

## Third and Fourth Grade Poetry Selections

### 1. BED IN SUMMER

*by Robert Louis Stevenson*

In winter I get up at night  
And dress by yellow candlelight  
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?

### 2. WHEN CHILDREN EAT

*by Margaret Horst Yoder*

A little pig will squeal and squeal  
    When it is hungry for a meal  
It does not bow its head and pray,  
    For food that comes to it each day.  
It gobbles down its food too fast,  
    Then settles in the mud at last

Now listen, dears, and you will know,  
    That children never should act so.  
They should not whine, nor should they squeal  
    When they are hungry for a meal  
With patience they should wait for meals,  
    And sing, instead of giving squeals.

And they should pray before they eat  
    To thank the Lord for bread and meat  
Please, do not gobble down your food,  
    But eat like little children should.

### 3. WINTER'S BLESSINGS

Pretty little snowflakes  
    Falling to the ground;  
Here is one, there is one,  
    Everywhere they're found

See them fall so gently  
    Through the frosty air,  
Every little snowflake  
    Has its beauties rare.

Soon the ground is covered  
    With the pretty snow,  
Then we see the snowbirds  
    Flying to and fro.

Happy little creatures —  
    Do not reap or sow,  
Yet the Master feeds them,  
    Even in the snow.

### 4. I LIKE LITTLE PUSSY

*by Jane Taylor*

I like little Pussy, her coat is so warm;  
And if I don't hurt her, she'll do me no harm.  
So I'll not pull her tail, nor drive her away,  
But Pussy and I very gently will play.

She shall sit by my side, and I'll give her some food;  
And she'll love me because I am gentle and good  
I'll pat little Pussy and then she will purr,  
And thus show her thanks for my kindness to her.

I'll not pinch her ears, nor tread on her paw,  
Lest I should provoke her to use her sharp claw;  
I never will vex her, nor make her displeased,  
For Pussy can't bear to be worried or teased.

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### 5. MERRY SUNSHINE

"Good morning, Merry Sunshine,  
How did you wake so soon?  
You've scared the little stars away  
And shined away the moon."

"I saw you go to sleep last night  
Before I ceased my playing;  
How did you get 'way over there?  
And where have you been staying?"

I never go to sleep, dear child,  
I just go round to see  
The little children of the east,  
Who rise and watch for me."

"I waken all the birds and bees  
And flowers on my way,  
And now come back to see the child  
Who stayed out late at play."

### 6. FIREFLIES

*by Elizabeth Jenkins*

I like the warm dark summer night,  
When fireflies burn their golden light,  
And flit so softly through the air,  
Now up, now down, now over there!

They sparkle in my apple tree,  
And from the grass they wink at me,  
And turn their lights on one by one;  
I think it would be lots of fun  
If I could shine at evening, too,  
Just as the little fireflies do.

But Mother tells me I can be  
A little light for all to see,  
A little candle clear and bright  
That shines for Jesus day and night.

### 7. A BIRD'S LESSON

A little bird, with feathers brown,  
Sat singing on a tree;  
The song was very soft and low,  
But sweet as it could be.

And all the people passing by  
Looked up to see the bird  
Whose singing was the sweetest  
That ever they had heard.

But all the bright eyes looked in vain;  
For birdie was so small,  
And, with a modest dark brown coat,  
He made no show at all.

"Dear Papa," little Gracie said,  
"Where can this birdie be?  
If I could only sing like that  
I'd sit where folks could see."

"I hope my little girl will learn  
A lesson from that bird;  
And try to do what good she can —  
Not to be seen nor heard."

"This birdie is content to sit  
Unnoticed by the way,  
And sweetly sing his Maker's praise,  
From dawn to close of day."

"So live, my child, to do some good,  
Let life be short or long;  
Though people may forget your looks,  
They'll not forget your song."

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### 8. SERVING JESUS

Children's hands can work for Jesus,  
Glad to do His holy will;  
Helping playmates, serving Mother,  
They are serving Jesus still.

Let your hands be quick and true;  
God will give them work to do.

Children's lips can move for Jesus,  
Speaking gently all the while,  
Making other people happy,  
With a love-word and a smile.

Let your speech in kindness fall;  
Jesus listens to it all.

Children's feet can run for Jesus,  
And for Him sweet comfort take  
To the hearts bowed low in sorrow,  
Blessing all for His dear sake.

Let your footsteps gladness bring,  
Doing errands for the King.

### 9. THE WIND AND THE LEAVES

"Come, little leaves," said the wind one day,  
"Come over the meadows with me and play.  
Put on your dresses of red and gold, —  
For summer is gone, and the days grow cold."

Soon as the leaves heard the wind's loud call,  
Down they came fluttering one and all.  
Over the brown fields they danced and flew,  
Singing the soft little songs they knew.

Dancing and whirling, the little leaves went;  
Winter had called them, and they were content;  
Soon fast asleep in their earthy beds,  
The snow laid a coverlet over their heads.

### 10. LITTLE THINGS

A raindrop is a little thing  
Many make the showers;  
Little moments flitting by,  
Make up all the hours.

One little star at close of day  
Faintly seems to twinkle,  
Till at length the shining host,  
All the blue besprinkle.

A smile is but a little thing  
To the happy giver,  
Yet can leave a blessed calm  
On our life's rough river.

Gentle words are never lost,  
Howe'er small they're seeming;  
Sunny rays of love are they,  
O'er our pathway gleaming.

### 11. TRY, TRY AGAIN

*by T. H. Palmer*

'Tis a lesson you should heed,  
Try, try again;  
If at first you don't succeed,  
Try, try again;  
Then your courage should appear,  
For if you will persevere,  
You will conquer, never fear,  
Try, try again.

Once or twice, though you should fail,  
Try, try again;  
If you would at last prevail,  
Try, try again;  
If we strive, 'tis no disgrace  
Though we do not win the race;  
What should you do in the case?  
Try, try again

If you find your task is hard,  
Try, try again;  
Time will bring you your reward,  
Try, try again  
All that other folks can do,  
Why, with patience, should not you?  
Only keep this rule in view:  
Try, try again.

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### 12. WHO TAUGHT THE BIRDS?

*by Jane Taylor*

Who taught the bird to build her nest  
Of softest wool, and hay, and moss?  
Who taught her how to weave it best,  
And lay the tiny twigs across?

Who taught the busy bee to fly  
Among the sweetest herbs and flowers,  
And lay her store of honey by,  
Providing food for winter hours?

Who taught the little ant the way  
Her narrow cell so well to bore  
And through the pleasant summer day  
To gather up her winter store?

'Twas God who taught them all the way,  
And gave the little creatures skill;  
He teaches children, when they pray,  
To know and do His heavenly will.

### 13. WHAT ROBIN TOLD

How do robins build their nests?  
Robin Redbreast told me.  
First, a wisp of amber hay  
In a pretty round they lay;  
Then some shreds of downy floss,  
Feathers, too, and bits of moss  
Woven with a sweet, sweet song;  
This way, that way, and around.  
That's what Robin told me.

Where do robins build their nests?  
Robin Redbreast told me.  
Up among the leaves so deep,  
Where the sunbeams scarcely creep;  
Long before the winds are cold,  
Long before the leaves are gold,  
Bright-eyed stars will peep and see  
Baby robins, one, two, three;  
That's what Robin told me.

### 14. FRIENDS

*by Abbie Farwell Brown*

How good to lie a little while  
And look up through the tree!  
The sky is like a kind, big smile  
Bent sweetly over me.

The sunshine flickers through the lace  
Of leaves above my head;  
And kisses me about the face,  
Like Mother, before bed.

The wind comes stealing o'er the grass  
To whisper pretty things;  
And though I cannot see him pass,  
I feel his careful wings.

And high above the clouds **I know**  
That God is watching, too;  
He loves me and He always sees,  
Each little thing I do.

So many gentle friends are near,  
Whom one can scarcely see,  
A child should never feel a fear,  
Wherever he may be.

### 15. BEING THANKFUL

God is love and kindness  
To us all below;  
On the just and unjust  
Sendeth rain and snow.

Let us e'er be thankful  
For His love to us.  
He's so kind and faithful,  
Giving blessings thus.

Let us ask the Saviour,  
As we kneel to pray,  
Help us to be thankful  
More and more each day.

Thankful in the morning,  
Thankful noon and night;  
Thankful for the raindrops,  
Thankful for the light.

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### 16. KIND AT HOME

I'd like for folks to say of me,  
No matter where I roam,  
"That child is nice and gentle-but  
She's sweeter far at home."

"Her temper never does she lose,  
She's patient as can be;  
She always strives to spread content,  
Among the family.

"She always tidies up her room;  
And like a gentle maid,  
She strives in countless little ways,  
To be of some real aid.

"She welcomes, with a friendly smile,  
The neighbors as them come;  
She's quite a nice girl anywhere —  
But sweeter far at home."

### 17. ON GUARD

Guard, my child, thy tongue,  
That it speak no wrong:  
Let no evil word pass o'er it;  
Set the watch of truth before it,  
That it speak no wrong;  
Guard, my child, thy tongue.

Guard, my child, thine eyes;  
Prying is not wise:  
Let them look on what is right;  
From all evil turn their sight  
Prying is not wise:  
Guard, my child, thine eyes.

Guard, my child, thine ear,  
Wicked words will sear.  
Let no evil word come in,  
That may cause thy soul to sin;  
Wicked words will sear  
Guard, my child, thine ear.

### 18. PLEASE, THANK YOU, AND PARDON ME

Please, thank you, and pardon me,  
Are such nice words to say  
To Teacher and to little friends  
For what they do each day.

"Please, I need some crayons now."  
"I thank you, if I may."  
And, "Pardon me, I did not hear.  
What is that you say?"

Please, thank you, and pardon me,  
Are such nice words to say.  
Try them once and try them twice,  
You'll like to talk that way.

### 19. WHERE GO THE BOATS?

*by Robert Louis Stevenson*

Dark brown is the river,  
Golden is the sand,  
It flows along forever,  
With trees on either hand.

Green leaves a-floating,  
Castles of the foam,  
Boats of mine a-boating —  
Where will all come home?

On goes the river,  
And out past the mill,  
Away down the valley,  
Away down the hill.

Away down the river,  
A hundred miles or more,  
Other little children  
Shall bring my boats ashore.

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### 20. THE LITTLE BUSY BEE

*by Isaac Watts*

How doth the little busy bee  
Improve each shining hour,  
And gather honey all the day  
From every opening flow'r!

How skillfully she builds her cell!  
How neat she spreads the wax!  
And labours hard to store it well  
With the sweet food she makes.

In works of labour or of skill,  
I would be busy, too;  
For Satan finds some mischief still  
For idle hands to do.

In books, or work, or healthy play  
Let my first years be passed,  
That I may give for ev'ry day,  
Some good account at last.

### 21. TWO SEEDS

I hid a selfish little thought,  
To think and think about.  
I did not know it would be caught  
Or ever be found out;  
But it was like a little seed,  
And it began to sprout!  
It grew into a little weed,  
And blossomed in a pout!

I hid another little thought,  
'Twas pleasant, sweet, and kind;  
So if this time it should be caught,  
I knew I shouldn't mind.  
I thought about it, hour by hour;  
'Twas growing all the while,  
It blossomed in a lovely flower,  
A happy little smile!

### 22. DON'T GIVE UP

*by Phoebe Gary*

If you've tried and have not won,  
Never stop for crying;  
All that's good and great is done  
Just by patient trying.

Though young birds, in flying, fall,  
Still their wings grow stronger,  
And the next time they can keep  
Up a little longer.

Though the sturdy oak has known  
Many a wind that bowed her,  
She has ris'n again and grown  
Loftier and prouder.

If by easy work you beat,  
Who the more will prize you?  
Gaining victory from defeat,  
That's the test that tries you.

### 23. PRAYER

I know not by what methods rare;  
But this I know: God answers prayer.  
I know that He has given His Word,  
Which tells me prayer is always heard  
And will be answered, soon or late;  
And so I pray and calmly wait.

I know not if the blessing sought  
Will come in just the way I thought,  
But leave my prayer with Him alone  
Whose will is wiser than my own,  
Assured that He will grant my quest  
Or send some answer far more blest.

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### 24. GOD IS LIKE THIS

*by Rowena Bennett*

I cannot see the wind at all  
Or hold it in my hand;  
And yet I know there is a wind  
Because it swirls the sand.  
I know there is a wondrous wind,  
Because I glimpse its power  
Whenever it bends low a tree  
Or sways the smallest flower.

And God is very much like this,  
Invisible as air,  
I cannot touch or see Him, yet  
I know that He is there  
Because I glimpse His wondrous works  
And goodness everywhere.

### 25. WHICH LOVED BEST?

*by Joy Allison (Mary A. Cragin)*

"I love you, Mother," said little John;  
Then, forgetting his work, his cap went on,  
And he was off to the garden swing,  
And left her the water and wood to bring.

"I love you, Mother," said rosy Nell —  
"I love you better than tongue can tell;"  
Then she teased and pouted full half the day  
Till her mother rejoiced when she went to play.

"I love you, Mother," said little Fan;  
"Today I'll help you all I can;  
How glad I am that school doesn't keep!"  
So she rocked the babe till it fell asleep.

Then, stepping softly, she fetched the broom,  
And swept the floor and tidied the room;  
Busy and happy all day was she,  
Helpful and happy as child could be.

"I love you, Mother," again they said,  
Three little children going to bed;  
How do you think that mother guessed  
Which of them really loved her best?

### 26. THE GOLDEN KEYS

A bunch of golden keys is mine  
To make each day with gladness shine.

"Good morning," that's the golden key  
That unlocks every day for me.

When evening comes, "Good night," I say,  
And close the door of each glad day.

When at the table, "If you please,"  
I take from off my bunch of keys.

When friends give anything to me,  
I use the little, "Thank you," key.

"Excuse me," "Beg your pardon," too,  
When by mistake some harm I do.

Or if unkindly harm I've given,  
With I'm sorry," I shall be forgiven.

On a golden ring these keys I'll bind  
This is its motto, "Be ye kind."

I'll often use each golden key,  
And then a happy child I'll be.

### 26. WHO LIKES THE RAIN?

*by Clara Doty Bates*

"I," said the duck, "I call it fun,  
For I have my little red rubbers on.  
They make a cunning three-toed track  
In the soft cool mud. Quack! Quack!"

"I," cried the dandelion, "I,  
My roots are thirsty, my buds are dry."  
And she lifted her little yellow head  
Out of her green and grassy bed.

"I hope 'twill pour! I hope 'twill pour!"  
Croaked the tree toad at this gray bark door.  
"For with a broad leaf for a roof  
I am perfectly weather-proof."

Sang the brook, "I welcome every drop;  
Come, come, dear rain drops, never stop  
Till a great river you make of me,  
Then I will carry you to the sea."

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27. ABRAHAM LINCOLN

*by Mildred Plew Meigs*

Remember he was poor and country-bred;  
His face was lined; he walked with awkward gait.  
Smart people laughed at him sometimes and said,  
"How can so very plain a man be great?"

Remember he was humble, used to toil.  
Strong arms he had to build a shack, a fence,  
Long legs to tramp the woods, to plow the soil,  
A head chuck full of backwoods common sense.

Remember all he ever had he earned  
He walked in time through stately White House doors;  
But all he knew of men and life he learned  
In little backwoods cabins, country stores.

Remember that his eyes could light with fun;  
That wisdom, courage, set his name apart;  
But when the rest is duly said and done,  
Remember that men loved him for his heart.

28. FOREIGN CHILDREN

*by Robert Louis Stevenson*

Little Indian, Sioux or Crow,  
Little frosty Eskimo,  
Little Turk or Japanese,  
O! don't you wish that you were me?

You have seen the scarlet trees  
And the lions over seas;  
You have eaten ostrich eggs,  
And turned the turtles off their legs.  
Such a life is very fine,  
But it's not as nice as mine:  
You must often, as you trod,  
Have wearied not to be abroad  
You have curious things to eat,  
I am fed on proper meat;  
You must dwell beyond the foam,  
But I am safe and live at home.

Little Indian, Sioux or Crow,  
Little frosty Eskimo,  
Little Turk or Japanese,  
O! don't you wish that you were me?

29. MY DOG

*by Marchette Chute*

His nose is short and scrubby;  
His ears hang rather low  
And he always brings a 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.

30. BUTTERFLY

*by William Jay Smith*

Of living creatures most I prize  
Black-spotted yellow Butterflies  
Sailing softly through the skies.

Whisking light from each sunbeam,  
Gliding over field and stream —  
Like fans unfolding in a dream,

Like fans of gold lace flickering  
Before a drowsy elfin king  
For whom the thrush and linnets sing —  
Soft and beautiful and bright  
As hands that move to touch the light  
When Mother leans to say good night.



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### 31. HABITS OF THE HIPPOPOTAMUS

*by Arthur Guiterman*

The hippopotamus is strong  
And huge of head and broad of bustle;  
The limbs on which he rolls along  
Are big with hippopotomuscle.

He does not greatly care for sweets  
Like ice cream, apple pie, or custard,  
But takes to flavor what he eats  
A little hippopotomustard.

The hippopotamus is true  
To all his principles, and just;  
He always tries his best to do  
The things one hippopotamust.

He never rides in trucks or trams,  
In taxicabs or omnibuses,  
And so keeps out of traffic jams  
And other hippopotomusses.

### 32. WHEN MOTHER READS ALOUD

When Mother reads aloud, the past  
Seems real as every day,  
I hear the tramp of armies vast,  
I see the spears and lances cast,  
I join the trilling fray;  
Brave knights and ladies fair and proud  
I meet when Mother reads aloud.

When Mother reads aloud, far lands  
Seem very near and true;  
I cross the desert's gleaming sands,  
Or hunt the jungle's prowling bands,  
Or sail the ocean blue.  
Far heights, whose peaks the cold mists shroud,  
I scale, when Mother reads aloud.

When Mother reads aloud, I long  
For noble deeds to do –  
To help the right, redress the wrong;  
It seems so easy to be strong,  
So simple to be true.  
Oh, thick and fast the visions crowd  
My eyes, when Mother reads aloud.

### 33. HIDING

*by 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 was  
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 aloud  
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!

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### 34. METHUSELAH

Methuselah ate what he found on his plate,  
And never, as people do now,  
Did he note the amount of the calorie count;  
He ate it because it was chow.  
He wasn't disturbed as at dinner he sat,  
Devouring a roast or a pie,  
To think it was lacking in granular fat  
Or a couple of vitamins shy.  
He cheerfully chewed each species of food,  
Unmindful of troubles or fears  
Lest his health might be hurt  
By some fancy dessert;  
And he lived over nine hundred years.

### 35. THE ANIMAL STORE

*by 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 a 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.

### 36. THE REASON FOR THE PELICAN

*by John Ciardi*

The Reason for the pelican  
Is difficult to see;  
His beak is clearly larger  
Than there's any need to be.

It's not to bail a boat with —  
He doesn't own a boat  
Yet everywhere he takes himself  
He has that beak to tote.

It's not to keep his wife in —  
His wife has got one, too.  
It's not a scoop for eating soup.  
It's not an extra shoe.

It isn't quite for anything.  
And yet you realize  
It's really quite a splendid beak  
In quite a splendid size.

### 38. TREES

*by 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.

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### 39. WHICH WASHINGTON

*by Eve Merriam*

There are many Washingtons:  
Across the narrow beach we fit,  
Which one do you like best?  
The rich man with his powdered wig  
and silk brocaded vest?

The sportsman from Virginia  
Riding with his hounds,  
Sounding a silver trumpet  
On the green resplendent grounds?

The President with his tricorn hat  
And polished leather boots,  
With scarlet capes and ruffled shirts  
And fine brass-buttoned suits?

Or the patchwork man with ragged feet,  
Freezing at Valley Forge,  
Richer in courage than all of them –  
Though all of them were George.

### 40. SONG FOR YOUNG AMERICANS

*by Gail Brooke Burket*

I live in a land  
Where the people are free  
And joy is a birthright  
Belonging to me.  
Love shelters my home  
Like a wide-branching tree.  
The doors of the church  
Are open to me.  
The schools unlock treasure  
With truth for a key.  
A whole world of wonder  
Is waiting for me.  
I live in a land  
Where the people are free;  
The future shines golden  
For children like me.

### 41. THE SANDPIPER

*Celia Thaxter*

Across the narrow beach we flit,  
One little sandpiper and I;  
And fast I gather, bit by bit,  
The scattered driftwood bleached and dry.  
The wild waves reach their hands for it,  
The wild wind raves, the tide runs high,  
As up and down the beach we flit,  
One little sandpiper and I.

Above our heads the sullen clouds  
Scud black and swift across the sky;  
Like silent ghosts in misty shrouds  
Stand out the white lighthouses high.  
Almost as far as eye can reach  
I see the close-reefed vessels fly,  
As fast we flit along the beach,-  
One little sandpiper and I.

I watch him as he skims along,  
Uttering his sweet and mournful cry;  
He starts not at my fitful song,  
Or flash of fluttering drapery  
He has no thought of any wrong;  
He scans me with a fearless eye.  
Staunch friends are we, well tried and strong,  
The little sandpiper and I.

Comrade, where wilt thou be to-night  
When the loosed storm breaks furiously?  
My driftwood fire will burn so bright!  
To what warm shelter canst thou fly?  
I do not fear for thee, though wroth  
The tempest rushes through the sky  
For are we not God's children both,  
Thou, little sandpiper, and I?

### 42. WINDOW BOXES

*Eleanor Farjeon*

A window box of pansies  
Is such a happy thing.  
A window box of wallflowers  
Is a garden for a king.  
A window box of roses  
Makes everyone stand still  
Who sees a garden growing  
On a window sill.

## Third and Fourth Grade Poetry Selections

### 43. HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

By the shores of Gitche Gumee,  
By the shining Big-Sea Water,  
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis,  
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis,  
Dark behind it rose the forest,  
Rose the black and gloomy pine-trees,  
Rose the firs with cones upon them;  
Bright before it beat the water,  
Bright the clear and sunny water,  
Beat the shining Big-Sea Water.

There the wrinkled old Nokomis  
Nursed the little Hiawatha,  
Rocked him in his linden cradle,  
Bedded soft in moss and rushes,  
Safely bound with reindeer sinews;  
Stilled his fretful wail by saying,  
"Hush! the naked bear will hear thee!"

Lulled him into slumber, singing,  
"Ewa-yea! my little owlet!  
Who is this that lights the wigwam?  
With his great eyes lights the wigwam?  
Ewa-yea! my little owlet!"

At the door on summer evenings  
Sat the little Hiawatha;  
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,  
Heard the lapping of the waters,  
Sounds of music, words of wonder;  
"Minne-wawa!" said the pine-trees,  
"Mudway-aushka!" said the water.

Saw the firefly, Wah-wah-taysee,  
Flitting through the dusk of evening,  
With the twinkle of its candle  
Lighting up the brakes and bushes;  
And he sang the song of children  
Sang the song Nokomis taught him:  
"Wah-wah-taysee, little firefly,  
Little, flitting, white-fire insect,  
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,  
Light me with your little candle,  
Ere upon my bed I lay me.  
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids!"

### 44. THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

Between the dark and the daylight,  
When the night is beginning to lower,  
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,  
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me  
The patter of little feet,  
The sound of a door that is opened,  
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,  
Descending the broad hall stair,  
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,  
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:  
Yet I know by their merry eyes  
They are plotting and planning together  
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway  
A sudden raid from the hall!  
By three doors left unguarded  
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret  
O'er the arms and back of my chair;  
If I try to escape, they surround me;  
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,  
Their arms about me entwine,  
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen  
In his Mouse-tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,  
Because you have scaled the wall,  
Such an old mustache as I am  
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,  
And I will not let you depart,  
But put you down into the dungeon  
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there I will keep you forever,  
Yes, forever and a day,  
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,  
And moulder in dust away!

## Third and Fourth Grade Poetry Selections

### 45. LITTLE BY LITTLE

*Anonymous*

“Little by little,” an acorn said,  
As it slowly sank in its mossy bed,  
“I am improving every day,  
Hidden deep in the earth away.”

Little by little, each day it grew;  
Little by little, it sipped the dew;  
Downward it sent out a thread-like root;  
Up in the air sprung a tiny shoot.

Day after day, and year after year,  
Little by little the leaves appear;  
And the slender branches spread far and wide,  
Till the mighty oak is the forest’s pride.

Far down in the depths of the dark blue sea,  
An insect train works ceaselessly.  
Grain by grain, they are building well,  
Each one alone in its little cell.

Moment by moment, and day by day,  
Never stopping to rest or to play,  
Rocks upon rocks, they are reaching high,  
Till the top looks out on the sunny sky.

The gentle wind and the balmy air,  
Little by little, bring verdure there;  
Till the summer sunbeams gayly smile  
On the buds and the flowers of the coral isle.

“Little by little,” said a thoughtful boy,  
“Moment by moment, I’ll well employ,  
Learning a little every day,  
And not spending all my time in play.  
And still this rule in my mind shall dwell,  
Whatever, I do, I will do it well.

“Little by little, I’ll learn to know  
The treasured wisdom of long ago;  
And one of these days, perhaps, we’ll see  
That the world will be the better for me”;  
And do you not think that this simple plan  
Made him a wise and useful man?

### 46. RAIN IN SUMMER

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

How beautiful is the rain!  
After the dust and heat,  
In the broad and fiery street,  
In the narrow lane,  
How beautiful is the rain!

How it clatters along the roofs,  
Like the tramp of hoofs!  
How it gushes and struggles out  
From the throat of the overflowing spout!

Across the window pane  
It pours and pours;  
And swift and wide,  
With a muddy tide,  
Like a river down the gutter roars  
The rain, the welcome rain!

In the country, on every side,  
Where far and wide,  
Like a leopard’s tawny and spotted hide,  
Stretches the plain,  
To the dry grass and the drier grain  
How welcome is the rain.

### 47. OVERHEARD IN AN ORCHARD

*Elizabeth Cheney*

Said the Robin to the Sparrow:  
“I should really like to know  
Why these anxious human beings  
Rush about and worry so.”

Said the Sparrow to the Robin:  
“Friend, I think that it must be  
That they have no heavenly Father  
Such as cares for you and me.”

### 48. FEBRUARY TWILIGHT

*Sara Teasdale*

I stood beside a hill  
Smooth with new-laid snow;  
A single star looked out  
From the cold evening glow.

There was no other creature  
That saw what I could see –  
I stood and watched the evening star  
As long as it watched me.

## Third and Fourth Grade Poetry Selections

### 49. THE DUEL

*Eugene Field*

The gingham dog and the calico cat  
Side by side on the table sat;  
'Twas half-past twelve, and (what do you think!)  
Not one nor t'other had slept a wink!  
The old Dutch clock and the Chinese plate  
Appeared to know as sure as fate  
There was going to be a terrible spat.  
*(I wasn't there; I simply state  
What was told to me by the Chinese plate!)*

The gingham dog went "bow-wow-wow!"  
And the calico cat replied "mee-ow!"  
The air was littered, an hour or so,  
With bits of gingham and calico,  
While the old Dutch clock in the chimney-place  
Up with its hands before its face,  
For it always dreaded a family row!  
*(Now mind: I'm only telling you  
What the old Dutch clock declares is true!)*

The Chinese plate looked very blue,  
And wailed, "Oh dear! what shall we do!"  
But the gingham dog and the calico cat  
Wallowed this way and tumbled that,  
Employing every tooth and claw  
In the awfulest way you ever saw –  
And, oh! How the gingham and calico flew!  
*(Don't fancy I exaggerate –  
I got my news from the Chinese plate!)*

Next morning, where the two had sat  
They found no trace of dog or cat;  
And some folks think unto this day  
That burglars stole that pair away!  
But the truth about the cat and pup  
Is this: they ate each other up!  
Now what do you really think of that!  
*(The old Dutch clock it told me so,  
And that is how I came to know.)*

### 50. THE OWL AND THE PUSSY CAT

*Edward Lear*

The Owl and the Pussy cat went to sea  
In a beautiful pea-green boat,  
They took some honey, and plenty of money,  
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.  
The owl looked up to the stars above,  
And sang to a small guitar,  
"O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love,  
What a beautiful Pussy you are,  
You are,  
You are!  
What a beautiful Pussy you are!"

Pussy said to the Owl, "You elegant fowl!  
How charmingly sweet you sing!  
O let us be married! Too long we have tarried:  
But what shall we do for a ring?"  
They sailed away, for a year and a day,  
To the land where the Bong-tree grows  
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood  
With a ring at the end of his nose,  
His nose,  
His nose,  
With a ring at the end of his nose.

"Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling  
Your ring?" Said the Piggy, "I will."  
So they took it away, and were married next day  
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.  
They dined on mince, and slices of quince,  
Which they ate with a runcible spoon  
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,  
They danced by the light of the moon,  
The moon,  
The moon,  
They danced by the light of the moon.

### 51. WORK WHILE YOU WORK

*M. A. Stodart*

Work while you work,  
Play while you play;  
One thing each time,  
That is the way.  
All that you do,  
Do with your might;  
Things done by halves  
Are not done right.

## Third and Fourth Grade Poetry Selections

### 52. MY SHADOW

*Robert L. 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  
sleepyhead,  
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast  
asleep in bed.

### 53. WASHINGTON

*Nancy Byrd Turner*

He played by the river when he was young,  
He raced with rabbits along the hills,  
He fished for minnows, and climbed and swung,  
And hooted back at the whippoorwills.  
Strong and slender and tall he grew-  
And then, one morning, the bugles blew.

Over the hills the summons came,  
Over the river's shining rim.  
He said that the bugles called his name,  
He knew that his country needed him,  
And he answered, "Coming!" and marched away  
For many a night and many a day.

Perhaps when the marches were hot and long  
He'd think of the river flowing by  
Or, camping under the winter sky,  
Would hear the whippoorwill's far-off song.  
Boy or soldier, in peace or strife,  
He loved America all his life!

### 54. OUR FLAG

*Author Unknown*

You may call it an old piece of bunting;  
You may call it an old tattered rag;  
But thousands have died for its honor  
And shed their best blood for the flag.

You may call it an old piece of bunting;  
You may call it an old tattered rag;  
But Freedom has made it majestic,  
And Time has ennobled Our Flag.

## Third and Fourth Grade Poetry Selections

### 55. KEEP A POEM IN YOUR POCKET

*Beatrice Schenk de Regniers*

Keep a poem in your pocket  
and a picture in your head  
and you'll never feel lonely  
at night when you're in bed.

The little poem will sing to you  
the little picture bring to you  
a dozen dreams to dance to you  
at night when you're in bed.

So-

Keep a picture in your pocket  
and a poem in your head  
and you'll never feel lonely  
at night when you're in bed.