



Langold Dyscarr Poetry Curriculum 2023_24

Note

These poems form the basis of our choral speaking assemblies in each year group and will be studied in class looking at the meaning and vocabulary during reading lessons.

Year 1

Cats Sleep Anywhere

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.

By Eleanor Farjeon

There was an old man from Peru

There was an old man from Peru
who dreamed he was eating his shoe.
When he woke in a fright
in the dark of the night
he found it was perfectly true.

Anon.

On the Ning Nang Nong

On the Ning Nang Nong
Where the cows go Bong!
and the monkeys all say BOO!
There's a Nong Nang Ning
Where the trees go Ping!
And the tea pots jibber jabber joo.
On the Nong Ning Nang
All the mice go clang
And you just can't catch 'em when they
do!
So it's Ning Nang Nong

Cows go Bong!
Nong Nang Ning
Trees go ping
Nong Ning Nang
The mice go clang
What a noisy place to belong
is the Ning Nang Ning Nang Nong!!

By Spike Milligan

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

When the blazing sun is gone,
When he nothing shines upon,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.

Then the traveller in the dark
Thanks you for your tiny spark,
How could he see where to go,
If you did not twinkle so?

In the dark blue sky you keep,
Often through my curtains peep
For you never shut your eye,
Till the sun is in the sky.

As your bright and tiny spark
Lights the traveller in the dark,
Though I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.

By Jane Taylor

Bed in Summer

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

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

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

By Robert Louis Stevenson

Year 2

This is the House That Jack Built

This is the house that Jack built.

This is the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the rat,
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the cat,
That killed the rat,
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the dog,
That worried the cat,
That killed the rat,
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the cow with the crumpled
horn,
That tossed the dog,
That worried the cat,
That killed the rat,
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the maiden all forlorn,
That milked the cow with the crumpled
horn,
That tossed the dog,
That worried the cat,
That killed the rat,
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the man all tattered and torn,
That kissed the maiden all forlorn,
That milked the cow with the crumpled
horn,
That tossed the dog,
That worried the cat,
That killed the rat,
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the priest all shaven and shorn,
That married the man all tattered and
torn,
That kissed the maiden all forlorn,
That milked the cow with the crumpled
horn,
That tossed the dog,
That worried the cat,
That killed the rat,
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the cock that crowed in the
morn,
That waked the priest all shaven and
shorn,
That married the man all tattered and
torn,
That kissed the maiden all forlorn,
That milked the cow with the crumpled
horn,
That tossed the dog,
That worried the cat,
That killed the rat,
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the farmer sowing his corn,
That kept the cock that crowed in the
morn,
That waked the priest all shaven and
shorn,

That married the man all tattered and
torn,
That kissed the maiden all forlorn,
That milked the cow with the crumpled
horn,
That tossed the dog,
That worried the cat,
That killed the rat,
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

By Anonymous

Daddy Fell Into the Pond

Everyone grumbled. The sky was grey.
We had nothing to do and nothing to
say.
We were nearing the end of a dismal
day,
And there seemed to be nothing
beyond,
THEN
Daddy fell into the pond!

And everyone's face grew merry and
bright,
And Timothy danced for sheer delight.
'Give me the camera, quick, oh quick!
He's crawling out of the duckweed.'
Click!

Then the gardener suddenly slapped his
knee,
And doubled up, shaking silently,
And the ducks all quacked as if they
were daft
And is sounded as if the old drake
laughed.

O, there wasn't a thing that didn't
respond

WHEN
Daddy fell into the pond!

By Alfred Noyes

The Engine Driver

The train goes running along the line,
Jicketty -can, Jicketty -can.
I wish it were mine, I wish it were mine,
Jicketty -can, Jicketty -can.
The engine driver stands in front ---
He makes it run, he makes it shunt;
Out of the town,
Out of the town,
Over the hill,
Over the down,
Under the bridges,
Across the lea,
Over the bridges,
And down to the sea,
With a Jicketty -can, Jicketty -can,
Jicketty -can, Jicketty -can,
Jicketty -can, Jicketty -can...

By Clive Sansom

Now We Are Six

When I was one,
I had just begun.
When I was two,
I was nearly new.
When I was three,
I was hardly me.
When I was four,
I was not much more.
When I was five,
I was just alive.
But now I am six,

I'm as clever as clever.
So I think I'll be six now
for ever and ever.

By A.A. Milne

Halfway Down

Halfway down the stairs
Is a stair
Where I sit.
There isn't any
Other stair
Quite like
It.
I'm not at the bottom,
I'm not at the top;
So this is the stair
Where
I always
Stop.

Halfway up the stairs
Isn't up
And it isn't down.
It isn't in the nursery,
It isn't in town.
And all sorts of funny thoughts
Run round my head.
It isn't really
Anywhere!
It's somewhere else
Instead!

By A. A. Milne

Year 3

The Sound Collector

A stranger called this morning
Dressed all in black and grey
Put every sound into a bag
And carried them away

The whistling of the kettle
The turning of the lock
The purring of the kitten
The ticking of the clock

The popping of the toaster
The crunching of the flakes
When you spread the marmalade
The scraping noise it makes

The hissing of the frying pan
The ticking of the grill
The bubbling of the bathtub
As it starts to fill

The drumming of the raindrops
On the windowpane
When you do the washing-up
The gurgle of the drain

The crying of the baby
The squeaking of the chair
The swishing of the curtain
The creaking of the stair

A stranger called this morning
He didn't leave his name
Left us only silence
Life will never be the same

By Roger McGough

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night
Sailed off in a wooden shoe,—
Sailed on a river of crystal light
Into a sea of dew.
“Where are you going, and what do you wish?”
The old moon asked the three.
“We have come to fish for the herring-fish
That live in this beautiful sea;
Nets of silver and gold have we,”
Said Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

The old moon laughed and sang a song,
As they rocked in the wooden shoe;
And the wind that sped them all night long
Ruffled the waves of dew;
The little stars were the herring-fish
That lived in the beautiful sea.
“Now cast your nets wherever you wish,—
Never afraid are we!”
So cried the stars to the fishermen three,
Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

All night long their nets they threw
To the stars in the twinkling foam,—
Then down from the skies came the wooden shoe,
Bringing the fishermen home:
‘Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed
As if it could not be;
And some folk thought ‘twas a dream
they’d dreamed

Of sailing that beautiful sea;
But I shall name you the fishermen
three:

Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little
eyes,
And Nod is a little head,
And the wooden shoe that sailed the
skies

Is a wee one's trundle-bed;
So shut your eyes while Mother sings
Of wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things
As you rock in the misty sea
Where the old shoe rocked the
fishermen three:—

Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

By Eugene Field

The Land of Counterpane

When I was sick and lay a-bed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay
To keep me happy all the day.

And sometimes for an hour or so
I watched my leaden soldiers go,
With different uniforms and drills,
Among the bed-clothes, through the
hills;

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets
All up and down among the sheets;

Or brought my trees and houses out,
And planted cities all about.

I was the giant great and still
That sits upon the pillow-hill,
And sees before him, dale and plain,
The pleasant land of counterpane.

By Robert Louis Stevenson

The Adventures of Isabel

Isabel met an enormous bear,
Isabel, Isabel, didn't care;
The bear was hungry, the bear was
ravenous,
The bear's big mouth was cruel and
cavernous.
The bear said, Isabel, glad to meet you,
How do, Isabel, now I'll eat you!
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry.
Isabel didn't scream or scurry.
She washed her hands and she
straightened her hair up,
Then Isabel quietly ate the bear up.
Once in a night as black as pitch
Isabel met a wicked old witch.
the witch's face was cross and wrinkled,
The witch's gums with teeth were
sprinkled.
Ho, ho, Isabel! the old witch crowed,
I'll turn you into an ugly toad!
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry,
Isabel didn't scream or scurry,
She showed no rage and she showed
no rancour,
But she turned the witch into milk and
drank her.
Isabel met a hideous giant,
Isabel continued self-reliant.

The giant was hairy, the giant was
horrid,
He had one eye in the middle of his
forehead.
Good morning, Isabel, the giant said,
I'll grind your bones to make my bread.
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry,
Isabel didn't scream or scurry.
She nibbled the zwieback that she
always fed off,
And when it was gone, she cut the
giant's head off.
Isabel met a troublesome doctor,
He punched and he poked till he really
shocked her.
The doctor's talk was of coughs and
chills
And the doctor's satchel bulged with
pills.
The doctor said unto Isabel,
Swallow this, it will make you well.
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry,
Isabel didn't scream or scurry.
She took those pills from the pill
concocter,
And Isabel calmly cured the doctor.

by Ogden Nash

Year 4

A Tiger's Tale

There was an ancient Grecian boy
Who played upon the fiddle,
Sometimes high, sometimes low,
Sometimes in the middle;
And all day long beneath the shade
He lunched on prunes and marmalade;
But what the tunes were which he
played
Is certainly a riddle.

Three tigers, gaunt and ravenous,
Came from the gloomy wood,
Intent to slay the fiddler,
But his music was too good;
So round about him once they filed,
Till by the melody beguiled,
They sat them softly down and smiled,
As only tigers could.

And thus beguiled, the tigers smiled
Throughout the livelong day
Until, at length, there was not left
Another tune to play.

What happened then I do not know;
I was not there to see.
But when a man runs short on tunes,
Can tigers be appeased with prunes,
Or marmalade and silver spoons?
That's what perplexes me.

By John Bennett

Mr. Nobody

I know a funny little man,
As quiet as a mouse,
Who does the mischief that is done
In everybody's house!
There's no one ever sees his face,
And yet we all agree
That every plate we break was cracked
By Mr. Nobody.

'Tis he who always tears out books,
Who leaves the door ajar,
He pulls the buttons from our shirts,
And scatters pins afar;
That squeaking door will always squeak,
For prithee, don't you see,
We leave the oiling to be done
By Mr. Nobody.

He puts damp wood upon the fire
That kettles cannot boil;
His are the feet that bring in mud,
And all the carpets soil.
The papers always are mislaid;
Who had them last, but he?
There's no one tosses them about
But Mr. Nobody.

The finger marks upon the door
By none of us are made;
We never leave the blinds unclosed,
To let the curtains fade.
The ink we never spill; the boots
That lying round you see
Are not our boots,—they all belong
To Mr. Nobody.

By Anonymous

From a Railway Carriage

Faster than fairies, faster than witches,
Bridges and houses, hedges and
ditches;
And charging along like troops in a
battle,
All through the meadows the horses
and cattle:
All of the sights of the hill and the plain
Fly as thick as driving rain;
And ever again, in the wink of an eye,
Painted stations whistle by.

Here is a child who clambers and
scrambles,
All by himself and gathering brambles;
Here is a tramp who stands and gazes;
And there is the green for stringing the
daisies!
Here is a cart run away in the road
Lumping along with man and load;
And here is a mill and there is a river:
Each a glimpse and gone for ever!

By Robert Louis Stevenson

The Witches' Spell from Macbeth

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.
Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

By William Shakespeare

YEAR 5

The Night Mail (abridged)

This is the night mail crossing the
Border,
Bringing the cheque and the postal
order,

Letters for the rich, letters for the poor,
The shop at the corner, the girl next
door.

Pulling up Beattock, a steady climb:
The gradient's against her, but she's on
time.

Past cotton-grass and moorland
boulder
Shovelling white steam over her
shoulder,

Snorting noisily as she passes
Silent miles of wind-bent grasses.

Birds turn their heads as she
approaches,
Stare from bushes at her blank-faced
coaches.

Sheep-dogs cannot turn her course;
They slumber on with paws across.

In the farm she passes no one wakes,
But a jug in a bedroom gently shakes.

III

Letters of thanks, letters from banks,
Letters of joy from girl and boy,
Receipted bills and invitations
To inspect new stock or to visit
relations,
And applications for situations,

And timid lovers' declarations,
And gossip, gossip from all the nations,
News circumstantial, news financial,
Letters with holiday snaps to enlarge in,
Letters with faces scrawled on the
margin,
Letters from uncles, cousins, and aunts,
Letters to Scotland from the South of
France,
Letters of condolence to Highlands and
Lowlands
Written on paper of every hue,
The pink, the violet, the white and the
blue,
The chatty, the catty, the boring, the
adoring,
The cold and official and the heart's
outpouring,
Clever, stupid, short and long,
The typed and the printed and the spelt
all wrong.

IV

Asleep in working Glasgow, asleep in
well-set Edinburgh,
Asleep in granite Aberdeen,
They continue their dreams,
But shall wake soon and hope for
letters,
And none will hear the postman's
knock
Without a quickening of the heart,
For who can bear to feel himself
forgotten?

By WH Auden

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had
brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

By William Wordsworth

Leisure

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare?

No time to stand beneath the boughs,
And stare as long as sheep and cows:

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass:

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night:

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can
dance:

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began?

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

By W. H. Davies

Sick

"I cannot go to school today,"
Said little Peggy Ann McKay.
"I have the measles and the mumps,
A gash, a rash and purple bumps.
My mouth is wet, my throat is dry,
I'm going blind in my right eye.
My tonsils are as big as rocks,
I've counted sixteen chicken pox
And there's one more—that's
seventeen,
And don't you think my face looks
green?"

My leg is cut—my eyes are blue—
It might be instamatic flu.
I cough and sneeze and gasp and choke,
I'm sure that my left leg is broke—
My hip hurts when I move my chin,
My belly button's caving in,
My back is wrenched, my ankle's
sprained,
My 'pendix pains each time it rains.
My nose is cold, my toes are numb.

I have a sliver in my thumb.
My neck is stiff, my voice is weak,
I hardly whisper when I speak.
My tongue is filling up my mouth,
I think my hair is falling out.
My elbow's bent, my spine ain't
straight,
My temperature is one-o-eight.
My brain is shrunk, I cannot hear,
There is a hole inside my ear.
I have a hangnail, and my heart is—
what?
What's that? What's that you say?
You say today is. . .Saturday?
G'bye, I'm going out to play!"

By Shel Silverstein

Year 6

Matilda Who Told Lies, And Was Burned to Death

Matilda told such Dreadful Lies,
It made one Gasp and Stretch one's
Eyes;
Her Aunt, who, from her Earliest Youth,
Had kept a Strict Regard for Truth,
Attempted to Believe Matilda:
The effort very nearly killed her,
And would have done so, had not She
Discovered this Infirmary.
For once, towards the Close of Day,
Matilda, growing tired of play,
And finding she was left alone,
Went tiptoe to the Telephone
And summoned the Immediate Aid
Of London's Noble Fire-Brigade.
Within an hour the Gallant Band
Were pouring in on every hand,
From Putney, Hackney Downs, and
Bow.
With Courage high and Hearts a-glow,
They galloped, roaring through the
Town,
'Matilda's House is Burning Down!'
Inspired by British Cheers and Loud
Proceeding from the Frenzied Crowd,
They ran their ladders through a score
Of windows on the Ball Room Floor;
And took Peculiar Pains to Souse
The Pictures up and down the House,
Until Matilda's Aunt succeeded
In showing them they were not
needed;
And even then she had to pay
To get the Men to go away,
It happened that a few Weeks later
Her Aunt was off to the Theatre

To see that Interesting Play
The Second Mrs. Tanqueray.
She had refused to take her Niece
To hear this Entertaining Piece:
A Deprivation Just and Wise
To Punish her for Telling Lies.
That Night a Fire did break out--
You should have heard Matilda Shout!
You should have heard her Scream and
Bawl,
And throw the window up and call
To People passing in the Street--
(The rapidly increasing Heat
Encouraging her to obtain
Their confidence) -- but all in vain!
For every time she shouted 'Fire!'
They only answered 'Little Liar!'
And therefore when her Aunt returned,
Matilda, and the House, were Burned.

By Hillaire Belloc

The Listeners

'Is there anybody there?' said the
Traveller,
Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence champed the
grasses
Of the forest's ferny floor:
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
Above the Traveller's head:
And he smote upon the door again a
second time;
'Is there anybody there?' he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller;
No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his grey
eyes,
Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners

That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the
 moonlight
To that voice from the world of men:
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on
 the dark stair,
That goes down to the empty hall,
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken
 By the lonely Traveller's call.
And he felt in his heart their
 strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark
 turf,
'Neath the starred and leafy sky;
For he suddenly smote on the door,
 even
Louder, and lifted his head:—
'Tell them I came, and no one
 answered,
That I kept my word,' he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
 Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of
 the still house
From the one man left awake:
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
 And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly
 backward,
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

By Walter De La Mare

The Tyger

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

By William Blake

The Eagle

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

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

By Alfred, Lord Tennyson