistache
Un coup de langue à la fraise

Savourer doucement
Et puis du bout des dents
Saisir une brisure du cornet

Tout l'art est de savoir
Faire durer les trois boules
Sans leur donner le temps de fondre
Mais assez pour en goûter
La fraîcheur parfumée

Class F901 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 9-12 (Continued)

UN MÉTIER DIFFICILE - Jacques Charpentreau

Être fantôme es un état
Très difficile, avec des tas
D'inconvénients: porter sa chaîne,
Travailler la nuit, sans hygiène,
Grelotter de froid tout l'hiver
Quand le vent vous passe au travers,
Transpirer l'été sans pouvoir
Se dévêtir malgré le noir,
Chaque soir repasser son suaire,
N'avoir que des amis mortuaires,
Respecter les lois syndicales

Et la Sécurité sociale,
 Faire une animation classique
 Dans les monuments historiques,
 Ne pas effrayer les enfants
 En arrivant de but en blanc,
 Graduer savamment son approche,
 Savoir jouer des gongs et des cloches,
 Suivre le même scénario
 Un peu simplet et maigriot
 Au fond d'une obscure province
 Derrière une porte qui grince,
 S'ennuyer dans les corridors
 En hululant comme un ténor
 A Bayreuth dans son contre si
 - Et sans jamais être applaudi!
 Etre fantôme est un état
 Pénible, rude, et délicat.
 C'est un métier très fatigant!
 Mais on n'a jamais mal aux dents...

Class F901 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 9-12 (Continued)
DEVANT DEUX PORTRAITS DE MA MERE - Emile Nelligan

Ma mère, que je l'aime en ce portrait ancien,
 Peint aux jours glorieux qu'elle était jeune fille,
 Le front couleur de lys et le regard qui brille
 Comme un éblouissant miroir vénitien!

Ma mère que voici n'est plus du tout la même;
 Les rides ont creusé le beau marbre frontal;
 Elle a perdu l'éclat du temps sentimental
 Où son hymen chanta comme un rose poème.

Aujourd'hui je compare, et j'en suis triste aussi,
 Ce front nimbé de joie et ce front de souci,
 Soleil d'or, brouillard dense au couchant des années.

Mais, mystère de coeur qui ne peut s'éclairer!
 Comment puis-je sourire à ces lèvres fanées?
 Au portrait qui sourit, comment puis-je pleurer?

Class F901 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 9-12 (Continued)
FAMILIALE - Jacques Prévert

La mère fait du tricot
Le fils fait la guerre
Elle trouve ça tout naturel la mère
Et le père qu'est-ce qu'il fait le père?
Il fait des affaires
Sa femme fait du tricot
Son fils la guerre
Lui des affaires
Il trouve ça tout naturel le père
Et le fils et le fils
Qu'est-ce qu'il trouve le fils?
Il ne trouve rien absolument rien le fils
Le fils sa mère fait du tricot son père des affaires lui la guerre
Quand il aura fini la guerre
Il fera des affaires avec son père
La guerre continue la mère continue elle tricote
Le père continue il fait des affaires
Le fils est tué il ne continue plus
Le père et la mère vont au cimetière
Ils trouvent ça naturel le père et la mère
La vie continue la vie avec le tricot la guerre les affaires
Les affaires la guerre le tricot la guerre
Les affaires les affaires et les affaires
La vie avec le cimetière.

Class F901 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 9-12 (Continued)
SAULES - Saint-Denis-Garneau

Les grands saules chantent
Mêlés au ciel
Et leurs feuillages sont des eaux vives
Dans le ciel

Le vent
Tourne leurs feuilles
D'argent
Dans la lumière
Et c'est rutilant
Et mobile
Et cela flue
Comme des ondes.

On dirait que les saules coulent
Dans le vent
Et c'est le vent
Qui coule en eux.

C'est des remous dans le ciel bleu
Autour des branches et des troncs
La brise chavire les feuilles
Et la lumière saute autour
Une féerie
Avec mille reflets
Comme des trilles d'oiseaux-mouches
Comme elle danse sur les ruisseaux
Mobile
Avec tous ses diamants et tous ses sourires.

Class F901 - French Solo Poetry – Grades 9-12 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class F904 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 9-12
DES HOT DOGS SOUS LE SOLEIL - Raymond Plante

Il faut vraiment de tout pour faire un monde. Il y a les impatients, ceux qu'on devrait servir avant qu'ils aient commandé. En les voyant sortir de leur voiture, simplement à leur démarche, il faudrait deviner qu'ils désirent un hamburger moutarde-oignons ou un cheeseburger all dressed. Il y a ceux qui ne savent pas ce qu'ils veulent. Pendant qu'ils hésitent, les pressés s'impatientent. Et ceux qui changent d'idée comme Madonna change de bikini.

- Dans mon cheeseburger, mets donc une tranche de tomate...Non, laisse faire, j'veais prendre du ketchup à la place... Ah! j'pense qu j'veais plutôt prendre une poutine et un steamé oignons seulement.

Il y a ceux qui me surveillent pendant que je prépare leur commande. Ils sont persuadés que je vais me tromper. Il y a ceux qui ne savent pas compter et qui s'imaginent que je ne leur remets pas leur monnaie au complet. Il y a aussi les clients ordinaires de qui il n'y a rien à dire. Il y a enfin ceux que je ne m'attendais jamais à voir là. Comme Moins-Cinq qui est venue avec ses deux filles. Moins-Cinq, s'est Mme Labelle, mon prof de français, dont le cou a l'allure de la Tour de Pise.

Class F904 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 9-12 (Continued)
NE FAITES PAS MAL A L'AVENIR - Roch Carrier

Nouvelle: Les enfants humiliés

Le midi, à la cafétéria, Linda, seule à une table, mangeait, la tête penchée sur son plateau. Benoit hésita, regarda autour de lui et vint se placer en face d'elle. Il n'avait pas faim. La nourriture était plutôt mauvaise, mais devant un banquet de roi, il n'aurait pas eu plus d'appétit. Linda pignochait dans son plateau. Pour rompre le silence, Benoit risqua:

- Ça m'a surpris que le professeur de français parle de ce problème-là.

- Je connais quelqu'un, moi, qui est battu par son père.

- Ah oui! Moi aussi je connais quelqu'un.

- Son père la frappe, continua Linda, la frappe jusqu'à ce qu'elle s'écrase par terre. Alors il commence à pleurer, et avec des sanglots il prie le bon Dieu de bien vouloir chasser les mauvaises idées de la tête de sa fille...

Linda fixa Benoit des yeux:

- Je sais, moi, que cette jeune fille n'a pas de mauvaises idées... Cette jeune fille ne sait pas pourquoi son père, bon la plupart du temps, devient tout à coup furieux et la bat.

Ils grignotèrent quelques bouchées sans parler.

- Moi, dit Benoit, le garçon que je connais est menacé de recevoir des coups de couteau. Quand ça va mal au bureau, son père revient avec une odeur d'alcool dans la bouche; c'est le signe de la tempête. Il se plaint que sa femme et ses enfants lui donnent tant de soucis qu'il ne peut plus travailler. Puis il accuse. Il crie. Et tout à coup, il les menace avec un couteau à dépecer. Le garçon que je connais a voulu se défendre - c'est l'aîné -, mais il a reçu un coup ici.

Benoit releva sa manche et Linda remarqua une cicatrice sur l'avant-bras. Benoit, étonné de son mouvement spontané, rebassa aussitôt sa manche.

- On est des enfants battus, dit Linda.

Class F904 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 9-12 (Continued)

UN VENT DE LIBERTÉ - Marie-Danielle Croteau

Mon grand-père est un être exceptionnel. Un croisement de Mary Poppins et de Schtroumpf farceur; un mélange de nounours et d'ange gardien. J'ai beau chercher autour de moi, dans les films et les livres, je ne trouve personne qui lui ressemble.

Ce matin, par exemple. N'importe qui, à sa place, aurait dit à la fille qui lançait ses pépins partout de s'étouffer avec. Pas lui. Après avoir mis la cassette en marche, il a pris une orange et il est venu s'asseoir à côté de moi avec deux pailles. Il m'a demandé:

- Tu connais ça, une sarbacane?

Vingt minutes plus tard, le sac d'oranges était presque vide, il y avait du jus qui coulait le long de mes bras, et mes coudes collaient à la table. Cependant, j'avais appris ce qu'était la sarbacane, une arme primitive terriblement efficace contre le cafard. Je pouvais sans risque me présenter à ma réunion.

Sans risque pour les autres, je veux dire. Mon envie de mordre s'était éparpillée dans la cuisine, propulsée à travers des dizaines de pépins-navettes spatiales. Quand on vit dans une île et qu'on est déprimée, c'est dangereux. On a les bleus marine. On souffre d'un vague à l'âme profond qui vous transforme en cannibale ou en vampire, selon l'heure.

Class F904 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 9-12 (Continued)

VINCENT ET MOI - Michael Bubbo

Les étoiles scintillent dans le ciel et Jo y accroche ses yeux, ses rêves, son espoir. Les étoiles bougent, tourbillonnent, deviennent une grande roue magique, exactement comme une toile de Van Gogh qui s'appelle "La Nuit étoilée". Jo ne sait pas très bien si elle rêve ou si elle est éveillée. Puis la roue s'arrête et les étoiles se dispersent. Elles s'éloignent, se rapprochent les unes des autres, se reforment pour dessiner le contour d'un visage avec deux petits yeux, un nez, des cheveux coupés ras. Une bouche où se dessine un sourire étoilé. Jo reconnaît soudain le visage de Vincent dans le ciel... Vincent qui l'appelle.

Sur son étroite banquette, Jo devient légère comme un nuage. Elle ne sent plus la fraîcheur du soir qui l'avait fait frissonner, mais ses larmes sont restées accrochées à ses cils comme autant de petites étoiles qui lui brouillaient la vue. Pourquoi le visage de Vincent là-haut devient-il plus grand et le bateau plus petit? Elle a l'impression de quitter la terre, de s'élever dans l'air tiède comme un grand papillon aux ailes déployées. Elle ne ressent ni vertige ni peur, elle vole seulement vers un visage souriant qui brille au milieu de la nuit.

Class F904 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 9-12 (Continued)

JOURNAL INTIME - Janice Harrell, pp.221 - 222

La noirceur était maintenant différente, venteuse et humide. Le bruissement des arbres était plus fort. Et j'entendis un son encore plus menaçant: sous le poids d'une chaussure, un éclat de verre craqua. Puis je perçus un doux frottement et un grattement et je compris que l'intrus frottait ses souliers sur le tapis pour enlever les éclats de verre incrustés dans ses semelles. Il y eut ensuite un autre fracas de verre brisé. Les morceaux de verre de la porte se remirent à tomber sur le sol. J'étais contente qu'il y ait ce bruit, car ma respiration me semblait incroyablement tumultueuse. Je retins mon souffle et fis un effort suprême pour ne pas éternuer. Le plancher vibra lorsque l'individu se mit à marcher. Quand je regardai à droite, j'aperçus des chaussures de tennis et reconnus l'odeur caractéristique de fumée de cigarette qui collait aux jeans de Stéphane. J'entendis un petit bruit sec et tout é coup, le bout de ses chaussures n'était plus qu'à quelques centimètres de moi, éclairé par la lueur d'une lampe de poche que balayait maintenant le sol. En fixant sans ciller les souliers devant mes yeux, je le vis bouger légèrement. Il s'appêtait à faire un pas. Je craignais même d'avalier ma salive.

Une toux sèche se fit entendre dans la chambre voisine. C'était Madame Landry! Une des chaussures fit un pas en arrière et disparut de mon champ de vision. Il y eut un silence de mort. Puis je sentis ses pas s'éloigner du lit. Il se dirigeait vers l'autre chambre.

Stéphane allait tuer Madame Landry!

Class F904 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 9-12 (Continued)

LE RECORD DE PHILIBERT DUPONT - Raymond Plante, pp. 71 - 72

J'aurais voulu planifier la surprise que je n'aurais pas pu faire mieux. A midi, Philibert, qui n'avait presque pas fermé l'oeil de la nuit précédente, m'a dit qu'il voulait dormir un peu. Il avait les paupières lourdes et, ce qui est plus rare, absolument pas faim. J'ai fait mine de rien et je l'ai laissé à sa sieste. Trois minutes plus tard, ses ronflements retentissaient. Le père Breton lui-même, qui peut certainement se vanter de détenir le record mondial de puissance en ronflements, s'est mis à sourciller. Mais rien n'ébranlait mon oncle Philibert. Même pas les camions des télévisions et les voitures des journalistes radiophoniques. Nous avions donné rendez-vous à tout ce beau monde pour une heure. Charles avait préparé des quantités de petits sandwiches de toutes sortes. Nous servions aussi du vin rose. Et à une heure précise, les journalistes étaient dans la cour, les yeux, les micros et les caméras tendus vers la cabane où mon oncle ronflait de plus belle. Les camions, les autos, les voix, rien n'avait pu le réveiller.

-Mesdames, mesdemoiselles et messieurs, bienvenue à cette conférence de presse. Je suis bien contente que vous soyez venus aussi nombreux. Je ne tiens pas à vous faire un long discours pour rien.

De toute façon, je me sentais tellement nerveuse que j'avais l'impression de courir après mon souffle et de ne plus avoir une goutte de salive dans la bouche... et je me disais que les hommes politiques qui s'écoutent parler pendant des heures à la télévision devaient être joliment gonflés.

-Mademoiselle Nadine Brisson et moi-même(en prononçant le nom de Nadine, j'aurais pu jurer que les ronflements de mon oncle s'étaient suspendus), nous vous avons invités ici pour souligner l'exploit de mon oncle. En effet, celui qui s'appelle Philibert Dupont, et dont vous entendez le souffle endormi, va demeurer en haut de son poteau pendant au moins un an, sinon deux, et il aura ensuite son nom écrit dans le célèbre Livre des records.

Class F904 - French Solo Prose Reading – Grades 9-12 (Continued)
OWN CHOICE

Class F908 - French Choral Speaking – Grades 9-12
OWN CHOICE

Class F912 - French Story Telling – Grades 9 and 10
OWN CHOICE (3-4 minutes)

Class F1112 - French Story Telling – Grades 11 and 12
OWN CHOICE (5-6 minutes)

FRENCH DRAMA
SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR ADULTS

Class F1301 - French Solo Poetry – Adults
OWN CHOICE

Class F1304 - French Solo Prose Reading – Adults
OWN CHOICE

Class F1312 - French Story Telling – Adults
OWN CHOICE (5-6 minutes)