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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!"

Degree of Difficulty: 1

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 4

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

Classical Christian Speech Meet

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 2

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!

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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!

Degree of Difficulty: 4

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?

Degree of Difficulty: 4

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 4

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 4

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.
Through lion-looks
Are nice in books
Don't ever, ever do it.

Degree of Difficulty: 4

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 4

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 2

Furry Bear

A.A. Milne

If I were a bear,
And a big bear too,
I shouldn't much care
If it froze or snow;

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 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,
And sleep all the winter in a big fur bed.

Degree of Difficulty: 5

Grandfather Frog

Louise Seaman Bechtal

Fat green frog sits by the pond,
Big frog, bull frog, grandfather frog.
Croak--croak--croak
Shuts 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!

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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?

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.”

Degree of Difficulty: 4

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 4

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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, who made 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!

Degree of Difficulty: 5

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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 supposed to go.

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

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.)

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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 for jeers,
These things keep meekly hid:
Myself and I, and mine and my,
And how I do and did.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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?

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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!

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 2

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 4

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 4

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 4

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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."

Degree of Difficulty: 3

What Is It?

Marie 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!

Degree of Difficulty: 3

Who Has 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.

Degree of Difficulty: 2

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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.

Degree of Difficulty: 3

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!

Degree of Difficulty: 3