1930

Poetry for little children

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called up and there said someone else from her class need it after she did. please check forest this morning she is going to ask for it in class. will stop in on Monday.
BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Thesis

Poetry for Little Children

Submitted by
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(B. S. E. Boston Teachers College 1927.)

In partial fulfillment of requirements for the Degree of Master of Education.

1930.
Poetry for Little Children.

I. Poetry. Its Scope and Purpose.

(a) To give pleasure. P. 7.
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II. Suggestions for Teaching Poetry. P. 35.

Some lesson plans with emphasis on:

(a) Memorizing. P. 38.

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(b) Appreciation. P. 42.

III. Bibliography. P. 51.

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Interlude: Do Not Stuff Them With Children's Songs.

Do not stuff them with children's songs,
The neat and the pretty sugary words.
The cheap, the tawdry, the tinkling tunes.
Give knives and forks, as well as spoons,
Serve them, sometimes,
With grown-up runes.
Let them use, without much care,
The words with which you free the air.

Let those little men be gay,
Sparring, rioting, riding away
Teach the little women to be
Squirrels, elves and girls of the sea.
Centaur's children, riding far
Mature bright angels, on this star.
This planet has wings, is flying with joy.
And the songs fair Chatterton wrote as a boy

1. Every Soul is a Circus
   Lindsay Vachel. p. 59.
Excel the rhymes from a nurse girl's lips:
And the tunes that cherub Mozart made
Are still tremendous ocean-ships
Where other babes sail on and on
To where their own best thoughts have gone.
To shores they have already reached,
Where their little Noah's arks have beached.
I'll not debar shrewd Mother Goose
That sharp cartoonist still is good.
I'll not debar wise Edward Lear
His rhythms bad, his drawings queer.
For even there, in the nursery air
Twice-triple thoughts appear.

And in the midst of this, my book
Plain mimickings of him you find
And Thackeray, cartoonist kind,
Whose pictures in the "Rose and the Ring"
 Started young thoughts voyaging.
Scribblers maybe, and yet they keep
Young birds upon the fledgling wing,
And make the nest-born fancy sing.

One of my duties, in connection with my school work,
is to advise the other teachers in our little building what
reading books to order for use the following year. Invari-
ably, when I show them a book, they glance at it and say,
"That is too cut up with poetry. We want good, solid read-
ing matter with no breaks in the story content." If the book pleases them, they say "That is good solid reading. It is not broken up by poetry. Please order full sets for us." The criterion seems to be, the less poetry, the better the book.

Evidently we are not alone in our dislike of poetry in text books because all the newer publications are written entirely in prose or with very little poetry. The Pathway to Reading Primer, 1 The Field-Martin Primer, 2 The Land of Play, 3 Wag and Puff, 4 Playtime, 5 and Child-Story Readers, Primer 6 are all fine new books, and none of them contain more than two or three poems, most of them none at all. All are popular because they contain "solid reading matter unbroken by poetry." Some text books for little children contain poetry but it is written in prose form. It always seems a bit pathetic to me when a little child discovers a bit of verse hidden in the introduction, and says, "I can read that."

Nearly all teachers like poetry and little children

like it, too. It is a natural thing for children to chant rhymes and jingles while at play. The human race, in its immaturity, has been rocked to sleep by the rhymes of Mother Goose since these rhymes were first created. Five - ten - fifteen - twenty, in the game of Hide-and-Seek, is familiar to all children. "London Bridge is falling down, so fair my lady" is an old favorite. Children have a natural love of rhythm, especially when it accompanies action.

There is a reason for this elimination of poetry from our text books. Some forty or more years ago, reading was taught by spelling out the words, c-a-t - cat. Later a system of phonics was introduced by Ward, in Boston. Mrs. Gordon, of Milton, Massachusetts, improved the phonetic system of reading. This seemed a great advance in the teaching of reading, but it was still a difficult, uphill process, accompanied by much wailing and gnashing of teeth on the part of the pupil and teacher alike.

Near the turn of the century, the Aldine system of reading was launched and the use of rhymes.

"Come away,
Come and play."

The guardian angel of little children must have inspired Spaulding and Bryce. It was the first analytical system of reading, and poetry came into its own as a means of teaching the young.

Like all good things, there were imitators and the market was flooded with primers full of rhymes. I have been trying for twenty years to wear out some of the sets of books
acquired at the time. The Aldine rhymes were taught by rote and there was a story content behind each one. The imitators of Spaulding and Bryce simply incorporated the Mother Goose rhymes in their books and these rhymes were to be read, not memorized first. A little child can not read Mother Goose until he has become proficient in reading because many of the words are not phonetic; and the child has no other way of finding out his new words. Teachers and pupils alike struggled, but without success as far as reading was concerned. Poor old Mother Goose was not treated fairly. Ever since these books were placed on the market, there has been a dislike of rhymes and poetry in text books until today publishers eliminate all poetry from their text books for little children. The eclectic systems of reading do not use poetry at all.

I asked a number of teachers what they did when they came to poetry in their reading books and all said, "We skip it," or, "We read it ourselves to the children," or, "Children can not read poetry correctly."

In order to give children a love of poetry, it should be separated from the reading lesson. Poetry requires a very different technique from prose. Proper teaching of poetry will give pleasure to the child, increase his imagination, build his character, provide mental discipline, develop a right sense of humor, fire his ambition, and enrich his experience.

Our greatest moral teachers have all been poets: David, Solomon, Isaiah, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Shelley, Bryon, Browning and Tennyson. We have our own lesser poets
but great teachers in Longfellow, Emerson, Whittier, and Holmes.

A story invariably attracts a child. "The words, 'once upon a time' open up a vague retrospect into the past, and the child gets its first indistinct notion of history in this way. The stories embody the childhood of mankind." ¹

"Once upon a time" is the Open Sesame to literature. These simple words are enough to get and hold the attention of the little child. A poem has no such beginning. The teacher must use a more artificial, or at least a different way, to procure interest and attention. Few people, evidently realize that there is a difference between presenting a poem and telling a story to children, because there are a great number of books written upon the subject of story telling; and, as far as I have been able to discover, just one small book on "Teaching Poetry In The Grades." ² Many books give information upon the subject of poetry but do not tell you just how to present a poem to a class of young children. Haliburton and Smith alone give model lessons.

We have a wealth of material to choose from in selecting poems. The library shelves are full of collections of poetry. Poets new and poets old are represented. Humorous, descriptive, spiritual, imaginative verses are all to be had. One has but to choose from among them. One good book such

¹ Adler. Felix. The Moral Instruction of Childhood. Chap. VI. p. 68
² Haliburton M.W. and Smith. A. G. Teaching Poetry In The Grades.
as "The Home Book of Verse For Young Folks" edited by Burton S. Stevenson contains enough material to last at least one school year with no repetition.

Poetry can afford a great amount of sheer pleasure to the child if we choose poems suitable to his age and experience. Little children never tire of such poems as Lysbeth Boyd Borie's Saturday Towels.

Saturday Towels. 1

Under the bed
Away upstairs,
I like to pretend
Is a den for bears.

It's cool up there
When the yard is hot,
Sometimes it's dusty
And sometimes it's not.

So I lie very still
Hardly breathing at all
Till I hear black shoes
Coming down the hall.

Till Mary brings in
The Saturday towels.
Then I scramble out
With the awfullest youls.

1 Borie Lysbeth Boyd. Poems For Peter. p. 34.
With the awfullest, awfullest
Sort of a roar,
And she drops the towels
And runs for the door.

Then I laugh and laugh,
For, don't you see,
She thinks it's a bear,
But it's only Me!

The adventures of Christopher Robin and his little
playmates never fail to give pleasure to young children.

Puppy and I. 1

I met a man as I went walking;
We got talking,
Man and I.

"Where are you going to man?" I said
(I said to the man as he went by).
"Down to the village to get some bread.
Will you come with me?" "No, not I."

I met a horse as I went walking;
We got talking,
Horse and I.

"Where are you going to, Horse, to-day?"

1. Milne. A. A. When We Were Very Young. p. 6.
(I said to the horse as he went by).
"Down to the village to get some hay.
Will you come with me?" "No, not I."

I met a woman as I went walking;
We got talking
Woman and I.
"Where are you going to, Woman so early?"
(I said to the Woman as she went by).
"Down to the village, to get some barley.
Will you come with me?" "No, not I."

I met some rabbits as I went walking;
We got talking,
Rabbits and I.
"Where are you going in your brown fur coats?"
(I said to the rabbits as they went by).
"Down to the village to get some oats.
Will you come with us?" No, not I."

I met a puppy as I went walking;
We got talking,
Puppy and I.
"Where are you going this nice fine day?"
(I said to puppy as he went by).
"Up in the hills to roll and play."
"I'll come with you, Puppy," said I.

Felix Adler says, "The best literature and especially
the best poetry is a glass in which we see ourselves reflected". In selecting poems it is well, therefore, to choose those that are within the range of the child's imagination. Adler also says that the imagination is a most powerful auxiliary in the development of the mind and will.

The real purpose of the fairy tale is to increase the imagination. Poetry is rich in fairies and fairy lore.

Some One. 1

Some one came knocking
At my wee, small door;
Some one came knocking,
I'm sure - sure - sure;
I listened, I opened,
I looked to left and right,
But naught there was a-stirring
In the still dark night;
Only the busy beetle
Tap - tapping in the wall,
Only from the forest
The screech-owls call,
Only the cricket whistling
While the dewdrops fall,
So I know not who came knocking,
At all, at all, at all.

1. De La Mare. Walter. Silver Pennies. p. 1. or
   " " " Peacock Pie p. 18
Rose Fyleman's fairies always please.

Have you watched the fairies when the rain is done
Spreading out their little wings to dry them in the sun?
I have, I have! Isn't it fun?

Have you heard the fairies all among the limes
Singing little fairy tunes to little fairy rhymes?
I have, I have, lots and lots of times!

Have you seen the fairies dancing in the air,
And dashing off behind the stars to tidy up their hair?
I have, I have, I've been there!

Adler says, "much of the selfishness of the world is due not to actual hard heartedness but to a lack of imagination power ..... the faculty of putting one's self in the place of others." Therefore the more we have of Field's Taxis and Toadstools, Fyleman's Fairies, Lear's Owl and Pussy-Cat, Carroll's Walrus and Carpenter and Stevenson's

1. Fyleman, Rose. Silver Pennies p. 2. or Fairies and Chimneys p.23.
2. Adler, Felix Moral Instruction of Children.Ch.VI.p.64
Foreign Lands, the better.

A teacher should develop the characters of her pupils by her own example. She should be a model. That is the first requisite in teaching character development, but she can also use the poets as an additional aid. Calvin Coolidge said:

"The human soul will always rebel at any attempt to confine it to the physical world. It's dwelling place is in the intellectual and moral world. It is in that realm that all true education should lead. Unless our scholarship however brilliant, is to be barren and sterile, leading toward pessimism, more emphasis must be given to the development of our moral power. Our colleges must teach not only science but character. We must maintain a stronger, firmer grasp on the principal, declared in the Psalm's of David and re-echoed in the Proverbs of his son Solomon that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." ¹

Ruskin in his "Sesame and Lilies" says, "Have you measured and mapped out the short life and its possibilities? Do you know if you read this, that you can not read that?"

Hawthorn in "The Great Stone Face" tells of the boy growing up under the influence of a high ideal. A high ideal will lift us to the heights.

Robert Louis Stevenson is a great ethical teacher. William Blake, William Wordsworth and countless others all are ready to develop the characters of those who, because of

their tender years, are very close to God.

The Lamb. 1

Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bade thee feed
By the stream and o'er the meed;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright,
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?

Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb. I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
He is called by thy name.
For He calls Himself a Lamb.
He is meek, and He is mild;
He became a little child.
I a child, and thou a lamb.
We are called by His name.

Little Lamb, God bless thee!
Little Lamb, God bless thee!

" or Songs of Innocence, p. 7"
Little Christopher Robin has wandering thoughts when he is saying his prayers but he is not the only one so afflicted. He does not forget to say a prayer for others.

Vespers. ¹

Little boy kneels at the foot of the bed
Drops on the little hands little gold head.
Hush! Hush! Whisper who dares!
Christopher Robin is saying his prayers.

God bless Mummy I know that's right.
Wasn't it fun in the bath to-night?
The cold's so cold, and the hot's so hot.
Oh! God bless Daddy - I quite forgot.

If I open my fingers a little bit more,
I can see Nanny's dressing-gown on the door.
It's a beautiful blue, but it hasn't a hood.
Oh! God bless Nanny and maker her good.

¹ Milne, A. A. When We Were Very Young. p. 99.
Mine has a hood, and I lie in bed,
And pull the hood right over my
head,
And I shut my eyes, and I curl
up small,
And no body knows that I'm
there at all.

Oh! That you God for a
lovely day
And what was the other I
had to say?
I said "Bless Daddy" so what
can it be?
Oh! Now I remember it. God
Bless Me.

Little boy kneels at the foot
of the bed.
Drops on the little hands little
gold head.
Hush! Hush! Whisper who dares!
Christopher Robin is saying his prayers.

Cradle Song. 1

Bend Little flame!
Bend like a flower as I blow,
Tulip colored and all aglow.

Nobody guesses the way you go,
Nor the way you come.

Shine on the night
Fair as a star your beauty
gleams,
Clear and golden and dear
and bright.
Lead me to bed, it is
time for dreams --
Shine little light!

Cleanliness is next to Godliness and the poets do
not neglect this subject.

Prince Peter.¹

Young prince Peter suddenly, once,
For no real reason behaved like
a dunce.
His bath was ready that summer
morning,
But he said very loud (without
any warning):

"Who wants to scrub - oh, pish,
oh, stuff! -
In a silly old tub? I am clean
enough!"

¹ Turner Nancy Byrd. Magpie Lane. p. 67.
He threw out the towels and soap, and then --
"I never," he cried "will bathe again."

And rushed to the garden, wild and foolish,
Kicking his heels and being mulish.

All the pansies were in their places,
The sun was just drying their new-washed faces.

A toad went skittering down the path,
Bound for a puddle, to take a bath.

A robin dipped in a clear brown pool;
He thought Prince Peter was rather a fool.

"Hist!" he said to a startled wren,
"The prince is never to bathe again."

Down by the duck pond
Diddles and Daddles
Pushed through the water with legs like paddles.
They dived and chuckled,
    "He'll bathe no more."
Puss sat stiff by the kitchen door,
Washing her children, five fat kittens,
With pearl-white collars and pearl-gray mittens.

She washed each kitten from toe to crown
And cuffed it lightly to polish it down.

They sang with happiness in their throats --
Stiff-starched whiskers and shiny coats.

They gazed at Peter, who stood abashed,
They mourned, "He'll never again be washed."

All at once with a drooping head, Into the palace Peter fled.

His buttons were popping as he flew;
He flung off his collar and kicked off his shoe;
Into the bathroom wildly burst,
Into the bath tub hopped head first.

"Hurrp and hump," he said with a splash,
"'Twould be so lonesome never to wash!"

And from that time on there was never a neater Boy in the kingdom than young Prince Peter.

Emily Poulsson gives us an idea of what a child should be.

The Lovable Child.

Frisky as a lambkin,
Busy as a bee --
That's the kind of little girl People like to see.

Modest as a violet,
As a rose bud sweet --
That's the kind of little girl People like to meet.

---

Bright as is a diamond,
    Pure as any pearl --
Everyone rejoices in
    Such a little girl.

Happy as a robin,
    Gentle as a dove --
That's the kind of little girl
    Every one will love.

Fly away and seek her,
    Little song of mine,
For I choose that very girl,
    As my Valentine.

Robert Louis Stevenson, who gives more pleasure to children than any other poet I know, gives an ideal to which a child can aspire.

Good and Bad Children. 1

Children, you are very little,
And your bones are very brittle;
If you would grow great and stately,
You must try to walk sedately.

You must still be bright and quiet,
And content with simple diet;
And remain through all bewild'ring,
Innocent and honest children.

    Donohue and Co. Chicago, Ill.
Happy hearts and happy faces,
Happy play in grassy places —
That was how, in ancient ages,
Children grew to kings and sages.

But the unkind and the unruly,
And the sort who eat unduly,
They must never hope for glory --
Theirs is quite a different story!

Cruel children, crying babies,
All grow up as geese and gabies,
Hated as their age increases,
By their nephews and their nieces.

Poetry energizes the mind. When we memorize we
strengthen the will; we concentrate. Little children need
to be taught concentration and poetry is one of the best
means. It is impossible to memorize a poem without concen-
tration.

A little child must concentrate when he begins to get
his first ideas of arithmetic from Christopher Robin.

The End. 1

When I was One,
I had just begun.

1. Milne, A.A. Now We Are Six. p. 102.
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'm Six, I'm as clever as clever,
So I think I'll be six now for ever and ever.

Sir Philip Sidney, in the sixteenth century wrote in his "Defense of Poesie" (cir. 1581) -

"Now therein of all sciences, is our poet the monarch. For he doth not only show the way but giveth so sweet a prospect into the way as will intice any man to enter into it.... He cometh to you with words set in delightful proportion, either accompanied with or prepared for the well enchanting skill of musicke; and with a tale, forsooth he cometh into you, - with a tale which holdeth children from play and old men from the chimney corner."

It seems to me that at the present time the child needs his sense of humor developed more than ever before. The sign boards, the moving pictures, the present day songs, and the

comic supplements in the Sunday newspapers all tend to give a wrong sense of humor. They all foster the unkind humor that laughs at the misfortunes of others.

Miss Shedlock in the delightful book on "The Art of the Story Teller" says, "Avoid stories containing strong sensational episodes..... The taste that is fed by the sensational contents of newspapers and the dramatic excitement of street life and some of the lurid representations of the cinematograph, is so much stimulated that the interests in normal stories is difficult to rouse." \(^1\) Miss Shedlock says that coarse fun is destructive of reverence. In developing a right sense of humor we must follow the advise of John Burroughs, "thou shalt not preach." "Didactic fiction can never rank high." John Burroughs would have teachers portray and create and have ends as universal as nature.

In ancient days Mahomet gave advise on the teaching of poetry. "Teach your children poetry, it opens the mind, lends grace to wisdom and makes virtues hereditary." \(^2\)

Life is at times, grim for some of us, and a saving grace of humor will help us, for humor is getting a right sense of values. All of us need relaxation, and humor furnishes it.

Poetry is rich in humor. Edward Lear can be depended upon to brighten the dullest day.

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1. Shedlock, M. L. Art of the Story Teller. Chap. IV. p.50
2. Chap. V. p. 47.
The Owl And The Pussy Cat. 1

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

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

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

Edward Lear.

That charming humorist - Vachel Lindsay - gives us a quantity of good things.

The Little Turtle. 1

There was a little turtle,
He lived in a box.
He swam in a puddle
He climbed on the rocks.
He snapped at a mosquito,
He snapped at a flea,
He snapped at a minnow
And he snapped at me.
He caught the mosquito.
He caught the flea.
He caught the minnow,
But he didn't catch me!

Little Peter Borie is always full of the joy of life, and he is willing to share it.

Only Just Me. ¹

I wouldn't mind
Measles
And
I wouldn't mind
Mumps
'Cause
At least I'd have
Rashes
And
At least I'd have
Bumps.
But I hate
Tonsillitis
'Cause
There's nothing new
To see, --
When I take off
My under
Clothes
There's only
Just
Me.

¹ Borie, Lysbeth Boyd. Poems for Peter. p. 32.
Mary Austin develops not only the love of the great outdoors in little children but their sense of humor, too.

Grizzly Bear. 1

If you ever, ever, ever meet a grizzly bear,
You must never, never, never ask him where
He is going
Or what he is doing;
For if you ever, ever, dare
To stop a grizzly bear,
You will never meet another grizzly bear.

Herford's little kitten never fails to delight little children.

The Milk Jug. 2

The gentle milk jug blue and white
I love with all my soul;
She pours herself with all her might
To fill my breakfast bowl.

All day she sits upon the shelf
She does not jump or climb --
She only waits to pour herself,
When 'tis my supper time.

And when the Jug is empty quite,
I shall not mew in vain,
The friendly cow all red and white,
Will fill her up again.

Oliver Herford.

Paul Revere's Ride, Barbara Frietchie, America The Beautiful, The Star Spangled Banner and The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers will create a spirit of patriotism in the child and fire his ambition. We also need to fire the ambitions in other directions. "He also serves who only stands and waits."

"The hearts of children are very pliable; it is easily possible to produce on them too deep an impression; to give them at the outset a fatal twist, all the more since at a certain age many young people are prone to exaggerated introspection and self questioning." ¹

We can fire this ambitions of little children so that they will begin to compose little rhymes. There may be a Hilda Conkling or a Nathalia Crane in any home or school room.

Vachel Lindsay with his characteristic good humor says:-

"In my more helpless infancy when I was seven years old, I had a library card, but the dour old librarian would not

¹ Adler Felix. The Moral Instruction of Children. Ch. II. p.16.
let me take out anything but Jacob Abbott's Rollo books. I read them all. Also one Lucy book, which I found at home, blistered with my mother's infant tears which she had read in her day. Now in the fiftieth year of my age comes my revolt. I come roaring forth with a book which is the opposite of little Rollo and Lucy."

A child is naturally a hero worshipper. We can inspire little children to be similar to the ideal we set before them. We can help them to reach toward a goal.

Vachel Lindsay knows where of he speaks when he says:

"Yea, all parents use what they think is very strong subtle Henrik Ibsen language of the wild duck variety when the children are asleep. All the children use very strong and subtle and devil's disciple Bernard Shaw language when the older people are off on an alleged picnic. Why not get together in this matter? All parents shamefully, unblushingly and blatantly use very poetical and passionate language when they are sure the children are absent. All children use even better poetical and passionate language when the parents are absent. Why not get together in this matter?"

In the Lincoln School, New York City, as a result of firing this poetic ambition, many worth while poems have been written and published by boys and girls from the seventh through the twelfth grades. This work can start in the kindergarten and first grades.

1. Lindsay, Vachel. Every Soul is a Circus. Introduction. p.XVI.
2. Lindsay, Vachel, Every Soul is a Circus. Introduction. P.XVI.
The Barn-Swallow. 1

In the Alleghany mountains
When the apple orchards bloom
I know of eaves in a big red barn
Where I'll find nesting room.

I'm coming back! I'm coming back!
My wings are on the wind;
I'm coming back with the spring time
To the hills I've left behind.

I'm coming back! I'm coming back
To the hills that I know best,
Where the mountains sleep, and the winds walk
And where my wings can rest.

In the Alleghany mountains
Where the apple orchards bloom
I know of eaves in a big red barn,
Where I'll find resting room.

Forsythia. 2

On the edge of the forest a young tree stood,
Strong, and sturdy, with boughs of gray,
And near it blossomed a cherry tree

And a cloud of white on the first of May. But though the sun shone fair and bright. And the song of the birds was gay. The young tree longed for the blossoms white. Instead of his boughs of gray.

So the fairies took pity on the poor young thing, Standing so sad in the midst of spring; And they spread over him a golden veil Made of starlight soft and pale; And every spring it greets our eyes Round the bend of the road as a glad surprise.

Forsythia, its name is told, and it's fame is as bright as its flowers of gold.

Kenneth Graham says that children have just as much sense as we have. All they lack is experience. Poetry will enrich the child's experience. No subject is neglected. As Rachel Field says:

For An Anthology of Verse.

Stars are here and leaves and rain, Fire light and snow. Roses that were sweet to smell Centuries ago.
Beauty's never lost or spent
While growing hearts can find
Her bright reflection mirrored safe
In a poet's mind.  

Our modern poets give us the very air of the pine
woods and of the great out doors. That great poet of nature -
William Wordsworth - stands ever ready to teach us. To know
nature is to know God. Rachel Field tells us about toad-
stools but she tells us of taxis, too.

Benét carries us to New York City in his "Flying King
of Kurio," where we see:—

"Oh! all the cells of high hotels
Are bright with topaz eyes.
And elevated trains in flight
Uncoil like Dragons down the night.
In golden mail they gleam and trail
A vanishing surprise, —
But, hey! our gayer wilder light;
The signs upon the skies."  

Out we go again to the far far west with Mary Austin
when "Spring is in the valley."

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1. Field, Rachel. Mirror of Youth. An Anthology of Youth and
Spring In the Valley. 1

When the catkins on the willow
And the tassel on the birch,
The wild bees from the hiving rocks
Begin their honey search.

Lindsay takes us to the moon which is the "North
Wind's Cooky" while Christopher Morley supplies us with
"Animal Crackers." When twilight comes, we leave the
little children in Stevenson's bed, which is "like a little
boat," while Jane Taylor, William Blake, Christina Rossette,
and Alfred Tennyson sing them lullabies. Perhaps with
"Wynken, Blynken, and Nod" they will sail off in the wooden
shoe, and, like the child poet, Hilda Conkling, dream
fairies.

Children are just: -

Young Things. 2

"Dappled fawns of hills and holts,
Quaint and leggy calves and colts,
Pups and kittens soft as silk,
Full of innocence and milk,
Lambs and kids, a sportive crew,
Downy chicks and ducklings, too.
Cubs in rollypoly glee,
Babies girgling pink and wee,

1. Austin, Mary. The Children Sing in Far Far West. p.81.
   N. Y. 1929. p. 158.
Children, mostly under seven, -
Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

"I give you the end of a golden string;
Only wind it into a ball,
It will lead you into Heaven's gate,
Built in Jerusalem's wall."

    William Blake.
from a painting by Maxfield Parrish for "Poems of Childhood," by Eugene Field
(Scribner $2.50 Illustrated Classics for Younger Readers)
SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING POETRY.

In reading or reciting a poem to little children it is well to follow the advice of Hamlet.

"Speak the speech, trippingly on the tongue, for if you mouth it, I'd as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Do not saw the air too much with your hand, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, the world wind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor; suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature." 1

It is always well for the teacher to be familiar with the life of the poet. If she plans to present "The Owl and The Pussy Cat" by Edward Lear 2 she should first learn that Lear was born in 1812, - the same year that Robert Browning was born. That he was a landscape artist, a draftsman, and the youngest of twenty-one children. It is also interesting to know that he gave drawing lessons to Queen Victoria, and that he was a friend of Tennyson. It was his ambition to illustrate Tennyson's Poems. Lear died at his home in San Remo, Italy, at the Villa Emily - named after Tennyson's wife, of whom he was very fond.

Children would not be interested in this information but it makes a background for the teacher and she can then make Lear alive to her pupils. There are facts in all poets' lives that can be made interesting to little children. Just the idea that Lear had twenty brothers and sisters will make the children have an interest in this draftsman and painter. Showing the wood-cuts and pictures in "Letters of Edward Lear" will also arouse attention.

When possible it is always a good plan to show pictures of the poet, and as a reward of merit, give small pictures to the children to carry home. Children are always interested in the "Land of Counterpane" when they hear that the author was a sickly child and that when he grew up he was often sick in bed while writing his poems.

Poetry lends itself to the appreciation method of teaching probably more than does any other subject. It is well to follow the rules laid down by Wilson, Kyte, and Lull in their book "Modern Methods In Teaching" and more especially Hayward in "The Appreciation Lesson" paying particular attention to the chapter, "Red Letter Days."

Clear up all difficulties before the poem is read. We should never stop to explain words during the reading or reciting of the poem. Neither should we break the continuity by showing a picture. This should be done before or after the presentation. As in story telling, it is always better to recite the poem than to read it, because the book comes between you and the listener.

Some things should never be explained else we defeat our purpose. The child's imagination should be allowed free play. The amfalula tree in Eugene Field's Dinkey-Bird, for example, does not need explanation. We have accomplished our purpose if the child looks at an old stump in the school yard with a sparrow perched thereon and says to himself, "The dinkey-bird is singing in the amfalula tree." All that we wish is the beauty of the word to sing itself into the soul of the child. An inquiring pupil may say, "What is a dinkey-bird?" The teacher can then produce a picture of the hornbill - a bird of tropical Asia and Africa - and say, "It looks something like this." (The hornbill looks like the dinkey bird in the illustrated editions of Field.) and the children may draw what they think the dinkey bird looks like.

The teacher's illustrations should always be beautiful. I saw a student teacher give an appreciation lesson, and her drawings were so hideous that the poem was spoiled for me. If the children had any beautiful mental pictures, the realities must have completely obscured them.

One way of arousing interest in poetry is to make a poetry book. Use tag stock nine inches by twelve. Place on the cover an appropriate picture such as a child reading a book. For a title print, "Poems We Love." Select twenty-five or thirty poems you wish your pupils to become acquainted with. Use one page for a poem. Print and illustrate each one with colored pictures from the magazines. Make this book a work of art. Use it as you would any story book. Show the pictures to the children and say, "Would you like to hear about the girl
in this picture?" Read the poems at various times through the year. By the end of June you will find the children saying the poems to themselves as you read them. The teacher may suggest that other poems could be added to the book, and allow the children to decide what poems they wish to put in.

The Memorization Lesson.

In memorizing poetry, the re-creative or rote method should be used rather than the mechanical memorization of words which result in parrot-like repetition. In "re-creating" a poem one masters words for the sake of making a beautiful poem live, and makes memorizing a means to an end rather than the end itself. There should be no effort made to teach a poem formally for the sake of memorizing it because any reproduction of a poem that is worth while is spontaneous and individual as far as the child is concerned. A poem is scarcely suitable for children unless it can be used as a whole. There are, however, occasions when the part method can be used as a supplementary device. The method of the whole requires the complete reading through of the poem at each step of the memorization procedure. The method of the whole has the advantage of emphasizing right connections, of making a unified impression, and in the long run, of saving time. 1 If it is necessary, because of the length of the poem, to use the part method, it is advisable to divide the poem into thought groups rather than stanzas, and as quickly as possible reinstate the various.

thought groups in the poem as a whole.

The poem should not need elaborate explanation by the teacher. The child should interpret through his own experience. When a child's background is limited, he should be given experiences before trying to introduce specific bits of poetry. No amount of talking about material is a substitute for actual experience. The charm of poetry will grow as the experiences of children widen.

Model Lesson.

I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—
O wind, a-blowing all day long!
O wind that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid.
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see your self at all—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

Teacher. (after a windy day or night). "How many little children heard the wind last night?"
"Tell me, something about it." (Answers given by children)

"The wind blew terribly."
"The wind blew the dust into my eyes."
"The wind blew the dirt into my mouth."
"The wind broke my window."
"I saw a man walking down the street reading a paper and the wind blew the paper out of his hands."
"It thundered and lightened and rained and blew."
"The wind blew my mother's sheet over the garage gate."
"The wind blew my plants off the piazza."
"The wind blew my bloomers off the line and into the next yard."
"The wind broke a little bush in my garden."
"The wind blew branches off the trees."
"It kept me awake last night."
"When I went to bed, my mother opened the window and the wind blew the blanket off my bed."
"The wind broke a tulip in my garden."
"The wind blew a geranium plant off my window and broke the pot."

"The wind broke a branch off my lilac bush and spoiled the pretty flowers."

"I did not hear the wind because I was in bed asleep."

Teacher. "Now little children, let me read what Robert Louis Stevenson said about the wind." (Teacher reads the poem).

Teacher. "When I read the poem again, you see if you can remember what Stevenson saw the wind do." (Teacher reads poem again).

Child. "I saw you toss the kites"

Child. "And blow the birds about the sky."

Child. "I felt you push."

Teacher. "When I read the poem again see what Stevenson asks the wind."

Child. "Are you young or old?"

Child. "Are you a beast?"

Teacher. "When I read the poem this time, say any words that you remember."

Gradually the children learn the entire poem.

Teacher. "Shall we put this poem in our poetry book?"
THE APPRECIATION LESSON.

The Duel.

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

(I wasn't there; I simply state
What was told to me by the Chinese plate!)

The gingham dog went "Bow-wow-wow!"
And the calico cat replied "Mee-ow!"
The air was littered, an hour or so,
With bits of gingham and calico,

While the old Dutch clock in the chimney place
Up with its hands before its face,
For it always dreaded a family row!

(Now mind; I'm only telling you
What the old Dutch clock declares is true!)

The Chinese plate looked very blue,
And wailed, "Oh dear! What shall we do?"
But the gingham dog and the calico cat
Wallowed this way and tumbled that,

Employing every tooth and claw
In the awfulest way you ever saw -
And, oh! how the gingham and calico flew!
(Don't fancy I exaggerate -
I got my news from the Chinese plate.)

Next morning, where the two had sat
They found no trace of dog or cat:
And some folks think unto this day
That burglars stole that pair away!

But the truth about that dog and pup
Is this: they ate each other up!
Now what do you really think of that!
(The old Dutch clock it told me so,
And that is how I came to know.)

Eugene Field.

Teacher. - "How many little children have a dog?"
Please tell me something about your dog, John."
"My dog's name is Tom."
Answers from other children.
"I have a dog and she has four puppies."
"My dog's name is Bess."
"My dog is black and white."
"I have a fox terrier and he barks and barks."
"I have a German police dog that looks like a wolf."
"My dog follows me to school every day."
"My dog gets hold of my pants and pulls me down."
"
"When I go home from school my dog jumps up on me."
"My dog minds the baby."
"I don't like my uncle's dog because he snaps."
"A dog bit me and I had to go to the doctor."
"I like to sleep with my dog."
"My uncle has a whole yard full of dogs and he sells them."
"The dog I like is Nancy."
"My aunt's dog chases cats."
"I had a dog and some one stole him."

Teacher. "Now tell me something about your cats."
"I have a cat and her name is Snowball because she is white."
"My cat has four little wee, wee kitties."
"An automobile killed my cat."
"My cat climbs trees."
"My cat gets up on the table and steals things."
"My aunt has a cat with great big paws."
"My cat cries at night and it makes my father mad."
"I had a cat and she ran away."
"A man took my cat away in an automobile because she was sick."
"I give my cat milk every day."
"My cat and dog play together."
"My cat got his tail squeezed in the door."

Teacher- I should like to read you a poem about a dog and a cat”. (Teacher reads The Duel). The same poem may be reread a number of times during the year without further introduction or comment until it becomes familiar.
Rain

The rain is raining all around,
It falls on field and tree.
It rains on the umbrellas here,
And on the ships at sea.

Teacher (on a rainy day). "See how it is raining children."
(Children go to the windows and look at the rain)
Teacher. - "How many little children like the rain?"

"Why do you like it, John?"
"I like the rain because I can wear my rubber boots."
Answers from children.
"I like the rain because it makes puddles in the town field."
"I like the rain because I can wear my new rain coat and cap and carry my umbrella."
"I like the rain because my mother makes fudge on rainy days.
"I like to see the rain drops running down the window pane."
Teacher - "Would you like to hear what some people say about the rain?" (Teacher reads Stevenson's Rain).
Teacher - "Perhaps you would like to hear what someone else says about the rain."

2

It Rains.
The Rain comes always down an' down
An' never up again!
It must be dry
Up in the sky
Without a bit of Rain?

The thirsty earth just drinks it up
An' never leaves one drop!
An' not until
Its had its fill
Does it consent to stop.

Some day, the rain may not rain down!
An' then - what shall we do?
We'll drink the
Rivers up, an'
Then perhaps - a lake or two?

Teacher - "Here is what someone else says about the rain."

1.
The Storm
In my bed all safe and warm
I like to listen to the storm.
The thunder rumbles loud and grand -
The rain goes splash and whisper: and
The lightning is so sharp and bright
It sticks its fingers through the night.

Teacher - "Let us see what still another person says about the rain."

2.
Showers
The showers race across the sky
To make the hilltops green,
The wind must blow them twenty ways
To wash the willows clean.

2. Austin, Mary. The Children Sing in the Far West, p. 79.
The spent drops twinkle in the grass
And mirror pools thread every lane,
While feather-wet the meadow lark
Is singing in the rain!
Teacher - "See if you like this one children."

Very Lovely

Wouldn't it be lovely if the rain came down
Till the water was quite high over all the town?
If the cabs and buses all were set afloat,
And we had to go to school in a little boat?

Wouldn't it be lovely if it still should pour
And all went up to live on the second floor,
If we saw the butcher sailing on the hill,
And we took the letters in at the window-sill?

It's been raining, raining, all the afternoon;
All these things might happen really very soon.
If we woke tomorrow and found they had begun
Wouldn't it be glorious? Wouldn't it be fun?

Teacher - "Let us choose which poem about the rain we like best. Which one shall we put in our poetry book? How many little children would like to learn one of these poems for the next rainy day?"

L. Fyleman, Rose. Fairies and Chimneys. p. 36.
Taxis

Ho, for taxis green or blue,
    Hi, for taxis red,
They roll along the Avenue
    Like spools of colored thread!

Jack-o' Lantern yellow,
Orange as the moon,
Greener than the greenest grass
Ever grew in June.
Gayly striped or checked in squares,
Wheels that twinkle bright,
Don't you think that taxis make
A very pleasant sight?
Taxis shiny in the rain,
Scudding through the snow,
Taxis flashing back the sun
Waiting in a row.

Ho, for taxis red and green,
    Hi, for taxis blue,
I wouldn't be a private car
    In sober black, would you?

Poetry may well be used in connection with oral English, but it should not be used as a tool subject. We may give the child the sentence sense, word drill, self-expression, and incidentally, give him love of poetry at the same time.

Teacher. - "Little children, on your way back from lunch, will you please look at the taxis that pass you."

Teacher (The next session). "How many taxis did you see, John?"

"I saw five taxis."

"What color taxi did you see, May?"

"I saw a brown and white taxi."

"And yours, Charles?"

"I saw a checked taxi and it was black and white."

"I saw a red taxi with four people in it."

"I saw a green taxi in front of my house."

"I saw an orange taxi going very fast."

"I saw six taxis in my back yard, and my father owns them."

"I saw a red taxi and it said 'Hancock' on it."

"I saw a green taxi and it said 'Town' on the front of it."

"I saw a black car and a taxi bump each other."

"I saw my father driving his taxi."

"I saw a man running for a black taxi."

Teacher. - "What color is your father's automobile, John?"

"It is black."

Teacher. "Yes, many private cars are black."

Teacher (After all have given a sentence containing 'I saw'). "I should like to read you a little poem about taxis."

(Teacher reads Rachel Field's Taxis).

In all our work with poetry, we should bear in mind the words of Sir Philip Sydney in his "Defense of Poesy."
"The final end of learning is to draw and lead us to so beget a perfection as our degenerate souls, made worse by their clay lodgings, can be capable of."

In making our selection of poems to use, the words of William James are still as good as if they had been written but yesterday.

"Living things, then, moving things, or things that savor of danger or of blood, that have a dramatic quality,- these are the objects natively interesting to childhood, to the exclusion of almost everything else." 1

If we make use of poetry in the school room it can be depended upon "to console the afflicted; to add sunshine to daylight, by making the happy happier; to teach the young and the gracious of every age to see, to think and feel, and therefore, to become more actively and securely virtuous." 2

The little minds with which we deal are:-

"Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together."

We must inculcate the meaning, if not the words, of the immortal definition of poetry by Coleridge, - "The best words the best order."

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from a painting by Jessie Willcox Smith for "A Child's Garden of Verses"
(Scribner $2.50 Illustrated Classics for Younger Readers)
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Hunting and Fishing Magazine, 404 N. Wesley Ave., Mount
Morris, Illinois or 108 Massachusetts Ave., Boston, Mass.
Thirty-two sport pictures eight and one half by twelve inches.
One dollar.

Magazine covers and advertising pictures. See Woman's World 4223-4243 West Lake St., Chicago, Ill., or People's Popular Monthly, Des Moines, Iowa, for club offers. A wealth of material for one dollar.


Nature Magazine 1214 - 16th St., Washington, D. C. Invaluable for its pictures of birds, animals, and nature. Free sample copy.

Our Dumb Animals, 46 Central St., Norwood, Mass. Contains many pictures of animals. Free sample copy.


Railway and Steamship Advertising matter. Pamphlets
free. Canadian Pacific Railway, 332 Washington St., Boston, for pictures of the west.

Seed catalogues. For addresses look in the back of magazines or in the advertising sections of the Sunday newspapers under "Farm and Garden."


The second hand book stores sell old magazines and books for very little. Invaluable material here.