2015 Poetry Month Event Kit

Featuring activities and fun from these Shel Silverstein classics:
Falling Up Special Edition
Runny Babbit 10th Anniversary Edition

Everything you need for Poetry Month celebrations!
Dear Reader,


Inside this kit, you’ll celebrate Poetry Month with activities for use in the classroom, library, bookstore, or home, featuring the wonderful cast of characters in *Falling Up Special Edition* and *Runny Babbit*. You’ll meet the Monkey, have some fun with Headphone Harold, get silly with spoonerisms with Runny Babbit and his friends, and much more. Be sure to look out for the helpful reminders from Runny along the way!

Use this kit to laugh and learn with poetry during National Poetry Month in April or anytime during the year.
In “Rainglasses,” Shel Silverstein assumes that if sunglasses keep out the sun, then rainglasses should keep out the rain, and reimagines a pair of glasses with windshield wipers. If you could transform an ordinary object into something extraordinary, what would YOU invent? Draw your invention in the space below and then write a two-line poem describing your creation.

RUNNY’S RITTLE LEMINDER:
If you need some inspiration, think of the items around your house that you use every day.
Monkeying Around

Shel uses a clever play on words in the poem “The Monkey” from Falling Up by using numbers in place of words, but many of the numbers only sound like the word Shel means. Can you guess the actual word the numeral represents in the poem? Write the word in the space next to the number in the poem below. Be sure to read the poem aloud when you’re finished!

1 __________ little monkey
Was goin’ 2 __________ the store
When he saw a banana 3 __________
He’d never climbed be4 __________.
By 5 __________ o’clock that evenin’
He was 6 __________ with a stomach ache
‘Cause 7 __________ green bananas
Was what that monkey 8 __________.
By 9 __________ o’clock that evenin’
That monkey was quite ill,
So 10 __________ we called the doctor
Who was 11 __________ on the hill.
The doctor said, “You’re almost dead.
Don’t eat green bananas no more.”
The sick little monkey groaned and said,
“But that’s what I 1-2 __________ the 3-4 __________.”

RUNNY’S RITTLE LEMINDER:
Some of the numerals stand for the actual numbers they represent; while some stand for similar-sounding words.
Shel writes about many zany creatures in *Falling Up*, but can you name them all? Read the excerpts from the poems below and match the poem with the illustration of the animal it describes. Which character is your favorite, and why?

1. He started jumpin’ and skippin’ and kickin’,  
   He did a dance called the Funky Chicken,  
   He did the Polka, he did the Twist,  
   He bent himself into a pretzel like this.

2. He says, “It’s not that I like ice  
   Or freezin’ winds and snowy ground.  
   It’s just sometimes it’s kind of nice  
   To be the only bird in town.”

3. And when you feel like dancin’,  
   You simply shake a hoof  
   And hop on the top of your little hut  
   On your leafy kangaroo.

4. And who will comb his tail,  
   And who will shine his long sharp quills  
   And manicure his nails?

5. He’ll crunch all your soldiers, he’ll munch on your trucks,  
   He’ll chew your poor puppets to shreds,  
   He’ll swallow your Big Wheel and slurp up your paints  
   And bite off your dear dollies’ heads.

6. I’m barkin’, I’m growlin’, I’m bitin’ his butt.  
   He howls and jumps back in his sleigh.  
   I scare his strange horses, they leap in the air.  
   I’ve frightened the whole bunch away.

**RUNNY’S RITTLE LEMINDER:**

The poems contain key words and context clues that describe each character—be sure to read them carefully!
Now that you’ve read Shel’s poems in *Falling Up*, it’s time to put your vocabulary and poetry writing skills to the test! Write your own version of “Headphone Harold” by filling in the blanks in the poem below with a noun, verb, or adjective. Be creative—the sillier the better! Don’t forget to share and read aloud your poem when you’re finished.

**HEADPHONE HAROLD**

Headphone Harold wore his ____________

Through the ____________ and through the day.

He said, “I’d rather ____________ my music

Than the ____________ things people say.”

In the city’s honkin’ ____________

He heard trumpets ’stead of trucks.

Down the quiet country back roads

He ____________ drums instead of ducks.

Through the patterin’ springtime ____________

He heard ____________ instead of ____________.

Down the track at the railroad crossin’

He ____________ the trombones—not the ____________.

**RUNNY’S RITTLE LEMINDER:**

Nouns are people, places, or things; verbs are action words; and adjectives are words that describe another word.
How well do you know Runny Babbit and his friends?
In Runny Babbit, Shel uses spoonerisms, deliberate plays on words in which corresponding letters are switched between two words in a phrase. Unscramble the names of Runny’s friends in the clues below, then write each name on the line provided.

**RUNNY’S RITTLE LEMINDER:**
If you get stumped on a word, use the illustrations as a hint as you decode the names.
Runny’s Name Tag

What would YOUR name look like as a spoonerism? Write your name (first and last) in *Runny Babbit* style on the name tag below. Then color and decorate your name tag and, with a grown-up’s help, cut out along the line and affix to your shirt with a piece of tape.

Bonus fun! Parents, teachers, librarians, and booksellers: If you’re doing this activity with a group of kids, compile all the name tags when finished and tape or glue them together for a spoonerism art piece to display in your home, classroom, library, or bookstore.

My name is . . .

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**RUNNY’S RITTLE LEMINDER:**
Use your imagination to decorate your name tag, and always ask a grown-up for help when using scissors!