

## Perfect Poems and rhymes for 7-11 year olds to read aloud



### Mix a Pancake

by Christina Rossetti

Mix a pancake,  
Stir a pancake,  
Pop it in the pan;  
Fry the pancake,  
Toss the pancake –  
Catch it if you can.

### Cats Sleep Anywhere

by Eleanor Farjeon

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.

### The Sandwich

by Tony Bradman

Oh what shall I have  
Today for my tea?  
I know – a sandwich,  
As big as can be!

I'll start with the bread,  
Two slices, quite large;  
Then slap on some jam,  
Oh yes, and some marge,

I'll put in some cheese,  
A tomato or two,  
And maybe an onion  
This big one will do!

I'll bung in some lettuce,  
A radish, of course,  
And...a sizzling burger,  
All covered in sauce!

Add in some chicken,  
And maybe some chips,  
Some biscuits, an apple,  
A packet of crisps,

A cake with some  
candles,  
Some chocolate (one  
bar),  
Spaghetti, bananas,  
Sweets from a jar,

Baked beans and  
humbugs,  
Carrots and mustard,  
All topped off with cream  
And steaming hot  
custard...

Now a sandwich like that  
You really can't beat,  
It's packed out with  
goodies,  
A real tasty treat.

There's only one problem;  
It's breaking my heart...  
It's such a big sandwich –  
Where do I start?

### I Don't Want to Go into School

by Colin McNaughton

I don't want to go into school today;  
Mum,  
I don't feel like school work today.  
Oh, don't make me go to school today,  
Mum  
Oh, please let me stay home and play.

But you must go to school, my cherub,  
my lamb,  
If you don't it will be a disaster,  
How would they manage without you,  
my sweet,  
After all you are the headmaster!





### The Sound Collector

by Roger McGough

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

### Stone

by Charles Simic

Go inside a stone  
That would be my way.  
Let somebody else become a dove  
Or gnash with a tiger's tooth.  
I am happy to be a stone.

From the outside the stone is a riddle:  
No one knows how to answer it.  
Yet within, it must be cool and quiet  
Even though a cow steps on it full  
weight,  
Even though a child throws it in a river,  
The stone sinks, slow, unperturbed  
To the river bottom  
Where the fishes come to knock on it  
And listen.

I have seen sparks fly out  
When two stones are rubbed.  
So perhaps it is not dark inside after all;  
Perhaps there is a moon shining  
From somewhere, as though behind a  
hill—  
Just enough light to make out  
The strange writings, the star charts  
On the inner walls.

### Down Behind the Dustbin

by Michael Rosen

Down behind the dustbin  
I met a dog called Ted.  
'Leave me alone,' he says,  
'I'm just going to bed.'  
Down behind the dustbin  
I met a dog called Roger.  
'Do you own this bin?' I said.  
'No. I'm only a lodger.'  
Down behind the dustbin  
I met a dog called Sue.  
'What are you doing here?' I said.  
'I've got nothing else to do.'



### Books

by Eleanor Farjeon

What worlds of wonder are our books!  
As one opens them and looks,  
New ideas and people rise  
In our fancies and our eyes.

The room we sit in melts away,  
And we find ourselves at play  
With someone who, before the end,  
May become our chosen friend.

Or we sail along the page  
To some other land or age.  
Here's our body in the chair,  
But our mind is over there.

Each book is a magic box  
Which with a touch a child unlocks.  
In between their outside covers  
Books hold all things for their lovers.

### Bedtime

by Eleanor Farjeon

Five minutes, five minutes more,  
please!  
Let me stay five minutes more!  
Can't I just finish the castle  
I'm building here on the floor?  
Can't I just finish the story  
I'm reading here in my book?  
Can't I just finish this bead-chain —  
It almost is finished, look!  
Can't I just finish this game, please?  
When a game's once begun  
It's a pity never to find out  
Whether you've lost or won.  
Can't I just stay five minutes?  
Well, can't I just stay just four?  
Three minutes, then? two minutes?  
Can't I stay one minute more?

From Macbeth

by Shakespeare

### The Witches' Chant

Round about the cauldron go:  
In the poisonous entrails throw.  
Toad, that under cold stone  
Days and nights has thirty-one  
Sweated venom sleeping got,  
Boil thou first in the charmed pot.  
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 blindworm's sting,  
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing.  
For charm of powerful trouble,  
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.  
Double, double toil and trouble;  
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

### From The Hill We Climb

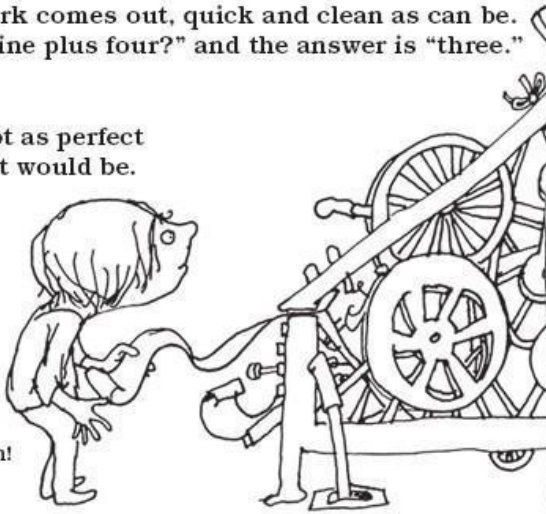
by Amanda Gorman

We will not march back to what was, but  
move to what shall be:  
A country that is bruised but whole,  
benevolent but bold, fierce and free.  
We will not be turned around or  
interrupted by intimidation because we  
know our inaction and inertia will be the  
inheritance of the next generation.  
Our blunders become their burdens.  
But one thing is certain:  
If we merge mercy with might, and  
might with right, then love becomes our  
legacy and change, our children's  
birthright.

## HOMWORK MACHINE

The Homework Machine, oh the Homework Machine,  
Most perfect contraption that's ever been seen.  
Just put in your homework, then drop in a dime,  
Snap on the switch, and in ten seconds' time,  
Your homework comes out, quick and clean as can be.  
Here it is—"nine plus four?" and the answer is "three."  
Three?  
Oh me . . .  
I guess it's not as perfect  
As I thought it would be.

Read more  
poems in  
*A Light in  
the Attic*  
by Shel Silverstein!



A Light in the Attic © 1981 Evil Eye Music, Inc.

### More poetry:

- The Listeners by Walter de la Mare
- Jabberwocky by Lewis Carroll
- Wynken, Blynken and Nod by Eugene Field
- I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud by William Wordsworth

### The Tyger by William Blake

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?

### A few ideas for how to perform poetry:

- Make up actions or act out parts of the poem or story.
  - Give voices to different characters.
- Say some words quietly, some loudly! Say some sentences slowly and others quickly. Make your poem come to life!
  - Use facial expressions to represent feelings.
- Rehearse your poem beforehand – get a feel for the rhythm and words.

