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## Bulletin 130 - Creative Work in English with the Fourth Grade Children

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*Eastern Illinois University*

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# The Teachers College Bulletin

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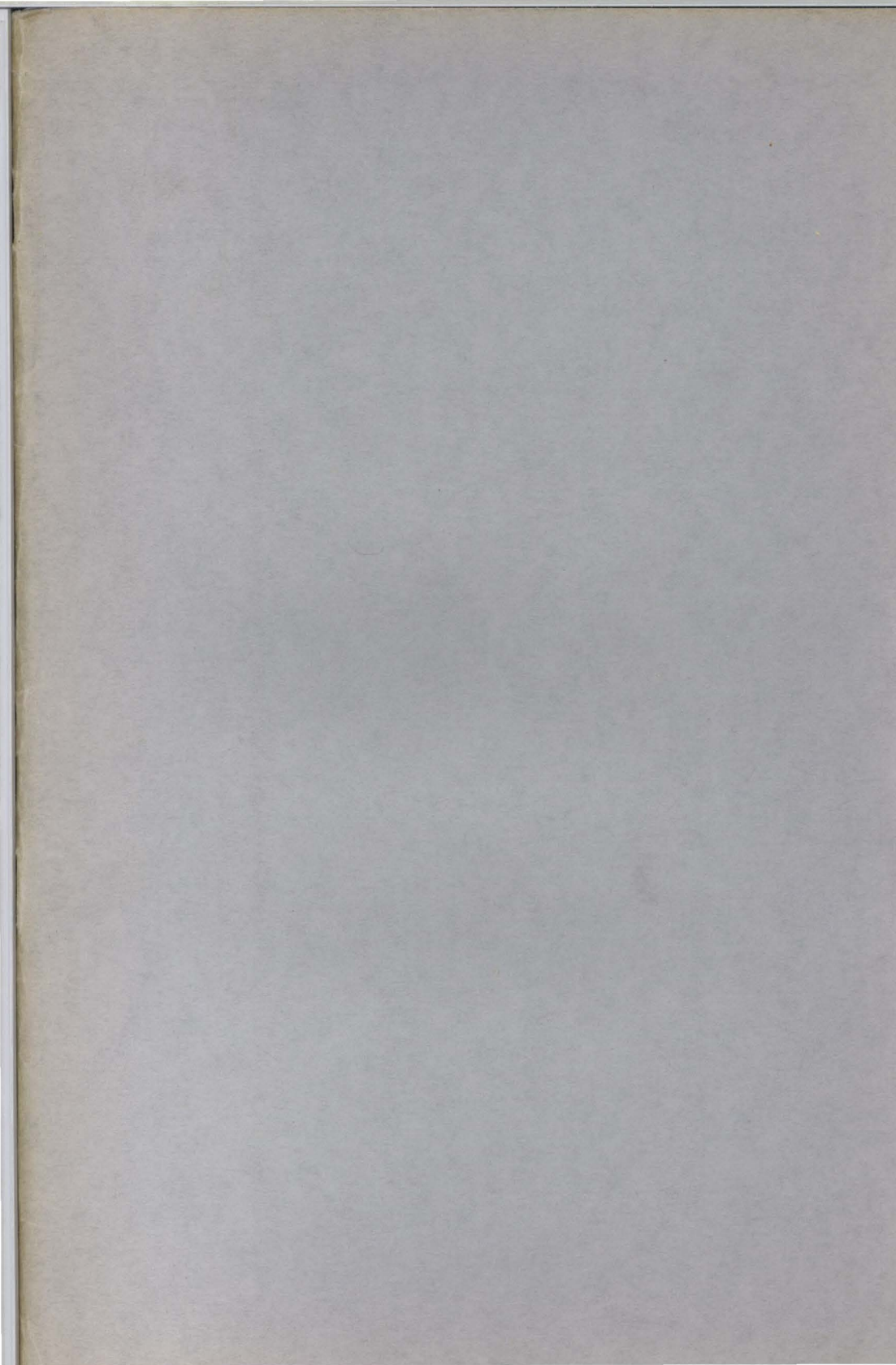
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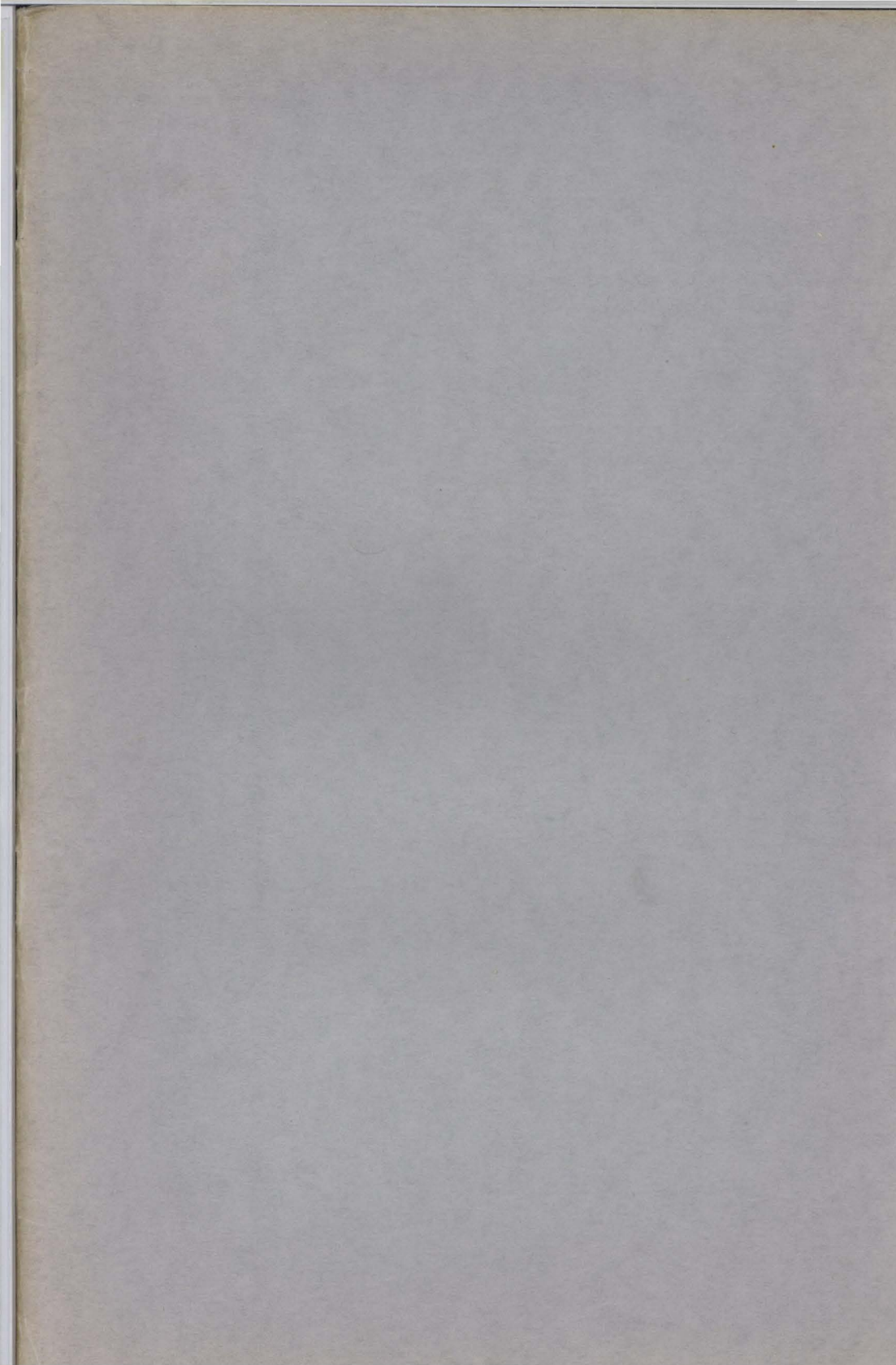
Eastern Illinois State Teachers College  
AT  
CHARLESTON

CREATIVE WORK IN ENGLISH  
WITH FOURTH GRADE  
CHILDREN

*By*

MYRTLE ARNOLD, A. M.  
Training Teacher, Fourth Grade





STATE OF ILLINOIS  
HENRY HORNER, *Governor*

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Eastern Illinois State  
Teachers College

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THE TEACHERS COLLEGE BULLETIN

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STATE OF ILLINOIS  
HENRY HORNER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF REGISTRATION  
AND EDUCATION

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Under the provisions of the Civil Administrative Code for the consolidation of State Agencies under the direction of the Governor, the five State Normal Schools of Illinois are controlled by a single board consisting of eleven members: The Director of Registration and Education, who is ex officio chairman, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, who is ex officio secretary, and nine members appointed by the Governor for terms of six years.

To MRS. J. P. VAUGHAN  
whose inspiration is responsible  
for these creative efforts

## INTRODUCTION

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This bulletin contains six types of original English work produced in the fourth grade of the Training School at the Eastern Illinois State Teachers College during the years 1930 to 1934 inclusive. There are fables, myths, stories suggested by pictures, stories on special topics suggested by the teacher, plays, and poems. An introduction giving a brief account of the procedure used to develop the work precedes each type of material.



## FABLES

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Modeling stories after simple fables such as "The Fox and the Grapes," is a good approach to original story-telling and writing. Some suggestive titles are "The Mouse and the Cheese" and "The Cat and the Robin." Many others can be used. It obviously is much easier to write correctly a story of this kind than a truly original story. The brevity of the story helps to insure the success of the undertaking. The value of these stories is not in the originality (there can be but little of that), but in the power the children gain in applying the same idea to various situations, in sticking to the point, and in learning the points of composition involved.

### THE MOUSE AND THE CHEESE

A mouse happened by a shelf. He smelled some cheese high up on the shelf.

"Oh! That does smell good," said the mouse with great delight.

The mouse easily climbed up the wooden sides, but, alas! he came up as far as the glass doors, but they were too slick and the poor mouse scototed to the floor with a bang!

He scampered away to his hole and said, "I didn't want that cheese anyway. It was stale."

Miles Tipsword, 1931-32

### THE LAMB AND THE CLOVER

Once a lamb was in a pasture running around. He saw some clover on the other side of the fence.

He said, "I am going to get that clover."

Then he began to run up and down the fence until he came to a little hole. He tried and tried to get through the fence but he got caught and began to cry. The farmer heard him and came out.

After the farmer pulled him out the lamb said, "I didn't want that clover. It was too dry."

Wayne Goodman, 1933-34

### THE LAMB AND THE CLOVER

Once a lamb was frolicking around in a field when he spied some clover.

"I will get that clover," the little lamb said.

So he tried to jump the fence but the gate fell on him.

"Oh, well, I didn't want that clover anyway. It was all dry and crumbly," said the lamb.

Jeanne Johns, 1933-34

## MYTHS

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To start the work on myths it seems advisable to take a familiar myth such as "Why the Pine Tree Sighs", and work out varied stories using the same title. In order to show the variety of ideas possible, several original stories from this title are included. Many titles such as "Why the Grass Has No Flowers", "Why the Owl Says 'Who'", and "How the Beaver Got Its Tail" can be invented by the teacher. Explanation of almost any natural phenomenon can be the basis for a myth.

How is variety secured? Any teacher knows that, if she gives the children a title and asks them to tell stories, almost all the stories will be like the story told by the first child. One cannot say, "Let's have variety" and get it presto! One has to work for it, plan for it. The teacher needs to take time before class to think of half a dozen or more varied ideas and to plan questions she will ask to direct the children's thoughts into different channels. Some titles of myths suggest both punishment and reward; some, either punishment or reward; some, accident; some, magic; some may involve fairy folk (various kinds); some, people; some, animals; etc. For example, using the title "Why the Grass Has No Flowers" one may ask, "Do you think having no flowers is a punishment or a reward?" Both ideas may be considered possible. Questions such as "In what way could it be a punishment? A reward?" will bring forth the story plans. If one child thinks the grass was too proud of its flowers and, in consequence, was punished by a fairy queen or a god, many children will probably tell similar stories. The teacher needs to keep questioning and directing thought into new paths. She can ask whether the loss of flowers by the grass was accidental. Children will think of storms, fires, stampedes of animals, plucking of the flowers, magical disappearance, etc.

A story with a good beginning and a good ending is usually a good story. It is easy to see that not a great deal of variety is possible in the endings of myths. The last sentence draws some such conclusion as the following: "Ever since that time the pine tree has sighed", "And that is why the bear is stumpy-tailed", or "That was the first water lily". If the teacher does not work for variety in beginning sentences, she finds the majority of stories beginning "One day". After the story plans have been discussed, it is a good thing to have several beginning sentences given. Children like to work for variety when they are encouraged to do so and when their efforts are appreciated.

Now if the children are given a minute or two to think through their stories (heads down helps concentration), they are ready to enjoy together their original myths.

## WHY THE PINE TREE SIGHS

One day a forest caught on fire and all the trees burned up. All but one pine tree that was on a near-by mountain. Every day that pine tree sighed because of the loss of her brothers.

And that is why the pine tree sighs to-day.

Jane Lee Baker, 1930-31

## WHY THE PINE TREE SIGHS

Once long, long ago a pine lived in a deep forest in a sunny little grove. Flowers grew about him. Birds and butterflies flitted about him. The pine tree was very happy.

But the pine tree had enemies. His worst enemy was an old dwarf who was gloomy. He wanted to spoil this happiness. He thundered, "I will steal this happiness the pine trees have."

The dwarf fretted over his magic and finally stole the pine tree's happiness.

The pine tree was sad. And that is why the pine tree sighs.

Marguerite Little, 1930-31

## WHY THE PINE TREE SIGHS

One day a little robin flew around hunting for a place to make a nest. She came to the pine tree and asked if she could build a nest in its branches.

The pine tree said, "You may if you will sing to me and make me happy."

The first day of winter the robin said, "I will have to go to the south."

So she flew away.

And that is why the pine tree sighs.

Evelyn Goble, 1930-31

## WHY THE PINE TREE SIGHS

Once upon a time pine trees had golden leaves. So of course they boasted about their beautiful leaves.

One day a fairy came along and found them boasting.

She said angrily, "Since you are boasting so about your leaves you shall have needles!"

So the pine trees could boast no more about their golden leaves. And to this day the pine tree sighs because it has needles instead of golden leaves.

Olive Davis, 1930-31

## WHY THE OWL SAYS, "WHO"

"Now that Mrs. Owl is out she will not know who stole her babies," said the snake.

So the snake and the mongoose climbed into Mrs. Owl's nest and hurried away. When Mrs. Owl came home she saw her nest torn up and her babies gone.

So she said, "Who! Who! Who stole my babies?"

And ever since then the owls have said, "Who".

Jeanne Johns, 1933-34

## WHY THE OWL SAYS, "WHO"

One night an owl was up in a tree-top. A light was shining from a house near by. He looked down and saw a great big pile of owl feathers.

"Who, who has done this?" said the owl. "Who, who, who has done this?"

And from that day to this the owls have said, "Whoooo."  
Yvonne Bell, 1931-32

## WHY THE CAT CAN SEE AT NIGHT

Once upon a time long ago, an old witch lived with a beautiful cat and a bag of magic grain.

One day the old witch blew out of the window and forgot to close it. Some birds flew in and began to eat the magic grain. By luck the beautiful cat saw them and killed and ate them.

When the old witch came back and heard what he had done she said to him, "What would you like most to have for saving my magic grain?"

"I would like most to have eyes that will see at night," replied the cat.

And ever since that time the cat can see at night.  
Miles Tipsword, 1931-32

## WHY THE CAT CAN SEE AT NIGHT

Long, long ago a magician had a very smart cat. Now this magician loved his violin. One day while the magician was away the cat ran his paw over and over the strings. When the magician heard about this playing he said that he would help. The cat learned very soon.

The magician was very proud of his cat, so he said, "Since you are so very smart I will give you a wish."

"I want a pair of eyes that can see at night," said the cat. "Then I can play in the night as well as the day."

From that day to this the cat has been able to see at night.  
Jacqueline Hennrich, 1931-32

## WHY THE GRASS HAS NO FLOWERS

Long, long ago the grass had flowers. One night it happened that the fairies went to dance in the witch's back yard where the moon shone the brightest.

That night the old witch peeped out of her big chocolate window to catch a glimpse of the moon. But what was her surprise to see a group of fairies dancing in the moonlight!

"Aha!" she said in a gruff voice. "I shall have captives."

So she picked up her old squeaky lantern and hobbled down her rickety old steps. Then she stepped off the last step and crushed all the flowers that grew in her garden.

Since then the grass has had no flowers.  
Marjorie Ingram, 1930-31

## WHY THE GRASS HAS NO FLOWERS

Long ago on the first of May all the flowers gathered together to have a "May Day Party".

One year it was very cold, and there was snow on the ground. The "Flowers of the Grass" were anxious to come up. Some other flowers warned them saying, "You'd better sleep a little longer for the ice and snow will freeze you."

But the "Flowers of the Grass" would not listen and said, "We will do what we please."

When they reached the top of the earth the snow and ice froze them.

Since that time the grass has had no flowers.

Sara Louise Stevens, 1930-31

## WHY THE GRASS HAS NO FLOWERS

Once an elf was picking flowers to use in making a new suit.

The grass said, "You do not need any of my flowers."

"I need them to weave me a new suit," begged the elf.

"But you may not have any of them," cried the grass.

"Then you shall not have any either," said the elf tapping his wooden shoe three times.

All the flowers disappeared.

That is why the grass has no flowers to-day.

Thomas Moore, 1930-31

## WHY THE GRASS HAS NO FLOWERS

Long, long ago the grass had flowers. But the Indians held war dances every night. They trampled on the flowers, so they never grew up again.

And that is why the grass has no flowers.

Jane Lee Baker, 1930-31

## STORIES SUGGESTED BY PICTURES

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To secure good stories suggested by pictures, it is necessary first of all to select pictures that appeal, pictures with story possibilities. The interests of the particular age should be considered. For instance, children at the fourth grade level enjoy pictures of animals, especially dogs; of children doing such things as giving circuses, parties, playing games; of humorous situations; of holiday situations; and of adventure.

A story suggesting a single idea such as a boy training a dog to jump through a hoop or to beg for a bone is a good one with which to begin. There can be enough variation to make the stories interesting and yet enough similarity to insure successful composition. There will be many words needed by most of the children. These words can be taught as a class exercise. The additional words needed by individuals can be listed on the blackboard before the children write their stories, or they can be given by the teacher as she moves about the room.

As the work progresses it is desirable to use pictures with additional possibilities. For instance, a picture of a poorly dressed boy looking longingly toward a circus suggests variety of treatment. We all know what he wants to do. Does he get his wish? How? Invariably he gets his wish! He sometimes earns the admission price; at other times he meets a kind old gentleman who gives him a ticket; and then again he manages to do a favor for someone and is rewarded for his thoughtfulness. Moreover, his experiences while earning the money or the circumstances making possible the favor offer variation.

In approaching a lesson of this type the children should have an opportunity to look at the picture and to talk about it, telling what they see. As in lessons in which the teacher develops original myths, the teacher must plan and question for variety of ideas before the story-telling begins. If variety in titles is desired, several titles should be given in preparation. The same applies to beginnings and endings. After the planning period, a short time is needed for the children to think through their stories before telling them.

### THE NAUGHTY LITTLE ELEPHANT

Mother Elephant and Baby Elephant lived in the jungle.

One day Baby Elephant decided to go for a walk.

"I guess Mother won't care and if I ask her she might say, 'No'."

First he went to the big palm trees where he knew the monkeys would be. But as soon as he got there they hid in the leaves and wouldn't come out. That made him angry so he went to the spring and got his trunk full of water.



Then he came back and squirted it at them.  
Just as he was turning around to go and get some more he saw Mother Elephant behind him.

"You get along home there, young elephant!" she said and spanked him with her trunk.

Just then Papa Elephant came along.

"What's all the commotion about?" he asked.

"He's been very naughty," said Mother pointing at Baby Elephant. "Ow! Ow! Ow!" said Mother Elephant.

"What's the matter, Mother?" said Papa.

"A snake bit me!"

Baby Elephant turned and grinned as he went home.

Elizabeth Taylor, 1931-32

#### THE SLOW ELEPHANT

One day a mother elephant was walking in a jungle. The baby elephant was slowly poking along. His mother was pushing him from behind.

He said, "Hee, hee! You are tickling me."

Wayne Goodman, 1933-34

#### FISHING TOGETHER

One day a man was riding down a country road. His car got stuck in the mud and he had to walk. He saw a boy fishing and joined him. They had very good luck and fished until the boy's mother called him.

The man had to walk home. But he didn't mind it because he was thinking of the good dinner he was going to have of the fish.

Evelyn Goble, 1930-31

#### FISHING

One day John asked his Uncle Bill to go fishing with him. He agreed, so they started off with bait, line, hooks, and all the things needed. They baited their hooks. John caught one fish and so did Uncle Bill.

"Oh, I've got another!" cried John.

He bent down to take it off the hook and slipped into the water. Uncle Bill pulled him out, and that ended the fishing party.

Martha Moore, 1930-31

#### THE SNOWBALL FIGHT

The children were making a fort. When Grandpa came out to look at the thermometer the children threw snowballs at him. He went and got his coat and cap. He picked up a hard snowball and threw it. It went through the fort and the fort came down on the children. The children never threw snowballs at Grandpa again.

Gerry Brumleve, 1933-34

### THE SNOWBALL FIGHT

The children liked the old man who always played with them. He lived in a yellow cottage on the corner.

One day as he was sitting by the fire he heard a loud bang! squash! whack! He immediately jumped up to see what had happened.

He opened the door and a hail of snowballs came flying at him.

He said, "I'll get my hat and coat and show them how to snowball fight."

Jack Lee Sensintaffar, 1933-34

### THE TARGET

The children had just got out of school. They went past Grandpa Burton's house. They decided to make his thermometer a target.

They began. Grandpa came out and told them to scat. They ran!

Wayne Goodman, 1933-34

### GRANDPA'S SURPRISE

Grandpa was sitting peacefully by the fire. Bang! Wham! Something hit the door.

Grandpa said, "Oh, it's time for the school children to be out".

Sure enough the children were getting out. They had to pass Grandpa's cottage. Snowballs!

Bob I. Inyart, 1933-34

### THE UNWANTED CAT

"Come with me", Kat said. "I have a surprise for you".

The kittens went into the parlor and jumped upon the table.

"A mother cat!" exclaimed Kit.

"What is your name?" asked Spat.

The cat said nothing.

"Let us push him over", said Spat. "That will make him talk".

So they pushed the cat over. It fell on the floor and broke into pieces.

Patricia Reami, 1933-34

### JIPPY, JAPPY, AND SPATTY

Jippy, Jappy, and Spatty wished to have someone to play with. They were romping around in the living room when Jippy spied a black cat on the table.

"Let us play with this black cat", said Jippy.

They sprang upon the table and knocked the big black cat over. Crash! The black cat broke into bits.

The three kittens turned sadly away.

Bobby Inyart, 1933-34

### THE THREE KITTENS

Once upon a time there were three little kittens. They lived with their mother in the basement.

One day the little kittens saw the basement door open. They ran up the basement stairs and into the living room. There on the table stood a big china cat.

"Oh, look at that!" the kittens cried.

But they could get no farther because their mother came into the room, took them in her mouth, and carried them downstairs.

Lucile Adams, 1933-34

### THE DOG SHOW

Jack came running in one day and said, "May I enter my dog, Mother?"

"Yes", said mother.

"They are going to give five dollars for the best dog. I need some new clothes."

"Yes," said mother.

And Spot won the prize.

Harold Franklin, 1933-34

### THE DOG SHOW

Pat did not want to go into the strange building. He balked for half an hour. At last it was only five minutes until time for the show to begin, so Dick carried him in.

The manager said, "He will have to go in the second class because he is not a thoroughbred."

Pat was led onto the stage and was placed on a high round stool. He did not like it because there were so many people staring at him.

At last the judge put a new collar around his neck and asked Dick, "What is his name, Sonny?"

"Pat", answered Dick.

The judge said in a husky voice, "Pat wins the collar!"

Eugene Combs, 1933-34

### THE PRIZE

One day Billy came rushing in to his mother. He was very excited.

"Oh, Mother, may I enter my dog at the dog show up the street?"

"I suppose so if you will give it a bath."

So Billy gave it a bath and got it ready.

Then when he was taking it to the show it sat down and wouldn't go, but Billy took it up in his arms and carried it to the show. Then when they got there his dog won the first prize.

William Fugate, 1933-34

## THE DOG SHOW

Big news spread over Barnsville. There was to be a great dog show and everybody was to enter his dog. A five dollar prize was to be given to the owner of the best dog.

All that day Jim was at home, teaching his dog tricks, but he had a hard time. He had a hoop in one hand and a bone in the other. He tried to coax the dog to jump through the hoop in this way. But the dog seemed to be interested in something else. But at last he got him jumping through the hoop just in time to enter him in the show!

Although his dog did not win, Jim was very well pleased with his day's work.

Charles Boyer, 1933-34

## STORIES ON SPECIAL TOPICS

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Topics such as "A Dream" and "How I Was Frightened" bring forth the greatest variety of ideas, if the planning is carried on as suggested for myths. The first topic can include almost any experience, real or imaginary. Some fears may have been aroused by animals, wind, storm, people, Hallowe'en, etc. Here is a teacher's opportunity to discourage some of the fears of childhood. The teacher may ask, "Do you remember things that used to frighten you when you were too little to know better?" Suggestions for obtaining variety have been given under previous types of stories discussed.

### A DREAM

I was sure I was going to get to stay up and see the Old Year out and the New Year come in, but, no, I didn't.

Not long after I had gone to bed a strange man came to me and said, "I hear that you want to see me go out and the New Year come in."

"Yes, I do," I said.

"Come with me then," said the Old Year.

We went up on the top of the world. After awhile I saw we were slipping, and he cried out, "Save me! I'm going!" But it was too late.

Just then I awoke. It was midnight.

Suzanne Winter, 1931-32

### A DREAM

One afternoon I was lying in the hammock, reading a story. Suddenly, I fell asleep.

I dreamed that I went to the clouds and I asked them where the fairies lived. They said they were in fairyland. I asked them where fairyland was. They said the fairies lived in among the clouds, but they didn't come out until dark.

Then I was awakened by my mother's call, "Supper is ready."

I went into the house, and told my dream to the family.

Yvonne Bell, 1931-32

### LAND HO!

"Land ho!" shouted the look-out on the masthead. We were sailing into the Persian Gulf. The rower across from me got up and sat down beside me. He sartered to push me off the boat.

Then I awoke and found my grandmother putting some more covers over me!

Eugene Combs, 1933-34

## HOW I WAS FRIGHTENED

I lay asleep dreaming. This is the dream.  
I was going down the stairs when I saw a couple of shadows  
in front of me. They came closer and closer. Then I saw more  
of them. They were gorillas.

I woke up and found it was only a dream.

Bobby Inyart

## HOW I WAS FRIGHTENED

When I was in Saint Louis one day, we went to the zoo.

Uncle John said, "Where would you like to go first?"

I said, "I would like to go to the Crystal Cave."

So he said, "All right, but don't get frightened."

So when we were walking along, some boards under our feet  
began wiggling.

Uncle John cried out, "Look out, and don't fall down!" So  
I didn't.

Then we walked on and on until we saw right in front of us  
something that looked like a picture of a dog all lighted up.  
When boo! out came the dog.

I screamed and cried out, "Oh, Uncle John! come here and  
get me."

So he came and took me by the hand and we went out of  
the cave.

After I was out I said, "Well, I don't want to go in there  
again."

Jeanne Johns, 1933-34

## HOW I WAS FRIGHTENED

One night when I had the measles my father and mother  
went to town and left me alone with my uncle.

I was thinking that he was not my uncle but someone dressed  
like him. I thought it was Dillinger. I felt the barrel of his  
gun against me! I woke up, and found that it was my mother.

Lucille Adams, 1933-34

## THE SUNDAY I REMEMBER BEST

One Sunday my mother told me to go to Sunday School and  
stay for church.

When I got home I saw nearly all of my relations in the  
front yard.

Then Mother said, "Do you see why I did not let you have  
a birthday party?"

Lucille Adams, 1933-34



## PLAYS

Writing original plays is a delightful group activity. It makes a desirable culmination of the creative English work of the year. Many groups choose to write a play for Mother's Day. The idea of helping mother, of course, is the theme of these plays. Different groups find various ways of working out the theme. Most plays end with a pleasant surprise for mother!

At first the group works out the large plan; how mother is to be helped. Then they plan the situation in which the idea of helping mother is thought of by her children. It is great fun to plan the last scene, where mother discovers what helpers she has!

When the large planning has been done, the lines and the action can be worked out. The children usually have several suggestions for each speech. The group should decide on the best to use. There will be discussion, often change.

The interest in these lessons runs high for the children are eager to write and dramatize their own play for their mothers.

### A MOTHER'S DAY SURPRISE

#### *Characters:*

Mother—Barbara; Joe—Claude; Father—Miles  
Kathryn—Suzanne; Molly—Frances Ann; Ellen—Nettie

#### SCENE I

Place: Kitchen.

Time: About a week before Mother's Day.

Mother: (Working. Goes to door and calls) Joe, come here a minute. Will you bring some wood and make a fire in the fireplace? It's quite chilly to-day.

Joe: Oh, wait till I get my turn at batting and then I'll do it. We sure are having a grand game. (Runs out.)

Mother: Molly, what are you doing?

Molly: Just playing with my dolls.

Mother: The dishes haven't been done yet so you had better get started right away.

Molly: Oh, I do so hate to do the dishes. Why can't Kathryn do them?

Mother: Because I asked you to wash them. Oh, well, I suppose I must do them myself, but I did so want to go down town.

Kathryn: (enters with wood) No, I will and you can go now.

Mother: Thank you, Kathryn, I will be gone about three hours because after I am through shopping I will stop at Grandmother's. She hasn't been very well lately. If I am not home by five o'clock, will you please put the potatoes in the oven? Keep track of the children, and when they come in have them clean up for supper.

## SCENE II

Same scene, two hours later

Kathryn: (Getting potatoes ready. Goes to the door and calls)  
Molly, Joe, Ellen! It's time to come in now and get ready  
for supper.

Joe: It's a good thing you didn't call any sooner. We just tied  
the score. I was up to bat and made a home run.

Kathryn: You're going to be a ball player when you grow up,  
aren't you?

Joe: Sure, I'm going to beat Babe Ruth.

Molly: Don't brag. We'll beat you tomorrow.

Kathryn: Hurry and clean up. I have something exciting to  
tell you.

Children together: Tell us now!

Kathryn: The sooner you clean up the sooner you'll hear it.  
(Children scamper off to wash. Kathryn continues to  
get supper.)

Joe: (Rushing in) I'm ready. Tell me.

Molly and Ellen: (Run in drying their hands) Hurry up!  
Tell us! We're ready.

Kathryn: A week from tomorrow is Mother's Day. Would you  
like to buy her a present?

Children: Oh, yes, let's do!

Ellen: I'm going to buy her a new dress.

Molly: I'd like to get her a wristwatch.

Joe: I think it would be nice if we could get her a new spring  
outfit.

Kathryn: But think of the money it would take!

Ellen: I have forty-five cents.

Joe: I have four dollars and eight cents.

Molly: And I have five dollars and fifty cents.

Kathryn: I have eight dollars. That makes eighteen dollars  
and three cents.

Joe: We can get her a new spring outfit! I'll earn some more  
money next week working for the neighbors.

Molly: Just the other day, Mrs. Bennett said she was going to  
clean house next week and she needed someone to take care  
of the baby. I am going to ask her if I may do it.

Ellen: What can I do?

Kathryn: You help me with the dishes every day and you will  
be doing just as much as Molly and Joe.  
(Front gate slams.)

Joe: Here comes Mother now! Now, Ellen, don't you talk  
about this so Mother can hear. Let's earn as much money  
as we can and do all we can around the house to help Mother.  
I am going to do all I can.

Ellen: I won't tell, Joe.

Mother: (entering) What are you children up to now?

Ellen: We were just talking—(Kathryn nudges her)—er—about  
Joe's baseball game.

Mother: Come into my room. I have some things to show you.

## SCENE III

Dining Room

Mother's Day

(Mother and Father at church. Children setting table for dinner.)

Ellen: I can hardly wait until Mother comes and see what she says!

Molly: I wonder what she'll buy with the money.

Joe: (looking out of window) Oh, here's the car, now!  
(Mother and Father enter.)

Father: My, I'm hungry.

Mother: Why, the children are all in the house! I will have to hurry and get dinner. (Sees the flowers.) See the pretty flowers! (Goes to smell the flowers.) Why, the table is all set! And my plate? Why is it turned over?

Children together: Look and see!

(Mother turns up plate, finds envelope, opens it, and takes out card and money.)

Mother: Is this for me!! (Reads card aloud) "For Mother on Mother's Day with greatest love. We want you to buy for yourself a new spring outfit. Kathryn, Ellen, Molly, Joe." Oh, you darlings! But where did you get all of this money?

Joe: I have been working for the neighbors. Mrs. Russell gave me seventy-five cents for mowing her lawn. Mrs. Craig gave me a quarter for running errands, and I had four dollars and eight cents!

Molly: Mrs. Bennett gave me one dollar and fifty cents for taking care of her baby last week while she was housecleaning. And I have five dollars and fifty cents!

Ellen: I didn't earn any money but I used my allowance.

Kathryn: Ellen has been very helpful to me this week. She has helped with the dishes and the bed-making and been my helper in every way.

Mother: Yes, I have noticed she has been good and so have the rest of you. This has been a wonderful Mother's Day! And I know a becoming blue suit that I'd love to have!

Father: And this is my surprise for you all! After dinner we will drive out to see Grandmother Lupton in the country!

Joe: (as all go out) Hurray! Hurray for Mother's Day!

THE END.

By Class of 1931-32

## A REAL SURPRISE

*Characters:*

Barbara Jean, Margaret, Mary, Horace, John, Father, Mother, Rosie, Kate.

Time: Saturday Morning before Mother's Day.

Place: Living Room.

## ACT I

(The children enter)

Barbara Jean: Hurrah! Now that Mother's gone we can fix up the living room and have a surprise for her on Mother's Day.

Horace: Yes, and I'm going to help also.

Mary: What can I do, Barbara Jean?

Barbara J.: You can pick some flowers for us.

(Mary goes out.)

Margaret: I'll sweep the floor and dust the chairs.

Horace: I'll move the heavy things, Margaret, so you can dust behind them.

Barbara J.: That's fine. Now we'll all have something to do.

(Pause—all work for quite a while. Mary comes in with the flowers.)

Mary: My work is all done.

Horace: Fine! She's beat all of us and she's the youngest, too!

Mary: What shall I do next?

Barbara J.: You can see if John is coming.

(Mary looks.)

Mary: Here he comes now, whoopee!

John: Look! I've earned a dollar already.

Horace: Fine! Now we can buy a plant for Mother.

Children: Let's go buy it now.

(Exit.)

## ACT II

Place: Living Room.

Time: Noon of the same day.

Characters: Same. Mrs. Bear.

Mary: Mother will be pleased with—

Margaret: With the flowers, but—

Horace: But she'll be more pleased—

Barbara: With the front room.

Mother: (coming in) My goodness, there's that front room left to clean.

(Enter Mrs. Bear.)

Children: (hiding) We thank you Mother dear,  
For your tender care,  
When with you we never fear.  
Many things for you we'll bear.

Mother: What good fairies have been here? And would you look at those chairs shine?

Children: (jumping out) Do you really like it? We thought we would surprise you. It's all for Mother's Day.

Mother: And the geranium! Isn't that lovely?

Children: Yes, here is a pretty flower.  
We bought it just for you.  
It shows how much we love you.  
We hope you like it, too.

Mrs. Bear: Children, on Monday you shall have a party if you wish.

Mary: But Mother, it is not children's day nor our birthday.

Mrs. Bear: It doesn't have to be any of those days but if you like, you can play May Day games or any other kind you like.

Children: Oh Mother, you're a dear. It seems as if it's Children's Day instead of Mother's Day.

Barbara J.: Hurrah! Goody! Come on. Let's make our guest list now.

(Curtain.)

### ACT III

Place: On Lawn.

Time: Monday afternoon.

Characters: Same, Father and guests.

Mary: What would you like to play, Rosie?

Rosie: I would like to play Blind Man's Buff. That would be lots of fun.

(They play.)

Barbara J.: Come children. We're going to see who can get the prize for putting the tail on the donkey.

Kate: Barbara Jean, you pick out the jolliest games.

(They play.)

Barbara J.: \_\_\_\_\_, you won. Here's your prize.

(Receives prize.)

Mary: And now the Maypole dance.

Barbara J.: Sh—— not so loud, we don't want to let Mother hear.

Margaret: We can have it right now because here comes Father with the Maypole.

(Enters Father with Maypole.)

Father: Here you are, children. Now you can have your dance.

Horace: Now I'll go call Mother.

Margaret: Now call Mother, Queen of the May,  
Tell her she's queen without delay.

(Mother comes. Mary crowns her.)

Mary: We crown you Queen of May,

We crown you right today,

We love you so dearly,

We hope you will stay.

(Maypole dance.)

(END.)

By Class of 1930-31

## POEMS

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Before children tell and write poems of their own, they need to have had frequent opportunities to read and hear poetry for pure enjoyment. When encouraged, they like to find and read to the group poems that they like. There will be a wide variety of themes, according to the interests of the age or the interests peculiar to the individual. There will be simple rhymes of Mother Goose, Robert Louis Stevenson, and others. There will be poems such as "Annabel Lee," that were loved by the grandparents of these children. There will be nonsense verse and child verse. And if children have access to books, they will find and delight in lovely lines written by the modern poets such as "Silver" by Walter de la Mare and "The Spirit of the Birch" by Arthur Ketchum. These poetry hours are most pleasant experiences for children and teachers.

After several of these periods of enjoying poems on varied subjects, children may be asked to find and read poems on certain themes such as autumn, the moon, snow, brooks, etc. Their attention may be called to the many kinds of rhythm poets use in handling the same theme. They enjoy picking out the word pictures used. The teacher can jot down on the blackboard a list of the expressions that the children like. Here the teacher might say, "We are going to write a poem about autumn. What pictures shall you use?" After telling several pictures they plan to use, the children will be ready to add to the list of expressive words some words and phrases they would like to use. After pursuing this course a while, the teacher might ask, "Who has the first line of his poem ready?" Several will be ready to give theirs. One may be placed on the blackboard. The class will be glad to add lines. There will be many suggestions from which choices must be made. Often several lines are equally good and the children should be helped to realize this. The poem called "Little Brook" in the collection that follows is a class poem.

After making class poems, the group is ready to start individual work on poems. A good exercise to encourage every member of the group to try is to leave two or three lines of a class poem on the board for the class to finish if they have not four lines of their own. In this way every one is able to make a contribution and feels successful. In later poem periods less help will be needed, though many children will always need suggestions from the group and the teacher. The children should have an opportunity to read their poems to the class. These efforts should be recognized no matter if they are not poetry. The group will gladly help improve a line here and there.

What shall be done about the rhyme scheme? Often in the beginning we find meaningless lines set in to complete the rhyme scheme. With guidance children see the importance of keeping the thought sensible even at the sacrifice of rhyme endings. In



the beginning it is easier to use the rhyme schemes: a, a, b, b or a, b, c, b. From wide reading of modern verse children get away from the idea that lines must rhyme. Their attention may need to be called to the fact.

We must not expect to get real poetry very often, not every year even! There are not many real poets in the world. But often we get a lovely phrase or line. We must capitalize on these. We can help the children to see their beauty, but we must not expect everyone to do as well.

It is imperative in creative work always to keep it on a plane of enjoyment. It must not be work! If it degenerates to that level all the good is lost; in fact, harm can be done. Children may learn to hate all poetry. It seems advisable not to have these poetry periods too often, probably not more than once a month. There is little danger then that the class as a whole will lose interest. But this need not be all the creative poetry written. The teacher can encourage the class to hand in to her at any time the poems that they write. If these contributions are appreciated, poems usually continue to appear off and on all year.

A teacher who plans to try this work will be inspired and greatly helped by reading "Creative Power" and "Creative Youth" by Hughes Mearns.

Below are three poems written when the class was studying a picture in art work. The group as a whole were writing a descriptive paragraph. Three girls decided they would like to write theirs in poetic form.

#### BEHIND THE PLOW

The farmer's plowing the soil;  
The clouds are rolling by;  
The ground is very rich,  
And red like a sunlit sky;  
And far back in the landscape  
The sea is sweeping by,  
Darker far than the pale blue sky;  
I can almost hear the farmer,  
Whistling his merry tune,  
And singing about the skies  
And the farming weather of June.

Maxine Dennis, 1930-31

#### BEHIND THE PLOW

The farmer began to plow;  
It was early in the spring;  
The ground was rich and fertile;  
He began to whistle and sing.  
The sea was bright and calm and fair;  
The clouds hung low in the sky;  
The breezes began to blow again,  
And the gulls began to fly.  
The horses pulled the plow;  
The plow was made of wood;  
It has turned three rows of earth,  
So overturned they stood.

Sara Louise Stevens, 1930-31

## THE MAN BEHIND THE PLOW

'Tis early in the morning,  
 And the boy is blithe and gay;  
 With the calm blue sea before him;  
 He is glad for the new spring day.  
 A bank of rolling clouds above him,  
 And, too, a pale blue sky;  
 The plowed red earth below him,  
 And gulls around him fly;  
 The horses' manes and tails  
 Are blown by the winds from the sea;  
 While the boy plows on and on  
 He whistles merrily.

Marguerite Little, 1930-31

## THE MOON

The Moon is the mother of thousands of stars,  
 They go floating around at night,  
 But when the dawn comes they go away  
 As if they were afraid of the light.

Suzanne Winter, 1931-32

## THE COOKIES

I will get the moon  
 On a damp, dark night.  
 I'm going to get it tonight!  
 Oh! some one took a bite!

I don't want it now  
 Since some one took a bite.  
 And I don't want it now  
 On a damp, dark night.

Jeanee Johns, 1933-34

## THE WORLD OF GOLD

The moon is a world of gold.  
 It is as big as our world.  
 There are about fifty men up there  
 They hack it day by day,  
 And that is why some nights  
 The moon has a big piece out of it.

William Fugate, 1933-34

## THE ORANGE

I will go up after the moon.  
 It is a big orange.  
 I will plant the seeds of the orange  
 And have a sky full of little oranges.

Harold Franklin, 1933-34

## LITTLE BROOK

Little brook, how fast you come  
 Down the mountain side;  
 From the caps of snow so white,  
 From the springs of glistening water,  
 Rushing, dancing, sparkling, splashing,  
 Gurgling, babbling, foaming, dashing.

Out upon the broad green meadow,  
 You now flow gently on your way  
 Over the moss-covered rocks you chatter  
 Around the grassy plots you murmur  
 Winding, dimpling, rippling, swerving,  
 Turning, twisting, bubbling, curving.

Class Poem, 1931-32

## BREAKFAST

The hens are getting their breakfast  
 From mother's nice moist bed,  
 (It's a new bed of pink roses)  
 And on nice fat worms they're fed.

The rabbits are getting their breakfast,  
 They're in the garden, too;  
 But they're in the vegetable garden  
 Eating lettuce and dew.

The robins are getting their breakfast  
 From the old oak tree in the yard;  
 The cherries are gone in the orchard  
 So they're eating insects instead.

Elizabeth Taylor, 1931-32

## THE SONG OF THE WOODCUTTER

My axe and I are out at dawn. Chop! Chop! Chop!  
 And there we stay through the whole long day  
 And see the rabbits hop.  
 And see the deer run wild and free  
 And hear the woodbirds sing  
 And see the trees sway in the breeze  
 As gently their branches they swing.

Elizabeth Taylor, 1931-32

## HALLOWE'EN

The lights were dim  
 In the little town;  
 Up came the big moon  
 When the sun went down.

The witch went for a ride  
 Right up through the air  
 With a black cat by her side.  
 No one knew she was there!

The boys worked fast  
 To miss no man's house.  
 They all aimed at last  
 To play just one more joke.

The owl did hoot!  
 The black cat did meow!  
 The witch her horn tooted!  
 Then home the boys flew!  
 Irene Sissell, 1933-34

See that witch!  
 Away I'll run!  
 I won't go out  
 Till the witching's done!  
 Marguerite Little, 1930-31

#### WHY I LOVE OCTOBER

I love October dear  
 Because it's the time of year  
 So many pumpkin faces  
 Greet us from so many places.  
 The witch and owl and black cat,  
 The ghost, the mask and all of that  
 Are always seen,  
 For they make fun for Hallowe'en.  
 Dorothy Kepler, 1933-34

#### OCTOBER

October days are here!  
 October days are here!  
 The leaves are turning yellow,  
 The grass is turning brown,  
 All the birds of summer  
 Will soon be southward bound.  
 Doyle Howell, 1930-31

#### THE LITTLE SNOWFLAKES

Little snowflakes coming from the sky,  
 How can you trip so lightly  
 Like little fairies  
 Dancing in the air?  
 Harold Franklin, 1933-34

#### THE BEADS

One morning when I awoke,  
 I saw that it had sleeted.  
 There were beads on the twigs  
 That sparkled and glistened  
 I went to get them—  
 They weren't there at all!  
 Bobby McIntyre, 1933-34

## THE SPARKLING SNOW

The Snow is sparkling  
 Like diamonds in the sun.  
 The peaceful little snowflakes  
 Are coming from above.  
 Dorothy Dean Dennis, 1933-34

## THE FROST

Mister Frostman came round one night,  
 And painted all the windows white;  
 Then the sun began to show  
 And Mister Frostman said, "Oh, Oh!"  
 Dwain Bower, 1933-34

## THE SNOW

The little fairy snowflakes  
 Come dancing from the sky.  
 When the sun comes out  
 You look like diamonds.  
 Dorothy Dennis, 1933-34

## AN INVITATION

The whole world seems to leap out and say,  
 "Come out! come out! it's a beautiful day.  
 The sun may go behind a cloud,  
 But, come out! Come out! Spring's on the way!"  
 Marguerite Little, 1930-31

## OLD FASHIONED LILACS

Lilac blooming at my door,  
 You are like the dames of yore;  
 You curtsy and sway o'er and o'er;  
 I'd like to catch the beads from your cap,  
 I'd like you to curtsy more and more.  
 Who are you curtseying to?  
 My dainty lilac answers me;  
 She says, "To you, to you."  
 Marguerite Little, 1930-31

## SPIREA WET WITH RAIN

Spirea with little silver pearls  
 Dropping from her hair  
 Bends to the ground;  
 And when I lean over  
 To scent her sweetness,  
 She kisses me!  
 Marguerite Little, 1930-31

## I WOULD

I would make a garden if I were you.  
 I would! I would! I would!  
 I wanted to tell you  
 Because I know you could.

Mary Sue Simmons, 1930-31

## SPRING

Oh, now it is spring!  
 The birds sweet carols sing;  
 The rain is coming slow and fast.  
 It's spring! At last! At last!

Mary Sue Simmons, 1930-31

## LITTLE HUMMING BIRD

Little humming bird  
 Daintiest of all;  
 I saw you with your green back,  
 White breast, last fall.

Marguerite Little, 1930-31

## KINGFISHER

I know a funny fisherman  
 That loves to fish  
 If you want to see him  
 You may have your wish  
 You know him by his long dark bill and  
     his band of white trim  
 He has a shrill cry  
 And a funny big eye  
 A beautiful tail  
 And a rough crest.

Jacqueline Hennrich, 1931-32

## THE HUMMING BIRD

Oh, you pretty little humming bird,  
 With your ruby throat so bright.  
 But I can't come near,  
 Till you're up in a flight.

Betty Jane Rogers, 1931-32

## CARDINALS

Oh, Cardinal, you are so red,  
 You look like you've just been in bed.  
 That big red tuft sticks up so far,  
 And I wonder just how old you are.

Jean Moore, 1931-32



## WREN

The little wren  
 With her tail perched high  
 Flies from her home  
 To soar high in the sky.  
 Anonymous, 1930-31

## THE BIRD

I have a little bird-house  
 That is up in a tree.  
 I know it is there because I heard it say,  
 "La lee! La lee!"  
 Mary Sue Simmons, 1930-31

## THE CANARY

The canary's back is very yellow  
 His song is very mellow  
 He does not try to bellow  
 Gay little fellow!  
 Margery Thomas, 1931-32

## A LITTLE BIRDIE

I saw a little birdie  
 Fly upon a tree;  
 I gave it some crumbs,  
 And it sang a song for me.  
 Evelyn Kincade, 1930-31

## THE CARDINALS

Have you seen the red birds  
 That came back from the south?  
 They are called the Cardinals,  
 With a small beak and mouth.  
 Mary Sue Simmons, 1930-31

## BIRDS

Robins are red and yellow,  
 Black are the crows,  
 And the owl knows things that nobody else knows.  
 Canaries are pretty—  
 They're yellow;  
 And the blue and white bluejay; stuck up old fellow.  
 Elizabeth Taylor, 1931-32

## MISTER CROW

I don't like Mister Crow, with his strong wing,  
 He is such a black old thing,  
 But besides that he is a jolly elf,  
 And cares for no one but himself.  
 Miles Tipsword, 1931-32

## LITTLE SQUIRRELS

Little squirrels in the fall,  
 Some are short and some are tall;  
 Some are fat and some are slim;  
 I'd rather be human  
 Than any of them.

Jack Wyeth, 1930-31

## SQUIRRELS

The squirrels in winter  
 Sleep cosily sound,  
 When the winds do howl  
 And the snow's on the ground.

Anonymous, 1930-31

## THE RAINDROPS

"Tick! Tack!" goes the fairy cobbler,  
 He is making fairy shoes of raindrops.  
 The fairy queen in her buttercup hat comes dancing in  
 With her raindrop shoes to mend.

Jack Lee Sensintaffar, 1933-34

## APRIL

April is here again  
 With its rainy season;  
 The rain comes down in torrents;  
 And I see no reason.

Martha Moore, 1930-31

## A SONG OF SPRING

The sun's shining bright,  
 And the sky is blue;  
 The birds are singing;  
 And we are singing, too.

The primroses bloom,  
 And the lambkins play;  
 Oh, sing for the joy  
 Of a glad spring day!

Martha Jane Setliffe, 1930-31

## APRIL SHOWERS

April showers  
 Are pattering on the pane  
 April showers  
 Make many a muddy lane.

Margery Thomas, 1931-32

## APRIL SHOWERS

April, April has come again  
 With its showers of silver rain.  
 Pitter, patter on the pane,  
 Comes April's silver rain.

April, April now is calling  
 For the showers to start falling,  
 Right out of the sky they fall  
 For they hear their mother's call

We love April best of all,  
 Though the April showers fall.  
 Frances Ann Wilson, 1931-32

## THE CLOUDS

Up in the fairy sky,  
 All the clouds came racing by,  
 I wonder why all clouds go by,  
 Without a sound.  
 Dean McMillan, 1933-34

## THE CLOUDS

Here come the fairy sheep.  
 They make me think of Little Bo Peep.  
 Here comes the Big Bad Wolf.  
 Better run, my little sheep!  
 Patricia Reami, 1933-34

## THE MOTOR BOATS

I often see the clouds go by.  
 They resemble motor-boats  
 Racing in the sky.  
 Richard Stoner, 1933-34

## COLORS

Colors in the canyon;  
 Colors in the sky;  
 There are great deep valleys  
 Where the river seems to fly.  
 Martha Moore, 1930-31

## LIGHTNING

Lightning in the window,  
 Lightning o'er my head,  
 Lightning in the sky,  
 As I lie here in my bed.  
 Martha Moore, 1930-31

## SUNSET

Red silken cushions,  
 Yellow silken cushions,  
 Violet and blue;  
 Pretty colors!  
 Now the sun sinks to rest,  
 Far away in the west.  
 Marguerite Little, 1930-31

## A POET

Wouldn't you like to be a poet?  
 I know I would—  
 So much;  
 Writing about mountains, birds, and such.  
 Maxine Dennis, 1930-31

## IN THE BATHTUB

I like to play in the bathtub;  
 But when mother comes to rub, I don't like her way;  
 For, "Mary, sit down," is what she will say;  
 But still I want to play.

Sara Beth Negley, 1930-31

## A CHRISTMAS DINNER

I had a Christmas dinner  
 I won't be any thinner;  
 But I am not a sinner  
 To eat a Christmas dinner.  
 Sally Lou Bainbridge, 1930-31

## MY KITTY

I have a little kitty,  
 And she's very, very pretty,  
 With four white paws,  
 And very long claws.  
 Dorothy Aufdenkamp, 1930-31

## JOHNNIE-JUMP-UPS

Sweet little Johnnie Jump-Ups  
 Dancing up and down,  
 Growing in the sunshine  
 For every one in town.  
 Jacqueline Hennrich, 1931-32