

# Poetry – Grade 1

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## The Acorn Man

*Author Unknown*

I met a little acorn man  
Just fallen from a tree.

I picked him up; he wasn't really  
Hurt, that I could see.

He brushed his jacket off and said,  
"I am not hurt at all.

For by the time the summer goes  
I'm ready for the fall!" ❁

## The Animal Store

*Rachel Field*

If I had a hundred dollars to spend,  
Or maybe a little more,

I'd hurry as fast as my legs would go  
Straight to the animal store.

I wouldn't say, "How much for this or that?"  
"What kind of dog is he?"

I'd buy as many as rolled an eye,  
Or wagged a tail at me!

I'd take the hound with the drooping ears  
That sits by himself alone;

Cockers and Cairns and wobbly pups  
For to be my very own.

I might buy a parrot all red and green,  
And the monkey I saw before.

If I had a hundred dollars to spend,  
Or maybe a little more. ❁

## **Animals, Too**

*Margaret E. Singleton*

Animals have feelings, too;  
They need love, just as people do.  
Animals have only cries  
And wagging tails and hopeful eyes  
To say they're hungry, hurt, or scared,  
Or how they wish that someone cared.  
Helping animals sick or sad  
Makes you and me feel strong and glad. ❁

## April Rain Song

*Langston Hughes*

Let the rain kiss you.

Let the rain beat upon your head with silver liquid drops.

Let the rain sing you a lullaby.

The rain makes still pools on the sidewalk.

The rain makes running pools in the gutter.

The rain plays a little sleep-song on our roof at night.

And I love the rain. ❀

## At the Seaside

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

When I was down beside the sea  
A wooden spade they gave to me  
To dig the sandy shore.  
My holes were empty like a cup,  
In every hole the sea came up,  
Till it could come no more. ❁

## At the Zoo

*William Makepeace Thackeray*

First I saw the white bear, then I saw the black;  
Then I saw the camel with a hump upon his back;  
Then I saw the grey wolf, with mutton in his maw;  
Then I saw the wombat waddle in the straw;  
Then I saw the elephant a-waving of his trunk;  
Then I saw the monkeys-mercy, how unpleasantly they-smelt!



## Be Even Tempered

*Alice Joyce Davidson*

Before you lose your temper  
Take a breath and count to ten,  
And silently ask God to help you  
Gain control again...

And have a pardon handy  
For the errors others make,  
Offer love and understanding,  
And banish hate and ache ...

Be even tempered always,  
Be loving and forgiving,  
And you will be rewarded  
With peace and joyful living! ❁

## Bed in Summer

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

In winter I get up at night  
And dress by yellow candle light.  
In summer quite the other way,  
I have to go to bed by day.

I have to go to bed and see  
The birds still hopping on the tree,  
Or hear the grown-up people's feet  
Still going past me in the street.

And does it not seem hard to you,  
When all the sky is clear and blue,  
And I should like so much to play,  
To have to go to bed by day? ❁

## A Bird

*Emily Dickinson*

A bird came down the walk,  
He did not know I saw;  
He bit an angleworm in halves  
And ate the fellow, raw.

And then he drank a dew  
From a convenient grass,  
And then hopped sidewise to the wall  
To let a beetle pass. ❀

## Boats

*Rowan Bastin Bennett*

The steamboat is a slowpoke,  
You simply cannot rush him.

The sailboat will not move at all  
Without a wind to push him;

But the speedboat, with his sharp red nose,  
Is quite a different kind;

He tosses high the spray and leaves  
The other boats behind. ❀

## Catch a Little Rhyme

*Eve Merriam*

Once upon a time  
I caught a little rhyme.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Caterpillar

*Christina Rossetti*

Brown and furry  
Caterpillar in a hurry,  
Take your walk  
To the shady leaf, or stalk,  
Or what not,  
Which may be the chosen spot.  
No toad spy you,  
Hovering bird of prey pass by you;  
Spin and die,  
To live again a butterfly. ❁

## Covetousness

*Peter Idley*

Covetousness hath never end,  
And where is no end, is no rest;  
Where is no rest, peace doth wend;  
Where is no peace, God is a guest;  
For God Himself made His nest  
Where peace made his bower,  
And there He dwelleth, our Saviour. ❁

## Crocus

*Sarah J. Day*

The crocus had slept in his little round house  
So soundly the whole winter through;

There came a tap-tapping,  
'Twas Spring at the door:  
“Up! Up! We are waiting for you!”

The crocus peeped out from his little brown house  
And nodded his gay little head;

“Good morning, Miss Snowdrop  
And how do you do  
This fine, chilly morning?” he said. ❁

## Don't Ever Cross a Crocodile

*Kaye Starbird*

Don't ever cross a crocodile,  
However few his faults.  
Don't ever dare  
A dancing bear  
To teach you how to waltz.

Don't ever poke a rattlesnake  
Who's sleeping in the sun  
And say the poke  
Was just a joke  
And really all in fun.

Don't ever lure a lion close  
With gifts of steak and suet.  
Though lion-looks  
Are nice in books  
Don't ever, ever do it. 🌸

## The Eagle

*Alfred, Lord Tennyson*

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

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

## The First Tooth

*Charles and Mary Lamb*

Through the house what busy joy,  
Just because the infant boy  
Has a tiny tooth to show!  
I have got a double row,

All as white, and all as small;  
Yet no one cares for mine at all.  
He can say but half a word,  
Yet that single sound's preferred

To all the words that I can say  
In the longest summer day.  
He cannot walk, yet if he put  
With mimic motion out his foot,

As if he thought he were advancing,  
It's prized more than my best dancing. ❁

## Flint

*Christina Rossetti*

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

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

## The Frog

*Anonymous*

What a wonderful bird the frog are—

When he sit, he stand almost;

When he hop, he fly almost.

He ain't got no sense hardly;

He ain't got no tail either.

When he sit, he sit on what he ain't got – almost. 🌸

## Funny the Way Different Cars Start

*Dorothy Baruch*

Funny the way  
Different cars start.  
Some with a chunk and jerk,  
Some with a cough and a puff of smoke  
Out of the back,

Some with only a little click—with  
hardly any noise.

Funny the way  
Different cars run.  
Some rattle and bang,  
Some whirrr,  
Some knock and knock.  
Some purr  
And hummm  
Smoothly on with hardly any noise. ❁

## Furry Bear

*A. A. Milne*

If I were a bear,  
And a big bear too,

I shouldn't much care  
If it froze or snowed;

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 the winter in a big fur bed. ❁

## Grandfather Frog

*Louise Seaman Bechtal*

Fat green frog sits by the pond,  
Big frog, bull frog, grandfather frog.

Croak—croak—croak

Shuts his eye, opens his eye,

Rolls his eye, winks his eye

Waiting for

A little fat fly.

Croak, croak.

I go walking down by the pond,

I want to see the big green frog.

I want to stare right into his eye.

Rolling, winking, funny old eye.

But oh! he hears me coming by.

Croak—croak—

SPLASH! ❀

## If All the Seas Were One Sea

*Author Unknown*

If all the seas were one sea,  
What a *great* sea that would be!  
And if all the trees were one tree,  
What a *great* tree that would be!

And if all the axes were one axe,  
What a *great* axe that would be!  
And if all the men were one man,  
What a *great* man he would be!

And if the *great* man took the *great* axe,  
And cut down the *great* tree,  
And let it fall into the *great* sea,  
What a splish splash *that* would be! ❀

## I Meant to Do My Work Today

*Richard Le Gallienne*

I meant to do my work today,  
But a brown bird sang in the apple tree,  
And a butterfly flitted across the field,  
And all the leaves were calling me.  
And the wind went sighing over the land,  
Tossing the grasses to and fro,  
And a rainbow held out its shining hand—  
So what could I do but laugh and go? ❁

## I Think When I Read That Sweet Story of Old

*Jemima Luke*

I think when I read that sweet story of old,  
When Jesus was here among men,  
How He called little children as lambs to His fold,  
I should like to have been with them then.

I wish that His hands had been placed on my head,  
That His arm had been thrown around me,  
And that I might have seen His kind look when  
He said,

“Let the little ones come unto me.” ❁

## The Ice-Cream Man

*Rachel Field*

When summer's in the city,  
And bricks a blaze of heat,  
The Ice-Cream Man with his little cart  
Goes trundling down the street.

Beneath his round umbrella,  
Oh, what a joyful sight,  
To see him fill the cones with mounds  
Of cooling brown or white:

Vanilla, chocolate, strawberry,  
Or chilly things to drink  
From bottles full of frosty-fizz,  
Green, orange, white, or pink.

His cart might be a flower bed  
Of roses and sweet peas,  
The way the children cluster round  
As thick as honeybees. ❀

## A Little Bird

*Aileen Fisher*

“What do you have for breakfast?”

I asked a little bird,

“Orange juice and cereal?”

He didn't say a word

He merely ate a flower seed

And something from a limb

Which might, I guess, be cereal

And orange juice—for him! 🌸

## Little Fred

*From The Children's Book of Virtues*

When little Fred  
Was called to bed,  
He always acted right;  
He kissed Mama,  
And then Papa,  
And wished them all good night.

He made no noise,  
Like naughty boys,  
but gently up the stairs  
Directly went  
When he was sent,  
And always said his prayers. ❀

## Little Snail

*Hilda Conkling*

I saw a little snail  
Come down the garden walk,

He wagged his head this way ...  
that way ...

Like a clown in a circus.

He looked from side to side  
As though he were from a different  
country,

I have always said he carries his house  
on his back ...

Today in the rain  
I saw that it was his umbrella. ❁

## Little Things

*Ebenezer Cobham Brewer*

Little drops of water,  
Little grains of sand,

Make the mighty ocean,  
And the pleasant land.

Thus the little minutes,  
Humble though they be,

Make the mighty ages,  
Of eternity. ❁

## The Lamb

*William Blake*

Little Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?  
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,  
By the stream and o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice?  
Little Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?  
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,  
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:  
For He calls Himself a Lamb.  
He is meek, and He is mild;  
He became a little child.  
I a child, and thou a lamb,  
We are called by His name.  
Little Lamb, God bless thee!  
Little Lamb, God bless thee! ❀

## Morning Prayer

*Ogden Nash*

Now another day is breaking,  
Sleep was sweet and so is waking.  
Dear Lord, I promised you last night  
Never again to sulk or fight.

Such vows are easier to keep  
When a child is sound asleep.  
Today, O Lord, for your dear sake,  
I'll try to keep them when awake. ❁

**Mrs. Peck-Pigeon***Eleanor Farjeon*

Mrs. Peck-Pigeon

Is picking for bread

Bob-bob-bob

Goes her little round head.

Tame as a pussy-cat

In the street,

Step-step-step

Go her little red feet.

With her little red feet

And her little round head,

Mrs. Peck-Pigeon

Goes picking for bread. ❁

## 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 you throw.

He gets spanked rather often  
For things he shouldn't do,

Like lying on beds, and barking,  
And eating up shoes when they're new.

He always wants to be going  
Where he isn't suppose to go.

He tracks up the house when it's snowing—  
Oh puppy, I love you so. ❁

## My Favorite Word

*Lucia and James L. Hymes, Jr.*

There is one word—  
My favorite—  
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.) ❁

**October**

*Rose Fyleman*

The summer is over,  
The trees are all bare,  
There is mist in the garden  
And frost in the air.  
The meadows are empty  
And gathered the sheaves—  
But isn't it lovely  
Kicking up leaves!

John from the garden  
Has taken the chairs;  
It's dark in the evening  
And cold on the stairs.  
Winter is coming  
And everyone grieves—  
But isn't it lovely  
Kicking up leaves! ❁

## Our Lips and Ears

*Author Unknown*

If you your lips would keep from slips,  
Five things observe with care:  
Of whom you speak, to whom you speak,  
And how and when and where.

If you your ears would save from jeers,  
These things keep meekly hid:  
Myself and I, and mine and my,  
And how I do and did. ❀

## The Pasture

*Robert Frost*

I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;  
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away  
(And wait to watch the water clear, I may):  
I sha'n't be gone long. You come too.

I'm going out to fetch the little calf  
That's standing by the mother. It's so young,  
It totters when she licks it with her tongue.  
I sha'n't be gone long. You come too. ❀

## Poetry

*Eleanor Farjeon*

What is poetry? Who knows?

Not a rose, but the scent of the rose;

Not the sky, but the light in the sky;

Not the fly, but the gleam of the fly;

Not the sea, but the sound of the sea;

Not myself, but what makes me

See, hear, and feel something that prose

Cannot: and what it is, who knows? ❁

## Quiet

*Anonymous*

I can be as quiet as a spider or an ant.

Quiet as a butterfly; don't tell me that I can't.

I can be as quiet as a little fleecy cloud,

Quiet as a snowflake; now that isn't very loud.

I can be as quiet as a baby chick asleep,

Quieter than that! How quiet can you keep? ❁

## The Rainbow

*Christina Rossetti*

Boats sail on the rivers,  
And ships sail on the seas;  
But clouds that sail across the sky  
Are prettier than these.

There are bridges on the rivers,  
As pretty as you please;  
But the bow that bridges heaven,  
And overtops the trees,  
And builds a road from earth to sky,  
Is prettier far than these. ❀

## Schoolroom Clock

*Mother Goose*

There's a neat little clock  
In the schoolroom it stands,  
And it points to the time  
With its two little hands.  
And may we, like the clock,  
Keep a face clean and bright,  
With hands ever ready  
To do what is right. ❀

## Someone

*Walter de la Mare*

Someone came knocking,  
At my wee, small door;  
Someone 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 owl's call,  
Only the cricket whistling  
While the dewdrops fall,  
So I know not who came knocking,  
At all, at all, at all. ❁

## Spring Prayer

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

For flowers that bloom about our feet;  
For tender grass, so fresh, so sweet;  
For song of bird, and hum of bee;  
For all things fair we hear or see,  
Father in heaven, we thank Thee!

For blue of stream and blue of sky,  
For pleasant shade of branches high;  
For fragrant air and cooling breeze;  
For beauty of the blooming trees,  
Father in heaven, we thank Thee! ❁

## Spring Rain

*Marchette Chute*

The storm came up so very quick  
It couldn't have been quicker.  
I should have brought my hat along;  
I should have brought my slicker.  
My hair is wet, my feet are wet,  
I couldn't be much wetter.  
I fell into a river once  
But this is even better. 🌸

## The Steam Shovel

*Rowena Bennett*

The steam digger  
Is much bigger  
Than the biggest beast I know.  
He snorts and roars  
Like the dinosaurs  
That lived long years ago.

He crouches low  
On his tractor paws  
And scoops the dirt up  
With his jaws.  
Then swings his long  
Stiff neck around  
And spits it out  
Upon the ground ...

Oh, the steam digger  
Is much bigger  
Than the biggest beast I know.  
It snorts and roar  
Like the dinosaurs  
That lived long years ago. ❀

## Thank God for Little Things

*Helen Steiner Rice*

Thank You, God, for little things  
that often come our way—

The things we take for granted  
but don't mention when we pray—

The unexpected courtesy,  
the thoughtful, kindly deed—

A hand reached out to help us  
in the time of sudden need—

Oh make us more aware, dear God,  
of little daily graces

That come to us with "Sweet Surprise"  
from never-dreamed-of places. ❁

## Thanks, Dear Jesus

*Ed Brandt*

THANKS dear Jesus for dying for me,  
THANKS for your all on Calvary's tree,  
THANKS for your payment to set me free,  
THANKS for letting me ransomed be.  
THANKS for the tomb that could not contain  
My Lord and my Savior wherein He had lain,  
THANKS for your resurrection, for ascending on high,  
THANKS for your promise to return by and by.  
THANKS for your love because it never fails,  
THANKS for your grace, it always prevails,  
THANKS for the Holy Spirit, He keeps me from sin;  
THANKS be to Him who lives within. ❁

## Traffic

*Jane Lear Talley*

In summertime our garden walk  
Is like a summer street;  
So many bugs run up and down  
With tiny little feet.

The ants are shiny taxicabs,  
Oh, my! They go so fast!  
Here comes a caterpillar bus  
Who slowly travels past.

I'm very sure that bugs must have  
Some very special vision;  
For I have never, never seen  
A bugmobile collision! ❁

## Tree House

*Anonymous*

A tree house, a tree house,  
A secret you and me house,  
A high up in the leafy branches  
Cozy as can be house.

A street house, a neat house,  
Be sure and wipe your feet  
It's not my kind of house at all—  
Let's go live in a tree house. ❁

## Trees

*Joyce Kilmer*

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

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest  
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. ❁

## Tummyache

*Aileen Fisher*

Father said that maybe  
it was too much candy.

Mother said more likely  
it was gooseberry jam.

Father said that maybe  
with the sweet things handy

I forgot my gravy  
and vegetables and ham.

Mother said that prob'ly  
I had been too gob'ly.

Father nodded "probably"  
and so did Gram.

But I said "Certainly,  
it COULDN'T have been candy.  
It must have been the gravy  
and vegetables  
and ham." ❁

## The Vulture

*Hilaire Belloc*

The Vulture eats between his meals  
And that's the reason why  
He very, very rarely feels  
As well as you and I.

His eye is dull, his head is bald,  
His neck is growing thinner.  
Oh! what a lesson for us all  
To only eat at dinner! ❀

## Walking

*Grace Ellen Glaubitz*

When Daddy  
Walks  
With Jean and me,  
We have a  
Lot of fun  
Cause we can't  
Walk as fast  
As he,  
Unless we  
Skip and  
Run

I stretch,  
And stretch  
My legs so far,  
I nearly slip  
And fall—  
But how  
Does Daddy  
Take such steps?  
He doesn't stretch  
At all! ❀

## What Does the Little Birdie Say

*Alfred Tennyson*

What does the little birdie say,  
In her nest at peep of day?  
“Let me fly,” says little birdie,  
“Mother, let me fly away.”

“Birdie, rest a little longer,  
Till the little wings are stronger.”  
So she rests a little longer,  
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,  
In her bed at peep of day?  
Baby says, like little birdie,  
“Let me rise and fly away.”

“Baby, sleep a little longer,  
Till the little limbs are stronger.”  
If she sleeps a little longer,  
Baby, too, shall fly away. ❀

## What Is It?

*Mcirrie Louise Allen*

Tall ears,  
Twinkly nose,  
Tiny tail,  
And—hop, he goes!

What is he—  
Can you guess?  
I feed him carrots  
And watercress.

His ears are long,  
His tail is small—  
And he doesn't make any  
Noise at all!

Tall ears,  
Twinkly nose,  
Tiny tail,  
And—hop, he goes! 🌸

## Who Seen the Wind?

*Christina Rosetti*

Who has seen the wind?  
Neither I nor you.  
But when the leaves hang trembling,  
The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?  
Neither you nor I.  
But when the trees bow down their heads,  
The wind is passing by. ❁

## Wind on the Hill

*A. A. Milne*

No one can tell me,  
Nobody knows,  
Where the wind comes from,  
Where the wind goes.

It's flying from somewhere  
As fast as it can  
I couldn't keep up with it,  
Not if I ran.

But if I stopped holding  
The string of my kite,  
It would blow with the wind  
For a day and a night.

And then when I found it,  
Wherever it blew,  
I should know that the wind  
Had been going there too.

So then I could tell them  
Where the wind goes ...  
But where the wind comes from  
Nobody knows. ❀

## Wind Song

*Lilian Moore*

When the wind blows  
the quiet things speak.  
Some whisper, some clang,  
Some creak.

Grasses swish.  
Treetops sigh.  
Flags slap  
and snap at the sky.  
Wires on poles  
whistle and hum.  
Ash cans roll.  
Windows drum.

When the wind goes—  
suddenly  
then,  
the quiet things  
are quiet again. ❁

## 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. ❁

## The Woodpecker

*Elizabeth Madox Roberts*

The woodpecker pecked out a little round hole  
And made him a house in the telephone pole.  
One day when I watched he poked out his head,  
And he had on a hood and a collar of red.

When the streams of rain pour out of the sky,  
And the sparkles of lightning go flashing by,  
And the big, big wheels of thunder roll,  
He can snuggle back in the telephone pole. ❁

## The Worms

*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 the worm! ❁