

## **POETRY**

### **Class A100 - A - Serious Poetry - Kindergarten - Non-competitive**

#### **FALLING STAR - Sara Teasdale**

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

### **Class A100 - B - Serious Poetry – Kindergarten - Non-competitive**

#### **THE WINDOW CLEANER - M. Long**

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

### **Class A100 - D - Humorous Poetry – Kindergarten - Non-competitive**

#### **IF I WERE A FISH - Marie Louise Allen**

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

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

**Class A100 - E - Humorous Poetry – Kindergarten - Non-competitive**

**JACK BE NIMBLE** - adapted by Joan Miller

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

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

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

**Class A101 - A - Serious Poetry - Grade One - Non-competitive**

**A LITTLE SEED** - Mabel Watts

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

**Class A101 - B - Serious Poetry - Grade One - Non-competitive**

**UNDERSEA** - Marchette Chute

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

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

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

**Class A101 - D - Humorous Poetry - Grade One - Non-competitive****FACE OFF** - Lois Simmie

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

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

**Class A101 - E - Humorous Poetry - Grade One - Non-competitive****AFTER A BATH** - Aileen Fisher

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

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

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

**Class A102 - A - Serious Poetry - Grade Two - Non-competitive****WINDY NIGHTS** - Robert Louis Stevenson

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

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

**Class A102 - B - Serious Poetry - Grade Two - Non-competitive**

**STEAM SHOVEL - Charles Malam**

The dinosaurs are not all dead.  
I saw one raise its iron head  
To watch me walking down the road  
Beyond our house today.  
Its jaws were dripping with a load  
Of earth and grass that it had cropped.  
It must have heard me where I stopped,  
Snorted white steam my way,  
And stretched its long neck out to see,  
And chewed, and grinned quite amiably.

**Class A102 - D - Humorous Poetry - Grade Two - Non-competitive**

**THE SNEEZE - Sheree Fitch**

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

**Class A102 – E – Humorous Poetry – Grade Two - Non-competitive**

**AMBROSE AND PERCIVAL – Elizabeth Kouki**

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

“Garrump,” said Ambrose,  
“Who are they?”

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

**Class A103 - A - Serious Poetry - Grade Three**

**FOR SALE - Shel Silverstein**

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

**Class A103 - B - Serious Poetry - Grade Three**

**MY NOISY BROTHER - Bruce Lansky**

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

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

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

**Class A103 - D - Humorous Poetry - Grade Three****HARVEY ALWAYS WINS - Jack Prelutsky**

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

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

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

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

**Class A103 - E - Humorous Poetry - Grade Three****ALL FOR AN ICE-CREAM** by Karen Jackson

"Mum, can I have an ice-cream?"

"Go ask your dad."

"Dad, can I have an ice-cream?"

"Go ask your mum."

"But I've just asked her and she told me to ask you."

"Well tell her that I've told you to ask her."

"Mum, dad's just told me to tell you that you've got to tell me if I can have an ice-cream."

"Oh well I suppose you can but go ask your dad for 10 pence."

"Right."

"Dad, can I have 10 pence for an ice-cream?"

"I haven't got 10 pence."

"Oh come on dad you haven't looked yet and oh hurry the van'll go soon."

"Let's have a look then, ah, there you are."

"Thanks dad, Ohh!"

"What's the matter now?"

"The van's gone."

**Class A104 - A - Serious Poetry - Grade Four****EVERYTIME I CLIMB A TREE - David McCord**

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

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

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

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

**Class A104 - B - Serious Poetry - Grade Four****THINK OF IT** Betty Killion

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

“Sh-h-h,” says my mother  
Or some other tiptoe person.  
    Then I think of still things –  
        empty swings  
        dark nights  
        soaring kites  
        thick, soft mittens  
        newborn kittens  
        whispered prayers  
        sleeping bears –  
and I’m quiet!

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

**Class A104 - D - Humorous Poetry - Grade 4****ARITHMETIC** - Carl Sandburg

Arithmetic is where numbers fly  
 like pigeons in and out of your head.  
 Arithmetic tells you how many you lose or win  
 if you know how many you had  
 before you lost or won.

Arithmetic is seven eleven all good children  
 go to heaven - or five six bundle of sticks.

Arithmetic is numbers you squeeze from your  
 head to your hand to your pencil to your paper  
 till you get the right answer....

If you have two animal crackers, one good and one bad,  
 and you eat one and a striped zebra  
 with streaks all over him eats the other,  
 how many animal crackers will you have  
 if somebody offers you five six seven and you say  
 No no no and you say Nay nay nay  
 and you say Nix nix nix?

If you ask your mother for one fried egg  
 for breakfast and she gives you  
 two fried eggs and you eat  
 both of them, who is better in arithmetic,  
 you or your mother?

**Class A104 - E - Humorous Poetry - Grade 4****BETTY BOTTER** - Anonymous

Betty Botter  
 bought some butter.  
 "But," she said,  
 "the butter's bitter.  
 If I put it  
 in my batter,  
 it will make  
 my batter bitter.  
 But a bit  
 of better butter—  
*that* would make  
 my batter better."

So she bought  
 a bit of butter  
 better than  
 her bitter butter.  
 And she put it  
 in her batter,  
 and the batter  
 was not bitter.  
 So 'twas better  
 Betty Botter  
 bought a bit  
 of better butter!

**Class A105 - A - Serious Poetry - Grade Five****THE LION IS LOOSE** - David Bittle

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

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

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

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

**Class A105 - B - Serious Poetry - Grade Five****MURDER IN THE BATHTUB** - Marja Pilbacka

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

I picked up a jar  
and crushed him  
quickly

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

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

**Class A105 - D - Humorous Poetry - Grade Five**

**REBECCA** (Who slammed Doors for Fun and Perished Miserably) - Hillaire Belloc

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

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

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

. . . . .

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

**Class A105 - E - Humorous Poetry - Grade Five****THE FARMER AND THE QUEEN - Shel Silverstein**

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

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

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

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

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

**Class A106 - A - Serious Poetry - Grade Six****THE BASE STEALER - Robert Francis**

Poised between going on and back, pulled  
 Both ways taut like a tightrope-walker,  
 Fingertips pointing the opposites,  
 Now bouncing tiptoe like a dropped ball  
 Or a kid skipping rope, come on, come on,

Running a scattering of steps sidewise,  
 How he teeters, skitters, tingles, teases,  
 Taunts them, hovers like an ecstatic bird,  
 He's only flirting, crowd him, crowd him,  
 Delicate, delicate, delicate, delicate - now!

**Class A106 - B - Serious Poetry - Grade 6****MY MOCCASINS HAVE NOT WALKED** - Duke Redbird

My moccasins have not walked  
Among the giant forest trees

My leggings have not brushed  
Against the fern and berry bush

My medicine pouch has not been filled  
with roots and herbs and sweetgrass

My hands have not fondled the spotted fawn

My eyes have not beheld  
The golden rainbow of the north

My hair has not been adorned  
With the eagle feather

Yet  
My dreams are dreams of these  
My heart is one with them  
The scent of them caresses my soul

**Class A106 - D - Humorous Poetry - Grade Six****THE WORD** - Gordon and Bernice Korman

I'm packing my jeans  
And my underwear, too  
And I've found a ship bound for the sea.  
For if Mom and Dad read  
What I wrote on the wall,  
It's going to be curtains for me.

It is just a Word,  
It seemed harmless at first,  
It has only four letters in all,  
I did it in pencil,  
It's not very dark,  
And it's so nice and neat, and quite small.

But best to be safe,  
So I'd better be off  
To sail to those far distant lands..  
For my one little Word  
Is the kind of Word that  
Will grow hair on the palms of your hands.

So it's me for the window,  
And down to the yard,  
Then away I go over the hill  
Of course, I could just  
Turn my pencil around  
And erase it - all right, then, I will!

**Class A106 - E - Humorous Poetry - Grade Six****THIS MORNING IS OUR HISTORY TEST – Kenn Nesbitt**

This morning is our history test.  
I've pinned my notes inside my vest.  
Inside my coat I wrote my notes,  
including dates and famous quotes.  
I've written more upon my hand  
that only I can understand,  
and in my socks and sleeves I stowed  
my scribbled notes in secret code.

I've written down so many names  
of winners of Olympic games,  
of buildings, people, places too,  
from Tennessee to Timbuktu.  
I even copied down a piece  
on ancient Rome and ancient Greece,  
plus everything from Shakespeare's plays  
to who invented mayonnaise.

I came to school well prepared.  
I wasn't nervous, wasn't even scared.  
But here it is, the history test.  
I look inside my coat and vest  
to get the dates and famous quotes  
and find I cannot read my notes.  
So much for Shakespeare, Greece and Rome.  
I left my glasses back at home.

**Class A107 - A - Serious Poetry - Grade Seven****THAT WAS THE SUMMER** - Marci Ridlon

Have you ever smelled summer ?  
Sure you have.

Remember that time  
When you were tired of running  
Or doing nothing much  
And you were hot  
And you flopped right down on the ground?  
Remember how the warm soil smelled—  
And the grass?  
That was summer.

Remember that time  
When the storm blew up quick  
And you stood under a ledge  
And watched the rain till it stopped  
And when it stopped  
You walked out again to the sidewalk,  
The quiet sidewalk?  
Remember how the pavement smelled—  
All steamy warm and wet?  
That was summer.

Remember that time  
When you were trying to climb  
Higher in the tree,  
And you didn't know how  
And your foot was hurting in the fork  
But you were holding tight  
To the branch?  
Remember how the bark smelled then—  
All dusty dry, but nice?  
That was summer.

If you try very hard,  
Can you remember that time  
When you played outside all day  
And you came home for dinner  
And had to take a bath right away,  
Right away?  
It took you a long time to pull  
Your shirt over your head.  
Do you remember smelling the sunshine?  
That was summer.

**Class A107 - B - Serious Poetry - Grade Seven****THE WOLF** - Georgia Roberts Durston

When the pale moon hides and the wild wind wails,  
 And over the tree-tops the nighthawk sails,  
 The gray wolf sits on the world's far rim,  
 And howls: and it seems to comfort him.

The wolf is a lonely soul, you see,  
 No beast in the wood, nor bird in the tree,  
 But shuns his path; in the windy gloom  
 They give him plenty, and plenty of room.

So he sits with his long, lean face to the sky  
 Watching the ragged clouds go by.  
 There in the night, alone, apart,  
 Singing the song of his lone, wild heart.

Far away, on the world's dark rim  
 He howls, and it seems to comfort him.

**Class A107 - D - Humorous Poetry - Grade Seven****HELP** – Lois Simmie

Talk to your plant, the experts say,  
 So I told it all about me, it took all day  
 And the day after that and the next day too,  
 I talked and talked till my face turned blue  
 And the plant turned yellow and withered and brown  
 With spots and bumps and bugs all around

I talked a little louder in case it missed a word,  
 I told that plant every joke I'd heard,  
 I told it all of my bowling scores  
 For all of the games last year and more,  
 I recited it poems and I sang it songs,  
 I read it the dictionary. Gee it was long.

Till it moaned in a pitiful kind of way  
 And it feebly started to crawl away,  
 Pulling its roots right out of the spot  
 And its little plant toes curled up on the spot.  
 Can you think why? I'm sure I can't.  
 And I still had lots to tell that plant.

**Class A107 - E - Humorous Poetry - Grade Seven****OBEDIENT** - Shel Silverstein

Teacher said, "You don't obey.  
 You fidget and twidget  
 And won't sit down.  
 So go stand in the corner now  
 'Til I say you can turn around."  
 So there I stood 'til it got dark  
 Without a whimper or a tear,  
 'Til everybody else went home.  
 I guess that she forgot me here.  
 And that was Friday, so I stayed  
 All through the weekend—bein' good,  
 And Monday was the first day of  
 Summer vacation, so I stood  
 Through hot July and sticky August,  
 Tryin' to obey her rule.

Stood right there until September,  
 When—yikes—they closed down the school  
 Boarded up the doors and windows,  
 Moved to a new one way 'cross town.  
 So here I've stood for forty years  
 In dark and dust and creaky sounds,  
 Waiting for her to say, "Turn around."

This might not be just what she meant,  
 But me—I'm so obedient.

**Class A108 - A - Serious Poetry - Grade Eight****THE LONELY LAND** - A. J. M. Smith

Cedar and jagged fir  
 uplift sharp barbs  
 against the gray  
 and cloud-piled sky;  
 and in the bay  
 blown spume and windrift  
 and thin, bitter spray  
 snap  
 at the whirling sky;  
 and the pine trees  
 lean one way.

A wild duck calls  
 to her mate, and the ragged  
 and passionate tones  
 stagger and fall,  
 and recover  
 and stagger and fall,  
 on these stones—  
 are lost  
 in the lapping of water  
 on smooth flat stones.

This is a beauty  
 of dissonance,  
 this resonance  
 of stony strand,  
 this smoky cry  
 curled over a black pine  
 like a broken  
 and wind-battered branch

when the wind  
 bends the tops of the pines  
 and curdles the sky  
 from the north.

This is the beauty  
 of strength  
 broken by strength  
 and still strong.

**Class A108 - B - Serious Poetry - Grade Eight****THE DAWN WIND** - Rudyard Kipling

At two o'clock in the morning, if you open your window and listen,  
 You will hear the feet of the Wind that is going to call the sun.  
 And the trees in the shadow rustle and the trees in the moonlight glisten,  
 And though it is deep, dark night, you feel that the night is done.

So do the cows in the field. They graze for an hour and lie down,  
 Dozing and chewing the cud; or a bird in the ivy wakes,  
 Chirrup one note and is still, and the restless Wind strays on,  
 Fidgeting far down the road, till, softly, the darkness breaks.

Back comes the Wind full strength, with a blow like an angel's wing,  
 Gentle but waking the world, as he shouts: "The sun! The Sun!"  
 And the light floods over the fields and the birds begin to sing,  
 And the Wind dies down in the grass. It is Day and his work is done.

So when the world is asleep, and there seems no hope of her waking  
 Out of the long, bad dream that makes her mutter and moan,  
 Suddenly all men rise to the noise of fetters breaking,  
 And everyone smiles at his neighbour and tells him his soul is his own.

**Class A108 - D - Humorous Poetry - Grade Eight****NUTRITION REPORT** - Gordon and Bernice Korman

The minimum daily allowance  
 Of chocolate is now fourteen pounds,  
 Divided between Hershey Kisses,  
 Fudge, chocolate chip cookies, and Mounds.

Bazooka Joe gum is essential,  
 Tortilla chips make you much stronger,  
 Increase your intake of white sugar  
 So you can stay healthier longer.

For developing bones and good posture  
 It's obvious ice cream's the key,  
 Washed down with five gallons of cola,  
 Or 7-Up, not sugar-free.

Of course, you will need lots of fiber,  
 Like pretzels, and popcorn, and chips.  
 Make certain that nothing which grows in the ground  
 Is permitted to pass through your lips.

And this rule is terribly urgent:  
 We must be sure everyone eats a  
 Colossal amount of tomato, three-cheese,  
 Pepperoni and anchovy pizza.

**SURGEON GENERAL'S NOTE:**  
 It's probably a bad idea to do what this guy said.  
 It's excellent for gaining weight,  
 and things like dropping dead.

**Class A108 - E - Humorous Poetry - Grade Eight****HOW PLEASANT TO KNOW MR. LEAR – Edward Lear**

How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!  
Who has written such volumes of stuff!  
Some think him ill-tempered and queer,  
But a few think him pleasant enough.

His mind is concrete and fastidious,  
His nose is remarkably big;  
His visage is more or less hideous,  
His beard it resembles a wig.

He has ears, and two eyes, and ten fingers,  
Leastways if you reckon two thumbs;  
Long ago he was one of the singers,  
But now he is one of the dumbs.

He sits in a beautiful parlour,  
With hundreds of books on the wall;  
He drinks a great deal of Marsala,  
But never gets tipsy at all.

He has friends, laymen and clerical;  
Old Foss is the name of his cat;  
His body is perfectly spherical,  
He weareth a runcible hat.

When he walks in a waterproof white,  
The children run after him so!  
Calling out, "He's come out in his night-  
Gown, that crazy old Englishman, oh!"

He weeps by the side of the ocean,  
He weeps on the top of the hill;  
He purchases pancakes and lotion,  
And chocolate shrimps from the mill.

He reads but he cannot speak Spanish,  
He cannot abide ginger-beer:  
Ere the days of his pilgrimage vanish,  
How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!

**Class A109 - A - Serious Poetry - Grades Nine and Ten****5 WAYS TO KILL A MAN - Edwin Brock**

There are many cumbersome ways to kill a man:  
you can make him carry a plank of wood  
to the top of a hill and nail him to it. To do this  
properly you require a crowd of people  
wearing sandals, a cock that crows, a cloak  
to dissect, a sponge, some vinegar and one  
man to hammer the nails home.

Or you can take a length of steel,  
shaped and chased in a traditional way,  
and attempt to pierce the metal cage he wears.  
But for this you need white horses,  
English trees, men with bows and arrows,  
at least two flags, a prince and a  
castle to hold your banquet in.

Dispensing with nobility, you may, if the wind  
allows, blow gas at him. But then you need  
a mile of mud sliced through with ditches,  
not to mention black boots, bomb craters,  
more mud, a plague of rats, a dozen songs  
and some round hats made of steel.

In an age of aeroplanes, you may fly  
miles above your victim and dispose of him by  
pressing one small switch. All you then  
require is an ocean to separate you, two  
systems of government, a nation's scientists,  
several factories, a psychopath and  
land that no one needs for several years.

There are, as I began, cumbersome ways  
to kill a man. Simpler, direct, and much more neat  
is to see that he is living somewhere in the middle  
of the twentieth century, and leave him there.

**Class A109 - B - Serious Poetry - Grades Nine and Ten****THE ARCTIC INDIAN'S FAITH**

We worship the spirit that walks unseen  
Through our land of ice and snow:  
We know not His face, we know not His place,  
But His presence and power we know.

Does the Buffalo need the Pale-face word  
To find his pathway far?  
What guide has he to the hidden ford,  
Or where the green pastures are?  
Who teacheth the Moose that the hunter's gun  
Is peering out of the shade  
In the track the Moose has made?

Him do we follow, Him do we fear—  
The spirit of earth and sky;—  
Who hears with the Wapiti's eager ear  
His poor red children's cry.  
Whose whisper we note in every breeze  
That stirs the birch canoe  
Who hangs the reindeer moss on the trees  
For the food of the Caribou.

That Spirit we worship who walks unseen  
Through our land of ice and snow:  
We know not His face, we know not His place,  
But His presence and power we know.

**Class A109 - D - Humorous Poetry - Grades Nine and Ten****ANYONE LIVED IN A PRETTY HOW TOWN – e.e. cummings**

Anyone lived in a pretty how town  
 (with up so floating many bells down)  
 spring summer autumn winter  
 he sang his didn't he danced his did.

Women and men (both little and small)  
 cared for anyone not at all  
 they sowed their isn't they reaped their same  
 sun moon stars rain

children guessed (but only a few  
 and down they forgot as up they grew  
 autumn winter spring summer)  
 that noone loved him more by more

when by now and tree by leaf  
 she laughed his joy she cried his grief  
 bird by snow and stir by still  
 anyone's any was all to her

someones married their everyones  
 laughed their cryings and did their dance  
 (sleep wake hope and then) they  
 said their nevers they slept their dream

stars rain sun moon  
 (and only the snow can begin to explain  
 How children are apt to forget to remember  
 With up so floating many bells down)

One day anyone died I guess  
 (and noone stooped to kiss his face)  
 busy folk buried them side by side  
 little by little and was by was

all by all and deep by deep  
 and more by more they dream their sleep  
 noone and anyone earth by april  
 wish by spirit and if by yes.

Women and men (both dong and ding)  
 summer autumn winter spring  
 reaped their sowing and went their came  
 sun moon stars rain

**Class A109 - E - Humorous Poetry - Grades Nine and Ten****ROBINSON CRUSOE'S STORY** - Charles E. Carryl

The night was thick and hazy  
 When the "Piccadilly Daisy"  
 Carried down the crew and captain in the sea;  
 And I think the water drowned 'em;  
 For they never, never found 'em,  
 And I know they didn't come ashore with me.

Oh! 'twas very sad and lonely  
 When I found myself the only  
 Population on this cultivated shore;  
 But I've made a little tavern  
 In a rocky little cavern,  
 And I sit and watch for people at the door.

I spent no time in looking  
 For a girl to do my cooking,  
 As I'm quite a clever hand at making stews;  
 But I had that fellow Friday,  
 Just to keep the tavern tidy,  
 And to put a Sunday polish on my shoes.

I have a little garden  
 That I'm cultivating lard in,  
 As the things I eat are rather tough and dry;  
 For I live on toasted lizards,  
 Prickly pears, and parrot gizzards,  
 And I'm really very fond of beetle-pie.

The clothes I had were furry,  
 And it made me fret and worry  
 When I found the moths were eating off the hair;  
 And I had to scrape and sand 'em,  
 And I boiled 'em and I tanned 'em,  
 Till I got the fine morocco suit I wear.

I sometimes seek diversion  
 In a family excursion  
 With the few domestic animals you see;  
 And we take along a carrot  
 As refreshment for the parrot,  
 And a little can of jungleberry tea.  
 Then we gather as we travel,  
 Bits of moss and dirty gravel,  
 And we chip off little specimens of stone;  
 And we carry home as prizes  
 Funny bugs, of handy sizes,  
 Just to give the day a scientific tone.

If the roads are wet and muddy  
 We remain at home and study,  
 For the Goat is very clever at a sum  
 And the dog, instead of fighting,  
 Studies ornamental writing,  
 While the cat is taking lessons on the drum.

We retire at eleven,  
 And we rise again at seven;  
 And I wish to call attention, as I close,  
 To the fact that all the scholars  
 Are correct about their collars,  
 And particular in turning out their toes.

**Class A110 - A - Serious Poetry - Grades 11 and 12****PHENOMENAL WOMAN - Maya Angelou**

Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.  
 I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size  
 But when I start to tell them,  
 They think I'm telling lies.  
 I say,  
 It's in the reach of my arms,  
 The span of my hips,  
 The stride of my step,  
 The curl of my lips.  
 I'm a woman  
 Phenomenally.  
 Phenomenal woman,  
 That's me.

I walk into a room  
 Just as cool as you please,  
 And to a man,  
 The fellows stand or  
 Fall down on their knees.  
 Then they swarm around me,  
 A hive of honey bees.  
 I say,  
 It's the fire in my eyes,  
 And the flash of my teeth,  
 The swing in my waist,  
 And the joy in my feet.  
 I'm a woman  
 Phenomenally.  
 Phenomenal woman,  
 That's me.

Men themselves have wondered  
 What they see in me.  
 They try so much  
 But they can't touch  
 My inner mystery.  
 When I try to show them,  
 They say they still can't see.

I say,  
 It's in the arch of my back,  
 The sun of my smile,  
 The ride of my breasts,

The grace of my style.  
 I'm a woman  
 Phenomenally.  
 Phenomenal woman,  
 That's me.

Now you understand  
 Just why my head's not bowed.  
 I don't shout or jump about  
 Or have to talk real loud.  
 When you see me passing,  
 It ought to make you proud.  
 I say,  
 It's in the click of my heels,  
 The bend of my hair,  
 The palm of my hand,  
 The need for my care.  
 'Cause I'm a woman  
 Phenomenally.  
 Phenomenal woman,  
 That's me.

**Class A110 - B - Serious Poetry - Grades 11 and 12****THE BULL CALF** - Irving Layton

The thing could barely stand. Yet taken  
from his mother and the barn smells  
he still impressed with his pride,  
With the promise of sovereignty in the way  
his head moved to take us in.  
The fierce sunlight tugging the maize from the ground  
licked at his shapely flanks.  
He was too young for all that pride.  
I thought of the deposed Richard II.

"No money in bull calves," Freeman had said.  
The visiting clergyman rubbed the nostrils  
now snuffing pathetically at the windless day.  
"A pity ," he sighed.  
My gaze slipped off his hat toward the empty sky  
that circled over the black knot of men,  
over us and the calf, waiting for the first blow.

Struck  
the bull calf drew in his thin forelegs  
as if gathering strength for a mad rush...  
tottered... raised his darkening eyes to us,  
and I saw we were at the far end  
of his frightened look, growing smaller and smaller  
till we were only the ponderous mallet  
that flicked his bleeding ear  
and pushed him over on his side, stiffly,  
like a block of wood.

Below the hill's crest  
the river snuffled on the improvised beach.  
We dug a deep pit and threw the dead calf into it.  
It made a wet sound, a sepulchral gurgle,  
as the warm sides bulged and flattened.  
Settled, the bull calf lay as if asleep,  
one foreleg over the other,  
bereft of pride and so beautiful now,  
without movement, perfectly still in the cool pit,  
I turned away and wept.

**Class A110 - D - Humorous Poetry - Grades 11 and 12****HOUSEWORK** - Sheldon Harnick

You know, there are times  
when we happen to be  
just sitting there quietly  
watching TV,  
when the program we're watching  
will stop for awhile  
and suddenly someone  
appears with a smile  
and starts to show us  
how terribly urgent  
it is to buy some brand  
of detergent  
or soap  
or cleanser  
or cleaner  
or powder  
or paste  
or wax  
or bleach—  
to help with the housework.

Now most of the time  
it's a lady we see  
who's doing the housework  
on TV  
She's cheerfully scouring  
a skillet or two,  
or she's polishing pots  
'till they gleam like new,  
or she's scrubbing the tub,  
or she's mopping the floors,  
or she's wiping the stains  
from the walls and the doors,  
or she's washing the windows,  
the dishes, the clothes,  
or waxing the furniture  
'till it just glows,  
or cleaning the "fridge",  
or the stove or the sink  
with a lighthearted smile  
and a friendly wink

**Continued**

**(Class A110 – D continued)**

and she's doing her best  
to make us think  
that her soap  
or detergent  
or cleanser  
or cleaner  
or powder  
or paste  
or wax  
or bleach  
is the best kind of soap  
(or detergent  
or cleanser  
or cleaner  
or powder  
or paste  
or wax  
or bleach)  
that there is in the whole wide world!

And maybe it is...  
and maybe it isn't...  
and maybe it does what they  
say it will do...  
but I'll tell you one thing  
I KNOW is true:

The lady we see  
when we're watching TV  
The lady who smiles  
as she scours  
or scrubs  
or rubs  
or washes  
or wipes  
or mops  
or dusts  
or cleans  
or whatever she does  
on our TV screens–

that lady is smiling  
because she's an actress.  
And she's earning money  
for learning those speeches  
that mention those wonderful soaps

**Continued**

and detergents  
and cleansers  
and cleaners  
and powders  
and pastes  
and waxes  
and bleaches.

So the very next time  
you happen to be  
just sitting there quietly  
watching TV,  
and you see some nice lady  
who smiles as  
she scours  
or scrubs  
or rubs  
or washes  
or wipes  
or mops  
or dusts  
or cleans

**REMEMBER:**

Nobody smiles doing housework  
but those ladies you see on TV.  
Because even if  
the soap  
the detergent  
or cleanser  
or cleaner  
or powder  
or paste  
or wax  
or bleach  
that you use  
is the very best one—  
housework  
is just no fun.

Children,  
when you have a house of your own  
make sure, when there's house-work to do,  
that you won't have to do it alone.  
Little boys, little girls,  
when you're big husbands and wives,  
if you want all the days of your lives  
to seem sunny as summer weather  
make sure, when there's housework to do,

## **Class A110 - E - Humorous Poetry - Grades 11 and 12**

### **PYGMALION - Albert G. Miller**

Pygmalion thought that women were a great abomination.  
What little charm they had, he thought, was always on vacation.  
He swore he'd never say "I do" before the bridal altar  
And said he'd rather hammer stones than wear a husband's halter.

He took a block of ivory and many months he sculpted,  
And what he had when he got done impressed him so he gulped.  
For Pyg had carved a woman, an extremely lovely creature,  
And doggone realistic, every hillock, curve, and feature.

The figure was his masterpiece. He kissed it and caressed it  
And gave it pearls and emeralds, but first of course, he dressed it.  
He spoke of her as "Mrs." and he played the good provider.  
He tucked her into bed at night and hopped right in beside her .

The folks at Venus' Festival heard young Pygmalion urgin'  
The Goddess to create a woman like his ivory virgin.  
He rated high with Venus, so she simply up and took  
Her wand and mumbled something, and said, "Go right home and look."

But why go any further? It would be undignified,  
For Venus blessed the nuptials, and the family multiplied.  
Now this is pretty fiction, but don't let your Mrs. catch you  
In the parlor after midnight making sheep's eyes at a statue.



**READINGS****Class A500 - A - Serious Reading - Grades 3 and 4**

Excerpt from **WORM PIE** - Beverly Scudamore

After French, we were supposed to do math.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Class A500 - B - Serious Reading - Grades 3 and 4****PUPPIES FOR SALE - Dan Clark**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Class A500 -D - Humorous Reading - Grades 3 and 4**

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

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

Pepperoni seemed to nod.

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

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

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

Chuckie and Harvey ran off.

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

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

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

She pronounced and pointed out other parts.

"Stifle."

"Chine."

"Withers."

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

She walked around the goat pasture, studying the parts. A great way to test herself came to mind. She ran into the house and returned with a pad of yellow Post-It notes. She wrote down each part name on a sheet. She pressed each part name where she thought it belonged on Pepperoni's body. When she checked the drawing in the book, she'd gotten them all right!

Behind her she heard laughter. And arfing.

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

**Class A500 - E - Humorous Reading - Grades 3 and 4**

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

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

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

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

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

Rondi didn't understand.

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

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

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

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

"Love your hat, Rondi," said Joy.

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

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

"Don't you think so, Leslie?"

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

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

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

"What hat?" asked Rondi.

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

**Continued**

**(Class A500 – E continued)**

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

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

"What's so funny?" asked Todd.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Class A501 - A - Serious Reading - Grades 5 and 6**

Excerpt from **MANIAC MAGEE** by Jerry Spinelli

Maniac Magee was blind. Sort of.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Such as a kid who is allergic to pizza.

Or a kid who does dishes without being told.

Or a kid who never watches Saturday morning cartoons.

Or a kid who's another color.

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

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

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

And then all of a sudden he could.

**Class A501 - B - Serious Reading - Grades 5 and 6****THE BREADWINNER** – Deborah Ellis

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

“Hey Kaseem.”

Parvana looked back at her friend.

“Watch out for land mines,” Shauzia said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Class A501 - D - Humorous Reading - Grades 5 and 6****McBROOM'S ALMANAC - Sid Fleischman**

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

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

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

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

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

Will*jill*hester*chester*peter*polly*tim*tomm*ary*larry*and*littleclarinda*!" I shouted to our young'uns. "Bulb's shattered. Fetch the ripsaws, the crosscut saws, and let's get to work!"

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

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

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

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

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

"Of course not," I said.

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

He loped away, grumbling and snarling.

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

**Continued**

**(Class A501 – D continued)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Class A501 - E - Humorous Reading - Grades 5 and 6**

Excerpt from **DON'T GET CAUGHT WEARING THE LUNCH LADY'S HAIRNET** -  
Todd Strasser

The new lunch rules were ridiculous:

No talking.

Sit in your assigned seat.

No getting up without permission.

No slouching. They wanted you to sit up straight.

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

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

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

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

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

"Are you serious?" Wilson asked loudly.

"Spit it out," Wanda the Widebody repeated.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Continued**

**(Class A501 – E continued)**

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

"Who says?" I asked.

"Sit down!" Big Bertha yelled at me.

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

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

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

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

"You guys are psycho," said Dusty.

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

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

"Not on the floor!" yelled Big Bertha.

"You said to sit down," I said.

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

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

**Class A502 - A - Serious Reading - Grades 7 and 8**

Excerpt from LEININGEN VERSUS THE ANTS - Carl Stephenson

Dawn found a thoroughly refreshed and active Leiningen riding along the edge of the ditch. The planter saw before him a motionless and unaltered throng of besiegers. He studied the wide belt of water between them and the plantation, and for a moment almost regretted that the fight had ended so soon and so simply. In the comforting, matter-of-fact light of morning, it seemed to him now that the ants hadn't the ghost of a chance to cross the ditch. Even if they plunged headlong into it on all three fronts at once, the force of the now powerful current would inevitably sweep them away. He had got quite a thrill out of the fight--pity it was already over.

He rode along the eastern and southern sections of the ditch and found everything in order. He reached the western section, opposite the tamarind wood, and here, contrary to the other battle fronts, he found the enemy very busy indeed. The trunks and branches of the trees and the creepers of the lianas, on the far bank of the ditch, fairly swarmed with industrious insects. But instead of eating the leaves there and then, they were merely gnawing through the stalks, so that a thick green shower fell steadily to the ground.

No doubt they were victualling columns sent out to obtain provender for the rest of the army. The discovery did not surprise Leiningen. He did not need to be told that ants are intelligent, that certain species even use others as milch cows, watchdogs and slaves. He was well aware of their power for adaptation, their sense of discipline, their marvellous talent for organization.

His belief that a foray to supply the army was in progress was strengthened when he saw the leaves that fell to the ground being dragged to the troops waiting outside the wood. Then all at once he realized the aim that rain of green was intended to serve.

Each single leaf, pulled or pushed by dozens of toiling insects, was borne straight to the edge of the ditch. Even as Macbeth watched the approach of Birnam Wood in the hands of his enemies, Leiningen saw the tamarind wood move nearer and nearer in the mandibles of the ants. Unlike the fey Scot, however, he did not lose his nerve; no witches had prophesied his doom, and if they had he would have slept just as soundly. All the same, he was forced to admit to himself that the situation was now far more ominous than that of the day before.

He had thought it impossible for the ants to build rafts for themselves--well, here they were, coming in thousands, more than enough to bridge the ditch. Leaves after leaves rustled down the slope into the water, where the current drew them away from the bank and carried them into midstream. And every single leaf carried several ants. This time the farmer did not trust to the alacrity of his messengers. He galloped away, leaning from his saddle and yelling orders as he rushed past outpost after outpost: "Bring petrol pumps to the southwest front. Issue spades to every man along the line facing the wood !" And arrived at the eastern and southern sections, he dispatched every man except the observation posts to the menaced west.

**Continued**

**(Class A502 - A continued)**

Then, as he rode past the stretch where the ants had failed to cross the day before, he witnessed a brief but impressive scene. Down the slope of the distant hill there came toward him a singular being, writhing rather than running, an animal-like blackened statue with a shapeless head and four quivering feet that knuckled under almost ceaselessly. When the creature reached the far bank of the ditch and collapsed opposite Leiningen, he recognized it as a pampas stag, covered over and over with ants.

It had strayed near the zone of the army. As usual, they had attacked its eyes first. Blinded, it had reeled in the madness of hideous torment straight into the ranks of its persecutors, and now the beast swayed to and fro in its death agony.

With a shot from his rifle Leiningen put it out of its misery. Then he pulled out his watch. He hadn't a second to lose, but for life itself he could not have denied his curiosity the satisfaction of knowing how long the ants would take--for personal reasons, so to speak. After six minutes the white polished bones alone remained. That's how he himself would look before you can - Leiningen spat once, and put spurs to his horse.

**Class A502 - B - Serious Reading - Grades 7 and 8**

Excerpt from **LUKE BALDWIN'S VOW** - Morley Callaghan

Leaving the bike in the ditch, he started to cross the field, intending to get close enough to the house so Dan could hear him if he whistled softly. He got about fifty yards away from the house and whistled and waited, but there was no sign of the dog, which might be asleep at the front of the house, he knew, or over at the sawmill. With the saws whining, the dog couldn't hear the soft whistle. For a few minutes Luke couldn't make up his mind what to do, then he decided to go back to the road, get on his bike and go back the way he had come until he got to the place where the river path joined the road. There he could leave his bike, go up the path, then into the tall grass and get close to the front of the house and the sawmill without being seen.

He had followed the river path for about a hundred yards, and when he came to the place where the river began to bend sharply toward the house his heart fluttered and his legs felt paralysed, for he saw the old row-boat in the one place where the river was deep, and in the row-boat was Sam Carter with the collie.

The bearded man in the blue overalls was smoking the cigar; the dog, with a rope around its neck, sat contentedly beside him, its tongue going out in a friendly lick at the hand holding the rope. It was all like a crazy dream picture to Luke; all wrong because it looked so lazy and friendly, even the curling smoke from Sam Carter's cigar. But as Luke cried out, "Dan, Dan! Come on, boy!" and the dog jumped at the water, he saw that Sam Carter's left hand was hanging deep in the water, holding a foot of rope with a heavy stone at the end. As Luke cried out wildly, "Don't! Please don't!" Carter dropped the stone, for the cry came too late; it was blurred by the screech of the big saws at the mill. But Carter was startled, and he stared stupidly at the river bank, then he ducked his head and began to row quickly to the bank.

But Luke was watching the collie take what looked like a long, shallow dive, except that the hind legs suddenly kicked up above the surface, then shot down, and while he watched, Luke sobbed and trembled, for it was as if the happy secret part of his life around the sawmill was being torn away from him. But even while he watched, he seemed to be following a plan without knowing it, for he was already fumbling in his pocket for his jack-knife, jerking the blade open, pulling off his pants, kicking his shoes off while he muttered fiercely and prayed that Sam Carter would get out of sight.

It hardly took the mill hand a minute to reach the bank and go slinking furtively around the bend as if he felt that the boy was following him. But Luke hadn't taken his eyes off the exact spot in the water where Dan had disappeared. As soon as the mill hand was out of sight Luke slid down the bank and took a leap at the water, the sun glistening on his slender body, his eyes wild with eagerness as he ran out to the deep place, then arched his back and dived, swimming under water, his open eyes getting used to the greenish-grey haze of the water, the sandy bottom and the imbedded rocks.

**Continued**

**(Class A502 – B continued)**

His lungs began to ache, then he saw the shadow of the collie floating at the end of the taut rope, rock-held in the sand. He slashed at the rope with his knife. He couldn't get much strength in his arm because of the resistance of the water. He grabbed the rope with his left hand, hacking with his knife. The collie suddenly drifted up slowly, like a water-soaked log. Then his own head shot above the surface, and while he was sucking in the air he was drawing in the rope, pulling the collie toward him and treading water. In a few strokes he was away from the deep place and his feet touched the bottom.

Hoisting the collie out of the water, he scrambled toward the bank, lurching and stumbling in fright because the collie felt like a dead weight.

He went on up the bank and across the path to the tall grass, where he fell flat, hugging the dog and trying to warm him with his own body. But the collie didn't stir, the good amber eye remained closed. Then suddenly Luke wanted to act like a resourceful competent man. Getting up on his knees, he stretched the dog out on its belly, drew him between his knees, felt with trembling hands for the soft places on the flanks just above the hipbones, and rocked back and forth, pressing with all his weight, then relaxing the pressure as he straightened up. He hoped that he was working the dog's lungs like a bellows. He had read that men who had been thought drowned had been saved in this way.

"Come on, Dan. Come on, old boy," he pleaded softly. As a little water came from the collie's mouth, Luke's heart jumped, and he muttered over and over, "You can't be dead, Dan! You can't, you can't! I won't let you die, Dan!" He rocked back and forth tirelessly, applying the pressure to the flanks. More water dribbled from the mouth. In the collie's body he felt a faint tremor. "Oh, gee, Dan, you're alive," he whispered, "Come on, boy. Keep it up."

With a cough the collie suddenly jerked his head back, the amber eye opened, and there they were looking at each other. Then the collie, thrusting his legs out stiffly, tried to hoist himself up, staggered, tried again, then stood there in a stupor. Then he shook himself like any other wet dog, turned his head, eyed Luke, and the red tongue came out in a weak flick at Luke's cheek.

**Class 502 - D - Humorous Reading - Grades 7 and 8**

Excerpt from **REAL PONIES DON'T GO OINK!** - Patrick F. McManus

Retch and I arrived at the lake cabin just before dark, went inside and started a fire. Luckily, we were able to smother it before it did much damage.

"I don't know why Popper doesn't buy a new gas lantern," Retch said, rubbing off his eyebrows.

"Well, he'll have to now," I said. "The flames shot darn near to the ceiling. Good thing you had wits enough to throw your dad's fishing vest on top of it before you booted it out the door. Might have touched off a forest fire otherwise."

"You didn't do too bad yourself, tossing that bucket of water on the burning floorboards. The whole cabin could have gone up like a torch!"

The next morning we dragged the little cedar-strip boat down to the lake and launched it. It was one of the prettiest boats I'd ever seen, about what you'd expect of something that had been lovingly crafted with hand tools over a period of five years or so. It rowed like a dream. But the five-horse motor sent it skimming up the lake like a shaft of golden light playing on the waves. The fishing was wonderful, too. By evening we had two heavy stringers of perch and crappy.

Night was oozing in around us by the time we started back down the lake. Retch was rowing.

"Bail a little faster," he said. "We're taking on too much water."

"I'm bailing as fast as I can," I said. "You wouldn't think a little hole like that would let in so much water."

"Darn snag," Retch said. "Not only does it get the boat, it nails the motor, too. I've been up here a dozen times with Popper, and he's never once mentioned that snag. You would think a person's father would mention an obstacle like that. No, all he does is shout, "Not so fast, not so fast! You'll run into something!" I tell you it makes me feel bad to see that kind of negligence in a person's own parent. Bail faster!"

"Row faster!"

We finally made it back to the cabin, with a good three or four inches of the boat showing above water. We tied up at the dock, threw what was left of Mr. Sweeney's gear in the car, and headed home. Now, I certainly didn't recall seeing that big rock in the road on our way to the cabin. Retch said he was certain that it hadn't been there. The wrecker man said it had probably fallen down off the mountain after we had gone past on our way to the cabin. "Because," he said, "any fool would have noticed a rock that size."

The rock had gone right under the car, ripping off assorted parts, some of which were apparently fairly important, because the car refused to run.

**(Class A502 – D continued)**

"Can you fix it?" I asked the wrecker man.

"Fix it?" he said. "Only God could fix that car, and His bill would be almost as much as mine. You say a Mr. Herbert Sweeney will be happy to pay for my services, right? You boys just stand where I can see you until this Mr. Sweeney arrives, okay?"

"Okay," Retch said. "But unless you have a strong stomach, I think it would be better if he picked us up down the road a ways."

An hour after a collect phone call to the Sweeney residence, Mr. Sweeney's other car came roaring into the gas station. Mr. Sweeney got out and stood there for a moment staring at us. I wished he had been a little more specific about the consequences of our destroying his belongings. Then he rushed at us.

"You're both still alive!" he cried. "No missing limbs, no broken bones?"

"Naw, Popper, we're okay," Retch said, cringing. "But we destroyed your fishing car."

"That piece of junk! Good riddance!"

"And we hit a snag and broke a hole in your boat and knocked out your new motor. The boat's mostly sunk but tied up at the dock."

"You managed to get it back to the dock? That's wonderful! I thought I'd never see it or the motor again!"

"And we had a fire in the cabin, but we got it put out before it did much damage."

"You mean you didn't burn the cabin to the ground? I can't believe it? This is fantastic! And you two loons are still alive to tell about it! I never thought it could happen! Maybe you guys are actually ready to go out on your own, without me tagging along all the time. By gosh, I can hardly believe you made it back alive. What a relief!"

Driving back home with his father, Retch and I slowly recovered from the shocks of the day. Indeed, the good cheer of Mr. Sweeney proved infectious, and soon Retch and I were giving him a hilarious account of our adventure, to which Mr. Sweeney responded with great mirth.

"And then I kicked the lantern right out the door, Retch said, and busted it all to smithereens. Har har har!"

"Kicked it out the door and busted it all to smithereens!" shouted Mr. Sweeney. "Har har har!"

"But wait, there's more," Retch said, wiping tears from his eyes. "We put out the fire with your old fishing vest. Burnt a big hole in it! Heee heeee!"

"Burnt a hole in my old fishing vest?" Mr. Sweeney said, not laughing. "Burnt a hole in my fishing vest! Don't press your luck, Retch. Don't press your luck!"

As Retch said later, that was the problem with parents. All they cared about were their dumb old possessions.

**Class A502 - E - Humorous Reading - Grades 7 and 8**

Excerpt from **THE TRUTH ABOUT RATS, RULES, & SEVENTH GRADE** - Linda Zinner

Suddenly a brown rat – ten feet long, three hundred pounds, easy – wriggled out of the insulation, scurried across the top of the stove, slipped down a burner hole and disappeared.

"Aha!" said Mom again. She grinned into my panic-stricken face. "He's behind this last side panel! We got him cornered!"

Mom whaled on the last two screws. "Open the door, Larch, and stand by with the broom!"

I opened the door and covered behind the broom.

Mom stripped the last screw and tore off the panel. The rat tried to squirm down through the fiberglass, but Mom dropped the screwdriver and with her bare hand, her bare hand, grabbed that rat by the base of its tail and held it up.

"Ta,dah!" she sang.

The rat's body twisted in the air. Its frantic scrabbling at her fingers got Mom's attention, all right. That brought her back to reality.

"I'm touching a rat!" she screeched and let go of the tail.

The rat ran wildly over the floor.

"Get it! Get it!" screamed Mom.

"You get it!" I screamed back. Up and down I danced, my toes determined not to touch a floor that rat feet had run over not a minute ago. The broom handle in my hand swept the flour canister off the counter. A cloud of flour exploded as the canister hit the floor.

"Hit the rat with the broom!" Mom yelled.

I closed my eyes against the drifting flour and brought the bristles down hard on the place where I had last seen the rat.

I swung again. The upswing caught the cupboard behind me. A jar of spaghetti sauce and a box of elbow noodles splatted to the floor. Fresh clouds of flour mushroomed on the downswing.

The rat, acting on a thousand years of rat instinct, dodged the broom, the flour canister, and the spaghetti sauce. It skittered over the noodles and darted lightning-quick into the first dark hole it found. Which happened to be the leg hole of my jeans.

I dropped the broom and let out a bellow.

**Continued**

**(Class A502 – E continued)**

My jeans were too narrow at the knee, thank goodness, for the rat to slither all the way up my leg. I clapped both hands over the rat bulge at my knee and tried to push it down.

Under the denim the rat writhed and moiled between my cupped fingers like a pulsating tumor. Tickly tumor claws gripped my skin. Malignant yellow fangs scraped lightly through the fine hairs on my leg. The rat was toasty warm; leftover stove heat radiated from the wormy tail twined around my shin.

The more I pushed the rat *down*, the harder it tried to climb *up*.

I let go of my knee and screamed hideously. Mom screamed. I screamed. Mom screamed. The rat and I careened from cupboard to fridge to counter to stove, destroying everything in sight. The toaster oven crashed to the floor. The cupboard door broke a hinge. The dish drainer catapulted through the air. Forks, spoons, plates, and glasses showered all over the kitchen.

Finally, the rat let go. It dropped out of my jeans and scabbled over my bare toes. My foot, acting on a thousand years of foot instinct, kicked straight up to the ceiling. The rat sailed through the air, hit the threshold, and scurried out of the open kitchen door. Out into the deep, dark, safe, and quiet night.

Mom slammed the door shut.

**Class A503 - A - Serious Reading - Grades 9 and 10**

Excerpt from **THE GRAPES OF WRATH** - John Steinbeck

To the red country and part of the gray country of Oklahoma the last rains came gently, and they did not cut the scarred earth. The plows crossed and recrossed the rivulet marks. The last rains lifted the corn quickly and scattered weed colonies and grass along the sides of the roads so that the gray country and the dark red country began to disappear under a green cover. In the last part of May the sky grew pale and the clouds that had hung in high puffs for so long in the spring were dissipated. The sun flared down on the growing corn day after day until a line of brown spread along the edge of each green bayonet. The clouds appeared, and went away, and in a while they did not try any more. The weeds grew darker green to protect themselves, and they did not spread any more. The surface of the earth crusted, a thin hard crust, and as the sky became pale, so the earth became pale, pink in the red country and white in the gray country.

In the water-cut gullies the earth dusted down in dry little streams. Gophers and ant lions started small avalanches. And as the sharp sun struck day after day, the leaves of the young corn became less stiff and erect; they bent in a curve at first, and then, as the central ribs of strength grew weak, each leaf tilted downward. Then it was June, and the sun shone more fiercely. The brown lines on the corn leaves widened and moved in on the central ribs. The weeds frayed and edged back toward their roots. The air was thin and the sky more pale; and every day the earth paled.

In the roads where the teams moved, where the wheels milled the ground and the hooves of the horses beat the ground, the dirt crust broke and the dust formed. Every moving thing lifted the dust into the air: a walking man lifted a thin layer as high as his waist, and a wagon lifted the dust as high as the fence tops, and an automobile boiled a cloud behind it. The dust was long in settling back again.

When June was half gone, the big clouds moved up out of Texas and the Gulf, high heavy clouds, rain-heads. The men in the fields looked up at the clouds and sniffed at them and held wet fingers up to sense the wind. And the horses were nervous while the clouds were up. The rain-heads dropped a little spattering and hurried on to some other country. Behind them the sky was pale again and the sun flared. In the dust there were drop craters where the rain had fallen, and there were clean splashes on the corn, and that was all.

A gentle wind followed the rain clouds, driving them on northward, a wind that softly clashed the drying corn. A day went by and the wind increased, steady, unbroken by gusts. The dust from the roads fluffed up and spread out and fell on the weeds beside the fields, and fell into the fields a little way. Now the wind grew strong and hard and it worked at the rain crust in the corn fields. Little by little the sky was darkened by the mixing dust, and the wind felt over the earth, loosened the dust, and carried it away. The wind grew stronger. The rain crust broke and the dust lifted up out of the fields and drove gray plumes into the air like sluggish smoke. The corn threshed the wind and made a dry, rushing sound. The finest dust did not settle back to earth now, but disappeared into the darkening sky.

**Continued**

**(Class A503 – A continued)**

The wind grew stronger, whisked under stones, carried up straws and old leaves, and even little clods, marking its course as it sailed across the fields. The air and the sky darkened and through them the sun shone redly, and there was a raw sting in the air. During the night the wind raced faster over the land, dug cunningly among the rootlets of the corn, and the corn fought the wind with its weakened leaves until the roots were freed by the prying wind and then each stalk settled wearily sideways toward the earth and pointed the direction of the wind.

The dawn came, but no day. In the gray sky a red sun appeared, a dim red circle that gave a little light, like dusk; and as that day advanced, the dusk slipped back toward darkness, and the wind cried and whimpered over the fallen corn.

**Class A503 - B - Serious Reading - Grades 9 and 10****THE YELLOW WALLPAPER** – Charlotte Perkins Gilman

It is the strangest yellow, that wallpaper! It makes me think of all the yellow things I ever saw – not beautiful ones like buttercups, but old, foul, bad yellow things.

But there is something else about that paper - the smell! I noticed it the moment we came into the room but with so much air and sun it was not bad. Now we have had a week of fog and rain, and whether the windows are open or not, the smell is here.

It creeps all over the house.

I find it hovering in the dining-room, skulking in the parlour, hiding in the hall, lying in wait for me in the stairs.

It gets into my hair.

Even when I go to ride, if I turn my head suddenly and surprise it – there is that smell! Such a peculiar odour, too! I have spent hours in trying to analyze it, to find what it smelled like. It is not bad – at first – and very gentle, but quite the subtlest, most enduring odour I ever met.

In this damp weather it is awful. I wake up in the night and find it hanging over me. It used to disturb me at first. I thought seriously of burning the house – to reach the smell!

But now I am used to it. The only thing I can think of that it is like is the *color* of the paper! A yellow smell.

There is a very funny mark on this wall, low down, near the mopboard. A streak that runs round the room. It goes behind every piece of furniture, except the bed, a long straight, even *smooch*, as if it had been rubbed over and over.

I wonder how it was done and who did it. And what they did it for. Round and round and round – round and round and round – it makes me dizzy!

I really have discovered something at last. Through watching so much at night, when it changes so, I have finally found out.

The front pattern *does* move – and no wonder! The woman behind shakes it!

**Continued**

**(Class A503 – B continued)**

Sometimes I think there are a great many women behind, and sometimes only one, and she crawls around fast, and her crawling shakes it all over.

Then in the very bright spots she keeps still, and in the very shady spots she just takes hold of the bars and shakes them hard.

And she is all the time trying to climb through. But nobody could climb through that pattern - it strangles so; I think that is why it has so many heads.

They get through, and then the pattern strangles them off and turns them upside down, and makes their eyes white!

If those heads were covered or taken off it would not be half so bad.

I think that woman gets out in the daytime!

**Class A503 - D - Humorous Readings - Grades 9 and 10****ALWAYS DO A CANNONBALL - Gary Dunford**

Have you ever stuck your big toe in a lake to test how cold it was?

Ever sit on the edge of a dock, lazily let your foot touch the water?

If the answer is yes, you are most certainly dead and not reading this. Huge killer muskies patrol Ontario's creepy blue-black deeps, just waiting to grab a toe or digit and tug you out to a watery grave. The muskellunge—Algonquin for “hideous killer pike that lives under the dock”—is a large, predacious, soft-rayed, fresh-water fish, featuring “an oval body with a duck-billed snout full of large teeth.” Countless tourists are taken by muskie each summer, their cars and coolers of beer quietly distributed among park rangers. Woodsmen rightly fear them as the Piranha of the north.

If you *must* swim in Ontario's lakes, obey my two rules:

1. Do a really big cannonball to scare them away.
2. Get the hell out of the water within two minutes.

Even then, I cannot guarantee you will not be “tasted.” That funny tingle? You swear something touched you? It was not a stick. It was not a weed. It was...them. Muskie have a peculiar fondness for tourists from Ohio. Put an orange life vest on a toddler and you might just as well write “Appetizer” on his feet. I will not enter any body of water in Ontario without an old pair of tennis shoes on my feet and my trusty Muskie-Proof Oven Mittens. Offer no target these hateful, duck-billed murderers can fit into their mouths. Even protected, I still have bad dreams. I sleep in my socks in summer. Many experts—well, okay, me—believe the Loch Ness Monster is a muskie. You cannot argue with science.

My own obsession with muskie stems straight from childhood. Relatives—especially my cousins—spent most of their summers trying to kill me. I was a city kid and they were country people, a meaner strain of the rubes you may have seen in *Deliverance*. By day, they lured me ever higher up skyscraper trees, or encouraged me to dive head-first into six-inch-deep swimming holes. They delighted in putting worms, leeches and crayfish on me. But night was far, far worse. At dark, they took me fishing.

They'd row a boat down into Crappers' Swamp, a featureless, fetid stinkhole, there to look for huge, slug-eyed catfish by flashlight. “Don't touch their whiskers!” cousin Booger would yell when they got one in the boat. “The spikes will go right thru ya! Even pliers won't get them out!”

Sometimes we'd catch a blowfish. “Don't touch it!” Booger would howl, as a demon object would heave about my feet, first as big as a football, then a basketball, then a bean-bag chair. “They got poison skin!”

**Continued**

**(Class A503 - D continued)**

But bless him Booger let me keep my 10 fingers, 10 little toes. “Don’t ever put your hand over the side,” he warned. “Muskie’s will take a finger right off ya. And you better pray your finger snaps off: otherwise a big one will drag ya right outta the boat.” He put the flashlight at his chin and beamed it up his nose, mugged an awful death face: Man Eaten by Muskie’s.

That was the summer I started swimming in shoes and mittens. It was the same year I stopped snorkeling.

Sun snakes shimmered on the sand bottom, that last day I scuba’d along the lake shore. It was a watery wonder world, until I saw...the bones. Right by a big cement block that safely held the neighbor’s sailboat. The little rib cage was still intact, a hideous hunk of moss or fluff bobbing in the current. It was a partially-decomposed skeleton.

“Ye gods!” I howled, clawing my way out of the water back to the dock. “It’s muskie’s! They’re grabbing rabbits!” Some poor Petey Cottontail—probably down to the shore for a first drink that spring—snatched by his little pink nose and dragged out to sea by the greedy duckbills.

Damn them.

If I can save one reader a finger this summer, this message won’t have been in vain. Always do a cannonball. Don’t stay in the water more than a minute. Warn your friends! Muskie’s are a menace. I AM NOT KIDDING.

**Class A503 - E - Humorous Readings - Grades 9 and 10****DON'T JUST STAND THERE** - Eric Nicol

Every article about Vancouver mentions that you can swim at a fine bathing beach and half an hour later be skiing up the mountain.

My pride in this remarkable civic achievement has always been nagged by the fact that I can neither swim nor ski. The things I do (eating, sleeping, swearing, etc.) I could do just as well in Big Muddy, Saskatchewan. For years I have felt like a traitor to my environment, and when people asked me if I swam or skied I have had to give them an evasive answer, such as "Yes."

Last summer I decided to learn to swim and to ski. It was too late in the season to learn to swim, but I got busy telling everybody I was going to learn to ski this winter. I talked this up so much during the fall that by the beginning of the year I felt I had skied, and I became critical of the other skiers I saw, in the newsreels.

But a couple of weeks ago at the Badminton Club, when I was enjoying the glow of well-being that always followed my telling somebody I was going to learn to ski, George, one of my audience, said:

"How about coming up Hollyburn with me Wednesday?"

I may have flinched a bit, but months of ski talk had given me a certain verbal agility, and I was able to reply smoothly:

"Well, that sounds like fun, George. Unfortunately I haven't any skis, otherwise- "

"I can lend you skis," George said.

"I haven't any boots," I said. "Otherwise--"

"I can lend you boots, everything you need," George said.

Livid at the monstrous generosity of the man, who after all barely knew me, I attacked his qualifications.

"I didn't know you could ski, George," I said.

"I'm an instructor for The Daily Province ski classes," he said.

That night I went home from badminton feeling much more tired than usual.

The next Wednesday morning it was raining. I phoned George.

"Raining, George," I said. "Rotten day for skiing, I guess, eh?"

"That's right. Next Wednesday then, okay?"



**(Class A503 – E continued)**

The next Wednesday brought a fine, horrible, sunny morning. George picked me up in his car and we drove to the base of the Hollyburn ski lift. He handed me my skis, which looked much lighter when he was carrying them, and we joined the cluster of skiers waiting for chairs.

When my turn came, instead of a chair whirling around the platform there came a sort of opened basket. George held me back, saying:

"That one's for the stretcher cases."

I caught the chair behind the empty stretcher basket, which preceded me slowly and confidently up the hill. Swinging 20 to 30 feet above jagged stumps, the sky-hung tumbrel gave me plenty of time to brood about the blind confidence people put in mechanical engineers. "Look at the view of the city," George shouted behind me.

Turning, I saw a magnificent panorama of the city I had been fool enough to leave. I could pick out the General Hospital very easily. I turned back and found a man waiting to catch me.

In the handsome lodge I put on the ski boots, and a Province photographer who happened to be up looking for funny pictures suggested he take one of me lying on my back with my skis in the air. I said I didn't want my picture taken like that, so we went out to the snow, George put on my skis, I tried to move, fell on my back with my skis in the air, and the photographer took my picture.

A few attempts to keep my balance on the skis persuaded me that if skiing wasn't harder than I had thought the snow certainly was.

After I had fallen enough times to satisfy everybody around that needed a good laugh, George and I took off our skis for the hike to the Hollyburn Ski Lodge, where his class was waiting. His class was all women. The hills swarmed with women, swooping about and hammering a few more nails into the coffin of the expression "weaker sex."

Having experienced some difficulty in getting up on skis once my enormous weight hit the snow, I declined to provide burlesque comedy for a bunch of refrigerated Amazons. I retired to the cozy interior of the lodge, supplementing the group of fair, bronzed athletes with my pouchy pallor.

The young lady who gave me my coffee, with the friendliness of the fraternity said: "There's one thing about skiing, you're never too old to learn. We have ladies of sixty up here skiing."

I said: "Uh-huh," and made a mental note to hate ladies of sixty.

As George and I started back down the trail, my legs rubbering puckishly, I took a last look at the snowy splendour of the mountainside, breathed in the deep silence that was broken only by the squeak of my vertebrae, and swore to speak of learning to swim to none but the heaviest anchors.



**Class A504 - A - Serious Reading - Grades 11 and 12**

Excerpt from **FAHRENHEIT 451** - Ray Bradbury

"Once, books appealed to a few people, here, there, everywhere. They could afford to be different. The world was roomy. But then the world got full of eyes and elbows and mouths. Double, triple, quadruple population. Films and radios, magazines, books leveled down to a sort of pastepudding norm, do you follow me?"

"I think so."

Beatty peered at the smoke pattern he had put out on the air. "Picture it. Nineteenth-century man with his horses, dogs, carts, slow motion. Then, in the twentieth century, speed up your camera. Books cut shorter. Condensations. Digests. Tabloids. Everything boils down to the gag, the snap ending."

"Snap ending," Mildred nodded.

"Classics cut to fit fifteen-minute radio shows, then cut again to fill a two-minute book column, winding up at last as a ten- or twelve-line dictionary resume. I exaggerate, of course. The dictionaries were for reference. But many were those whose sole knowledge of *Hamlet* (you know the title certainly, Montag; it is probably only a faint rumor of a title to you, Mrs. Montag) whose sole knowledge, as I say, of *Hamlet* was a one-page digest in a book that claimed: *now at last you can read all the classics; keep up with your neighbors*. Do you see? Out of the nursery into the college and back to the nursery; there's your intellectual pattern for the past five centuries or more...."

"Speed up the film, Montag, quick. *Click, Pic, Look, Eye, Now, Flick, Here, There, Swift, Pace, Up, Down, In, Out, Why, How, Who, What, Where, Eh? Uh! Bang! Smack! Wallop, Bing, Bong, Boom!* Digest-digests, digest-digest-digests. Politics? One column, two sentences, a headline Then, in midair, all vanishes! Whirl man's mind around about so fast under the pumping hands of publishers, exploiters, broadcasters that the centrifuge flings off all unnecessary, time-wasting thought!..."

"School is shortened, discipline relaxed, philosophies, histories, languages dropped, English and spelling gradually gradually neglected, finally almost completely ignored. Life is immediate, the job counts, pleasure lies all about after work. Why learn anything save pressing buttons, pulling switches, fitting nuts and bolts?...."

"The zipper displaces the button and a man lacks just that much time to think while dressing at dawn, a philosophical hour, and thus a melancholy hour...."

"Life becomes one big pratfall, Montag; everything bang, boff, and wow!..."

"Empty the theatres save for clowns and furnish the rooms with glass walls and pretty colors running up and down the walls like confetti or blood or sherry or sauterne. You like baseball, don't you, Montag?"

"Baseball's a fine game."



**(Class A504 – A continued)**

Now Beatty was almost invisible, a voice somewhere behind a screen of smoke...

"You like bowling, don't you Montag?"

"Bowling, yes."

"And golf?"

"Golf is a fine game."

"Basketball?"

"A fine game."

“

"Billiards, pool? Football?"

"Fine games, all of them."

"More sports for everyone, group spirit, fun, and you don't have to think, eh? Organize and organize and superorganize super-super sports. More cartoons in books. More pictures. The mind drinks less and less. Impatience. Highways full of crowds going somewhere, somewhere, somewhere, nowhere. The gasoline refugee. Towns turn into motels, people in nomadic surges from place to place, following the moon tides, living tonight in the room where you slept this noon and I the night before...."

"Now let's take up the minorities in our civilization, shall we? Bigger the population, the more minorities. Don't step on the toes of the dog lovers, the cat lovers, doctors, lawyers, merchants, chiefs, Mormons, Baptists, Unitarians, second-generation Chinese, Swedes, Italians, Germans, Texans, Brooklynites, Irishmen, people from Oregon or Mexico. The people in this book, this play, this TV serial are not meant to represent any actual painters, cartographers, mechanics anywhere. The bigger your market, Montag, the less you handle controversy, remember that! All the minor minor minorities with their navels to be kept clean. Authors, full of evil thoughts, lock up your typewriters. They *did*. Magazines became a nice blend of vanilla tapioca. Books, so the damned snobbish critics said, were dishwater. No *wonder* books stopped selling, the critics said. But the public, knowing what it wanted, spinning happily, let the comic books survive. And the three-dimensional sex magazines, of course. There you have it, Montag. It didn't come from the Government down. There was no dictum, no declaration, no censorship, to start with, no! Technology, mass exploitation, and minority pressure carried the trick, thank God. Today, thanks to them, you can stay happy all the time, you are allowed to read comics, the good old confessions, or trade journals."

**Class A504 - B - Serious Reading - Grades 11 and 12**

Excerpt from **GRACEFULLY AFRAID** - Mary Anne Ashley

She was a sharp dresser. I felt good walking up the aisle her. Not now. She is not one of those women who can throw on rags and look like a million. But one thing that makes me feel good about myself is that, embarrassed or not, I am the kind of person who does not abandon another person because of what she wears or doesn't wear. It's uphill work a lot of the time. Sometimes though, it's fun when we go someplace nice and I'm dressed up and she's not. It's bold and defiant. I feel like people envy my courage and loyalty. Other times, it's not fun at all. It's downright humiliating. I feel she's asking too much of our long friendship. More and more I feel that way.

We're getting older and we should try our best. But she says, No, I did that for forty years. That's half my life. She said that right after she had a dream that she was going to live to be eighty-one. We tell one another our dreams. We like our dreams. We feel friendly toward them, even when they are a little frightening. It's a bond between us. We're both relaxed about what our unconscious minds might cough up during the night. After she told me that dream, she said, Now, that's it. The next forty years are mine. I said, Good for you! I had no idea she was talking about not wearing skirts anymore, about letting herself go.

She used to have a beautiful body. Now it's hidden under those twenty extra pounds. Mine is out there, highly visible. You've got a great body, she says. Well, I ought to, I reply.

I work darned hard to keep it that way. I work out in the gym every day. There's not an ounce of fat on me. I run every day. When she runs, she wets her pants. That's not her fault. I know that. She's had kidney infections since she was young. But she could do yoga. But she won't. She even likes yoga. She used to do it with her daughter-in-law. It's getting down on the floor and being out of this world that she says she doesn't like. So, she's flabby and I'm not. I'm fifty-one years old and still look great. Like it or not, we get more high marks when we look good in bathing suits.

We both read the same books, and I understand feminist principles. But what is, is. We have to get along in the here and now. This is a man's world and until that changes, we have to do certain things. We have to say certain things; we have to look a certain way. Like it or not. When she kicks up a fuss, I tell her she's just kicking the slats of her cradle.

You know, it's funny. When we first met eighteen years ago, she didn't know beans about being angry or getting revenge or having a good toe-to-toe fight. That's one of the things she liked about me. You don't pretend to any of the virtues, she said. You get even when someone does you dirt, and you don't have fits of remorse about it. I like that about you. You know that anger doesn't kill. I know it too, but I still don't know how to use it. You said *that to them?* she'd ask, her eyes popping.

Sure I did, I'd say. So what?

I love the way you say, So What.



**(Class A504 – B continued)**

When we first met, she'd never given anyone the finger. Hardly swore at all. She couldn't get mad without saying, I'm sorry. Once, when she was sick, I gave her my favorite book on anger, how to express it. She read it, and came off the couch like she was shot from guns. She loved it. She loved it that I gave that book to her. You could say I had a big hand in the kind of person she is today. She's a great one to have in your corner when there's a fight. But as we get older, I get nervous about what she'll do next. I say, Please don't make a fuss. She says, Don't call sticking up for ourselves making a fuss. Besides, even if we make a fuss, what can they do to us? They've done just about all they can do. I'll never be a history professor and you'll never be a Hollywood screen writer. We're just pokey people now, getting old, in our pokey places. For God's sake, let's not go to our graves without at least shooting our mouths off, she shouts.

And let's not go to our graves, I shout back, without you looking pretty for at least one day. I can hardly bear to look at you anymore.

**Class A504 - D - Humorous Readings - Grades 11 and 12****THIS MAY HURT A LITTLE** - Eric Nicol

The nurse leads me to the Chair, keeping up a chatter intended to distract the patient. Avoiding looking into the marble spit-basin to my immediate left, I ease into the Chair. My teeth seem to be chattering slightly. Fine, go ahead, fellows, it may be your last chance.

Dr. Burcher comes in while Nurse is bibbing me for the slaughter. We engage in gay banter, just as if I hadn't any idea he was going to crawl into my mouth to dynamite the old roots. Jittery, I open my mouth too soon and too wide. I shut it again while Dr. Burcher messes around in a drawer that clinks ominously. I don't know what he's after, but I'll bet it's the biggest of its kind.

Now he peers into my mouth with the little mirror. Poking around with a sharp instrument, he sees something he likes. He tries to drag it out. It puts up a battle; it likes it in there. Dr. Burcher plays it for a while, then throws a gaff into it. Something breaks off and I study his face carefully for confirmation that it is my jawbone.

"Quite a lot of tartar on your teeth," he says, and squelches my rebuttal by syringing water into my mouth. I spit, none too successfully, into the marble basin, and wipe off my chin for Round Two.

"I think I'll take a picture of those," he says, manipulating a fantastic machine which rears over me from the left. So, he's going to take a picture. For his file of Horrible Examples, no doubt.

Dr. Burcher wheels the machine over so that its snout is pointing into the side of my head.

"That's not my best side," I mumble, but already he's stuffing a negative into my mouth.

"Clench it between your teeth," he says, "and keep your tongue down."

My tongue doesn't want to keep down. Every instinct tells it to push the negative out of my mouth before it's too late, before the X-ray has a chance to record the fact that my gums are coming away from my face, or that my molars are all hollow and occupied by tiny animals.

But the camera buzzes briefly and Dr. Burcher has his pinkies in my mouth again, fishing for the negative. Now's the time to bite his fingers off. Nope, lost my nerve.

**Continued**

**(Class A504 – D continued)**

"I think I'd better fill that one at the back before it goes any further," says Dr. Burcher.

To back up this statement, he throws a pick into the young cave behind the last molar on the left lower side. I wonder what Pockle is doing now. Cooing over his young, probably, the yellow rat.

Here comes the local.

"This may hurt a little," says Dr. Burcher.

I know what that means. Dentists give you that "may hurt a little" routine just to make you feel foolish when you jump onto the ceiling.

Dr. Burcher eases the hypo into the gum in easy stages, about half as easy and twice as many stages as I'd prefer. Hey. When's he going to stop? A little farther and he'll blunt that thing on my back collar button. Ah, now he's easing it out again, evidently with several nerves coiled around it.

Pretty soon my mouth is frozen and Dr. Burcher is digging his thumb into my chin, asking if I can feel it. I say, yes, I can feel it, so he starts anyway.

Here comes the drill, that evil, skinny, twisted steel arm. My tongue huddles in one corner of my mouth and a light dew springs out of my forehead. This is it, men. . . .

Half an hour later Dr. Burcher has been excavating with everything but a steam shovel. But the worst is over, he says, stuffing wads of cotton into my mouth. These wads soak up the blood, so that you can quietly bleed to death without realizing it.

Setting the nurse to mixing cement-apparently enough to lay a small sidewalk-he fits a clamp over the molar and under the gum, and screws it tight. If he hadn't assured me that the worst is over I'd swear this was it. Now he's jamming in the cement, tamping it down, scratching his initials on it.

"There," he says finally. "That should do it."

He holds up a mirror and I have a brief, horrifying glimpse of the inside of my mouth. What a ghastly thing to have handling my food!

But as I surge out of the Chair I feel the special satisfaction that comes only with a tooth well filled and a face still too frozen to feel it. I leave by the special exit, head high, a worthy successor to Johnny Adams. I could even forgive Old Man Pockle. In fact, I haven't a thing to worry about until a week from Wednesday, when I go back to have two more filled. A week to live!

**Class A504 - E - Humorous Readings - Grades 11 and 12****THE MISERY INDEX - Arthur Black**

Edmonton's bad, but not as bad as Regina. Newfoundland's capital, St. John's, is pretty crummy too, but Chicoutimi-Jonquiere is crummier. Victoria and Vancouver? Leave those two wimps out of this. They don't even rate. We're talking real Canadian cities. Cities like, well, Winnipeg. Now there's a Canuck burg for ya! Winnipeg's the absolute top of the list.

Misery is what we're measuring here. As in urban winter misery, and it's official: when it comes to Canadian cities, Winnipeg is the worst one to spend the winter in.

The trouble with Canadian winters is that there really is no such animal. Winters here are very different, depending on where in the Great White North you choose to plant your mukluks. A Prairie winter is not like a Maritime winter, just as a winter in Prince Rupert would seem a little weird to a Mennonite farmer from Elmira, Ontario.

Except for one thing. There is one commodity that virtually all Canadian winters have in common.

Misery. It is safe to say that a Canadian winter is a miserable winter, one way or another.

Which is where David Phillips comes in. Mr. Phillips is a climatologist who toils for the Atmospheric Environment Service in Toronto. Looking out his office window one winter morning, across a scabby snowscape of dirty, salt-encrusted banks interspersed with ice patches, Mr. Phillips had a revelation. "What this country needs," he realized, "is a good Winter Misery Index."

So David Phillips designed one. He came up with a list of eleven pointed questions that he could ask about any city's winter experience, questions like: how much snow do you get, how many sunny days, how many times does the thermometer dip under 20 below, how much wind--questions like that. By assigning a numerical value to each answer, Phillips had a method of plotting any Canadian city's position on the Misery Map.

Winnipeg won, mittens down. On a scale of 100, Manitoba's capital copped a frosty 62. Regina wasn't far behind with a 61, and Chicoutimi- Jonquiere was nipping at both their heels with a rating of 60. That was Win, Place, and Show for David Phillips's Misery Sweepstakes. You'll be happy to learn that all other Canadian cities were way back in the pack.

Edmonton for instance, which I thought would rate pretty rotten, pulled a respectable 49. Toronto, which has never been my first choice for a January tryst, got a 34. A little farther south, Windsor scored a semitropical 29. As for equatorial hangouts like Vancouver and Victoria? Ten and 8 on the scale respectively. (I know, I know--I said I wouldn't talk about them, but I thought you should know just how bizarre things get in this country, winter-weather-wise.)

**Continued**

**(Class A504 – E continued)**

I'm glad we have David Phillips's Winter Misery Index. It's a stroke of genius that was long overdue. Especially when our only alternatives were the Druidic pronouncements emanating from Environment Canada--what in the name of heaven is an average mortal to make of a wind chill that is measured in *watts per square metre*?

And yet. . . the existence of the David Phillips's Misery Index begs one unignorable question: now that we know how miserable our winters are, what are we going to do about it?

Most of us would have trouble finding permanent work in the Greek islands, and retsina is an inferior substitute for Canadian lager.

Victoria's not big enough to take us all in. Besides, trading snowshoes for swim flippers is a dubious bargain at best.

Given the climate of economic restraint, I doubt that Ottawa will seriously consider financing a retractable dome stretching from the Queen Charlottes to Conception Bay.

And anyway, just think of the bill for windshield solvent.

Nope, let's face it. Dave Phillips's Misery Index only illustrates something that every Canadian knows in his permafrosted soul--we have lousy winters.

The thing is not to whine about it. Just accept it. If it makes you feel better, you can go around reciting the words of the English poet Shelley: "If winter comes, can spring be far behind?"

Easy for Shelley to say, of course.

He'd never visited Winnipeg.

## CHORAL SPEAKING

### **Class A700 - A - Choral Speaking - Kindergarten - Non-competitive**

#### **THE HOUSE OF THE MOUSE** - Lucy Sprague Mitchell

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

### **Class A700 - B - Choral Speaking - Kindergarten - Non-competitive**

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

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

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

**Class A701 - A - Choral Speaking - Grade 1 - Non-competitive****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 mittens on my big brown paws.  
 With a big brown furry-down up to my head,  
 I'd sleep all winter in a big fur bed.

**Class A701 - B - Choral Speaking - Grade 1- Non-competitive****CATS - Eleanor Farjcon**

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

**Class A702 - A - Choral Speaking - Grade 2 - Non-competitive****THE SECRET SONG - Margaret Wise Brown**

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

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

Who saw the sunset  
       flash on a bird  
 I said the fish  
 But nobody heard

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

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

**Class A702 - B - Choral Speaking - Grade 2- Non-competitive****GOOD MORNING - Muriel Sipe**

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

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

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

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

**Class A703 - A - Choral Speaking - Grade 3**

**I WOULDN'T** - John Ciardi

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

To the nice mice  
In the hall wall  
With the small door  
By the hall floor.  
  
And do they  
Come out and play  
When the fat cat  
Asks them to?  
  
Well, would you?

**Class A703 - B - Choral Speaking - Grade 3**

**DINNER-TIME RHYME** - June Crebbin

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

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

She goes home for dinner...



**Class A704 - A - Choral Speaking - Grade 4****BYE BYE BRONTOSAURUS - Jeff Moss**

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

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

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

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

Stop and think about that.

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

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

**Class A704 - B - Choral Speaking - Grade 4****THE RHINOCEROS** - Conrad Aiken

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

**Class A705 - A - Choral Speaking Grade5****THE SEAL** - Conrad Aiken

How must it feel  
to be  
a  
seal  
and swish among the  
ducks  
and teal  
and swim  
a cool  
Virginia Reel  
right underneath  
somebody's  
keel?  
Then  
*Much*  
to  
somebody's surprise  
pop up your head  
right out of sea  
and blink your big blue baby eyes  
and flap your fins  
with glee?

And o what bliss  
on summer days  
what bliss it is  
to lie and laze  
on a warm mudflat  
in the sun  
and *sunbathe*  
just  
like  
anyone.  
I think the seal  
has  
all  
the  
fun.

**Class A705 - B - Choral Speaking - Grade 5****BEES, BOTHERED BY BOLD BEARS, BEHAVE BADLY** - Walter R. Brooks

“Your honey or your life!” says the bold burglar bear,  
As he climbs up the tree where the bees have their lair.  
“Burglars! Burglars!” The tree begins to hum.  
“Sharpen up your stings, brothers! Tighten up your wings, brothers!  
Beat the alarm on the big brass drum!  
Watch yourself, bear, for  
here  
we  
come!”

Then the big black bees buzz out from their lair,  
With sharp stings ready zoom down on the bear.  
“Ouch! Ouch! Ouch! Don't be so rough!”  
He slithers down the tree, squalling, “Hey, let me be!” Bawling,  
“Keep your old honey. Horrid sticky stuff!  
I'm going home, for  
I've  
had  
enough!”



**Class A706 - A - Choral Speaking - Grade 6****VELVET SHOES** - Elinor Wylie

Let us walk in the white snow  
 In a soundless space;  
 With footsteps quiet and slow,  
 At a tranquil pace,  
 Under veils of white lace.

I shall go shod in silk,  
 And you in wool,  
 White as a white cow's milk,  
 More beautiful  
 Than the breast of a gull.

We shall walk through the still town  
 In a windless peace;  
 We shall step upon white down,  
 Upon silver fleece,  
 Upon softer than these.

We shall walk in velvet shoes:  
 Wherever we go  
 Silence will fall like dews  
 On white silence below.  
 We shall walk in the snow.

**Class A706 - B - Choral Speaking - Grade 6****GREEDY DOG** - James Hurley

The dog will eat anything.

Apple cores and bacon fat,  
 Milk you poured out for the cat.  
 He likes the string that ties the roast  
 And relishes hot buttered toast.  
 Hide your chocolates! He's a thief,  
 He'll even eat your handkerchief.  
 And if you don't like sudden shocks,  
 Carefully conceal your socks.  
 Leave some soup without a lid,  
 And you'll wish you never did.  
 When you think he must be full,  
 You find him gobbling bits of wool,  
 Orange peel or paper bags,  
 Dusters and old cleaning rags.

This dog will eat anything,  
 Except for mushrooms and cucumber.

Now what is wrong with those, I wonder?

**Class A707 - A - Choral Speaking - Grade 7****PEANUT BUTTER SANDWICH – Shel Silverstein**

I'll sing you a story of a silly young king  
 Who played with the world at the end of a string,  
 But he only loved one single thing –  
 And that was just a peanut-butter sandwich.

His sceptre and his royal gowns,  
 His regal throne and golden crowns  
 Were brown and sticky from the mounds  
 And drippings from each peanut-butter sandwich.

His subjects all were silly fools  
 For he had passed a royal rule  
 That all that they could learn in school  
 Was how to make a peanut-butter sandwich.

He would not eat his sovereign steak,  
 He scorned his soup and kingly cake,  
 And told his courtly cook to bake  
 An extra-sticky peanut-butter sandwich.

And then one day he took a bite  
 And started chewing with delight,  
 But found his mouth was stuck quite tight  
 From that last bite of peanut-butter sandwich.

His brother pulled, his sister pried,  
 The wizard pushed, his mother cried,  
 “My boy’s committed suicide  
 From eating his last peanut-butter sandwich!”

The dentist came, and the royal doc.  
 The royal plumber banged and knocked,  
 But still those jaws stayed tightly locked.  
 Oh darn that sticky peanut-butter sandwich!

The carpenter, he tried with pliers,  
 The telephone man tried with wires,  
 The firemen they tried with fire,  
 But couldn’t melt that peanut-butter sandwich.

With ropes and pulleys, drills and coil,  
 With steam and lubricating oil-  
 For twenty years of tears and toil –  
 The fought that awful peanut butter sandwich.

Then all his royal subjects came.  
 They hooked his jaws with grapplin’ chains  
 And pulled both ways with might and main  
 Against that stubborn peanut-butter

Each man and woman, girl and boy  
 Put down their ploughs and pots and toys  
 And pulled until kerack! Oh, joy -  
 They broke right through that peanut-butter  
 sandwich.

A puff of dust, a screech, a squeak -  
 The king’s jaw opened with a creak.  
 And then in voice so faint and weak -  
 The first words that they heard him speak  
 Were, “How about a peanut-butter  
 sandwich?”

**Class A707 - B - Choral Speaking - Grade 7****THE UPS AND DOWNS OF THE ELEVATOR CAR** - Caroline C. Emerson

The elevator car in the elevator shaft,  
 Complained of the buzzer, complained of the draft.  
 It said it felt car sick as it rose and fell,  
 It said it had a headache from the ringing of the bell.

“There is spring in the air,” sighed the elevator car.  
 Said the elevator man, “You are well-off where you are.”  
 The car paid no attention but frowned an ugly frown

when  
 up it  
 going should  
 started be  
 it going  
 And down.

Down flashed the signal, but up went the car.  
 The elevator man cried, “You are going much too far!”  
 Said the elevator car, “I’m doing no such thing.  
 I’m through with buzzers buzzing. I’m looking for the spring.”

Then the elevator man began to shout and call  
 And all the people came running through the hall.  
 The elevator man began to call and shout,  
 “The car won’t stop! Let me out! Let me out!”

On went the car past the penthouse door.  
 On went the car up one flight more.  
 On went the elevator till it came to the top.  
 On went the elevator, and it would not stop!

Right through the roof went the man and the car.  
 And nobody knows where the two of them are!  
 (Nobody knows but everyone cares,  
 Warily, dreading climbing the stairs!)

Now on a summer evening when you see  
 A shooting star  
 Fly through the air, perhaps it is –  
 That elevator car!

**Class A708 - A - Choral Speaking - Grade 8****THE EXPRESS** - Stephen Spender

After the first powerful plain manifesto,  
The black statement of pistons, without more fuss  
But gliding like a queen, she leaves the station.  
Without bowing and with restrained unconcern  
She passes the houses which humbly crowd outside,  
The gasworks and at last the heavy page  
Of death, printed by gravestones in the cemetery.  
Beyond the town there lies the open country  
Where, gathering speed, she acquires mystery,  
The luminous self-possession of ships on ocean.  
It is now she begins to sing - at first quite low,  
Then loud, and at last with a jazzy madness  
The song of her whistle screaming at curves,  
Of deafening tunnels, brakes, innumerable bolts.  
And always light, aerial, underneath  
Goes the elate metre of her wheels.  
Steaming through metal landscape on her lines  
She plunges new eras of wild happiness  
Where speed throws up strange shapes, broad curves  
And parallels clean like the steel of guns.  
At last, further than Edinburgh or Rome,  
Beyond the crest of the world, she reaches night  
Where only a low streamline brightness  
Of phosphorus on the tossing hills is white.  
Ah, like a comet through flame she moves entranced  
Wrapt in her music no bird song, no, nor bough  
Breaking with honey buds, shall ever equal.

**Class A708 - B - Choral Speaking - Grade 8****IF THE WORLD WAS CRAZY - Shel Silverstein**

If the world was crazy, you know what I'd eat?  
A big slice of soup and a whole quart of meat,  
A lemonade sandwich, and then I might try  
Some roasted ice cream or a bicycle pie,  
A nice notebook salad, an underwear roast,  
An omelet of hats and some crisp cardboard toast,  
A thick malted milk made from pencils and daisies,  
And that's what I'd eat if the world was crazy.

If the world was crazy, you know what I'd wear?  
A chocolate suit and a tie of eclair,  
Some marshmallow earmuffs, some licorice shoes,  
And I'd read a paper of peppermint news.  
I'd call the boys "Suzy" and I'd call the girls "Harry,"  
I'd talk through my ears, and I always would carry  
A paper umbrella for when it grew hazy  
To keep in the rain, if the world was crazy.

If the world was crazy, you know what I'd do?  
I'd walk on the ocean and swim in my shoe,  
I'd fly through the ground and I'd skip through the air,  
I'd run down the bathtub and bathe on the stair.  
When I met somebody I'd say "G'bye, Joe,"  
And when I was leaving - then I'd say "Hello."  
And the greatest of men would be silly and lazy  
I would be king. . . if the world was crazy.

## FRENCH POETRY

### **Class F100 – A – French Poetry – Kindergarten - Non-competitive**

#### **GRAND-MERE** - Suzanne Marot

Grand-maman  
Aux cheveux d'argent

M'a raconté  
de beaux contes...

Elle aussi  
Est une fée jolie!

### **Class F100 - B - French Poetry - Kindergarten - Non-competitive**

#### **LA NEIGE** - G. Illberg

Tombez, tombez, flocons blancs,  
Tournez, valsez gentiment;  
Sur le toit et sur la branche,  
Tombe, tombe, neige blanche.

### **Class F100 - C - French Poetry - Kindergarten - Non-competitive**

#### (Untitled) - Georges Kolebka

J'ai baissé les yeux:  
en bas il y avait mes pieds.  
Ils m'attendaient  
comme deux amis  
pour aller se promener.

### **Class F101 - A - French Poetry - Grades 1 and 2 - Non-competitive**

#### **L'AN PASSÉ** - Caumont

L'an passé, cela va sans dire,  
J'étais petit; mais à présent  
Que je sais compter, lire, écrire,  
C'est bien certain que je suis grand

**Class F101 - B - French Poetry - Grades 1 and 2 - Non-competitive**

**LES CHAMPIGNONS** - Anne-Marie Chapouton

Sur la mousse  
poussent  
les champignons

ils sont assis  
tout petits  
en rond

sous leur chapeau  
tout frais  
tout rond  
ils bavardent  
les champignons.

**Class F101 - C - French Poetry - Grades 1 and 2 - Non-competitive**

**UN BON DESSIN** - Simone Beaulac

Sur mon tableau,  
J'ai dessiné  
Un beau château.

Dans le château,  
On a trouvé  
Un p'tit bateau.

Dans le bateau,  
Était caché  
Un gros gâteau,

Et, sans couteau,  
J'ai dévoré  
Tout le gâteau!

**Class F102 - A - French Poetry - Grades 3 and 4****MON PETIT CHAT - Maurice Carême**

J'ai un petit chat,  
Petit comme ça.  
Je l'appelle Orange.

Je ne sais pourquoi  
Jamais il ne mange  
Ni souris ni rat.

C'est un chat étrange  
Aimant le nougat  
Et le chocolat.

Mais c'est pour cela,  
Dit tante Solange,  
Qu'il ne grandit pas!

**Class F102 - B - French Poetry - Grades 3 and 4****BONBONS - Ernest Pallascio-Morin**

Je ne suis pas gourmand  
mais je dis franchement  
que j'aime les bonbons:  
c'est si bon des bonbons!

Et puis, quand on est sage,  
je crois qu'il est d'usage  
que l'on nous récompense.

Notre comportement,  
plaisant à nos parents,  
vaut bien cette dépense!

**Class F102 - C - French Poetry - Grades 3 and 4**

**DEVINETTE - Raynald Talbot**

Je ne suis pas plus gros,  
Oh! que ça...

J'ai des courtes oreilles,  
Comme ça...

Ma longue queue se roule,  
Comme ça...

Je dors toujours en boule,  
Comme ça....

Je ne bois que du lait,  
Comme ça...

J'ai une moustachette,  
Comme ça...

Et de petites dents,  
Comme ça...

Qui croquent les souris,  
Comme ça...

Peux-tu dire mon nom,  
Comme ça...

Il n'est guère plus long,  
Oh! que ça!

**Class F103 - A - French Poetry - Grades 5 and 6****LE BONHOMME DE NEIGE** - A. Atzenwiler

Un jour, un bonhomme de neige  
Eut envie de voyager.

Il prit sa belle écharpe beige  
Et son bâton de noisetier.

A peine arrivé en Afrique,  
Il se sentit très fatigué.

Il fut piqué par un moustique  
A l'ombre d'un grand cocotier.

Il fut pris d'une forte fièvre  
Et soudain se mit à trembler,

Comme tremblent lapins et lièvres  
Quand la chasse va commencer.

Il transpirait à grosses gouttes,  
Il fondait de la tête aux pieds...

**Class F103 - B - French Poetry - Grades 5 and 6****L'ÉPOUVANTAIL** - Edmée Matthey-Dupra

Dans la vigne de grand-père,  
Depuis hier, s'est installé  
Un homme de mauvais air  
Dont je voudrais vous parler.

De grand-père il a la veste  
Et m'a chipé mon chapeau.  
Je connais son nom, du reste:  
Épouvantail à moineaux.

Les oiseaux du voisinage  
Ont sans doute reconnu  
Nos vêtements hors d'usage,  
Car ils sont tous accourus.

Mais moi, je passe à distance  
Car je suis bien plus malin  
Que les bons oiseaux qui pensent  
Qu'il va leur donner du pain...

**Class F103 - C - French Poetry - Grades 5 and 6****LES DOIGTS DE MA MAIN - Octave Aubert**

Voici ma main: elle a cinq doigts.  
 En voici deux, en voici trois.  
 Celui-ci, le petit bonhomme,  
 C'est mon gros pouce qu'il se nomme.  
 L'index, qui montre le chemin,  
 C'est le second doigt de ma main.

Entre l'index et l'annulaire,  
 Le majeur paraît un grand frère.  
 L'annulaire porte un anneau.

Avec ma bague il fait le beau!  
 Le minuscule auriculaire  
 Marche à côté de l'annulaire.

Regardez les doigts travailler!  
 Chacun fait son petit métier.

**Class F104 - A - French Poetry - Grades 7 and 8****LA MARMITE - Georges Gaudion**

Notre dame la marmite,  
 Accroupie comme le chaudron,  
 Aux fourches de feu des tisons,  
 Siffle.  
 Notre Dame la marmite,  
 Sainte-Mère du pot-au-feu,  
 A trois pattes comme les vieux,  
 A trois pattes boiteuses,  
 Debout ou bien accroupie  
 Et les poings sur les hanches,  
 Avec des grimaces gourmandes  
 Notre Dame la marmite  
 Ronfle et chante des légendes  
 Sur le feu.

**Class F104 - B - French Poetry - Grades 7 and 8**

**LE PETIT INVENTEUR** - Jacques Charpentreau

J'ai pris la perruque  
De mon oncle Luc  
Et j'ai fait un nid  
Pour mon canari.

Avec le dentier  
Du cousin Xavier  
J'ai fait deux sonnettes  
Et trois castagnettes.

Avec les bretelles  
De Pantagruel,  
J'ai fait un bougeoir  
Et ma balançoire.

Avec la ceinture  
De mon frère Arthur,  
J'ai fait la cravate  
Que porte ma chatte.

Avec les lunettes  
De ma tante Huguette,  
J'ai fait deux soucoupes  
Pour manger ma soupe.

Avec la culotte  
De ma soeur Charlotte,  
J'ai fait un coussin  
Pour mon chien.

Avec ma cervelle  
De Polichinelle,  
Déception amère,  
Je n'ai rien pu faire.

**Class F104 - C - French Poetry - Grades 7 and 8****LA MORT DES OISEAUX** - François Coppée

Le soir, au coin du feu, j'ai pensé, bien des fois,  
A la mort d'un oiseau, quelque part, dans les bois.

Pendant les tristes jours de l'hiver monotone,  
Les pauvres nids déserts, les nids qu'on abandonne,  
Se balancent au vent, sur le ciel gris de fer.  
Oh! comme les oiseaux doivent mourir, l'hiver!

Pourtant, lorsque viendra le temps des violettes,  
Nous ne trouverons pas leurs délicats squelettes,  
Dans le gazon d'avril où nous irons courir:  
Est-ce que les oiseaux se cachent pour mourir?

**Class F105 - A - French Poetry - Grades 9 and up****A QUOI JOUAIS-TU?** - Maurice Carême

A quoi jouais-tu, ma mère,  
Lorsque tu avais sept ans?  
Quelle ronde chantais-tu, ma mère,  
Quand revenait le mois d'avril?

Car tu as été une enfant,  
Tu as bondi à travers champs,  
Tu avais des sabots à fleurs  
Et un tablier de couleur,  
Tu aimais voler des groseilles  
Et tu fuyais souvent l'école  
Pour flâner le long du ruisseau.  
On me l'a dit encor tantôt...

Et malgré tout ce qu'on m'a dit,  
Je te vois mal en ce temps-là.  
Je m'imagine chaque fois,  
Tant je t'ai connue grave et bonne,  
Que tu n'as pas été enfant

Et que Dieu te créa maman  
Du premier geste de la main  
Comme il créa l'épi de blé  
Et l'humble étoile du berger.

**Class F105 - B - French Poetry - Grades 9 and up****COMMENT DÉGUSTER UNE GLACE EN CORNET - Jacqueline Barral**

Choisir une glace à la vanille  
A la fraise et à la pistache  
La faire briller un instant au soleil  
Les trois boules en équilibre  
Dans l'ouverture du cornet

Lécher la vanille d'or pâle  
Mordre un petit peu dans le vert pistache  
Se frotter les lèvres sur la fraise rose vif  
Se lécher les babines

Faire tourner la glace et recommencer  
Un coup de dent à la vanille  
Un baiser barbouillé à la pistache  
Un coup de langue à la fraise

Savourer doucement  
Et puis du bout des dents  
Saisir une brisure du cornet

Tout l'art est de savoir  
Faire durer les trois boules  
Sans leur donner le temps de fondre  
Mais assez pour en goûter  
La fraîcheur parfumée

**Class F105 - C - French Poetry - Grades 9 and up****UN MÉTIER DIFFICILE** - Jacques Charpentreau

Etre fantôme est un état  
Très difficile, avec des tas  
D'inconvénients: porter sa chaîne,  
Travailler la nuit, sans hygiène,  
Grelotter de froid tout l'hiver  
Quand le vent vous passe au travers,  
Transpirer l'été sans pouvoir  
Se dévêtir malgré le noir,  
Chaque soir repasser son suaire,  
N'avoir que des amis mortuaires,  
Respecter les lois syndicales  
Et la Sécurité sociale,  
Faire une animation classique  
Dans les monuments historiques,  
Ne pas effrayer les enfants  
En arrivant de but en blanc,  
Graduer savamment son approche,  
Savoir jouer des gongs et des cloches,  
Suivre le même scénario  
Un peu simplet et maigriot  
Au fond d'une obscure province  
Derrière une porte qui grince,  
S'ennuyer dans les corridors  
En hululant comme un ténor  
A Bayreuth dans son contre si  
- Et sans jamais être applaudi!  
Etre fantôme est un état  
Pénible, rude, et délicat.  
C'est un métier très fatigant!  
Mais on n'a jamais mal aux dents...

## **FRENCH PROSE READINGS**

### **Class F200 - A - French Prose Readings - Grades 3 and 4**

#### **SOPHIE LANCE ET COMPTE - Louise Leblanc**

Ca y est! Je suis au sommet de ma forme. Depuis deux semaines, je m'entraîne tous les jours. La partie de hockey la plus importante de ma vie a lieu demain matin. Et j'ai décidé de prendre un peu de repos.

Et puis, il faut que j'essaie l'équipement de Laurent pendant qu'il joue avec ses copains. Je ne lui ai pas encore dit que je le remplaçais dans le but des Lutins rouges.

J'espérais qu'il tomberait malade. Avec le froid qu'il fait! Je ne suis vraiment pas chanceuse, parce qu'il n'a jamais été en aussi bonne santé.

S'il n'attrape pas un rhume, les oreillons ou la rougeole avant ce soir, il va falloir que je trouve une autre idée.

### **Class F200 - B - French Prose Readings - Grades 3 and 4**

#### **LE CHIEN D'ARTHUR - Ginette Anfousse**

Le lendemain matin, après une nuit bien courte, Arthur se réveille ou plutôt se fait réveiller comme la veille. Il se souvient à quel point il s'était amusé.

D'abord, Dimanche lui avait arraché les couvertures pour lui renifler les orteils. Puis il lui avait piétiné le dos, mordillé le cou et léché les oreilles.

C'était si drôle et ça chatouillait tellement qu'Arthur avait décidé de faire le mort. De faire comme s'il dormait encore. Mais ce matin, Arthur se souvient que c'est comme ça, exactement comme ça, que son Dimanche avait fait pipi dans son lit.

### **Class F201 - A - French Prose Readings - Grades 5 and 6**

#### **LA COURSE AU BOUT DE LA TERRE - Louise-Michelle Sauriol**

Premier samedi de mars: c'est la course en Alaska, la course de chiens la plus longue du monde! Yaani attend le signal, le corps tendu, les yeux brillants. Il a de la peine à retenir son attelage. Des amis l'aident à contenir ses bêtes, nerveuses, impatientes. Anouk, sa chienne husky, tire déjà pour entraîner les autres. Sitka, Kadlouk, les pattes fébriles, piétinent la neige; Amarok jappe sans arrêt; des buées blanches s'élèvent au-dessus de toutes les têtes.

Le mercure descend depuis ce matin, le froid crispe les visages et fait grelotter jusqu'aux os. La foule crie des noms, se réchauffe en tapant des pieds, des mains. Un brouhaha monstre jaillit de partout.

**Class F201 - B - French Prose Readings - Grades 5 and 6****QUI A PEUR DES FANTOMES? - Sylvie Desrosiers**

John trouve que finalement les opérations de l'agence débutent bien. Il décide de rester au bureau, pendant que les filles accomplissent leur mission, au cas où quelque chose d'autre se présenterait.

Elles partent donc chacune de leur côté.

Agnès fait la route lentement, profite un peu du soleil chaud de ce début d'été. Arrivée en vue de l'église, elle aperçoit une voiture neuve, grise et étincelante.

Instinctivement, elle descend de sa bicyclette, s'approche sans bruit et va se poster près d'une fenêtre ouverte, sans se faire voir.

A l'intérieur, le vieux Labrosse a une conversation animée. Son interlocuteur est nul autre que Jean Caisse, le gérant de la caisse populaire de la rue Principale.

**Class F202 - A - French Prose Readings - Grades 7 and 8****JESSIE LA PARFAITE - Andrea Balis - Robert Reiser**

Madame, Monsieur,

Jusqu'ici, Jessica avait été une élève exemplaire, mais depuis quelque temps, son comportement semble avoir changé. Plusieurs incidents mineurs m'avaient déjà alertée, mais aujourd'hui elle s'est laissée entraîner dans une bagarre avec un condisciple. Ce n'est plus la Jessica que j'ai connue au début de l'année, et je crois de mon devoir de vous faire part de ma préoccupation à son sujet. N'hésitez pas à prendre contact avec moi afin que nous puissions débattre ensemble de ce problème.

Avec mes meilleurs sentiments,

Bernice Rogers

Jessie parcourt ces lignes une fois, deux fois, trois fois. Jamais encore elle n'a rapporté de billet à la maison. Jamais encore elle n'a eu de "comportement". Et tout ça, par la faute de Ben. C'est injuste. Les adultes s'accordent à dire qu'il ne faut surtout pas se laisser marcher sur les pieds, qu'il est très important d'apprendre à se défendre. Jessie n'a fait que défendre son tapis, rien de plus. Elle ne devrait pas se retrouver avec un billet à faire signer de ses parents. Elle espère de tout son coeur que ses parents seront de son avis, mais rien ne lui paraît moins sûr.

**Class F202 - B - French Prose Readings - Grades 7 and 8****UNE HISTOIRE A FAIRE JAPPER - Yves Beauchemin**

Pantoufle était un golden retriever au magnifique pelage doré, avec de longues oreilles pendantes, des pattes courtes et solides, un regard exalté et une langue qui pouvait vous atteindre le creux de l'oreille ou l'intérieur des narines avec une habileté stupéfiante. Bien sûr, il existe des milliers et des milliers de chiens semblables et vous en avez sûrement vu des tas. Mais si j'ai pris la peine d'écrire son histoire et celle de son jeune maître Guillaume, c'est qu'elle possédait quelque chose de très particulier.

Au début, personne ne le remarqua. Il fallut même quelques mois pour qu'on se doute de quelque chose. Ce fut tout d'abord la vieille mademoiselle Jeanson, qui habitait une jolie maison de brique près de chez Guillaume et faisait pousser tant de rhubarbe dans son potager. Mais sa timidité l'empêcha d'ouvrir la bouche, car elle craignit de passer pour folle.

Pantoufle grandit très vite. A six mois, elle avait presque atteint sa taille adulte.

- Ma foi! on dirait que quelqu'un la gonfle avec une pompe à bicyclette, plaisantait parfois Raymond.

Elle avait toujours faim et mangeait tout ce qu'on lui donnait: des cornichons à l'aneth, des sandwiches à la moutarde, du beurre d'arachide, etc.

**Class F203 - A - French Prose Readings - Grades 9 and up****UN VENT DE LIBERTÉ - Marie-Danielle Croteau**

Mon grand-père est un être exceptionnel. Un croisement de Mary Poppins et de Schtroumpf farceur; un mélange de nounours et d'ange gardien. J'ai beau chercher autour de moi, dans les films et les livres, je ne trouve personne qui lui ressemble.

Ce matin, par exemple. N'importe qui, à sa place, aurait dit à la fille qui lançait ses pépins partout de s'étouffer avec. Pas lui. Après avoir mis la cassette en marche, il a pris une orange et il est venu s'asseoir à côté de moi avec deux pailles. Il m'a demandé:

- Tu connais ça, une sarbacane?

Vingt minutes plus tard, le sac d'oranges était presque vide, il y avait du jus qui coulait le long de mes bras, et mes coudes collaient à la table. Cependant, j'avais appris ce qu'était la sarbacane, une arme primitive terriblement efficace contre le cafard. Je pouvais sans risque me présenter à ma réunion.

Sans risque pour les autres, je veux dire. Mon envie de mordre s'était éparpillée dans la cuisine, propulsée à travers des dizaines de pépins-navettes spatiales. Quand on vit dans une île et qu'on est déprimée, c'est dangereux. On a les bleus marine. On souffre d'un vague à l'âme profond qui vous transforme en cannibale ou en vampire, selon l'heure.

**Class F203 - B - French Prose Readings - Grades 9 up****VINCENT ET MOI - Michael Bubbo**

Les étoiles scintillent dans le ciel et Jo y accroche ses yeux, ses rêves, son espoir. Les étoiles bougent, tourbillonnent, deviennent une grande roue magique, exactement comme une toile de Van Gogh qui s'appelle "La Nuit étoilée". Jo ne sait pas très bien si elle rêve ou si elle est éveillée. Puis la roue s'arrête et les étoiles se dispersent. Elles s'éloignent, se rapprochent les unes des autres, se reforment pour dessiner le contour d'un visage avec deux petits yeux, un nez, des cheveux coupés ras. Une bouche où se dessine un sourire étoilé. Jo reconnaît soudain le visage de Vincent dans le ciel... Vincent qui l'appelle.

Sur son étroite banquette, Jo devient légère comme un nuage. Elle ne sent plus la fraîcheur du soir qui l'avait fait frissonner, mais ses larmes sont restées accrochées à ses cils comme autant de petites étoiles qui lui brouillaient la vue. Pourquoi le visage de Vincent là-haut devient-il plus grand et le bateau plus petit? Elle a l'impression de quitter la terre, de s'élever dans l'air tiède comme un grand papillon aux ailes déployées. Elle ne ressent ni vertige ni peur, elle vole seulement vers un visage souriant qui brille au milieu de la nuit.