

5th Grade



Poems

That

Play With Language

Eletelephony

~Laura Richards



Once there was an elephant,
Who tried to use the telephant-
No! No! I mean an elephone
Who tried to use the telephone-
(Dear me! I am not certain quite
That even now I've got it right.)

Howe'er it was, he got his trun k
Entangled in the telephunk;
The more he tried to get it free,
The louder buzzed the telephee-
(I fear I'd better drop the song
Of elephop and telephong!)

CASEY AT THE BAT

by: Ernest Thayer

A Ballad of the Republic, Sung in the Year 1888

The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day;
The score stood four to two with but one inning more to play.
And then when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did the same,
A sickly silence fell upon of the patrons of the game.

A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest
Clung to that hope which springs eternal in the human breast.
They thought if only Casey could but get a whack at that-
We'd put even money now with Casey at the bat.

But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
And the former was lulu and the latter was a cake;
So upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy 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 Blake, the much despised, tore the cover off the ball;
And when the dust had lifted, and the men saw what had occurred,
There was Johnnie safe at second, and Flynn a-hugging third.

Then from 5,000 throats and more there rose a lusty yell;
It rumbled through the valley, it rattled in the dell;
It knocked upon the mountain and recoiled upon 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.

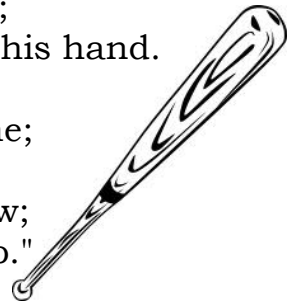
Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt.
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
Defiance gleamed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.



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 some one 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 bade the game go on;
He signaled 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 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 that ball go by again.

The sneer is gone from Casey's lip, 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 favored 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.



Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf

Roald Dahl, *Revolting Rhymes*

As soon as Wolf began to feel
That he would like a decent meal,
He went and knocked on Grandma's door.
When Grandma opened it, she saw
The sharp white teeth, the horrid grin,
And Wolfie said, "May I come in?"
Poor Grandmamma was terrified,
"He's going to eat me up!" she cried.

And she was absolutely right.
He ate her up in one big bite.
But Grandmamma was small and tough,
And Wolfie wailed, "That's not enough!
I haven't yet begun to feel
That I have had a decent meal!"
He ran around the kitchen yelping,
"I've *got* to have a second helping!"
Then added with a frightful leer,
"I'm therefore going to wait right here
Till Little Miss Red Riding Hood
Comes home from walking in the wood."
He quickly put on Grandma's clothes,
(Of course he hadn't eaten those).

"That's wrong!" cried Wolf. "Have you forgot
To tell me what **BIG TEETH** I've got?
Ah well, no matter what you say,
I'm going to eat you anyway."
The small girl smiles. One eyelid flickers.
She whips a pistol from her knickers.
She aims it at the creature's head
And *bang bang bang*, she shoots him dead.
A few weeks later, in the wood,
I came across Miss Riding Hood.
But what a change! No cloak of red,
No silly hood upon her head.
She said, "Hello, and do please note
My lovely furry wolfskin coat."

He dressed himself in coat and hat.
He put on shoes, and after that
He even brushed and curled his hair,
Then sat himself in Grandma's chair.
In came the little girl in red.
She stopped. She stared. And then she said,

"What great big ears you have, Grandma."
"All the better to hear you with," the Wolf
replied.

"What great big eyes you have, Grandma."
said Little Red Riding Hood.
"All the better to see you with," the Wolf
replied.

He sat there watching her and smiled.
He thought, I'm going to eat this child.
Compared with her old Grandmamma
She's going to taste like caviar.

Then Little Red Riding Hood said, "But
Grandma,
what a lovely great big furry coat you have
on."



The Echoing Green

By: William Blake

The sun does arise,
And make happy the skies.
The merry bells ring
To welcome the spring.
The skylark and thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around,
To the bells' cheerful sound,
While our sports shall be seen
On the echoing green.

Old John with white hair
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak,
Among the old folk.
They laugh at our play,
And soon they all say:
'Such, such were the joys
When we all, girls and boys,
In our youth-time were seen
On the echoing green.'

Till the little ones weary
No more can be merry;
The sun does descend,
And our sports have an end.
Round the laps of their mother
Many sisters and brothers,
Like birds in their nest,
Are ready for rest;
And sport no more seen
On the darkening green.



My Shadow

By 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 shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an errant sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.



THE MAN IN THE MOON

by Edith E Millard 1832 – 1891

The Man in the Moon is a friend of mine,
He comes when the stars begin to shine:
I fancy he lights them, one by one,
And never rests till his work is done.

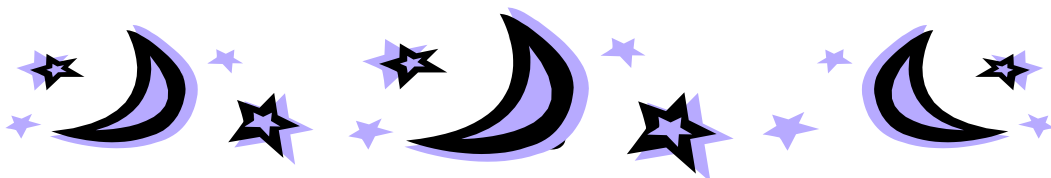
Sometimes I do not see him at all,
And I think, most likely, he has to call
And shout for the stars that would rather try
To play hide and seek in the big blue skies.

The other night, to my great surprise,
The Man in the Moon had tears in his eyes;
He looked so sad and his mouth drooped down,
And he gave me the most *tremendous* frown!

"Poor Man in the Moon, I am sorry!" I said,
"Have you lost some stars?" but he shook his head;
He could not tell me what was amiss,
So I waved my hand and threw him a kiss.

For more than a week there was rain or snow,
And the wind was very angry- I heard it blow;
But the Man in the Moon I could not see,
The dark clouds hid him away from me.

Last night he peeped through the window pane,
I declare I hardly knew him again!
I tried to sketch him for Nurse to see,
A jollier face there never could be.
His eyes were smiling at me like this,
And all because I threw him a kiss!



Millions of Raindrops

Millions of massive raindrops have fallen on the ground;
They have danced on the house-tops,
they have hidden in the ground.
They were liquid-like musicians, with anything for keys,
Beating tunes upon the windows, keeping time upon the trees.



The Road Not Taken

By Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.



Ticklish Tom

By Shel Silverstein

Did you hear 'bout Ticklish Tom?
He got tickled by his mom.
Wiggled and giggled and fell on the floor,
Laughed and rolled right out the door.
All the way to school and then
He got tickled by his friends.
Laughed till he fell off his stool,
Laughed and rolled right out of school
Down the stairs and finally stopped
Till he got tickled by a cop.
And all the more that he kept gigglin',
All the more folks kept ticklin'.
He shrieked and screamed and rolled around,
Laughed his way right out of town.
Through the country down the road,
He got tickled by a toad.
Past the mountains across the plain,
Tickled by the falling rain,
Tickled by the soft brown grass,
Tickled by the clouds that passed.
Giggling, rolling on his back
He rolled on the railroad track.
Rumble, rumble, whistle, roar--
Tom ain't ticklish any more.



The Unicorn

from the book "Where the Sidewalk Ends" (1974)

A long time ago, when the earth was green
and there was more kinds of animals than you've ever seen,
and they run around free while the world was bein' born,
and the loveliest of all was the Unicorn.

There was green alligators and long-neck geese.
There was humpy bumpy camels and chimpanzees.
There was cats and rats and elephants, but sure as you're born
the loveliest of all was the Unicorn.

But the Lord seen some sinnin', and it caused him pain.
He says, "Stand back, I'm gonna make it rain."
He says, "Hey Brother Noah, I'll tell ya whatcha do.
Go and build me a floatin' zoo.

And you take two alligators and a couple of geese,
two humpy bumpy camels and two chimpanzees.
Take two cats and rats and elephants, but sure as you're born,
Noah, don't you forget my Unicorn."

Now Noah was there, he answered the callin'
and he finished up the ark just as the rain was fallin'.
He marched in the animals two by two,
and he called out as they went through,

"Hey Lord, I got your two alligators and your couple of geese,
your humpy bumpy camels and your chimpanzees.
Got your cats and rats and elephants - but Lord, I'm so forlorn
'cause I just don't see no Unicorn."



Ol' Noah looked out through the drivin' rain
but the Unicorns were hidin', playin' silly games.
They were kickin' and splashin' in the misty morn,
oh them silly Unicorn.

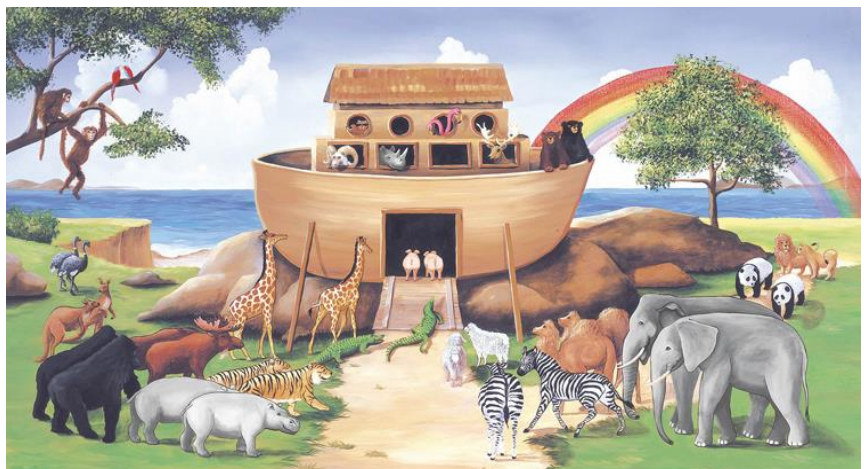
The goat started goatin', and the snake started snakin',
the elephant started elephantin', and the boat started shaking'.
The mouse started squeakin', and the lion started roarin',
and everyone's aboard but the Unicorn.

I mean the green alligators and the long-neck geese,
the humpy bumpy camels and the chimpanzees.
Noah cried, "Close the door 'cause the rain is pourin' -
and we just can't wait for them Unicorn."

Then the ark started movin', and it drifted with the tide,
and the Unicorns looked up from the rock and cried.
And the water come up and sort of floated them away -
that's why you've never seen a Unicorn to this day.

You'll see a lot of alligators and a whole mess of geese.
You'll see humpy bumpy camels and lots of chimpanzees.
You'll see cats and rats and elephants, but sure as you're born
you're never gonna see no Unicorn!

Shel Silverstein



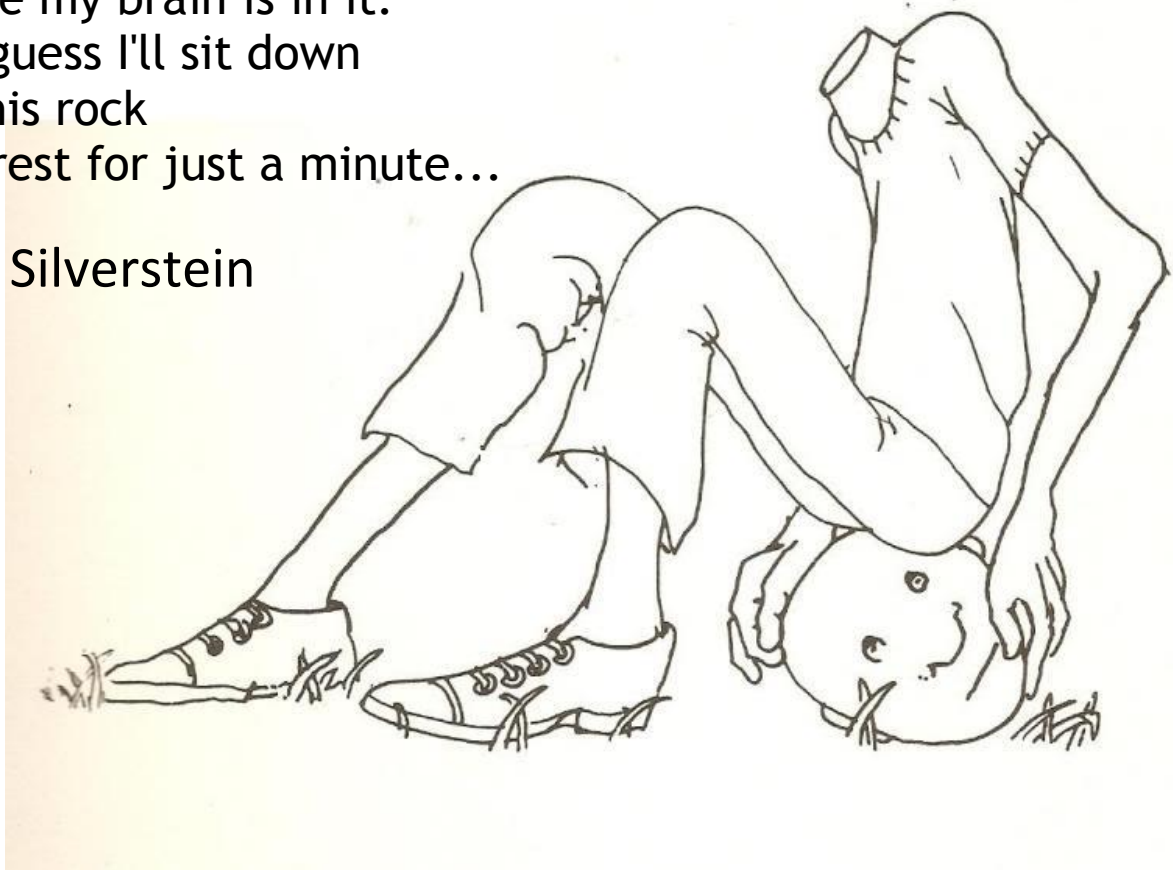
The Loser

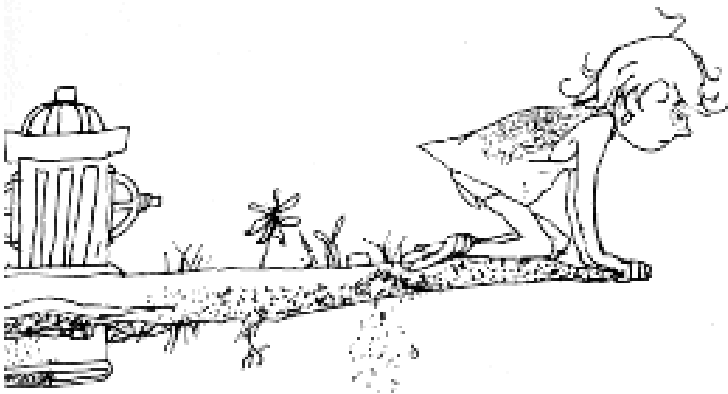
from the book "Where the Sidewalk Ends" (1974)

Mama said I'd lose my head
if it wasn't fastened on.
Today I guess it wasn't
'cause while playing with my cousin
it fell off and rolled away
and now it's gone.

And I can't look for it
'cause my eyes are in it,
and I can't call to it
'cause my mouth is on it
(couldn't hear me anyway
'cause my ears are on it),
can't even think about it
'cause my brain is in it.
So I guess I'll sit down
on this rock
and rest for just a minute...

Shel Silverstein





Where the Sidewalk Ends

from the book "Where the Sidewalk Ends" (1974)

There is a place where the sidewalk ends
and before the street begins,
and there the grass grows soft and white,
and there the sun burns crimson bright,
and there the moon-bird rests from his flight
to cool in the peppermint wind.

Let us leave this place where the smoke blows black
and the dark street winds and bends.

Past the pits where the asphalt flowers grow
we shall walk with a walk that is measured and slow
and watch where the chalk-white arrows go
to the place where the sidewalk ends.

Yes we'll walk with a walk that is measured and slow,
and we'll go where the chalk-white arrows go,
for the children, they mark, and the children, they know,
the place where the sidewalk ends.

Shel Silverstein

Berkley

Black as midnight,
Bad as the devil
With eyes like pieces of dark chocolate,
He thinks he's king of the world,
My dog Berkley.
He's very much like a pig
With his pudgy stomach and all.
Like a leech, he's always attached
To his next meal.



Even though he's as bad as the devil,
Berkley is my best fellow.

Stars

They are like flashlights in the night sky;
God's little helpers guiding us on our journeys.
Stars are as bright as a lighthouse on an icy, ocean night;
they are like guardians committed to bringing you home.

Birds

Chirping non-stop, like a machine in the trees,
Building their nest like little worker bees.
They sing their songs, like chatter-boxes.
As regular as alarm clocks,
Waking people up each day.
They are silent at night,
Like snakes advancing on prey.



By: **Natasha Niemi**

Metaphor for a Family

My family lives inside a medicine chest:
Dad is the super-size band aid, strong and powerful
but not always effective in a crisis.
Mom is the middle-size tweezer,
which picks and pokes and pinches.
David is the single small aspirin on the third shelf, sometimes ignored.
Muffin, the sheep dog, is a round cotton ball, stained and dirty,
that pops off the shelf and bounces in my way as I open the door.
And I am the wood and glue which hold us all together with my love.



Fifth of July

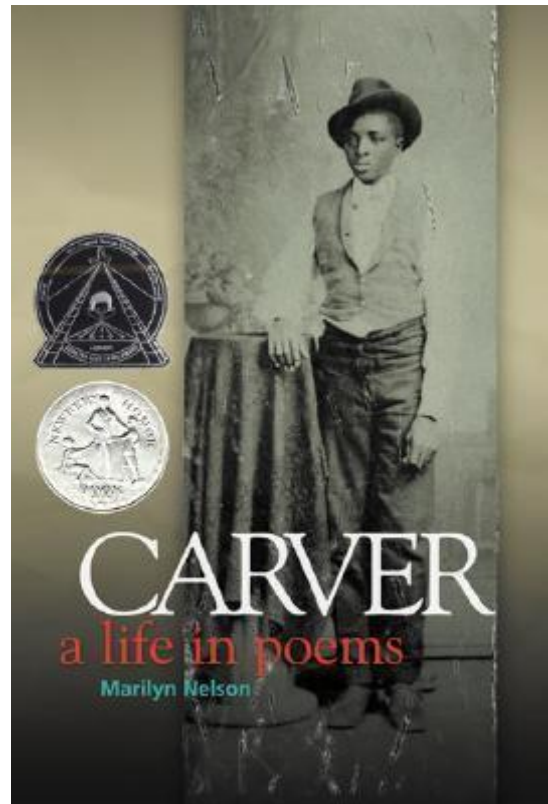
My family is an expired firecracker
set off by the blowtorch of divorce.
We lay scattered in many directions.
My father is the wick, badly burnt
but still glowing softly.
My mother is the blackened paper fluttering down,
blowing this way and that, unsure where to land.
My sister is the fallen, colorful parachute,
lying in a tangled knot, unable to see the beauty she holds.
My brother is the fresh, untouched powder that
was protected from the flame.
And I, I am the singed, outside papers, curled away from everything,
silently cursing the blowtorch.



Coincidence

By: Marilyn Nelson

*In Wakefield the night train
screeches to a neck-wrenching halt.
Last, the explanation reaches
the Colorado compartment,
where Dr. Carver guards in a valise
his jars of Before and After soils
and of compost, his giveaway
bags of raw peanuts.*



A Hunch

I had a horrible hunch
That got me going good
A feeling that felt freaky
Shall I share it, yes I should
I don't like frightening stories
But when I got to school
My teacher told us terrible tales
Of goblins, ghosts and ghouls
I knew I should have stayed home
Stayed right there in my bed
Is this really something they should teach?
Is there nothing else instead?



Alan Loren

Dunking Donuts

Dora never dunked her donuts
We never quite knew why
She really should share her secret
Oh Dora please don't lie!
'It's true I don't dunk my donuts'
She spoke and said 'you see'
If donuts were meant for dunking and dipping
They would come inside my tea



Alan Loren

The Precocious Teapot

The teapot whistled at the lovely young pot
She came to a boil at this unfortunate shot
When the pan saw what happened, he began to sizzle
The pot was his cousin and it made him grizzle
The faucet joined in with a whoosh of its water
It seems that the pot was his only daughter
The teapot was humbled and expressed his regret
It was an unfortunate gaffe he'd rather forget



Alan Loren

The Construction Site

On my way home from school today
I stopped for sweets along the way
When I heard a thud that made me jump
It seems that a wrecking ball was in a dump
Bu this wasn't a dump, I am not a fool
It was a construction site and it was so cool
I was startled by the rat-tat-tat of a loud jackhammer
It caused me to stumble and even to stammer
Then all of a sudden, I heard some loud taps
A hammer was banging
A new building perhaps?
One of the men had a brand new drill
It buzzed as it drilled; it was such a big thrill
Then I heard the beep beeping of a truck in reverse
What a great afternoon, I could sure have done worse!



Alan Loren

City Street

Beep beep goes the taxi as the light turns green
He is in a hurry so he makes a huge scene
The police car let out a mighty wail
'Honking your horn sir can land you in jail!'
Well that is not entirely true
But it can surely get you into a mighty big stew
A bus goes by with a mighty roar
With a sleeping passenger who started to snore
A traffic policeman whistled his whistle
The sound of that whistle made everyone bristle
It is true that the city is a busy, busy place
But said another way, It's just a faster pace



Poetry by Alan Loren