Poetry Month
2010
Event Kit

HarperCollinsChildren'sBooks  www.shelsilverstein.com
Dear Readers,

Celebrate National Poetry Month 2010 with the zany, wild, and very creative world of Shel Silverstein! From his cherished characters like Runny Babbit, The Missing Piece and Giraffe and a Half to unexpected surprises in the poems “The Gletcher” and “Overdues,” there are tons of ways to learn and celebrate using Shel Silverstein’s works.

Whether you’re in a classroom, a library or a bookstore, or at home, you can use the following reproducible activities to bring poetry to life and teach children about exploring the language of poetry.

Have fun!

HarperCollins Children’s Books
Marketing Department

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Celebrate with Code-Doku!

Code-doku is a popular game based on numerical Sudoku puzzles. Instead of solving a grid with the numbers 1–9, Code-doku uses letters. When you solve the puzzle, you reveal a secret message! Place each of the letters S, W, A, N, H, E, L, R, and D exactly once in each row, column, and 3×3 box. When you have completed the puzzle, the shaded squares can be read left to right, from top to bottom to form a phrase answering this question:

**How do we celebrate poetry month?**

(Answers on final page)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>L</th>
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<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>L</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Below is a crossword puzzle containing the names of some of Shel Silverstein’s cherished characters. Read each quote in the clue section. When you know which character a specific quote is describing, write that character’s name, one letter per box, in the corresponding spaces. Omit any spaces in the character’s name.

1. “A warning for those who chance to meet a wild ___ coming home late at night, down a dark street.”

2. “Ickle Me, ___ ___, Tickle Me too / Went for a ride in a flying shoe.”

3. “If you say, ‘Let’s bead a rook / That’s billy as can se,’ / You’re talkin’ ___ ___ talk, / Just like mim and he.”

4. “___ ___ he rides like the wind / Don’t know where he’s going but sees where he’s been.”

5. “___ ___ ___, / With your chin in your hand, / Haven’t you ever been pleased?”

6. “Me who? / Yes, exactly! / Exactly what? / Yes, I have an ___ on a chain?”

7. “If you had a giraffe and he stretched another half, you would have ___ ___ ___ ___.”

8. “Once there was a ___ … and she loved a little boy.”

9. “’Make up your mind,’ they all said together, and poor ___ the Great, he couldn’t make up his mind; he wasn’t really a lion anymore and he certainly wasn’t really a man.”

(Answers on final page)
The Five W’s

In stories and poems, the Five W’s are the basic pieces of information that the reader needs to know. Look at the chart below describing the Five W’s. Then read *The Missing Piece*. After you’ve finished the story, see if you can answer each of the W’s.

**The Five W’s:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>Who is the story about?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What?</td>
<td>What happens in the story?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where?</td>
<td>Where does the story take place?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When?</td>
<td>When does the story take place?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why?</td>
<td>Why does the story happen?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Five W’s in *The Missing Piece*:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After reading and thinking about *The Missing Piece*, write your own poem using the Five W’s on the lines below. Once you have your 5 W’s, place a piece of paper over the instructions on the left and read the poem you’ve created.

**Write Your Own 5 W Poem**

Line One: **Who?**

Line Two: **What?**

Line Three: **Where?**

Line Four: **When?**

Line Five: **Why?**
Perform a Poem

Bringing poetry to life for an audience can be fun and exciting! Read the two poems below from *Runny Babbit* and *A Light in the Attic* aloud with emotion and actions. Stage directions are offered in italics for each poem. Have friends or family members act while you read, or memorize the poem and perform a monologue!

**RUNNY HETS GANDSOME**

**Read:**

Runny bought a wurly cig
And tuck it on with star.
Runny thought, “Now I look like
A handsome stovie mar.”
But the tair it got all hangled
In the twicket and the thigs.
Runny said, “I guess some folks
Just don’t look wood in gigs.”

**Act:**

Twirl your finger in the air or in your hair.
Pretend to stick something on your head.
Act like you are someone famous.
Grab at your hair or head in confusion.
Shrug your shoulders.
Take a bow!

**LITTLE ABIGAIL AND THE BEAUTIFUL PONY**

**Read:**

There was a girl named Abigail
Who was taking a drive
Through the country
With her parents
When she spied a beautiful sad-eyed
Grey and white pony.
And next to it was a sign
That said,
FOR SALE—CHEAP.
“Oh,” said Abigail.
“May I have that pony?
May I please?”

**Act:**

Pretend to steer a steering wheel.
Put your hand above your eyes as if looking into the distance.
Make a prop sign in advance and hold it up now.
Point at another actor playing pony or at an imaginary pony.

(Continued on next page)
Read:

And her parents said, "No you may not."
And Abigail said, "But I MUST have that pony."
And her parents said, "Well, you can't have that pony,
But you can have a nice butter pecan ice cream cone when we get home."
And Abigail said, "I don't want a butter pecan ice cream cone,
I WANT THAT PONY— I MUST HAVE THAT PONY."
And her parents said, "Be quiet and stop nagging—
You're not getting that pony."
And Abigail began to cry and said, "If I don't get that pony I'll die."
And her parents said, "You won't die.
No child ever died yet from not getting a pony."
And Abigail felt so bad
That when they got home she went to bed,
And she couldn't eat,
And she couldn't sleep,
And her heart was broken,
And she DID die—
All because of a pony
That her parents wouldn't buy.

(This is a good story
To read to your folks
When they won't buy
You something you want.)

Act:

Shake your finger and head back and forth.
Stomp your foot on the ground.
Pretend to lick an ice cream cone.
Shake your head back and forth.
Stomp your feet and point toward the pony.
Put one finger on your lips in a sign of “Shhh.”
Wipe your eyes as if you are crying.
Throw your head and arms back.
Put your hands under your head and keep your eyes wide open.
Put your hands over your heart.

Take a bow!
Share a Word Lib

The fun of word libs is to create a hilarious poem using word substitutions. In the poem below from *Falling Up* words have been removed and descriptions are accompanied by blank spaces. Ask a friend to give you words that match each description (without seeing the poem). When you have finished filling in the blanks, read the completed hilarious poem aloud.

**A Quick Review:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun:</th>
<th>the name of a person, place, or thing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjective:</td>
<td>describes someone or something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb:</td>
<td>an action word</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE**

____ said, “How do you get to ________?”

I said, “By ________,” and ________ smiled.

“When I was your age,” ________ said,

“I ________ it barefoot—______ miles.”

____ said, “How many fights have you had?”

I said, “______—and both times I got whipped.”

“When I was your age,” ________ said,

“I could drive a ________—and lift a ________.”

____ said, “How much weight can you tote?”

I said, “One bag of ________.” ________ laughed.

“When I was your age,” ________ said,

“I ________ it barefoot—______ miles.”

____ said, “How many fights have you had?”

I said, “______—and both times I got whipped.”

“When I was your age,” ________ said,

“I fought every day—and was never licked.”

____ said, “How old are you?”

I said, “______,” and then ________ puffed out his chest and said,

“When I was your age... I was ten.”

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A Partial Poem?

Read the poem “Overdues” from A Light in the Attic. Then write a response paragraph to the question posed in “Overdues.”

OVERDUES

What do I do?
What do I do?
This library book is 42
Years overdue.
I admit that it’s mine
But I can’t pay the fine—
Should I turn it in
Or hide it again?
What do I do?
What do I do?

Next, look at the art to the right from A Light in the Attic Special Edition. Write a short poem based on what you think is happening in the picture—don’t forget to give it a title. After you’ve written your poem, go to page 177 in the book and compare your poem with Shel Silverstein’s!
Below are three different poems from *DON'T BUMP THE GLUMP*. Read each poem below. Listen to what the poem is saying and draw a picture of what you think each creature looks like!

**THE GLETCHER**
See the Gletcher in his cage,
His claws are sharp, his teeth are double.
Thank heaven he's locked up safe inside,
Or we'd all be in terrible trouble!

**QUICK-DISGUIISING GINNIT**
This is the Quick-Disguising Ginnit.
Didn't he have you fooled for a minute?

**ONE-LEGGED ZANTZ**
Please be kind to the One-Legged Zantz.
Consider his feelings—
Don't ask him to dance.
Sing a Poem!

Song lyrics are oftentimes poems set to music. You can have fun singing Shel Silverstein poems in any style you would like. If you are uncomfortable with singing, then clapping, snapping and foot stomping can make an equally exciting rhythm. You don’t even need instruments! Below are two poems from *Where the Sidewalk Ends*. Have fun turning them into your own songs!

**EIGHTEEN FLAVORS**

Eighteen luscious, scrumptious flavors—
Chocolate, lime and cherry,
Coffee, pumpkin, fudge banana,
Caramel cream and boysenberry,
Rocky road and toasted almond,
Butterscotch, vanilla dip,
Butter brickle, apple ripple,
Coconut and mocha chip,
Brandy peach and lemon custard,
Each scoop lovely, smooth, and round,
Tallest ice cream cone in town,
Lying there (sniff) on the ground.

**BOA CONSTRICCTOR**

Oh, I'm being eaten
By a boa constrictor,
A boa constrictor,
I'm being eaten by a boa constrictor,
And I don't like it—one bit.
Well, what do you know?
It's nibblin' my toe.
Oh, gee,
It's up to my knee.
Oh my,
It's up to my thigh.
Oh, fiddle,
It's up to my middle.
Oh, heck,
It's up to my neck.
Oh, dread,
It's upmmmmmmmmmmmyyyyyyyyyyyyyy . . .

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Alliteration Activity

Alliteration is the repetition of the same consonant sound at the beginning of several words that occur close together. For example, if you read “Messy Room,” below, from A Light in the Attic, you will hear repetition of the letter w (“workbook is wedged in the window”). The sounds with alliteration have been underlined. Read “Standing Is Stupid” below, from A Light in the Attic. Underline the parts of the poem with alliteration. “Rotten Convention” from Falling Up is also a great example of a poem with alliteration. When you’ve finished, write your own poems using alliteration.

**STANDING IS STUPID**

Standing is stupid,
Crawling’s a curse,
Skipping is silly,
Walking is worse.
Hopping is hopeless,
Jumping’s a chore,
Sitting is senseless,
Leaning’s a bore.
Running’s ridiculous,
Jogging’s insane—
Guess I’ll go upstairs and
Lie down again.

**MESSY ROOM**

Whosever room this is should be ashamed!
His underwear is hanging on the lamp.
His raincoat is there in the overstuffed chair,
And the chair is becoming quite mucky and damp.
His workbook is wedged in the window,
His sweater’s been thrown on the floor.
His scarf and one ski are beneath the TV,
And his pants have been carelessly hung on the door.
His books are all jammed in the closet,
His vest has been left in the hall.
A lizard named Ed is asleep in his bed,
And his smelly old sock has been stuck to the wall.
Whosever room this is should be ashamed!
Donald or Robert or Willie or--
Huh? You say it’s mine? Oh, dear,
I knew it looked familiar!
Match Game

When art is used next to a poem, it adds an element of excitement and description to the vivid imagery of the poem. Below are four short poems and four illustrations. Read each poem and match the text to the correct illustration. Poems are from *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, *Falling Up* and *Runny Rabbit*.

**CHESTER**
Chester came to school and said,
"Durn, I growed another head."
Teacher said, "It's time you knowed
The word is 'grew' instead of 'growed.'"

**CARROTS**
They say that carrots are good for your eyes,
They swear that they improve your sight,
But I'm seein' worse than I did last night—
You think maybe I ain't usin' 'em right?

**GLUB—GLUB**
He thought it was
The biggest puddle
He'd go splashing through.
Turns out it was
The smallest lake—
And the deepest, too.

**THE KUNGLE JING**
"Oh I am the Jing of the Kungle,"
Runny roared to one and all
When he wore his cion's lostume
To the Walloheen boastume call.
But there he met a leal rion
Who said, "You'd best cake tare,
And do not start believin'
You're the costume that you wear."

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Below are two versions of the illustration from “The Crocodile’s Toothache” (page 66) from Where the Sidewalk Ends. Look at the two pictures and see if you can notice what is different. Find the ten differences and write them down below.

1. _____________________________
2. _____________________________
3. _____________________________
4. _____________________________
5. _____________________________
6. _____________________________
7. _____________________________
8. _____________________________
9. _____________________________
10. _____________________________

(Answers on final page)
**Answers!**

**CODE-DOKU:**

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| H | S | A | W | R | D | L | E | N |
| D | N | E | L | A | S | H | W | R |
| L | R | W | H | N | E | A | S | D |
| E | A | R | N | L | H | S | D | W |
| W | D | L | E | S | R | N | H | A |
| S | H | N | D | W | A | E | R | L |
| A | W | H | R | E | L | D | N | S |
| R | L | D | S | H | N | W | A | E |
| N | E | S | E | A | D | W | R | L | H |
```

**Hidden Message:** We read and share Shel.

**CROSSWORD:**


**SPOT THE DIFFERENCE:**

**On the right side illustration:** no tear in crocodile’s eye, no watch on dentist, stripes on sock, dentist has more hair, one less tooth on floor, tail bends differently, no cup on sink pipe, chair has no headrest, lamp arm bends differently, crocodile has more spots on belly

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