Poetry Month 2011

Celebrate

Poetry Month Activities Kit

HarperCollinsChildren'sBooks  www.shelsilverstein.com
Dear Reader,

It’s here, it’s here! Poetry Month is here once again—so let’s Shellebrate!

Please enjoy these activities, which are perfect to use in a classroom, library, or bookstore, or at home. We hope this event kit will help you make the reading and understanding of poetry an exciting and meaningful experience.

As we look forward to the coming publication of Shel Silverstein’s new poetry collection, *Every Thing On It*, let’s play with his delightful poetry that we already know and love.

Have fun!

HarperCollins Children’s Books
Marketing Department
Inventions

Have an idea for a brilliant invention? So did Shel! Match the picture of the invention to the description.

1. I've made me a moon-catchin' net,  
   And I'm goin' huntin' tonight,  
   I'll run along swingin' it over my head,  
   And grab for that big ball of light.

2. I made an airplane out of stone . . .  
   I always did like staying home.

3. Guess what I've done!  
   Invented a light that plugs into the sun.

4. The Homework Machine, oh the Homework Machine,  
   Most perfect contraption that's ever been seen.

What are your fantastic invention ideas?  
Draw them and write a poem about what they can do!
Can you guess these classic Shel Silverstein characters from their descriptions? Match the stanza and name to the illustration for each character.

1. ____________, the dancin’ bear,
   Ran away from the County Fair,
   Ran right up to my back stair
   And thought he’d do some dancin’ there.

2. Poor ____________,
   From Wilmington,
   His buttons will not come undone.

3. ____________ screamed a scream
   So loud it made her eyebrows steam.

4. Oh the blithery, blathery pirate
   (His name, I believe is ____________),
   His manner is sullen and irate,
   And his humor is vulgar and broad.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claude</th>
<th>Danny</th>
<th>Millie</th>
<th>Benjamin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O’Dare</td>
<td>McDeevit</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bunn</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Reproducible Activity —— www.shelsilverstein.com
Poetic List

Wow! Shel came up with many different kinds of shoes for his poem “A Closet Full of Shoes.” By matching up the words that rhymed, he made a poem out of a list. Now it's your turn! Come up with a list of similar things and create a poem. For example, types of desserts? Breeds of dogs? Places? Colors? The possibilities are endless!

A LIST OF ______________________

A CLOSET FULL OF SHOES

Party shoes with frills and bows,
Workin’ shoes with steel toes,
Sneakers, flip-flops, and galoshes,
Boots to wear with mackintoshes,
Brogans, oxfords, satin pumps,
Dancin’ taps and wooden clumps,
Shoes for climbin’, shoes for hikes,
Football cleats and baseball spikes,
Shoes of shiny patent leather,
Woolly shoes for winter weather,
Loafers, rough-outs, sandals, spats,
High heels, low heels, platforms, flats,
Moccasins and fins and flippers,
Shower clogs and ballet slippers . . .
A million shoes and just one missin’—
That’s the one that matches this’n.
Vocabulary

It's important for a poet to have a large vocabulary—so here's a challenge! Use the definitions below to come up with a word that fits. Fill in each word—then read the highlighted vertical boxes to uncover a classic Shel character.

1. **F** **E** **R** **O** **C** **I** **O** **U** **S** : fierce like a wild creature
2. **A** _ _ _ : a light blue, like a clear sky
3. **M** _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : an item kept to remember something by
4. **P** _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : to move with a spring in one's step, like a horse
5. **P** _ _ _ _ : to feel compassion toward, or feel sorry for
6. **R** _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : a flexible solid material used to make tires and elastic bands
7. **D** _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : far-off or remote, removed
8. **E** _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : decorated with needlework
9. **I** _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : unable to be seen by the eye
10. **M** _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : to make better or more valuable
11. **D** _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : to cease or stop
Home Sweet Home

In “Dinner Guest,” the narrator lists all the places he’s likely to be when the Razor-Tooth Sline comes for dinner. To find the name of the city where Shel Silverstein grew up, write all of the circled letters into the first line below the poem. Then unscramble them to fill in the second line!
(Here’s a hint: it’s known as the Windy City!)

DINNER GUEST

When the Razor-Tooth Sline
Comes to my house to dine,
You may find me in Fran(C)e or Detro(I)t,
Or off in Khart(0)um or in the spare room
Of my Uncle Ed’s place in Belo(I)t.
You may find me in Ph(I)lly, Ra(C)ine or R(A)bat,
You may reach me in Ma(L)mo or G(hor).
You may see me in S(I)kkim and likely as not
You will run into me at the store.
You may find me in H(amburg)
Or up in St. Pau(L),
In Ky(O)to, Keno(S)ha or N(ome),
But one thing is sure, if you find me at all,
You NEVER shall find me at home!

Write down all the circled letters here:

Answer:

C I
Amazing Occupations

What do you want to be when you grow up? In Shel’s world, there are all kinds of amazing occupations. Match the job to the picture that describes it!

1. So please get your rags
   And your polishing jars,
   Somebody has to go polish the stars.

2. I paint the flamin’ red on Robin Redbreast,
   I pour the blue on bluegills by the shore.

3. The great sword-swallow Salomar,
   He wears no ties or collars.
   He leans back, opens up his mouth,
   And “Gulp,” his sword he swallers.

4. Sometimes it sure can be hard work
   To make somebody smile.
Verb Placement

Using the list of verbs below, complete Shel's poem
“Magic” from Where the Sidewalk Ends.

MAGIC

Sandra's ___________ a leprechaun,
Eddie's ___________ a troll,
Laurie ___________ with witches once,
Charlie ___________ some goblins' gold.
Donald ___________ a mermaid sing,
Susy ___________ an elf,
But all the magic I have ___________
I've had to ___________ myself.

VERBS:
danced
found
heard
known
make
seen
spied
touched

Can you write a poem that uses at least eight action words in two sentences?

YOUR POEM:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Reproducible Activity —— www.shelsilverstein.com
Fill in the Blanks!

Are you superstitious? Match the words below to the correct superstitions in this poem from A Light in the Attic.

SUPERSTITIOUS

If you are superstitious you’ll never step on __________ .

When you see a __________ you will never walk beneath it.

And if you ever spill some __________ you’ll thrown some ’cross your back,

And carry ’round a __________ ’s foot just in case you need it.

You’ll pick up any __________ that you find lying on the ground,

And never, never, ever throw your __________ upon the bed,

Or open an __________ when you are in the house.

You’ll bite your __________ each time you say

A thing you shouldn’t have said.

You’ll hold your __________ and cross your fingers

Walkin’ by a graveyard,

And number __________ ’s never gonna do you any good.

Black __________ will all look vicious, if you’re superstitious,

But I’m not superstitious (knock on __________ ).

ANSWERS:

breath cats cracks hat ladder pin rabbit

salt thirteen tongue umbrella wood

Reproducible Activity — www.shelsilverstein.com
Homonyms are words that sound alike but mean different things and can be spelled differently. In “Little Hoarse” from *Falling Up*, the words “hoarse” and “horse” are mixed up to get a laugh.

**LITTLE HOARSE**

My voice was raspy, rough, and cracked.
I said, “I am a little hoarse.”
They stuck a saddle on my back
And jumped on me—and now, of course,
They trot me and they gallop me,
They prance me up and down the town
Yellin’, “Giddy up, little hoarse.”
(Some things don’t mean the way they sound.)

Now it’s your turn to try out some homonyms!

Think of a homonym for each of the words below. What other homonym pairs can you think of? Try to come up with a joke that uses homonyms!

(Example: What’s black and white and **read** all over? A newspaper!)

1. New _______________________

2. Plain _______________________

3. See _______________________

4. Brake _______________________

*Reproducible Activity* — www.shelsilverstein.com
Think you can crack this code? Test your skills to figure out this famous first line. We’ve filled in a few to help you along!

S R G I X L I V I A E W E X V I I . . . ___ T ____ W __ _ T ____ . . .

E R H W L I P S Z I H E

___ ___ ___ V ___ ___

P M X X P I F S C

___ T T ___ ___

A = W B = X C = _ D = Z E = _ F = _ G = _

H = _ I = _ J = F K = G L = _ M = _ N = J

O = K P = _ Q = M R = N S = _ T = _

U = _ V = _ W = _ X = T Y = U Z = V
Creatures Crossword

In Don’t Bump the Glump, Shel Silverstein introduced us to many different creatures! Using your copy of Don’t Bump the Glump, seek out some of the amazing creatures by their descriptions below!

ACROSS
3. We can catch him if we wait, wait, wait
5. I don’t think he sees us
8. He feeds upon poets and tea
9. At the very first inkling of danger or dread, Will bury himself most completely
10. A native of Uganda Who sort of lost his way
11. You may bounce on his belly And call him old Nelly
12. I fear his wrath

DOWN
1. I think he’s been eating my mustache again
2. He’d love for you to scratch his belly
3. His claws are sharp, his teeth are double
4. That silly fish ... Has been swimming in my coffee
6. A model of meekness, With only one weakness, And that is for eating his mate
7. It’s up to me to announce him. . . . Uh . . . how do you pronounce him . . . ?
11. Don’t bump him

Reproducible Activity —————— www.shelsilverstein.com
We hope you enjoyed celebrating Poetry Month with Shel Silverstein! Here are the answers to our activities.

**Inventions**

1.

2.

3.

4.

**Vocabulary**

1. FEROCIOUS
2. AZURE
3. MEMENTO
4. PRANCE
5. PITY
6. RUBBER
7. DISTANT
8. EMBROIDERED
9. INVISIBLE
10. IMPROVE
11. DESIST

**Home Sweet Home**
Chicago, Illinois

**Amazing Occupations**

1.

2.

3.

4.

**By Any Other Name . . .**

1. Danny O’Dare

2. Benjamin Bunn

3. Millie McDeevit

4. Claude
Verb Placement
seen, touched, danced, found,
heard, spied, known, make

Fill in the blanks!
cracks, ladder, salt, rabbit, pin,
hat, umbrella, tongue, breath,
thirteen, cats, wood

Homonyms
1. knew
2. plane
3. sea
4. break

Cryptogram
Once there was a
tree . . . and she
loved a little boy.

Creatures Crossword
ACROSS
3. Grinch
5. TerribleFeezus
8. Bloath
9. Zumby
10. Panada
11. Gumplegutche
12. UnderslungZath

DOWN
1. SkitteringSkeep
2. Gheli
3. Gletcher
4. Crawfee
6. BulbulousBrole
7. Zrbangraldnk
11. Glump