

Rocky Mountain Classical Christian Schools

Speech Meet Official Selections

Sixth Grade

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Sixth Grade: Poetry

anyone lived in a pretty how town

E.E. Cummings

anyone lived in a pretty how town
(with up so floating many bells down)
spring summer autumn winter
he sang his didn't he danced his did.

Women and men(both little and small)
cared for anyone not at all
they sowed their isn't they reaped their same
sun moon stars rain

children guessed(but only a few
and down they forgot as up they grew
autumn winter spring summer)
that no one loved him more by more

when by now and tree by leaf
she laughed his joy she cried his grief
bird by snow and stir by still
anyone's any was all to her

someones married their everyones
laughed their cryings and did their dance
(sleep wake hope and then)they
said their nevers they slept their dream

stars rain sun moon
(and only the snow can begin to explain
how children are apt to forget to remember
with up so floating many bells down)

one day anyone died i guess
(and no one stooped to kiss his face)

busy folk buried them side by side
little by little and was by was

all by all and deep by deep
and more by more they dream their sleep
noone and anyone earth by april
wish by spirit and if by yes.

Women and men(both dong and ding)
summer autumn winter spring
reaped their sowing and went their came
sun moon stars rain

At Breakfast Time

Edgar A. Guest

My Pa he eats his breakfast in a funny sort of way:
We hardly ever see him at the first meal of the day.
Ma puts his food before him and he settles in his place
An' then he props the paper up and we can't see his face;
We hear him blow his coffee and we hear him chew his toast,
But it's for the morning paper that he seems to care the most.

Ma says that little children mighty grateful ought to be
To the folks that fixed the evening as the proper time for tea.
She says if meals were only served to people once a day,
An' that was in the morning just before Pa goes away,
We'd never know how father looked when he was in his place,
'Coz he'd always have the morning paper stuck before his face.

He drinks his coffee steamin' hot, an' passes Ma his cup
To have it filled a second time, an' never once looks up.
He never has a word to say, but just sits there an' reads,
An' when she sees his hand stuck out Ma gives him what he needs.
She guesses what it is he wants, 'coz it's no use to ask:
Pa's got to read his paper an' sometimes that's quite a task.

One morning we had breakfast an' his features we could see,
But his face was long an' solemn an' he didn't speak to me,
An' we couldn't get him laughin' an' we couldn't make him smile,
An' he said the toast was soggy an' the coffee simply vile.
Then Ma said: "What's the matter? Why are you so cross an' glum?"
An' Pa 'most took her head off 'coz the paper didn't come.

The Ballad of William Sycamore

Stephen Vincent Benét

MY FATHER, he was a mountaineer,
His fist was a knotty hammer;
He was quick on his feet as a running deer,
And he spoke with a Yankee stammer.

My mother, she was merry and brave,
And so she came to her labor,
With a tall green fir for her doctor's grave
And a stream for her comforting neighbor.

And some are wrapped in the linen fine,
And some like a gosling's scion;
But I was cradled on twigs of pine
In the skin of a mountain lion.

And some remember a white, starched lap
And a ewer with silver handles;
But I remember a coonskin cap
And the smell of bayberry candles.

The cabin logs, with the bark still rough,
And my mother who laughed at trifles,
And the tall, lank visitors, brown as snuff,
With their long, straight squirrel-rifles.

I can hear them dance, like a foggy song,
Through the deepest one of my slumbers,
The fiddle squeaking the boots along
And my father calling the numbers.

The quick feet shaking the puncheon-floor,
And the fiddle squealing and squealing,
Till the dried herbs rattled above the door
And the dust went up to the ceiling.

There are children lucky from dawn till dusk,
But never a child so lucky!

For I cut my teeth on "Money Musk"
In the Bloody Ground of Kentucky!

When I grew as tall as the Indian corn,
My father had little to lend me,
But he gave me his great, old powder-horn
And his woodsman's skill to befriend me.

With a leather shirt to cover my back,
And a redskin nose to unravel
Each forest sign, I carried my pack
As far as a scout could travel.

Till I lost my boyhood and found my wife,
A girl like a Salem clipper!
A woman straight as a hunting-knife
With eyes as bright as the Dipper!

We cleared our camp where the buffalo
feed,
Unheard-of streams were our flagons;
And I sowed my sons like the apple-seed
On the trail of the Western wagons.

They were right, tight boys, never sulky or
slow,
A fruitful, a goodly muster.
The eldest died at the Alamo.
The youngest fell with Custer.

The letter that told it burned my hand.
Yet we smiled and said, "So be it!"
But I could not live when they fenced the
land,
For it broke my heart to see it.

I saddled a red, unbroken colt

And rode him into the day there;
And he threw me down like a thunderbolt
And rolled on my as I lay there.

The hunter's whistle hummed in my ear
As the city-men tried to move me,
And I died in my boots like a pioneer
With the whole wide sky above me.

Now I lie in the heart of the fat, black soil,
Like the seed of the prairie-thistle;
It has washed my bones with honey and oil
And picked them clean as a whistle.

And my youth returns, like the rains of
Spring,
And my sons, like the wild-geese flying;
And I lie and hear the meadow-lark sing
And have much content in my dying.

Go play with the towns you have built of
blocks,
The towns where you would have bound
me!
I sleep in my earth like a tired fox,
And my buffalo have found me.

The Bells

Edgar Allan Poe

Hear the sledges with the bells—
Silver bells!

What a world of merriment their melody foretells!

How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!

While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,

To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells

From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—

From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!

What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!

Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!

From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune,

What a liquid ditty floats

To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!

Oh, from out the sounding cells,

What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!

How it swells!

How it dwells

On the Future! how it tells

Of the rapture that impels

To the swinging and the ringing

Of the bells, bells, bells,

Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,

Bells, bells, bells—

To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

Hear the loud alarum bells—
Brazen bells!
What tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
Too much horrified to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek,
Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire,
Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,
And a resolute endeavor
Now—now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
Of Despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!
Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows;
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling,
And the wrangling.
How the danger sinks and swells,
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells—
Of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

Hear the tolling of the bells—
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!

For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.

And the people—ah, the people—
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,

And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling

On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman—
They are neither brute nor human—

They are Ghouls:

And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,

Rolls

A pæan from the bells!

And his merry bosom swells

With the pæan of the bells!

And he dances, and he yells;

Keeping time, time, time,

In a sort of Runic rhyme,

To the pæan of the bells—

Of the bells:

Keeping time, time, time,

In a sort of Runic rhyme,

To the throbbing of the bells—

Of the bells, bells, bells—

To the sobbing of the bells;

Keeping time, time, time,

As he knells, knells, knells,

In a happy Runic rhyme,

To the rolling of the bells—

Of the bells, bells, bells—

To the tolling of the bells,

Of the bells, bells, bells, bells—

Bells, bells, bells—

To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

Beowulf, an excerpt

Translation by Seamus Heaney

In off the moors,
down through the mist bands
the God-cursed Grendel came greedily loping.
The bane of the race of men roamed forth, hunting
for a prey in the high hall.

Handsomely structured,
a sturdy frame braced with the best
of blacksmith's work inside and out.
No shielding elder believed
there was any power or person upon earth
capable of wrecking their horn-rigged hall.

Under the cloud-murk Grendel moved
towards it until it shone above him, a sheer keep
of fortified gold.

Spurned and joyless, he journeyed on ahead
and arrived at the bawn. The iron-braced door
turned on its hinge when his hands touched it.
Then his rage boiled over, he ripped open
the mouth of the building, maddening for blood, pacing
the length of the patterned floor
with his loathsome tread, while a baleful light,
flame more than light, flared
from his eyes. He saw many men in the mansion, sleeping,
a ranked company of kinsman and warriors
quartered together. And his glee was demonic,
picturing the mayhem:
Before morning he would rip
life from limb and devour them, feed on their flesh;
but his fate that night was due to change,
his days of ravening had come to an end.

For mighty and canny,
Hygelac's kinsman was keenly watching
for the first move the monster would make.
Nor did the creature keep him waiting

but struck suddenly and started in;
he grabbed and mauled a man on his bench,
bit into his bone-lappings, bolted down his blood
and gorged on him in lumps, leaving the body
utterly lifeless,
eaten up
hand and foot.

Venturing closer, his talon was raised to attack Beowulf
where he lay on the bed; he was bearing in
with open claw when the alert hero's
comeback and armlock forestalled him utterly.
The captain of evil discovered himself
in a handgrip harder than anything
he had ever encountered in any man
on the face of the earth. Every bone in his body
quailed and recoiled, but he could not escape.
He was desperate to flee to his den and hide
with the devil's litter, for in all his days
he had never been clamped or cornered like this.

Then Beowulf sprang to his feet
and got a firm hold. Fingers were bursting,
the monster back-tracking, the man overpowering.
The dread of the land was desperate to escape,
to take a roundabout road and flee
to his lair in the fens. The latching power
in his fingers weakened; it was the worst trip
the terror-monger had taken to Heorot.
And now the timbers trembled and sang,
a hall-session that harrowed every Dane inside the stockade.

Then an extraordinary wail arose, and bewildering fear
came over the Danes. Everyone felt it
who heard that cry as it echoed off the wall,
a God-cursed scream and strain of catastrophe.
The howl of the loser, the lament of the hell-serf
keening his wound.

Grendel:
overwhelmed and manacled tight
by Beowulf who of all men

was foremost
and strongest
in the days of this life.

The Blind Men and the Elephant

John Godfrey Sax

It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.

The First approached the Elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl:
"God bless me! But the Elephant
Is very like a wall!"

The Second, feeling of the tusk,
Cried "Ho! what have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me 'tis mighty clear
This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a spear!"

The Third approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up and spake;
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a snake!"

The Fourth reached out an eager hand
And felt about the knee.
"What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain," quoth he,

'Tis clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a tree!"

The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,
Said: "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a fan!"

The Sixth no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!

MORAL.
So oft in theologic wars,
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter ignorance
Of what each other mean,
And prate about an Elephant
No one of them has seen!

The Builders

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

Nothing useless is, or low;
Each thing in its place is best;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest.

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Truly shape and fashion these;
Leave no yawning gaps between;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen.

In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care

Each minute and unseen part;
For the Gods see everywhere.

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen;
Make the house, where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean.

Else our lives are incomplete,
Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways, where the feet
Stumble as they seek to climb.

Build to-day, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base;
And ascending and secure
Shall to-morrow find its place.

Thus alone can we attain
To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain,
And one boundless reach of sky.

Casey at the Bat

Ernest Lawrence Thayer

The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day:
The score stood four to two, with but one inning more to play,
And then when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did the same,
A pall-like silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest
Clung to the hope which springs eternal in the human breast;
They thought, "If only Casey could but get a whack at that—
We'd put up even money now, with Casey at the bat."

But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
And the former was a hoodoo, while the latter was a cake;
So upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,
For there seemed but little chance of Casey getting to the bat.

But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
And Blake, the much despised, tore the cover off the ball;
And when the dust had lifted, and men saw what had occurred,
There was Jimmy safe at second and Flynn a-hugging third.

Then from five thousand throats and more there rose a lusty yell;
It rumbled through the valley, it rattled in the dell;
It pounded on the mountain and recoiled upon the flat,
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.

There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place;
There was pride in Casey's bearing and a smile lit Casey's face.
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.

Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt;
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
Defiance flashed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.

And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,
And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there.

Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped—
“That ain’t my style,” said Casey. “Strike one!” the umpire said.

From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,
Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore;
“Kill him! Kill the umpire!” shouted someone on the stand;
And it’s likely they’d have killed him had not Casey raised his hand.

With a smile of Christian charity great Casey’s visage shone;
He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;
He signaled to the pitcher, and once more the dun sphere flew;
But Casey still ignored it and the umpire said, “Strike two!”

“Fraud!” cried the maddened thousands, and echo answered “Fraud!”
But one scornful look from Casey and the audience was awed.
They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles strain,
And they knew that Casey wouldn’t let that ball go by again.

The sneer is gone from Casey’s lip, his teeth are clenched in hate,
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate;
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey’s blow.

Oh, somewhere in this favoured land the sun is shining bright,
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light;
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout,
But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty Casey has struck out.

Castor Oil

Edgar A. Guest

I don't mind lickin's, now an'then,
An' I can even stand it when
My mother calls me in from play
To run some errand right away.
There's things 'bout bein' just a boy
That ain't all happiness an'joy,
But I suppose I've got to stand
My share o' trouble in this land,
An' I ain't kickin' much—but, say,
The worst of parents is that they
Don't realize just how they spoil
A feller's life with castor oil.

Of all the awful stuff, Gee Whiz!
That is the very worst there is.
An' every time if I complain,
Or say I've got a little pain,
There's nothing else that they can think
'Cept castor oil for me to drink.
I notice, though, when Pa is ill,
That he gets fixed up with a pill,
An' Pa don't handle Mother rough
An' make her swallow nasty stuff;
But when I've got a little ache,
It's castor oil I've got to take.

I don't mind goin' up to bed
Afore I get the chapter read;
I don't mind bein' scolded, too,
For lots of things I didn't do;
But, Gee! I hate it when they say,
"Come! Swallow this—an' right away!"
Let poets sing about the joy
It is to be a little boy,
I'll tell the truth about my case:
The poets here can have my place,
An' I will take their life of toil
If they will take my castor oil.

The Charge of the Light Brigade

Alfred Tennyson

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
"Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!" he said:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabers bare,

Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sab'ring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd:
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the saber-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volleyed and thundered:
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of death
Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them—
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?
Oh, the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.
Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade—
Noble six hundred!

The Children's Hour

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence;
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape, they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there I will keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away!

Christ and the Little Ones

Julia Gill

“The Master has come over Jordan”
Said Hannah the Mother one day
“He is healing the people who throng Him,
With a touch of His finger,” they say,
“And now I will carry the children,
Little Rachel and Samuel and John,
I shall carry the baby Esther,
For the Lord to look upon.”
The father looked at her kindly,
But he shook his head and smiled;
“Now who but a doting mother
Would think of a thing so wild?
If the children were tortured by demons,
Or dying of fever, ‘twere well;
Or had they the taint of the leper
Like many in Israel.”
“Nay, do not hinder me, Nathan,
I feel such a burden of care,
If I carry it to the Master,
Perhaps I shall leave it there.
If he laid his hand on the children,
My heart will be lighter, I know,
For a blessing for ever and ever
Will follow them as they go.”
So over the hills of Judah,

Along the vine-rows green,
With Esther asleep on her bosom,
And Rachel, her brothers between,
‘Mid the people who hung on His teaching,
Or waited His touch or His word—
Through the rows of proud Pharisees
listening
She pressed to the feet of the Lord.
“Now why shouldst thou hinder the Master,”
Said Peter, “With children like these?
Seest now how from morning to evening
He teacheth and healeth disease?”
Then Christ said, “Forbid not the children,
Permit them to come unto me!”
And he took in His arms little Esther
And Rachel He set on His knee.
And the heavy heart of the mother
Was lifted all earth-care above,
As He laid His hands on the brothers
And blest them with tenderest love;
As He said of the babes in His bosom,
“Of such is the kingdom of heaven—
And strength for all duty and trial,
That hour to her spirit was given.

Columbus

Joaquin Miller

Behind him lay the gray Azores,
Behind the Gates of Hercules;
Before him not the ghosts of shores,
Before him only shoreless seas.
The good mate said, "Now we must pray
For, lo, the very stars are gone.
Brave Adm'r'l, speak: what shall I say?"
"Why, say: Sail on! Sail on! And on!"

"My men grow mutinous day by day;
My men grow ghastly, wan and weak."
The stout mate thought of home; a spray
Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.
"What shall I say, brave Adm'r'l, say,
If we sight naught but sea at dawn?"
"Why, you shall say at break of day,
Sail on! Sail on! Sail on! And on!"

They sailed and sailed as winds might blow,
Until at last the blanched mate said;
"Why, now not even God would know
Should I and all my men fall dead.
These very winds forget their ways,

For God from these dread seas is gone.
Now speak brave Adm'r'l, speak and say."
He said: "Sail on! Sail on! And on!"

They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the
mate,
"This mad sea shows his teeth tonight,
He curls his lip, he lies in wait,
With lifted teeth as if to bite:
Brave Adm'r'l, say but one good word;
What shall we do when hope is gone?"
The words leaped as a leaping sword:
"Sail on! Sail on! Sail on! Sail on!"

Then pale, and worn, he kept his deck
And peered through darkness. Ah, that night
Of all dark nights! A light!
A light! A light! A light!
It grew, a starlight flag unfurled!
It grew to be time's burst of dawn.
He gained a world; he gave that world
Its greatest lesson. "On! Sail on!"

The Country Mouse and the City Mouse

Richard Scrafton Sharpe

In a snug little cot lived a fat little mouse,
Who enjoyed, unmolested, the range of the house;
With plain food content, she would breakfast on cheese,
She dined upon bacon, and supped on grey peas.

A friend from the town to the cottage did stray,
And he said he was come a short visit to pay;
So the mouse spread her table as gay as you please,
And brought the nice bacon and charming grey peas.

The visitor frowned, and he thought to be witty:
Cried he, "You must know, I am come from the city,
Where we all should be shocked at provisions like these,
For we never eat bacon and horrid grey peas.

"To town come with me, I will give you a treat:
Some excellent food, most delightful to eat.
With me shall you feast just as long as you please;
Come, leave this fat bacon and shocking grey peas."

This kind invitation she could not refuse,
And the city mouse wished not a moment to lose;
Reluctant she quitted the fields and the trees,
The delicious fat bacon and charming grey peas.

They slyly crept under a gay parlor door,
Where a feast had been given the evening before;
And it must be confessed they on dainties did seize,
Far better than bacon, or even grey peas.

Here were custard and trifle, and cheesecakes good store,
Nice sweetmeats and jellies, and twenty things more;
All that art had invented the palate to please,
Except some fat bacon and smoking grey peas.

They were nicely regaling, when into the room
Came the dog and the cat, and the maid with a broom:

They jumped in a custard both up to their knees;
The country mouse sighed for her bacon and peas.

Cried she to her friend, "Get me safely away,
I can venture no longer in London to stay;
For if oft you receive interruptions like these,
Give me my nice bacon and charming grey peas."

The Cross Was His Own

Author Unknown

They borrowed a bed to lay His head,
The Christ the Lord came down;
They borrowed a donkey in the mountain pass
For Him to ride to town.

But the crown that He wore
And the cross that He bore
were His own.

He borrowed the bread when the crowd he fed
On the grassy mountain side;
He borrowed the dish of broken fish
With which He satisfied.

But the crown that He wore
And the cross that He bore
were His own.

He borrowed the ship in which to sit
To teach the multitude;
He borrowed the nest in which to rest.

He had never a home as crude;
But the crown that He wore
And the cross that He bore
were His own.

He borrowed a room on the way to the tomb.
The passover lamb to eat.

They borrowed a cave, for Him a grave,
They borrowed a winding sheet.

But the crown that He wore
And the cross that He bore
were His own.

The thorns on His head were worn in my stead.
For me the Savior died.

For guilt of my sin the nails drove in
When Him they crucified.

Though the crown that He wore
And the cross that He bore
were His own.

They rightly were mine—instead.

Daniel Boone

Arthur Guiterman

Daniel Boone at twenty-one
Came with his tomahawk, knife, and gun
Home from the French and Indian War
To North Carolina and the Yadkin shore.
He married his maid with a golden band,
Built his house and cleared his land;
But the deep woods claimed their son again
And he turned his face from the homes of
men.

Over the Blue Ridge, dark and lone,
The Mountains of Iron, the Hills of Stone,
Braving the Shawnee's jealous wrath,
He made his way on the Warrior's Path.
Alone he trod the shadowed trails;
But he was lord of a thousand vales
As he roved Kentucky, far and near,
Hunting the buffalo, elk, and deer.
What joy to see, what joy to win
So fair a land for his kith and kin,
Of streams unstained and woods unhewn!
"Elbow room!" laughed Daniel Boone.

On the Wilderness Road that his axmen
made
The settlers flocked to the first stockade;
The deerskin shirts and the coonskin caps
Filed through the glens and the mountain
gaps;
And hearts were high in the fateful spring
When the land said "Nay!" to the stubborn
king.
While the men of the East of farm and town
Strove with the troops of the British Crown,
Daniel Boone from a surge of hate
Guarded a nation's westward gate.

Down in the fort in a wave of flame
The Shawnee horde and the Mingo came,
And the stout logs shook in a storm of lead;
But Boone stood firm and the savage fled.
Peace! And the settlers flocked anew,
The farm lands spread, the town lands grew;
But Daniel Boone was ill at ease
When he saw the smoke in his forest trees.
"There'll be no game in the country soon.
Elbow room!" cried Daniel Boone.

Straight as a pine at sixty-five—
Time enough for a man to thrive—
He launched his bateau on Ohio's breast
And his heart was glad as he oared it west;
There was kindly folk and his own true blood
Where great Missouri rolls his flood;
New woods, new streams, and room to
spare,
And Daniel Boone found comfort there.
Yet far he ranged toward the sunset still,
Where the Kansas runs and the Smoky Hill,
And the prairies toss, by the south wind
blown;
And he killed his bear on the Yellowstone.
But ever he dreamed of new domains
With vaster woods and wider plains;
Ever he dreamed of a world-to-be
Where there are no bounds and the soul is
free.
At fourscore-five, still stout and hale,
He heard a call to a farther trail;
So he turned his face where the stars are
strewn;
"Elbow room!" sighed Daniel Boone.

The Destruction of Sennacherib

George Gordon Byron

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

The Dreams

Eugene Field

Two dreams came down to earth one night
From the realm of mist and dew;
One was a dream of the old, old days,
And one was a dream of the new.
One was a dream of a shady lane
That led to the pickerel pond
Where the willows and rushes bowed
themselves
To the brown old hills beyond.
And the people that peopled the old-time
dream
Were pleasant and fair to see,
And the dreamer he walked with them again
As often of old walked he.
Oh, cool was the wind in the shady lane
That tangled his curly hair!
Oh, sweet was the music the robins made
To the springtime everywhere!
Was it the dew the dream had brought
From yonder midnight skies,
Or was it tears from the dear, dead years
That lay in the dreamer's eyes?
The other dream ran fast and free,
As the moon benignly shed
Her golden grace on the smiling face
In the little trundle-bed.
For 'twas a dream of times to come
Of the glorious noon of day
Of the summer
that follows the careless spring
When the child is done with play.

And 'twas a dream of the busy world
Where valorous deeds are done;
Of battles fought in the cause of right,
And of victories nobly won.
It breathed no breath of the dear old home
And the quiet joys of youth;
It gave no glimpse of the good old friends
Or the old-time faith and truth.
But 'twas a dream of youthful hopes,
And fast and free it ran,
And it told to a little sleeping child
Of a boy become a man!
These were the dreams that came one night
To earth from yonder sky;
There were the dreams two dreamers
dreamed
My little boy and I.
And in our hearts my boy and I
Were glad that it was so;
He loved to dream of days to come,
And I of long ago.
So from our dreams my boy and I
Unwillingly awoke,
But neither of his precious dream
Unto the other spoke.
Yet of the love we bore those dreams
Gave each his tender sign;
For there was triumph in his eyes—
And there were tears in mine!

Drop a Pebble in the Water

James W. Foley

Drop a pebble in the water: just a splash, and it is gone;
But there's half-a-hundred ripples, circling on and on and on,
Spreading, spreading from the center, flowing on out to the sea.
And there is no way of telling where the end is going to be.

Drop a pebble in the water: in a minute you forget,
But there's little waves a-flowing and there's ripples circling yet,
And those little waves a-flowing to a great big wave have grown;
You've disturbed a mighty river just by dropping in a stone.

Drop an unkind word, or careless: in a minute it is gone;
But there's half-a-hundred ripples circling on and on and on.
They keep spreading, spreading, spreading from the center as they go,
And there is no way to stop them, once you've started them to flow.

Drop an unkind word, or careless: in a minute you forget;
But there's little waves a-flowing, and there's ripples circling yet,
And perhaps in some sad heart a mighty wave of tears you've stirred,
And disturbed a life was happy 'ere you dropped that unkind word.

Drop a word of cheer and kindness: just a flash and it is gone;
But there's half-a-hundred ripples circling on and on and on,
Bearing hope and joy and comfort on each splashing, dashing wave
Till you wouldn't believe the volume of the one kind word you gave.

Drop a word of cheer and kindness: in a minute you forget;
But there's gladness still a-swelling, and there's joy a-circling yet,
And you've rolled a wave of comfort whose sweet music can be heard
Over miles and miles of water just by dropping one kind word.

The Dying Father

Les Cox

The doctors shook their heads and said,

“All hope for him is past ...

‘Twill be a miracle if he

Another day will last!”

The gray-haired man had read their lips.

Then asked to see his wife;

He told her, “Dear, call all the kids,

While I’m still blessed with life.”

With family then around his bed,

So anxious and forlorn,

He hugged and told them, one by one,

“I’ll see you in the mom.”

The last to see him was his son

Who was his “pride and joy”;

With tears that filled his eyes he said:

“Good-bye, my darling boy!”

His son replied, “Dear dad, why did

You say these words to me

Won’t I meet you when comes the morn—

I’m in your family?”

His father then replied, “Dear son,

The Devil’s way you’ve trod ...

And where I’m going you can’t come,

Unless you trust in God!...

So many tears I’ve shed for you—

Oft times I couldn’t sleep;

For like my Savior I so love

His lost and dying sheep!”

This son was filled with deepest grief,

Then hugged his dying dad,

And said, “Could Jesus love someone

Who’s been so mean and bad?”

His father said, “Oh yes, He can—

Just bow your head and pray!”

Then Jesus came into his heart,

And joy was great that day!

And though death took him, heaven left

A smile none could erase;
"Safe in the fold!" was written on
That blessed father's face!

Father William (*also known as The Old Man's Complaints*. And how he gained them.)

Robert Southey

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
The few locks which are left you are grey;
You are hale, Father William, a hearty old man,
Now tell me the reason I pray.

In the days of my youth, Father William replied,
I remember'd that youth would fly fast,
And abused not my health and my vigour at first
That I never might need them at last.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
And pleasures with youth pass away,
And yet you lament not the days that are gone,
Now tell me the reason I pray.

In the days of my youth, Father William replied,
I remember'd that youth could not last;
I thought of the future whatever I did,
That I never might grieve for the past.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
And life must be hastening away;
You are cheerful, and love to converse upon death!
Now tell me the reason I pray.

I am cheerful, young man, Father William replied,
Let the cause thy attention engage;
In the days of my youth I remember'd my God!
And He hath not forgotten my age.

Hiawatha's Childhood

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis,
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis.
Dark behind it rose the forest,
Rose the black and gloomy pine-trees,
Rose the firs with cones upon them;
Bright before it beat the water.
Beat the clear and sunny water,
Beat the shining Big-Sea-Water.

There the wrinkled old Nokomis
Nursed the little Hiawatha.
Rocked him in his linden cradle,
Bedded soft in moss and rushes,
Safely bound with reindeer sinews;
Stilled his fretful wail by saying,
"Hush, the Naked Bear will hear thee!"
Lulled him into slumber, singing,
"Ewa-yea! my little owlet!
Who is this, that lights the wigwam?
With his great eyes lights the wigwam?
Ewa-yea! my little owlet!"

Many things Nokomis taught him
Of the stars that shine in heaven;
Showed him ishkoodah, the comet,
Ishkoodah, with fiery tresses,
Showed the Death-Dance of the spirits,
Warriors with their plumes and war-clubs
Flaring far away to northward
In the frosty nights of winter;
Showed the broad white road in heaven,
Pathway of the ghosts, the shadows,
Running straight across the heavens,
Crowded with the ghosts, the shadows.

At the door on summer evenings,
Sat the little Hiawatha,
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,
Heard the lapping of the waters,

Sounds of music, words of wonder;
"Minne-wawa!" said the pine-trees,
"Mudway-aushka!" said the water.

Saw the fire-fly Wah-wah-taysee,
Flitting through the dusk of evening,
With the twinkle of its candle
Lighting up the brakes and bushes,
And he sang the song of children,
Sang the song Nokomis taught him;
"Wah-wah-taysee, little fire-fly,
Little flitting, white-fire insect,
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,
Light me with your little candle,
Ere upon my bed I lay me,
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids!"

Saw the moon rise from the water,
Rippling, rounding from the water,
Saw the flecks and shadows on it,
Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?"
And good Nokomis answered:

"Once a warrior, very angry,
Seized his grandmother, and threw her
Up into the sky at midnight;
Right against the moon he threw her;
'Tis her body that you see there."

Saw the rainbow in the heaven,
In the eastern sky the rainbow,
Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered:

"'Tis the heaven of flowers you see there;
All the wild-flowers of the forest,
All the lilies of the prairie,

When on earth they fade and perish,
Blossom in that heaven above us."
When he heard the owls at midnight,
Hooting, laughing in the forest,
"What is that?" he cried in terror;

"What is that," he said, "Nokomis?"

And the good Nokomis answered;

"That is but the owl and owlet,

Talking in their native language,

Talking, scolding at each other."

Then the little Hiawatha

Learned their names and all their secrets,

How they built their nests in summer,

Where they hid themselves in winter,

Talked with them whene'er he met them,

Called them "Hiawatha's Chickens."

Of all beasts he learned the language,

Learned their names and all their secrets,

How the beavers built their lodges,

Where the squirrels hid their acorns,

How the reindeer ran so swiftly,

Why the rabbit was so timid,

Talked with them whene'er he met them,

Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."

The House with Nobody in It

Joyce Kilmer

Whenever I walk to Suffron along the Erie track
I go by a poor old farmhouse with its shingles broken and black.
I suppose I've passed it a hundred times, but I always stop for a minute
And look at the house, the tragic house, the house with nobody in it.

I never have seen a haunted house, but hear there are such things;
That they hold the talk of spirits, their mirth and sorrowings.
I know this house isn't haunted, and I wish it were, I do;
For it wouldn't be so lonely if it had a ghost or two.

The house on the road to Suffron needs a dozen panes of glass,
And somebody ought to weed the walk and take a scythe to the grass.
It needs new paint and shingles, and the vines should be trimmed and tied;
But what it needs the most of all is some people living inside.

If I had a lot of money and all my debts were paid
I'd put a gang of men to work with brush and saw and spade.
I'd buy that place and fix it up the way it used to be
And I'd find some people who wanted a home and give it to them free.

Now, a new house standing empty, with staring window and door,
Looks idle, perhaps, and foolish, like a hat on its block in the store.
But there's nothing mournful about it; it cannot be sad and lone
For the lack of something within it that it has never known.

But a house that has done what a house should do, a house that has sheltered life,
That has put its loving wooden arms around a man and his wife,
A house that has echoed a baby's laugh and held up his stumbling feet,
Is the saddest sight, when it's left alone, that ever your eyes could meet.

So whenever I go to Suffron along the Erie track
I never go by the empty house without stopping and looking back,
Yet it hurts me to look at the crumbling roof and the shutters fallen apart,
For I can't help thinking the poor old house is a house with a broken heart.

How Do You Tackle Your Work?

Edgar A. Guest

How do you tackle your work each day?
Are you scared of the job you find?
Do you grapple the task that comes your way
With a confident, easy mind?
Do you stand right up to the work ahead
Or fearfully pause to view it?
Do you start to toil with a sense of dread
Or feel that you're going to do it?

You can do as much as you think you can,
But you'll never accomplish more;
If you're afraid of yourself, young man,
There's little for you in store.
For failure comes from the inside first,
It's there if we only knew it,
And you can win, though you face the worst,
If you feel that you're going to do it.

Success! It's found in the soul of you,
And not in the realm of luck!
The world will furnish the work to do,
But you must provide the pluck.
You can do whatever you think you can,
It's all in the way you view it.
It's all in the start that you make, young man:
You must feel that you're going to do it.

How do you tackle your work each day?
With confidence clear, or dread?
What to yourself do you stop and say
When a new task lies ahead?
What is the thought that is in your mind?
Is fear ever running through it?
If so, just tackle the next you find
By thinking you're going to do it.

The Fish

Elizabeth Bishop

I caught a tremendous fish
and held him beside the boat
half out of water, with my hook
fast in a corner of his mouth.
He didn't fight.
He hadn't fought at all.
He hung a grunting weight,
battered and venerable
and homely. Here and there
his brown skin hung in strips
like ancient wallpaper,
and its pattern of darker brown
was like wallpaper:
shapes like full-blown roses
stained and lost through age.
He was speckled with barnacles,
fine rosettes of lime,
and infested
with tiny white sea-lice,
and underneath two or three
rags of green weed hung down.
While his gills were breathing in
the terrible oxygen
- the frightening gills,
fresh and crisp with blood,
that can cut so badly I thought of the coarse
white flesh
packed in like feathers,
the big bones and the little bones,
the dramatic reds and blacks
of his shiny entrails,
and the pink swim-bladder
like a big peony.
I looked into his eyes
which were far larger than mine
but shallower, and yellowed,
the irises backed and packed
with tarnished tinfoil

seen through the lenses
of old scratched isinglass.
They shifted a little, but not
to return my stare.
- It was more like the tipping
of an object toward the light.
I admired his sullen face,
the mechanism of his jaw,
and then I saw
that from his lower lip
- if you could call it a lip
grim, wet, and weaponlike,
hung five old pieces of fish-line,
or four and a wire leader
with the swivel still attached,
with all their five big hooks
grown firmly in his mouth.
A green line, frayed at the end
where he broke it, two heavier lines,
and a fine black thread
still crimped from the strain and snap
when it broke and he got away.
Like medals with their ribbons
frayed and wavering,
a five-haired beard of wisdom
trailing from his aching jaw.
I stared and stared
and victory filled up
the little rented boat,
from the pool of bilge
where oil had spread a rainbow
around the rusted engine
to the bailer rusted orange,
the sun-cracked thwarts,
the oarlocks on their strings,
the gunnels- until everything
was rainbow, rainbow, rainbow!
And I let the fish go.

I Hear America Singing

Walt Whitman

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand singing on the steamboat
deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands,
The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in the morning, or at noon intermission or at
sundown,
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of the girl sewing or
washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,
The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly,
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

If

Rudyard Kipling

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about don't deal in lies,
Or being hated don't give away to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;
If you can dream and not make dreams your master;
If you can think and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop to build 'em up with wornout tools;
If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch and toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which say to them: "Hold on!"
If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

If Jesus Came to Your House

Author Unknown

If Jesus came to your house to spend a day or two,
 If He came unexpectedly, I wonder what you'd do.
Oh, I know you'd give your nicest room to such an honored Guest,
 And all the food you'd serve to Him would be the very best—
And you would keep assuring Him you're glad to have Him there,
 That serving Him in your home is joy beyond compare!
But when you saw Him coming, would you meet Him at the door,
 With arms outstretched in welcome to your Heavenly Visitor?
Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in,
 Or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they'd been?
Would you turn off the radio and hope He hadn't heard—
 And wish you hadn't uttered that last, loud, hasty word?
Would you hide your worldly music and put some hymn books out?
 Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?
And I wonder-if the Savior spent a day or two with you—
 Would you go right on doing the things you always do?
Would you keep right on saying the things you always say?
 Would life for you continue as it does from day to day?
Would your family conversation keep up its usual pace?
 And would you find it hard each meal to say a table grace?
Would you sing the songs you always sing and read the books you read,
 And let Him know the things on which your mind and spirit feed?
Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you'd planned to go,
 Or would you, maybe, change your plans for just a day or so?
Would you be glad to have Him stay forever on and on,
 Or would you sigh with great relief when He at last was gone?
It might be interesting to know the things that you would do
 If Jesus came in person to spend some time with you.

In Times Like These

Helen Steiner Rice

We read the headlines daily
and listen to the news,
We shake our heads despairingly
and glumly sing the blues—
We are restless and dissatisfied
and we do not feel secure,
We are vaguely discontented
with the things we must endure ...

This violent age we live in
is filled with nameless fears
As we listen to the newscasts
that come daily to our ears,
And we view the threatening future
with sad sobriety
As we're surrounded daily
by increased anxiety ...

How can we find security
or stand on solid ground
When there's violence and dissension
and confusion all around;
Where can we go for refuge
from the rising tides of hate,
Where can we find a haven
to escape this shameful fate...

So instead of reading headlines
that disturb the heart and mind,
Let us open up the BIBLE
and in doing so we'll find
That this age is no different
from the millions gone before,
But in every hour of crisis
God has opened up a door
For all who seek His guidance
and trust His all-wise plan,
For God provides protection
beyond that devised by man...

And we learn that each TOMORROW
is not ours to understand,
But lies safely in the keeping
of the great Creator's Hand,
And to have the steadfast knowledge
that WE NEVER WALK ALONE
And to rest in the assurance
that our EVERY NEED IS KNOWN
Will help dispel our worries,
our anxieties and care,
For doubt and fear are vanquished
in THE PEACEFULNESS OF PRAYER

The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers

Felicia Hemans

The breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
The woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed;

The heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted, came;
Not with the roll of stirring drums
And the trumpet that sings of fame.

Admidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods
rang
To the anthem of the free.

There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim-band—
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow, serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod;
They have left unstained what there they
found,
Freedom to worship God.

Live Christmas Every Day

Helen Steiner Rice

Christmas is more than a day
at the end of the year,
More than a season
of joy and good cheer,
Christmas is really
God's pattern for living
To be followed all year
by unselfish giving.
For the holiday season
awakens good cheer
And draws us closer
to those we hold dear,
And we open our hearts
and find it is good
To live among men
as we always should.
But as soon as the tinsel
is stripped from the tree,
The spirit of Christmas
fades silently
Into the background
of daily routine,

And is lost in the whirl
of life's busy scene.
And all unaware
we miss and forego
The greatest blessing
that mankind can know,
For if we lived Christmas
every day, as we should,
And made it our aim
to always do good,
We'd find the lost key
to meaningful living
That comes not from getting,
but from unselfish giving.
And we'd know the great joy
of Peace upon Earth,
Which was the real purpose
of our Savior's birth,
For in the Glad Tidings
of that first Christmas night,
God showed us THE WAY
and the Truth and the Light!

The Lost Purse

Edgar A. Guest

I remember the excitement and the terrible alarm
That worried everybody when William broke his arm;
An' how frantic Pa and Ma got only j es' the other day
When they couldn't find the baby 'coz he'd up and
walked away; But I'm sure there's no excitement that our house
has ever shook Like the times Ma can't remember where she's put
her pocketbook.

When the laundry man is standin' at the door an'wants his pay
Ma hurries to get it, an' the fun starts right away.
She hustles to the sideboard, 'coz she knows exactly where
She can put her hand right on it, but alas! it isn't there.
She tries the parlor table an' she goes upstairs to look,
An' once more she can't remember where she put her pocketbook.

She tells us that she had it just a half an hour ago,
An' now she cannot find it though she's hunted high and low;
She's searched the kitchen cupboard an' the bureau drawers upstairs,
An' it's not behind the sofa nor beneath the parlor chairs.
She makes us kids get busy searching every little nook,
An' this time say she's certain that she's lost her pocketbook.

She calls Pa at the office an' he laughs I guess, for then
She always mumbles something 'bout the heartlessness of men.
She calls to mind a peddler who came to the kitchen door,
An' she's certain from his whiskers an'the shabby clothes he wore
An' his dirty shirt an' collar that he must have been a crook,
An' she's positive that feller came and got her pocketbook.

But at last she allus finds it in some queer an' funny spot,
Where she'd put it in a hurry, an'had somehow clean forgot;
An' she heaves a sigh of gladness, an' she says, "Well, I declare,
I would take an oath this minute that I never put it there."
An' we're peaceable an' quiet till next time Ma goes to look
An' finds she can't remember where she put her pocketbook.

Ma and the Auto

Edgar A. Guest

Before we take an auto ride Pa says to Ma: "My dear,
Now just remember I don't need suggestions from the rear.
If you will just sit still back there and hold in check your fright,
I'll take you where you want to go and get you back all right.
Remember that my hearing's good and also I'm not blind,
And I can drive this car without suggestions from behind."

Ma promises that she'll keep still, then off we gayly start,
But soon she notices ahead a peddler and his cart.
"You'd better toot your horn," says she, "to let him know we're near;
He might turn out!" and Pa replies: "just shriek at him, my dear."
And then he adds: "Some day, so me guy will make a lot of dough
By putting horns on tonneau seats for women-folks to blow!"

A little farther on Ma cries: "He signaled for a turn!"
And Pa says: "Did he?" in a tone that's hot enough to burn.
"Oh, there's a boy on roller skates!" cries Ma. "Now do go slow.
I'm sure he doesn't see our car." And Pa says: "I dunno,
I think I don't need glasses yet, but really it may be
That I am blind and cannot see what's right in front of me."

If Pa should speed the car a bit some rigs to hurry past
Ma whispers: "Do be careful now. You're driving much too fast."
And all the time she's pointing out the dangers of the street
And keeps him posted on the roads where trolley cars he'll meet.
Last night when we got safely home, Pa sighed and said: "My dear,
I'm sure we've all enjoyed the drive you gave us from the rear!"

Mending Wall

Robert Frost

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun,
And makes gaps even two can pass
abreast.

The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a
stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I
mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them
made,
But at spring mending-time we find them
there.

I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to
each.

And some are loaves and some so nearly
balls

We have to use a spell to make them
balance:

'Stay where you are until our backs are
turned!'

We wear our fingers rough with handling
them.

Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, 'Good fences make good
neighbors'.

Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:
'Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows?

But here there are no cows.

Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down.' I could say '.Elves' to
him,

But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage
armed.

He moves in darkness as it seems to me
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, "Good fences make good
neighbors."

Mother's Glasses

Edgar A. Guest

I've told about the times that Ma can't find her pocketbook
And how we have to hustle round for it to help her look,
But there's another care we know that often comes our way,
I guess it happens easily a dozen times a day.
It starts when first the postman through the door a letter passes,
And Ma says: "Goodness gracious me! Wherever are my glasses?"

We hunt 'em on the mantelpiece an' by the kitchen sink,
Until Ma says: "Now, children, stop, an' give me time to think
Just when it was I used 'em last an' just exactly where.
Yes, now I know—the dining room. I'm sure you'll find 'em there."
We even look behind the clock, we busy boys an' lasses,
Until somebody runs across Ma's missing pair of glasses.

We've found 'em in the Bible, an' we've found 'em in the flour,
We've found 'em in the sugar bowl, an' once we looked an hour
Before we came across 'em in the padding of her chair;
An' many a time we've found 'em in the topknot of her hair,
It's a search that ruins order an' the home completely wrecks,
For there's no place where you may not find poor Ma's elusive specs.

But we're mighty glad, I tell you, that the duty's ours to do,
An' we hope to hunt those glasses till our time of life is through;
It's a little bit of service that is joyous in its thrill,
It's a task that calls us daily an' we hope it always will.
Rich or poor, the saddest mortals of all the joyless masses
Are the ones who have no mother dear to lose her reading glasses.

Mother's Ugly Hands

Mary Mason

When Jean was just a little girl
She used to play for hours
With Tinker-Cat or Peter-Dog,
Or help Mom with her flowers.
But then sometimes her mom would stop
The work she had to do
To read to Jean or play with her;
And as God planned, Jean grew.
But then one day she realized
Her mom was not the same
As those of other little girls;
And Jean grew up with shame,
For Mother's hands were ugly hands,
Misformed and scarred and red.
And somehow love for Mother changed
To selfishness and dread.
Somehow she never asked her mom
How those scars came to be,
Too busy with the selfish fear
That other eyes might see.
But then one time Jean's grandma came
With suitcase packed to stay,
And it was at her grandma's feet
The truth came out one day.
"When you were just a tiny thing,
About the age of two
One day your clothing caught on fire,
Though how we never knew;
Your mother said she scarcely felt
The searing tongues of flame,

As with her hands she fought the fire.
And that is how she came
To have the scars you hate so much;
She did it all for you.
You were not burned as bad as she,
And so you never knew."
"Oh, Grandma, I am so ashamed!"
And Jean began to weep.
"To think my mother loved me so!"
That night she couldn't sleep
And made her way to Mother's room
And in a rush of tears
Received forgiveness for the hate
She harbored all those years.
That's how it is with Mother love;
Of death it's unafraid.
So very much like dying love
On Calvary's hill portrayed.
Our Jesus too, bears ugly marks
Of suffering and of pain.
He did it all for you and me,
But it was not in vain.
For, as we view His suffering,
We, too, must cry, "Forgive!"
For only through His dying love
Are we prepared to live.
I'm thankful, God, for Mother love
Which bravely fought the fire,
And for my Jesus' dying love
Which—that love did inspire.

The Naming Of Cats

T. S. Eliot

The Naming of Cats is a difficult matter,
It isn't just one of your holiday games;
You may think at first I'm as mad as a hatter
When I tell you, a cat must have THREE DIFFERENT NAMES.
First of all, there's the name that the family use daily,
Such as Peter, Augustus, Alonzo or James,
Such as Victor or Jonathan, George or Bill Bailey--
All of them sensible everyday names.
There are fancier names if you think they sound sweeter,
Some for the gentlemen, some for the dames:
Such as Plato, Admetus, Electra, Demeter--
But all of them sensible everyday names.
But I tell you, a cat needs a name that's particular,
A name that's peculiar, and more dignified,
Else how can he keep up his tail perpendicular,
Or spread out his whiskers, or cherish his pride?
Of names of this kind, I can give you a quorum,
Such as Munkustrap, Quaxo, or Coricopat,
Such as Bombalurina, or else Jellylorum
Names that never belong to more than one cat.
But above and beyond there's still one name left over,
And that is the name that you never will guess;
The name that no human research can discover--
But THE CAT HIMSELF KNOWS, and will never confess.
When you notice a cat in profound meditation,
The reason, I tell you, is always the same:
His mind is engaged in a rapt contemplation
Of the thought, of the thought, of the thought of his name:
His ineffable effable
Effanineffable
Deep and inscrutable singular Name.

Nathan Hale

Francis Miles Finch

To drumbeat, and heartbeat,
A soldier marches by;
There is color in his cheek,
There is courage in his eye,
Yet to drumbeat and heartbeat
In a moment he must die.
By the starlight and moonlight,
He seeks the Briton's camp;
He hears the rustling flag,
And the armed sentry's tramp;
And the starlight and moonlight
His silent wanderings lamp.
With slow tread and still tread,
He scans the tented line;
And he counts the battery guns,
By the gaunt and shadowy pine;
And his slow tread and still tread
Gives no warning sign.
The dark wave, the plumed wave,
It meets his eager glance;
And it sparkles 'neath the stars,
Like the glimmer of a lance
A dark wave, a plumed wave,
On an emerald expanse.
A sharp clang, a steel clang,
And terror in the sound!
For the sentry, falcon-eyed,
In the camp a spy hath found;
With a sharp clang, a steel clang,
The patriot is bound.
With calm brow, and steady brow,
He listens to his doom;
In his look there is no fear,
Nor a shadow-trace of gloom;
But with calm brow and steady brow,
He robes him for the tomb.
In the long night, the still night

He kneels upon the sod;
And the brutal guards withhold
E'en the solemn Word of God!
In the long night, the still night,
He walks where Christ hath trod.
'Neath the blue morn, the sunny morn,
He dies upon the tree;
And he mourns that he can lose
But one life for Liberty;
And in the blue morn, the sunny morn,
His spirit wings are free.
But his last words, his message-words,
They burn, lest friendly eye
Should read how proud and calm
A patriot could die,
With his last words, his dying words,
A soldier's battle cry.
From the Fame-leaf and Angel-leaf,
From monument and urn,
The sad of earth, the glad of heaven,
His tragic fate shall learn;
But on Fame-leaf and Angel-leaf
The name of HALE shall burn!

On First Looking into Chapman's Homer

John Keats

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

Partridge Time

Edgar A. Guest

When Pa came home last night he had a package in his hand;
“Now Ma,” said he, “I’ve something here which you will say is grand.
A friend of mine got home today from hunting in the woods,
He’s been away a week or two, and got back with the goods.
He had a corking string of birds-I wish you could have seen ‘em!”

“If you’ve brought any partridge home,” said Ma, “you’ll have to clean ‘em.”
“Now listen, Ma,” said Pa to her, “these birds are mighty rare.
I know a lot of men who’d pay a heap to get a pair.
But it’s against the law to sell this splendid sort of game,
And if you bought ‘em you would have to use a different name.

It isn’t every couple has a pair to eat between ‘em.”
“If you got any partridge there,” says Ma, “you’ll have to clean ‘em.”
“Whenever kings want something fine, it’s partridge that they eat,
and millionaires prefer ‘em, too, to any sort of meat.
About us everywhere tonight are folks who’d think it fine
If on a brace of partridge they could just sit down to dine.
They’ve got a turkey skinned to death; they’re sweeter than a chicken.”
“If that’s what you’ve brought home,” says Ma, “you’ll have to do the pickin’.”

And then Pa took off the paper and showed Ma what he had.
“There, look at those two beauties! Don’t they start you feelin’ glad?”
An’ ain’t your mouth a’waterin’ to think how fine they’ll be
When you’ve cooked ‘em up for dinner, one for you an’ one for me?”
But Ma just turned her nose up high, and said, when she had seen ‘em,
“You’ll never live to eat ‘em if you wait for me to clean ‘em.”

Peace Hymn of the Republic

Henry van Dyke

O Lord, our God, Thy mighty hand
 Hath made our country free;
From all her broad and happy land
 May praise arise to Thee.
Fulfill the promise of her youth,
 Her liberty defend;
By law and order, love and truth,
 America befriend!
The strength of every state increase
 In Union's golden chain;
Her thousand cities fill with peace,
 Her million fields with grain.
The virtues of her mingled blood
 In one new people blend;
By unity and brotherhood
 America befriend!
O suffer not her feet to stray;
 But guide her untaught might,
That she may walk in peaceful day,
 And lead the world in light.
Bring down the proud, lift up the poor,
 Unequal ways amend;
By justice, nation-wide and sure.
 America befriend!
Through all the waiting land proclaim
 Thy gospel of good-will;
And may the music of Thy name
 In every bosom thrill.
O'er hill and vale, from sea to sea,
 Thy holy reign extend;
By faith and hope and charity,
 America befriend!

Problem Child

J. E. Faulker

How shall I deal with Roger, Mrs. Prodger?

I've never yet been able

To sit him at a table

And make him paint a label

For the salmon in the kindergarten shop.

 But he's full of animation

 When I mention a dictation

 And he never wants a spelling test to stop.

I've encouraged self-expression

And intentional digression

But I think I'll have to let the system drop.

 For the normal child, like Roger,

 Is a do-er, not a dodger,

And my methods, Mrs. Prodger, are a flop.

How shall I deal with Roger, Mrs. Prodger?

I've had projects on the fairies,

On markets, shops and dairies;

I've had projects on the prairies,

But the little fellow doesn't want to play:

 Instead he has a yearning

 For unreasonable learning,

 And wants to do arithmetic all day.

He shows a strong proclivity

For purposeless activity,

And doesn't want experience in clay.

So I rather think that Roger

Is a do-er, not a dodger,

And how would you deal with Roger, can you say?

A Psalm of Life

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!-
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,

Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, how'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

The Real Successes

Edgar A. Guest

You think that the failures are many,
You think the successes are few,
But you judge by the rule of the penny,
And not by the good that men do.
You judge men by standards of treasure
That merely obtain upon earth,
When the brother you're snubbing may measure
Full-length to God's standard of worth.

The failures are not in the ditches,
The failures are not in the ranks,
They have missed the acquirement of riches,
Their fortunes are not in the banks.
Their virtues are never paraded,
Their worth is not always in view,
But they're fighting their battles unaided,
And fighting them honestly, too.

There are failures today in high places
The failures aren't all in the low;
There are rich men with scorn in their faces
Whose homes are but castles of woe.
The homes that are happy are many,
And numberless fathers are true;
And this is the standard, if any,
By which we must judge what men do.

Wherever loved ones are awaiting
The toiler to kiss and caress,
Though in Bradstreet's he hasn't a rating,
He still is a splendid success.
If the dear ones who gather about him
And know what he's striving to do
Have never a reason to doubt him,
Is he less successful than you?

You think that the failures are many,

You judge by men's profits in gold;
You judge by the rule of the penny-In
this true success isn't told.
This falsely man's story is telling,
For wealth often brings on distress,
But wherever love brightens a dwelling,
There lives, rich or poor, a success.

Rereading Frost

Linda Pastan

Sometimes I think all the best poems
have been written already,
and no one has time to read them,
so why try to write more?

At other times though,
I remember how one flower
in a meadow already full of flowers
somehow adds to the general fireworks effect

as you get to the top of a hill
in Colorado, say, in high summer
and just look down at all that brimming color.
I also try to convince myself

that the smallest note of the smallest
instrument in the band,
the triangle for instance,
is important to the conductor

who stands there, pointing his finger
in the direction of the percussions,
demanding that one silvery ping.
And I decide not to stop trying,

at least not for a while, though in truth
I'd rather just sit here reading
how someone else has been acquainted
with the night already, and perfectly

The Sandpiper

Celia Thaxter

Across the narrow beach we flit,
One little sandpiper and I,
And fast I gather, bit by bit,
The scattered driftwood bleached and dry.
The wild waves reach their hands for it,
The wild wind raves, the tide runs high,
As up and down the beach we flit,—
One little sandpiper and I.

Above our heads the sullen clouds
Scud black and swift across the sky;
Like silent ghosts in misty shrouds
Stand out the white lighthouses high.
Almost as far as an eye can reach
I see the close-reefed vessels fly,
As fast we flit along the beach,—
One little sandpiper and I.

I watch him as he skims along,
Uttering his sweet and mournful cry.
He starts not at my fitful song,
Nor flash of fluttering drapery.
He has no thought of any wrong;
He scans me with a fearless eye:
Staunch friends are we, well tried and strong,
The little sandpiper and I.

Comrade, where wilt thou be tonight,
When the loosed storm breaks furiously?
My driftwood fire will bum so bright!
To what warm shelter canst thou fly?
I do not fear for thee, through wroth
The tempest rushes through the sky:
For are we not God's children both,
Thou, little sandpiper, and I?

Sheridan's Ride

Thomas Buchanan Read

UP from the South at break of day,
Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,
The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
Like a herald in haste, to the chieftain's door,
The terrible grumble, and rumble, and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war,
Thundered along the horizon's bar;
And louder yet into Winchester rolled
The roar of that red sea uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold,
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good, broad highway leading down;
And there, through the flush of the morning light,
A steed as black as the steeds of night,
Was seen to pass, as with eagle flight,
As if he knew the terrible need;
He stretched away with his utmost speed;
Hills rose and fell; but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprung from those swift hoofs, thundering South,
The dust, like smoke from the cannon's mouth;
Or the trail of a comet, sweeping faster and faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster.
The heart of the steed, and the heart of the master
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls,
Impatient to be where the battle-field calls;
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full play,
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

Under his spurning feet the road

Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed,
And the landscape sped away behind
Like an ocean flying before the wind,
And the steed, like a barque fed with furnace ire,
Swept on, with his wild eyes full of fire.
But lo! he is nearing his heart's desire;
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away.

The first that the general saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops;
What was done? what to do? a glance told him both,
Then, striking his spurs, with a terrible oath,
He dashed down the line 'mid a storm of huzzas,
And the wave of retreat checked its course there, because
The sight of the master compelled it to pause.
With foam and with dust the black charger was gray;
By the flash of his eye, and the red nostril's play,
He seemed to the whole great army to say,
"I have brought you Sheridan all the way
From Winchester, down to save the day!"

Hurrah! hurrah for Sheridan!
Hurrah! hurrah for horse and man!
And when their statues are placed on high,
Under the dome of the Union sky,
The American soldier's Temple of Fame;
There with the glorious general's name,
Be it said, in letters both bold and bright,
"Here is the steed that saved the day,
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,
From Winchester, twenty miles away!"

The Singer's Revenge

Edgar A. Guest

It was a singer of renown who did a desperate thing,
For all who asked him out to dine requested him to sing.
This imposition on his art they couldn't seem to see.
For friendship's sake they thought he ought to work without a fee.

And so he planned a dinner, too, of fish and fowl and wine
And asked his friends of high degree to come with him to dine.
His banker and his tailor came, his doctor, too, was there,
Likewise a leading plumber who'd become a millionaire.

The singer fed his guests and smiled, a gracious host was he;
With every course he ladled out delicious flattery,
And when at last the meal was done, he tossed his man a wink,
"Good friends," said he, "I've artists here you'll all enjoy, I think.

"I've trousers needing buttons, Mr. Tailor, if you please,
Will you oblige us all tonight by sewing some on these?
I've several pairs all handy-by, now let your needle jerk;
My guests will be delighted to behold you as you work.

"Now, doctor, just a moment, pray, I cannot sing a note;
I asked you here because I thought you'd like to spray my throat;
I know that during business hours for this you charge a fee,
But surely you'll be glad to serve my friends, tonight, and me?"

The plumber then was asked if he would mend a pipe or two;
A very simple thing, of course, to urge a friend to do;
But reddest grew the banker's face and reddest grew his neck,
Requested in his dinner clothes to cash a good sized check.

His guests astounded looked at him. Said they: "We are surprised!
To ask us here to work for you is surely ill-advised.
'Tis most improper, impolite!" The singer shrieked in glee:
"My friends, I've only treated you as you have treated me."

Solitude

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Laugh, and the world laughs with you;
Weep, and you weep alone;
For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,
But has trouble enough of its own.
Sing, and the hills will answer;
Sigh, it is lost on the air;
The echoes bound to a joyful sound,
But shrink from voicing care.

Rejoice, and men will seek you;
Grieve, and they turn and go;
They want full measure of all your pleasure,
But they do not need your woe.
Be glad, and your friends are many;
Be sad, and you lose them all,—
There are none to decline your nectared wine,
But alone you must drink life's gall.

Feast, and your halls are crowded;
Fast, and the world goes by.
Succeed and give, and it helps you live,
But no man can help you die.
There is room in the halls of pleasure
For a large and lordly train,
But one by one we must all file on
Through the narrow aisles of pain.

Song

Celia Thaxter

We sail toward evening's lonely star
That trembles in the tender blue;
One single cloud, a dusky bar,
Burnt with dull carmine through and through,
Slow smouldering in the summer sky,
Lies low along the fading west.
How sweet to watch its splendors die,
Wave-cradled thus and wind-caressed!

The soft breeze freshens, leaps the spray
To kiss our cheeks, with sudden cheer;
Upon the dark edge of the bay
Lighthouses kindle, far and near,
And through the warm deeps of the sky
Steal faint star-clusters, while we rest
In deep refreshment, thou and I,
Wave-cradled thus and wind-caressed.

How like a dream are earth and heaven,
Star-beam and darkness, sky and sea;
Thy face, pale in the shadowy even,
Thy quiet eyes that gaze on me!
O realize the moment's charm,
Thou dearest! we are at life's best,
Folded in God's encircling arm,
Wave-cradled thus and wind-caressed.

Sonnet XVIII

William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this and this gives life to thee.

Sonnet XIX

William Shakespeare

Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws,
And make the earth devour her own sweet brood;
Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,
And burn the long-lived phoenix in her blood;
Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleets,
And do whate'er thou wilt, swift-footed Time,
To the wide world and all her fading sweets;
But I forbid thee one most heinous crime:
O, carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow,
Nor draw no lines there with thine antique pen;
Him in thy course untainted do allow
For beauty's pattern to succeeding men.
Yet, do thy worst, old Time: despite thy wrong,
My love shall in my verse ever live young.

Sonnet XXX

William Shakespeare

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

Sonnet XXXVI

William Shakespeare

Let me confess that we two must be twain,
Although our undivided loves are one:
So shall those blots that do with me remain
Without thy help by me be borne alone.
In our two loves there is but one respect,
Though in our lives a separable spite,
Which though it alter not love's sole effect,
Yet doth it steal sweet hours from love's delight.
I may not evermore acknowledge thee,
Lest my bewailed guilt should do thee shame,
Nor thou with public kindness honour me,
Unless thou take that honour from thy name:
But do not so; I love thee in such sort
As, thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

Sonnet CXVI

William Shakespeare

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come:
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

Sonnet CXXXVIII

William Shakespeare

When my love swears that she is made of truth
I do believe her, though I know she lies,
That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although she knows my days are past the best,
Simply I credit her false speaking tongue:
On both sides thus is simple truth suppress'd.
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
And wherefore say not I that I am old?
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love loves not to have years told:
Therefore I lie with her and she with me,
And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be.

The Spider and the Fly

Mary Howitt

“Will you walk into my parlor?” said the Spider to the Fly,
‘Tis the prettiest little parlor that ever you did spy.
The way into my parlor is up a winding stair,
And I have many curious things to show when you are there.”
“Oh no, no,” said the little Fly, “to ask me is in vain,
For who goes up your winding stair can ne’er come down again.”

“I’m sure you must be weary, dear, with soaring up so high;
Will you rest upon my little bed?” said the Spider to the Fly.
“There are pretty curtains drawn around, the sheets are fine and thin;
And if you like to rest awhile, I’ll snugly tuck you in!”
“Oh no, no,” said the little Fly, “for I’ve often heard it said,
They never, never wake up again, who sleep upon your bed!”

Said the cunning Spider to the Fly, “Dear friend, what can I do,
To prove the warm affection I’ve always felt for you?
I have within my pantry good store of all that’s nice;
I’m sure you’re very welcome—will you please to take a slice?”
“Oh no, no,” said the little Fly, “kind sir, that cannot be,
I’ve heard what’s in your pantry, and I do not wish to see.”

“Sweet creature,” said Spider, “you’re witty and you’re wise;
How handsome are your gauzy wings, how brilliant are your eyes!
I have a little looking-glass upon my parlour shelf,
If you’ll step in a moment dear, you shall behold yourself.”
“I thank you gentle sir,” she said, “for what you’re pleased to say,
And bidding you good morning now, I’ll call another day.”

The Spider turned him round about, and went into his den,
For well he knew the silly Fly would soon come back again;
So he wove a subtle web, in a little comer sly,
And set his table ready, to dine upon the Fly.
Then he came out to his door again, and merrily did sing:
“Come hither, hither, pretty Fly, with the pearl and silver wing;
Your robes are green and purple—there’s a crest upon your head;
Your eyes are like the diamond bright, but mine are dull as lead.”

Alas, alas! how very soon this silly little Fly,
Hearing his wily, flattering words, came slowly flitting by;
With buzzing wings she hung aloft, then near and nearer drew,
Thinking only of her brilliant eyes, and green and purple hue;
Thinking only of her crested head-poor foolish thing! At last,
Up jumped the cunning Spider, and fiercely held her fast.
He dragged her up his winding stair, into his dismal den,
Within his little parlour—but she ne'er came out again!

Spring (from *In Memoriam*)

Alfred Lord Tennyson

DIP down upon the northern shore,
O sweet new-year, delaying long:
Thou dost expectant Nature wrong;
Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded noons,
Thy sweetness from its proper place?
Can trouble live with April days,
Or sadness in the summer moons?

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,
The little speedwell's darling blue,
Deep tulips dashed with fiery dew,
Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,
Delayest the sorrow in my blood,
That longs to burst a frozen bud,
And flood a fresher throat with song.

Now fades the last long streak of snow;
Now bourgeons every maze of quick
About the flowering squares, and thick
By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long,
The distance takes a lovelier hue,
And drowned in yonder living blue
The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,
The flocks are whiter down the vale,
And milkier every milky sail
On winding stream or distant sea;

Where now the sea-mew pipes, or dives
In yonder greening gleam, and fly

The happy birds, that change their sky
To build and brood, that live their lives

From land to land; and in my breast
Spring wakens too; and my regret
Becomes an April violet,
And buds and blossoms like the rest.

The Star-Spangled Banner

Francis Scott Key

O! say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
 What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming—
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
 O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming!
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O! say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

On that shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
 Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
 As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream;
'Tis the star-spangled banner; O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
 That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
 Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps, pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave;
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

O! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
 Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!
Blest with victory and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land
 Praise the power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just,
And this be our motto—"In God is our trust":
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

The Story of Albrecht Dürer

Helen Steiner Rice

As you read this poem
Perhaps you'd like to know
That this story really happened
Many centuries ago
When two talented young artists
Were struggling hard to earn
Just enough to live on
So both of them might learn
How to be great artists
And leave behind a name
That many centuries later
Would still retain its fame,
But in their dire necessity
For the warmth of food and fire,
One of the artists sacrificed
His dream and heart's desire
So he might earn a living
And provide enough to eat
'Til both of them were back again
Securely on their feet ...
But months and years of grueling toil
Destroyed the craftsman's touch,
And scarred and stiffened were the hands
That held promise of so much,
He could no longer hold a brush
The way he used to do,

And the dream he once had cherished,
No longer could come true ...
So uncomplainingly he lived
With his friend who had succeeded
Who now could purchase all the things
They once had so much needed. .
But the famous ALBRECHT DÜRER,
The friend we're speaking of,
Was always conscious that he owed
A debt of thanks and love
To one who sacrificed his skill
So that Dürer might succeed,
But how can anyone repay
A sacrificial deed,
But when he saw these hands in prayer
He decided he would paint
A picture for the world to see
Of this "unheralded saint" ...
So down through countless ages
And in many, many lands
All men could see the beauty
In these toilworn PRAYING HANDS ...
And seeing, they would recognize
That behind FAME and SUCCESS
Somebody sacrificed a dream
For another's happiness.

Thanksgiving

Edgar A. Guest

For strength to face the battle's might,
For men that dare to die for right,
 For hearts above the lure of gold
 And fortune's soft and pleasant way,
For courage of our days of old,
 Great God of All, we kneel and pray.
We thank Thee for our splendid youth.
Who fight for liberty and truth,
 Within whose breasts there glows anew
 The glory of the altar fires
Which our heroic fathers knew—
 God make them worthy of their sires!
We thank Thee for our mothers fair
Who through the sorrows they must bear
 Still smile, and give their hearts to woe,
 Yet bravely heed the day's command—
That mothers, yet to be, may know
 A free and glorious motherland.
Oh, God, we thank Thee for the skies
Where our flag now in glory flies!
 We thank Thee that no love of gain
 Is leading us, but that we fight
To keep our banner free from stain
 And that we die for what is right.
Oh, God, we thank Thee that we may
Lift up our eyes to Thee today;
 We thank Thee we can face this test
 With honor and spotless name,
And that we serve a world distressed
 Unselfishly and free from shame.

The Touch of the Master's Hand

Myra Welch

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But he held it up with a smile.

"What am I bidden, good folks?" he cried,
"Who'll start the bidding for me?
"A dollar, one dollar"—then "Two! Only two!
Two dollars, and who'll make it three?"

"Three dollars, once; three dollars, twice;
And going for three"—But no,
From the room far back, a gray-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow;

Then wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening the loosened strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet
As a caroling angel sings.

The music ceased and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said: "What am I bid for the old violin?"
And he held it up with the bow.

"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two?
Two thousand! And who'll make it three?
Three thousand, once; three thousand, twice,
And going, and gone!" said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We do not understand
What changed its worth?" Swift came the reply.
"The touch of the master's hand."

And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scarred with sin,

Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.

A “mess of pottage,” a glass of wine,
A game — and he travels on;
He’s “going” once and “going” twice—
He’s “going” and almost “gone!”

But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand,
The worth of a soul, and the change that’s wrought
By the touch of the Master’s hand.

To the Flag

Adapted from Leland Scott and Grace Bush

Remember me? People call me Old Glory ... the Stars and Stripes ... the Star-Spangled Banner. What-ever they call me, I am your flag—the flag of the United States of America!

I am the symbol of America—an America more precious than ever, because the gifts it has given you are threatened with loss and destruction. I am the thrilling heart of America—the sign of your inheritance.

The courage and strength of the pioneers—the pathfinders who met hardship in the days when we were beginning to be a nation—are in the red of my stripes.

The noble mind and motive of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and others who held high their beliefs in the greatness of this nation, are in the white of my stripes.

The truth that will not stoop, the integrity of the principles that undergird you, the unshakable trust in God that have come down to you, that you might walk in safety—these are in the blue of my field of stars.

And every one of those stars takes on fresh splendor—the splendor of a people free to worship God as they choose, free to work, to laugh, to love, to own, and to live—as you realize with bright, new clarity how much these freedoms mean!

I am your Flag. I am the soul of America. Hold me proudly high!

To the Humble

Edgar A. Guest

If all the flowers were roses,
 If never daisies grew,
If no old-fashioned posies
 Drank in the morning dew,
Then man might have some reason
 To whimper and complain,
And speak these words of treason,
 That all our toil is vain.
If all the stars were Saturns
 That twinkle in the night,
Of equal size and patterns,
 And equally as bright,
Then men in humble places,
 With humble work to do,
With frowns upon their faces
 Might trudge their journey through.
But humble stars and posies
 Still do their best, although
They're planets not, nor roses,
 To cheer the world below.
And those old-fashioned daisies
 Delight the soul of man;
They're here, and this their praise is
 They work the Master's plan.
Though humble be your labor,
 And modest be your sphere,
Come, envy not your neighbor
 Whose light shines brighter here.
Does God forget the daisies
 Because the roses bloom?
Shall you not win His praises
 By toiling at your loom?
Have you, the toiler humble,
 Just reason to complain,
To shirk your task and grumble
 And think that it is vain
Because you see a brother

With greater work to do?
No fame of his can smother
The merit that's in you.

Vacation Time

Edgar A. Guest

Vacation time! How glad it seemed
When as a boy I sat and dreamed
Above my school books, of the fun
That I should claim when toil was done;
And, oh, how oft my youthful eye
Went wandering with the patch of sky
That drifted by the window panes
O'er pleasant fields and dusty lanes,
Where I would race and romp and shout
The very moment school was out.
My artful little fingers then
Feigned labor with the ink and pen,
But heart and mind were far away,
Engaged in some glad bit of play.

The last two weeks dragged slowly by;
Time hadn't then learned how to fly.
It seemed the clock upon the wall
From hour to hour could only crawl,
And when the teacher called my name,
Unto my cheeks the crimson came,
For I could give no answer clear
To questions that I didn't hear.

"Wool gathering, were you?" oft she said
And smiled to see me blushing red.
Her voice had roused me from a dream
Where I was fishing in a stream,
And, if I now recall it right,
Just at the time I had a bite.

And now my youngsters dream of play
In just the very selfsame way;
And they complain that time is slow
And that the term will never go.
Their little minds with plans are filled
For joyous hours they soon will build,
And it is vain for me to say,
That have grown old and wise and gray,

That time is swift, and joy is brief;
They'll put no faith in such belief
To youthful hearts that long for play
Time is a laggard on the way.
'Twas, oh, so slow to me back then
Ere I had learned the ways of men!

Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night

Walt Whitman

Vigil strange I kept on the field one night;
When you my son and my comrade dropt at my side that day,
One look I but gave which your dear eyes return'd with a look I shall never forget,
One touch of your hand to mine O boy, reach'd up as you lay on the ground,
Then onward I sped in the battle, the even-contested battle,
Till late in the night reliev'd to the place at last again I made my way,
Found you in death so cold dear comrade, found your body son of
responding laughter, (never again on earth responding,)
Bared your face in the starlight, curious the scene, cool blew the moderate night-wind,
Long there and then in vigil I stood, dimly around me the battlefield spreading,
Vigil wondrous and vigil sweet there in the fragrant silent night,
But not a tear fell, not even a long-drawn sigh, long, long I gazed,
Then on the earth partially reclining sat by your side leaning my chin in my hands,
Passing sweet hours, immortal and mystic hours with you dearest comrade - not a tear, not a
word,
Vigil of silence, love and death, vigil for you my son and my soldier,
As onward silently stars aloft, eastward new ones upward stole,
Vigil final for you brave boy, (I could not save you, swift was your death,
I faithfully loved you and cared for you living, I think we shall surely meet again,)
Till at latest lingering of the night, indeed just as the dawn appear'd,
My comrade I wrapt in his blanket, envelop'd well his form,
Folded the blanket well, tucking it carefully over head and carefully under feet,
And there and then and bathed by the rising sun, my son in his grave, in his rude-dug grave I
deposited,
Ending my vigil strange with that, vigil of night and battle-field dim,
Vigil for boy of responding laughter, (never again on earth responding,)
Vigil for comrade swiftly slain, vigil I never forget, how as day brighten'd,
I rose from the chill ground and folded my soldier well in his blanket,
And buried him where he fell.

The Village Blacksmith

Henry W. Longfellow

Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn 'til night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hands he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling—rejoicing—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begun,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

When Pa Comes Home

Edgar A. Guest

When Pa comes home, I'm at the door,
An' then he grabs me off the floor
An' throws me up an' catches me
When I come down, an' then, says he:
"Well, how'd you get along to-day?
An' were you good, an' did you play,
An' keep right out of mamma's way?
An' how'd you get that awful bump
Above your eye? My, what a lump!
An' who spilled jelly on your shirt?

An' where'd you ever find the dirt
That's on your hands? And my! Oh, my!
I guess those eyes have had a cry,
They look so red. What was it, pray?
What has been happening here today?"

An' then he drops his coat an' hat
Upon a chair, an' says: "What's that?
Who knocked that engine on its back
An' stepped upon that piece of track?"
An' then he takes me on his knee
An' says: "What's this that now I see?
Whatever can the matter be?
Who strewed those toys upon the floor,
An' left those things behind the door?
Who upset all those parlor chairs
An' threw those blocks upon the stairs?
I guess a cyclone called today
While I was workin' far away.
Who was it worried mamma so?
It can't be anyone I know."
An' then I laugh an' say: "It's me!
Me did most ever'thing you see.
Me got this bump the time me tripped.
An' here is where the jelly slipped
Right off my bread upon my shirt,

An' when me tumbled down it hurt.

That's how me got all over dirt.
Me threw those building blocks downstairs,
An' me upset the parlor chairs, '
'Coz when you're playin' train you've got
To move things 'round an awful lot."
An' then my Pa he kisses me
An' bounces me upon his knee
An' says: "Well, well, my little lad,
What glorious fun you must have had!"

The world is too much with us; late and soon

William Wordsworth

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;—
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

Sixth Grade: Bible Memory

Please memorize from one of the following versions:

- King James Version (KJV)
- New American Bible (NAB)
- New American Standard Bible (NASB)
- New King James Version (NKJV)
- New International Version (NIV)
- English Standard Version (ESV)

Scripture passages presented here are from the New King James Version (NKJV) or English Standard Version (ESV).

Isaiah 53

Who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant,
And as a root out of dry ground.
He has no form or comeliness;
And when we see Him,
There is no beauty that we should desire Him.
He is despised and rejected by men,
A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.
Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.
But He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.
He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
Yet He opened not His mouth;
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.
He was taken from prison and from judgment,
And who will declare His generation?
For He was cut off from the land of the living;
For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.
And they made His grave with the wicked—
But with the rich at His death,
Because He had done no violence,
Nor was any deceit in His mouth.
Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him;
He has put Him to grief.
When You make His soul an offering for sin,

He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days,
And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.
He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied.
By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many,
For He shall bear their iniquities.
Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,
And He shall divide the spoil with the strong,
Because He poured out His soul unto death,
And He was numbered with the transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many,
And made intercession for the transgressors.

Psalm 96

Oh, sing to the LORD a new song!
Sing to the LORD, all the earth.
Sing to the LORD, bless His name;
Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.
Declare His glory among the nations,
His wonders among all peoples.

For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised;
He is to be feared above all gods.
For all the gods of the peoples are idols,
But the LORD made the heavens.
Honor and majesty are before Him;
Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

Give to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
Give to the LORD glory and strength.
Give to the LORD the glory due His name;
Bring an offering, and come into His courts.
Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!
Tremble before Him, all the earth.

Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns;
The world also is firmly established,
It shall not be moved;
He shall judge the peoples righteously."
Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
Let the sea roar, and all its fullness;

Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it.
Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the LORD.
For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth.
He shall judge the world with righteousness,
And the peoples with His truth.

Psalm 139:1-14

O LORD, You have searched me and known me.
You know my sitting down and my rising up;
 You understand my thought afar off.
You comprehend my path and my lying down,
 And are acquainted with all my ways.
For there is not a word on my tongue,
 But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.
You have hedged me behind and before,
 And laid Your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
 It is high, I cannot attain it.

Where can I go from Your Spirit?
 Or where can I flee from Your presence?
If I ascend into heaven, You are there;
 If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
 And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there Your hand shall lead me,
 And Your right hand shall hold me.
If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me,"
 Even the night shall be light about me;
Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You,
 But the night shines as the day;
 The darkness and the light are both alike to You.

For You formed my inward parts;
 You covered me in my mother's womb.
I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
 Marvelous are Your works,
 And that my soul knows very well.

Proverbs 4:13-27

Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go;
Keep her, for she is your life.
Do not enter the path of the wicked,
And do not walk in the way of evil.
Avoid it, do not travel on it;
Turn away from it and pass on.
For they do not sleep unless they have done evil;
And their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall.
For they eat the bread of wickedness,
And drink the wine of violence.
But the path of the just is like the shining sun,
That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.
The way of the wicked is like darkness;
They do not know what makes them stumble.
My son, give attention to my words;
Incline your ear to my sayings.
Do not let them depart from your eyes;
Keep them in the midst of your heart;
For they are life to those who find them,
And health to all their flesh.
Keep your heart with all diligence,
For out of it spring the issues of life.
Put away from you a deceitful mouth,
And put perverse lips far from you.
Let your eyes look straight ahead,
And your eyelids look right before you.
Ponder the path of your feet,
And let all your ways be established.
Do not turn to the right or the left;
Remove your foot from evil.

2 Timothy 2:14-26

Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.

Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

Colossians 1:1-14

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are in Colosse:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, which has come to you, as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth; as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood the forgiveness of sins.

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many.

If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be?

But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

Hebrews 11:1-10

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.

By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Isaiah 42:1-8

“Behold! My Servant whom I uphold,
My Elect One in whom My soul delights!
I have put My Spirit upon Him;
He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.
He will not cry out, nor raise His voice,
Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.
A bruised reed He will not break,
And smoking flax He will not quench;
He will bring forth justice for truth.
He will not fail nor be discouraged,
Till He has established justice in the earth;
And the coastlands shall wait for His law.”
Thus says God the LORD,
Who created the heavens and stretched them out,
Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it,
Who gives breath to the people on it,
And spirit to those who walk on it:
“I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness,
And will hold Your hand;
I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people,
As a light to the Gentiles,
To open blind eyes,
To bring out prisoners from the prison,
Those who sit in darkness from the prison house.
I am the LORD, that is My name;
And My glory I will not give to another,
Nor My praise to carved images.

James 3:1-12

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things.

See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and [h]self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Luke 8:5-15

“A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?”

And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that
Seeing they may not see,
And hearing they may not understand.’

“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.

Matthew 14:22-33

Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.

But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."

So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"

And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."

1 Peter 1:10-25

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.” And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because

“All flesh is as grass,
And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass.
The grass withers,
And its flower falls away,
But the word of the LORD endures forever.”
Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

Psalm 19:1-11

The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament shows His handiwork.
Day unto day utters speech,
And night unto night reveals knowledge.
There is no speech nor language
Where their voice is not heard.
Their line has gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.
In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun,
Which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
And rejoices like a strong man to run its race.
Its rising is from one end of heaven,
And its circuit to the other end;
And there is nothing hidden from its heat.
The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul;
The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;
The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;
The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.
More to be desired are they than gold,
Yea, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.
Moreover by them Your servant is warned,
And in keeping them there is great reward.

Psalm 34:1-15

I will bless the LORD at all times;
His praise shall continually be in my mouth.
My soul shall make its boast in the LORD;
The humble shall hear of it and be glad.
Oh, magnify the LORD with me,
And let us exalt His name together.

I sought the LORD, and He heard me,
And delivered me from all my fears.
They looked to Him and were radiant,
And their faces were not ashamed.
This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard him,
And saved him out of all his troubles.
The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him,
And delivers them.

Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good;
Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!
Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints!
There is no want to those who fear Him.
The young lions lack and suffer hunger;
But those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing.

Come, you children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
Who is the man who desires life,
And loves many days, that he may see good?
Keep your tongue from evil,
And your lips from speaking deceit.
Depart from evil and do good;
Seek peace and pursue it.

The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,
And His ears are open to their cry.

Psalm 119:1-12

Blessed are the undefiled in the way,
Who walk in the law of the LORD!
Blessed are those who keep His testimonies,
Who seek Him with the whole heart!
They also do no iniquity;
They walk in His ways.
You have commanded us
To keep Your precepts diligently.
Oh, that my ways were directed
To keep Your statutes!
Then I would not be ashamed,
When I look into all Your commandments.
I will praise You with uprightness of heart,
When I learn Your righteous judgments.
I will keep Your statutes;
Oh, do not forsake me utterly!

How can a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed according to Your word.
With my whole heart I have sought You;
Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!
Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You.
Blessed are You, O LORD!
Teach me Your statutes.

Proverbs 3:13-26

Happy is the man who finds wisdom,
And the man who gains understanding;
For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver,
And her gain than fine gold.
She is more precious than rubies,
And all the things you may desire cannot compare with her.
Length of days is in her right hand,
In her left hand riches and honor.
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.
She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her,
And happy are all who retain her.
The LORD by wisdom founded the earth;
By understanding He established the heavens;
By His knowledge the depths were broken up,
And clouds drop down the dew.
My son, let them not depart from your eyes—
Keep sound wisdom and discretion;
So they will be life to your soul
And grace to your neck.
Then you will walk safely in your way,
And your foot will not stumble.
When you lie down, you will not be afraid;
Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.
Do not be afraid of sudden terror,
Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
For the LORD will be your confidence,
And will keep your foot from being caught.

Romans 8:28-39

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written:

“For Your sake we are killed all day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.