



Associated Manitoba Arts Festivals

SPEECH ARTS MANUAL

PART 1: ADDENDUM

SPEECH ARTS MANUAL PART 1: SOLO SPOKEN POETRY

**Reproduction of any part of this document is restricted to preparation for,
and participation in, an AMAF affiliated festival.**

Table of Contents

SA 9001 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, KINDERGARTEN Page 1

Safe?	Silverstein, Shel	What is it?	Allen, Marie Louise
Five Years Old	Allen, Marie Louise	The Hairy Dog	Asquith, Herbert
Mud	Boyden, P.C.	The Drinking Fountain	Chute, Marchette
The Queen Bee	Robinson, M.K.	"SH"	Tippett, James
Catkin	Unknown	The Wish	Friday, Ann

SA 9003 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, GRADE 1 Page 6

Colors	Silverstein, Shel	Just Me	Hillert, Margaret
Yawn	Whelchan, Susan	Toes	Anglund, Joan Walsh
March	Newman, Fran	New Pet	Pasley, Lois F.
Something Big Has Been Here	Prelutsky, Jack	Words	Greve, Glenda
Spring Rain	Chute, Marchette	Magical Eraser	Silverstein, Shel

SA 9005 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, GRADE 2 Page 12

Sick Days	Hoberman, Mary Ann	Automobile Mechanics	Baruch, Dorothy
An Early Worm Got Out of Bed	Prelutsky, Jack	Spiders	Hoberman, Mary Ann
Being Lost	Kuskin, Karla	Jonathan's Farm	Waddington, Miriam
Bingo Has an Enemy	Fyleman, Rose	Camping	Marshall, Winifred C.
Mice	Fyleman, Rose	The Loser	Silverstein, Shel

SA 9007 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, GRADE 3 Page 17

Polar Bear	Smith, William J.	Today is Very Boring	Prelutsky, Jack
Our Mole	Simmie, Lois	Under the Ground	Bacmeister, Rhoda W.
My Dog, He is an Ugly Dog	Prelutsky, Jack	Sea Cliff	Smith, A.J.M.
Pebbles	Kitching, John	Fishes' Evening Song	Ipcar, Dahlov
The Sloth	Roethke, Theodore	Spaghetti	Flynn, Frank

SA 9010 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, CLASSICAL, GRADES 1 – 3 Page 25

Cats	Farjeon, Eleanor	The Land of Nod	Stevenson, Robert Louis
The Crocodile	Carroll, Lewis	The Four Friends	Milne, A.A.
Who Has Seen the Wind?	Rossetti, Christina	Not That	Aldis, Dorothy
The Swing	Stevenson, Robert Louis	Politeness	Milne, A.A.
The March Wind	Anonymous	A Kitten	Farjeon, Eleanor

PSA 9021 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, GRADE 4 Page 30

Alligators Are Unfriendly	Prelutsky, Jack	Lately I've Been Late	Lesynski, Loris
Brontosaurus	Kredenser, Gail	No Girls Allowed	Prelutsky, Jack
Homework	Yolen, Jane	Billy Batter	Lee, Dennis
Messy Room	Silverstein, Shel	New Jacket	Hoberman, Mary Ann
Unscratchable Itch	Silverstein, Shel	Anyone Seen My...?	Fatchen, Max

PSA 9023 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, GRADE 5 Page 40

Did You?	Cole, William	Smart	Silverstein, Shel
I Am Flying	Prelutsky, Jack	An Elephant is an Odd Affair	Gay, Zhenya
Pachycephalosaurus	Armour, Richard	An Alley Cat with One Life Left	Prelutsky, Jack
Whose Boo is Whose?	Kennedy, X.J.	Sneaky Bill	Cole, William
Almost Perfect	Silverstein, Shel	Snowman	Silverstein, Shel

PSA 9025 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, GRADE 6 Page 50

Eggs!	Prelutsky, Jack	Polar Bear Snow	Heidbreder, Robert
Keep a Stiff Upper Lip	Cary, Phoebe	The Runaway	Frost, Robert
The Hump	Kipling, Rudyard	The Marrog	Scriven, R.C.
The Puzzle	Lee, Dennis	Seal	Smith, William Jay
It Couldn't Be Done	Guest, Edgar A.	The Flotz	Prelutsky, Jack

PSA 9027 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, CLASSICAL, GRADES 4 – 6 Page 60

My Shadow	Stevenson, Robert Louis	The River	Scott, Frederick George
The Lamplighter	Stevenson, Robert Louis	Wild Horses	Smith, Myra A.I.
The Ride-by-Nights	de la Mare, Walter	The Minuet	Dodge, Mary M.
Indian Summer	Campbell, Wilfred	A Bird Came Down the Walk	Dickinson, Emily
Going Up North	Lee, Dennis	The Kitten at Play	Wordsworth, William

PSA 9029 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, CANADIAN, GRADES 4 – 6 Page 69

A Path to the Moon	Nichol, B.P.	Lion	Smith, William Jay
And My Heart Soars	George, Chief Dan	Pizza Theme & Variations	Lesynski, Loris
Mrs. Piper	Smith, William Jay	Paul Bunyan	Bourinot, Arthur S.
Procrastination	Simmie, Lois	The Diver	Ross, W.W.E.
The Camper	Johnson, E. Pauline	Flight of the Roller Coaster	Souster, Raymond

PSA 9031 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, MANITOBAN, GRADES 4 – 6 Page 79

From Death Unto Life	Giesbrecht, Cornelius V.	Spirit Sands	Atkin, Robert C.
I Call Her Home	Wright, Lenore	The People in the Valley	Le Dressay, Anne
Ma-he-can (Wolf)	Mercredi, Duncan	Lake Winnipeg 1956	Mercredi, Duncan
Manitoba	Burak, Randy	The Magic Painters	Connolly, Frank
Old House	Kenny, Anita	Sow the Land	Bredin, Errol

PSA 9041 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, GRADE 7 Page 89

Clean Gene	Silverstein, Shel	Winnie the	Webster, Clive
The Train Dogs	Johnson, E. Pauline	The Road Not Taken	Frost, Robert
It Must Be the Devil in Me	McNaughton, Colin	This Was My Brother	Gould, Mona
Manitoba Farmers	Hulbert, Winifred	Digging for China	Wilbur, Richard
Those Winter Sundays	Hayden, Robert	In Between	Banks, Lisa

PSA 9043 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, GRADE 8 Page 99

Rain	Graham, Carolyn	Eastern Shore	Bruce, Charles
If	Kipling, Rudyard	The Beaches of Mexico	Graham, Carolyn
Stick to It	Guest, Edgar A.	The Cage	Manning-Sanders, Ruth
It Was a Long Time Ago	Farjeon, Eleanor	The Little Green Orchard	de la Mare, Walter
The Fog	Davies, W.H.	Talking	Viorst, Judith

PSA 9045 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, GRADE 9 Page 109

The Need of Being Versed in Country Things	Frost, Robert	Velvet Shoes	Wylie, Elinor
Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night	Thomas, Dylan	Mountain Lion	Lawrence, D.H.
The Glove and the Lions	Hunt, Leigh	Sad Story of a Motor Fan	Field, H.A.
Fortune	Ferlinghetti, Lawrence	No Doctors Today Thank You	Nash, Ogden
The Long Voyage	Cowley, Malcolm	Barter	Teasdale, Sara

PSA 9047 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, CLASSICAL, GRADES 7 – 9 Page 120

London, 1802	Wordsworth, William	Because I Could Not Stop for Death	Dickinson, Emily
Abou Ben Adhem	Hunt, James Henry Leigh	High Flight	Magee, John Gillespie
The Listeners	de la Mare, Walter	Wander – Thirst	Gould, Gerald
The Fiddler of Dooney	Yeats, William Butler	Annabel Lee	Poe, E.A.
There Came a Wind Like a Bugle	Dickinson, Emily	Ozymandias	Shelley, Percy

PSA 9049 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, CANADIAN, GRADES 7 – 9 Page 129

The Ships of Yule	Carman, Bliss	The Colt	Knister, Raymond
It is Dangerous to Read Newspapers	Atwood, Margaret	How One Winter Came in the Lake Region	Campbell, Wilfred
The Blue Heron	Roberts, T.G.	The Deserted Pasture	Carman, Bliss
The Reformed Pirate	Roberts, T.G.	To Hilton	Panchami, Vasnata
Workworn	Johnson, E. Pauline	A January Morning	Lampman, Archibald

PSA 9051 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, MANITOBAN, GRADES 7 – 9 Page 139

The Danger of Merely Living	Kroetch, Robert	The Prairie Child	Freeman, Marta
Prairie Crocus	Saunders, Thomas	Friend or Foe	Antoniw, Lillian
September Heat	Cory, Wendy	Popular Geography	Waddington, Mariam
Transformations	Waddington, Mariam	Okanagan	Christie, Norma G.
Grey to Green	Thorleifson, Al	Poem	Livesay, Dorothy

PSA 9061 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, GRADE 10 Page 149

Disembarking at Quebec	Atwood, Margaret	I, Icarus	Nowlan, Alden
Jazz Concert	Tawara, Machi	Departure	Kirkland, Glen
To L.H.B. (1894 – 1915)	Mansfield, Katherine	Antlers Against the Sky	Barker, S. Omar
The Bear on the Delhi Road	Birney, Earle	Ars Poetica	MacLeish, Archibald
Warty Bliggens the Toad	Maquis, Don	Fire on the Hills	Jeffers, Robinson

PSA 9063 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, GRADE 11 Page 159

Constantly Risking Absurdity and Death	Ferlinghetti, Lawrence	The Shell	Stephens, James
An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum Spender , Stephen	Brooke, Rubert	The Burning of the Leaves	Binyan, Lawrence
The Soldier	Hobson, Julie	After Apple Picking	Frost, Robert
My Position, My View	Waddington, Mariam	Warren Pryor	Nowlan, Alden
Ukrainian Church		From the Shore	Sandburg, Carl

PSA 9065 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, 20TH/21ST CENTURY, GRADE 12 Page 169

All Aboard	Wright, Lenore	October Paint	Sandburg, Carl
Perception	Wright, Lenore	Exile	Sheard, Virna
The Ice-Cart	Gibson, Wilfred Wilson	Too Hot to Sleep	Marty, Sid
Night-Boat	Brown, Audrey Alexander	Canadian Railroad Trilogy	Lightfoot, Gordon
The Forsaken	Scott, Duncan Campbell	Ex Basketball Player	Udipke, John

PSA 9067 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, CLASSICAL, GRADES 10 – 12 Page 180

Brave New World	MacLeish, Archibald	A Description of Love	Raleigh , Sir Walter
Silences	Pratt, E.J.	Charge of the Light Brigade	Tennyson, Alfred Lord
The Dark Stag	Crawford, Isabella Valancy	Home – Thoughts, from Abroad	Browning, Robert
A Valediction Forbidding Mourning	Donne, John	The Lady of Shalott	Tennyson, Alfred Lord
Vestigia	Carman, Bliss	The Tyger	Blake , William

PSA 9069 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, CANADIAN, GRADES 10 – 12 Page 191

The Wind Our Enemy	Marriott, Anne	The Game	Crozier, Lorna
The Sculptors	Purdy, Alfred	The Kite is a Victim	Cohen, Leonard
Dazzle	Roberts, Dorothy	July	Borson, Roo
A Walk in Kyoto	Birney, Earle	The Shrouding	Livesay, Dorothy
Please Hear What I Am Not Saying	Stewart, Brenda	Woman by the Shore	Nero, Robert W.

PSA 9071 SOLO SPOKEN POETRY, MANITOBAN, GRADES 10 – 12 Page 201

Without Benefit of Tape	Livesay, Dorothy	Green Rain	Livesay, Dorothy
Lynx in Winnipeg	Valgardson, W.D.	Wooded Paths	Rioux, Christianne
Paul Isfeld: Fisherman	Valgardson, W.D.	Forsaken Dreams	Sanderson, Ida E.
The Child Looks Out	Livesay, Dorothy	Lonely Home	Antoniw, Lillian
Silent Seasons	Hulbert, Winifred	Reprieve	Hulbert, Winifred N.

BEING LOST

Being lost
Is the perfect way
To pass the time
On a sky blue day
When it's warm
And the open window
Uncurtains a call
Spiraling up the stairway
Hovering in the hall.
No one comes then
When they call me.
I am not there
Where they look.
I linger alone
In a place of my own
Lost
In a book.

Karla Kuskin (Secret Places, Charlotte Huck, Greenwillow Books)

BINGO HAS AN ENEMY

Bingo is kind and friendly,
A gentleman right to the core,
But he can't bear rats
And he hates all cats
And the fuzzy brown dog next door.

There's a nice little girl who lives there,
But they glare at us more and more;
So we never can call,
And the cause of it all
Is the fuzzy brown dog next door.

Bingo is limping a little
And one of his ears is sore,
He's rather a fright,
But, oh, what a sight
Is the fuzzy brown dog next door!

Rose Fyleman (Time for Poetry, W.J. Gage and Company)

BRONTOSAURUS

The giant brontosaurus
Was a prehistoric chap
With four fat feet to stand on
And a very skimpy lap.
The scientists assure us
Of a most amazing thing—
A brontosaurus blossomed
When he had a chance to sing!

(The bigger brontosauruses,
Who liked to sing in choruses,
Would close their eyes
and harmonize
And sing most anything.)

They growled and they yowled,
They deedled and **they** dummed;
They warbled and **they** whistled,
They howled and they hummed.
They didn't eat, they didn't sleep;
They sang and sang all day.
Now all you'll find are footprints
Where they tapped the time away!

Gail Kredenser ([Random House Book of Poetry for Children](#), Random House)

UNSCRATCHABLE ITCH

There is a spot that you can't scratch
Right between your shoulder blades,
Like an egg that just won't hatch
Here you set and there it stays.
Turn and squirm and try to reach it,
Twist your neck and bend your back,
Hear your elbows creak and crack,
Stretch your fingers, now you bet it's
Going to reach—no that won't get it—
Hold your breath and stretch and pray,
Only just an inch away,
Worse than a sunbeam you can't catch
Is that one spot that
You can't scratch.

Shel Silverstein ([A Light in the Attic](#), Harper Collins Publishing)

THE PUZZLE

Annie and Ernie
McGilligan Spock
Pedalled their tricycles
Round the block.

They pedalled and pedalled
And pedalled in pairs,
Till they came to a house
That was just like theirs.

In the same front yard
Stood the same small tree;
On the same brown table
The same pot of tea;

And the very same smells!
And the very same noise!
And the very same beds
With the very same toys!

They stood and **they** stared
And they stared and they stood;
The thing was too weird
To be understood:

How was it possible?
Think of the shock
Of Annie and Ernie
McGilligan Spock!

Dennis Lee (Jelly Belly, MacMillan Canada)

THE FLOTZ

I am the Flotz, I gobble dots,
indeed, I gobble lots and lots,
every dot I ever see
is bound to be a bite for me.
I often munch on myriads
of sweet, abundant periods,
I nibble hyphens, and with ease
chew succulent apostrophes.

From time to time, I turn my gaze
to little dotted "i's" and "j's,"
and if I chance upon a dash,
I soon dispatch it with panache.
I chomp on commas half the day,
quotation marks are rarer prey,
a semicolon's quite a treat,
while polka dots are joys to eat.

When I confront a dotted line,
my tongue flicks out, those dots are mine,
Morse code becomes a feast, and yes,
I've snacked upon an S.O.S.
For I'm the Flotz, who gobbles dots,
I gobble them in pails and pots,
and you'll not like my brief embrace
if you have freckles on your face.

Jack Prelutsky (New Kid on the Block, Scholastic)

THE RIVER

Why hurry, little river,
Why hurry to the sea?
There is nothing there to do
But to sink into the blue
And all forgotten be.
There is nothing on that shore
But the tides for evermore,
And the faint and far-off line
Where the winds across the brine
For ever, ever roam
And never find a home.

Why hurry, little river,
From the mountains and the mead,
Where the graceful elms are sleeping
And the quiet cattle feed?
The loving shadows cool
The deep and restful pool;
And every tribute stream
Brings its own sweet woodland dream
Of the mighty woods that sleep
Where the sighs of earth are deep,
And the silent skies look down
On the savage mountain's frown.

Oh linger, little river,
Your banks are all so fair,
Each morning is a hymn of praise,
Each evening is a prayer.
All day the sunbeams glitter
On your shallows and your bars,
And at night the dear God stills you
With the music of the stars.

Frederick George Scott (All Sails Set, Copp Clark Publishing)

MRS. PIPER

There was an Old Woman named Piper
Who spoke like a windshield wiper.

She would say: "Dumb Gump!
Wet Stump! Wet Stump!"

And then like the voice of disaster
Her words would come faster and faster:

"Dumb Gump! Dumb Gump!
Wet Stump! Wet Stump!
Wet Stump! Wet Stump!"

Tiddledy-diddledy-diddledy-bump...
Bump...

Bump...

Bump...

BUMP!"

—Which greatly annoyed *Mr.* Piper!

William Jay Smith (*Around My Room*, Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE

It's cold.
Winter is dying.
But it is not yet dead.
In its final days,
It makes one last effort
To conquer life.

A breeze starts up from the northwest.
It grows stronger, and soon becomes
A wild, wicked wind, whipping the white snow
Into a fanatical, freezing fury.
The once large and gentle snowflakes
Have become small and sinister and icy;
Driven by the angry air,
They show mercy to no man,
Penetrating the flesh
Like minute hypodermic needles,
Injecting the deadly cold
Into the heart,
Into the very soul
Of all who dare defy the winter wind.

But March has come,
And though it has come like a raging lion,
It may yet leave like a meek little lamb;
For Winter is dying,
And in spite of its last mad, malicious moments,
Its death is inevitable.
Soon Spring will come,
And with it,
Warmth, life, and joy.

Cornelius V. Giesbrecht ([Poetry of Manitoba](#), Province of Manitoba)

SOW THE LAND

Thunder roars over the prairie
Lightning turns night into day
They mentioned hail in the forecast
Pray it doesn't pass this way.

The crop is coming along nicely
There's been just the right bit of rain
Lost it all to a storm last year
Won't make it if it happens again.

With one eye on the heavens
The other on the crop as it grows
Trusting there'll be a good harvest this year
And next spring again I can sow,
Sow the land with my heart in my hands
Sow with a hope and a prayer
Sweat blood as once more I gamble
That the "Dealer" will be fair.

I'm a gambler by profession
A farmer who works the land
It's a mixture of hard work and hoping
That I'm dealt a winning hand.

But drought, hoppers and hailstorms
Can soon destroy a dream
And unless you work the land, my friend
You don't know what I mean.

Errol Bredin ([Manitoba Myriad](#), Dennis County Writers' Group)

THE LISTENERS

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveler,
Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
Of the forest's ferny floor:
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
Above the Traveler's head:
And he smote upon the door again a second time;
"Is anybody there?" he said.
But no one descended to the Traveler;
No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his gray eyes,
Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners
That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
To that voice from the world of men:
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
That goes down to the empty hall,
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely Traveler's call.
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
'Neath the starred and leafy sky;
For he suddenly smote on the door, even
Louder, and lifted his head:—
"Tell them I came, and no one answered,
That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
From the one man left awake:
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

Walter de la Mare (Classic Poems to Read Aloud, Kingfisher)

THE REFORMED PIRATE

His proper name was Peter Sweet:
But he was known as Keel-haul Pete
From Turtle Cay to Port-of-Spain
And all along the Spanish Main,
And up and down those spicy seas
Which lave the bosky Caribbees.
His sense of humour was so grim,
Fresh corpses were but jokes to him.
He chuckled, chortled, slapt his flank,
To see his victims walk the plank.
His language – verbal bilge and slush-
Made all who heard it quake and blush.
Loud would he laugh, with raucous jeers,
To see his shipmates plug their ears
Whenever, feeling extra gay,
To his high spirits he gave way.

But were his shipmates **prudes**? Oh no!-
Ptomaine Bill and Strangler Joe,
Slicer Mike, Tarnation Shay,
And twoscore more as bad as they,
Ready to cut throats any day.
But Pete's expressions used to freeze
E'en their tough sensibilities.
Like shocked young ladies they would cry,
"Avast!" "Belay!" and "Fie, oh fie!"
Pete's home-life was not – well, quite nice.
In one short week he married thrice;

And so on. All his cool retreats
(From which had fled the parakeets)
Were over-run with Missus Sweets:
And yet his heart was ever true-
Deep down – to Angostura Sue.

Three nights hand-running – one, two, three-
He dreamed about a gallows-tree.
Three nights hand-running, he awoke
With yells that made the bulkheads smoke.
Then terror took his soul by storm:
So he decided to reform.

T.G. Roberts (The Leather Bottle, McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd.)

WORKWORN

Across the street, an humble woman lives;
To her 'tis little fortune ever gives;
Denied the wines of life, it puzzles me
To know how she can laugh so cheerily.
This morn I listened to her softly sing,
And, **marvelling** what this effect could bring
I looked: 'twas but the presence of a child
Who passed her gate, and looking in, had smiled.
But self-encrusted, I had failed to see
The child had also looked and laughed to me.
My lowly **neighbour** thought the smile God-sent,
And singing, through the toilsome hours she went
O! weary singer, I have learned the wrong
Of taking gifts, and giving naught of song;
I thought my blessings scant, my mercies few,
Till I contrasted them with yours, and you;
To-day I counted much, yet wished it more—
While but a child's bright smile was all your store,

If I had thought of all the stormy days,
That fill some lives that tread less favoured ways,
How little sunshine through their shadows gleamed,
My own dull life had much the brighter seemed;
If I had thought of all the eyes that sweep
Through desolation, and still smiling keep
That see so little pleasure, so much woe,
My own had laughed more often long ago;
If I had thought how leaden was the weight
Adversity lays at my kinsman's gate,
Of that great cross my next door neighbour bears,
My thanks had been more frequent in my prayers;
If I had watched the woman o'er the way,
Workworn and old, who labours day by day,
Who has no rest, no joy to call her own,
My tasks, my heart, had much the lighter grown.

OKANAGAN

The clear skies of the Okanagan, lakes, a
sparkling diamond blue.
Mountains rise in stately splendour,
creating a panoramic view.
Sagebrush growing on the craggy slopes
and on the rolling valley floor,
Pine and evergreen surround us, this is
Mother Nature's store.
Feathery crystals falling from the sky,
leave a blanket of pure white snow,
Rain's come down to touch the earth
urging fruit trees and flower to grow.

Apple blossoms, peach and plum are
bursting into bloom,
Cherry, apricot and grape, fill the valley
with sweet perfume.
Sandy beaches, trails and parks,
viewpoints along the way
Come and visit **for a while**, we know
you will want to stay.
Gracious people you will always find
make you feel welcome here,
Friendly smiles, affectionate hello's and a
heart full of good Cheer.

Norma G. Christie (Rapid City Anthology, Compascor)

FIRE ON THE HILLS

The deer were bounding like blown leaves
Under the smoke in front of the roaring wave of the brush-fire;
I thought of the smaller lives that were caught.
Beauty is not always lovely; the fire was beautiful, the terror
Of the deer was beautiful; and when I returned
Down the black slopes after the fire had gone by, an eagle
Was perched on the jag of a burnt pine,

Insolent and gorged, cloaked in the folded storms of his
shoulders.

He had come from far off for the good hunting
With fire for his beater to drive the game; the sky was
merciless

Blue, and the hills merciless black,
the **sombre**-feathered great bird sleepily merciless between
them.

I thought, painfully, but the whole mind,
The destruction that brings an eagle from heaven is better
than mercy.

Robinson Jeffers (Poetry of our Time, Macmillan)

WARREN PRYOR

When every pencil meant a sacrifice
his parents boarded him at school in town,
slaving to free him from the stony fields,
the **meagre** acreage that bore them down.

They blushed with pride when, at his graduation,
they watched him picking up the slender scroll,
his passport from the years of brutal toil
and lonely patience in a barren hole.

When he went in the Bank their cups ran over.
They **marvelled** how he wore a milk-white shirt
work days and jeans on Sundays. He was saved
from their thistle-strewn farm and its red dirt.

And he said nothing. Hard and serious
like a young bear inside his teller's cage,
his axe-hewn hands upon the paper bills
aching with empty strength and throttled rage.

Alden Nowlan (Connections 3 – Discovering, Gage Publishing)

FROM THE SHORE

A lone gray bird,
Dim-dipping, far-flying,
Alone in the shadows and grandeurs and tumults
Of night and the sea
And the stars and storms.

Out over the darkness it wavers and hovers,
Out into the gloom it swings and batters,
Out into the wind and the rain and the vast,
Out into the pit of a great black world,
Where fogs are at battle, **sky-driven, sea-blown,**
Love of mist and rapture of flight,
Glories of chance and hazards of death
On its eager and palpitant wings.

Out into the deep of the great dark world,
Beyond the long borders where foam and drift
Of the sundering waves are lost and gone
On the tides that **plunge** and rear and crumble.

Carl Sandburg (Poetry for Young People, Scholastic)

ALL ABOARD

a distant whistle blows
through the long tunnel
of memory

feel the shuttle-sway
steel wheels on steel tracks
clickety clack
throbs a pulse
that matches
my own

conductor arranges seats
for a 3AM village stop
never a porter to answer
a silent bell
for a middle-of-the-night
assist

landscape moves by windows
a real – too – real film
running sideways
eye-balled from padded seats
that face
where we've been

observation car sees
grey-green foothills grey-purple
mountains
approach at clickety clack speed

burrowing tunnels spill
new life – new scenes
trestles cross
vicious torrents
300 feet below - stop
the heart in the throat

the ocean larger
much larger than Lake Winnipeg
not nearly
as calm

Vancouver
next stop
end of the line

mountains to the east
ocean to the west
and I claustrophobic
breathe in the coast
long
for the prairie flat-lands
soon too soon
the last spike
is driven in the heart
of Via

TOO HOT TO SLEEP

He was sleeping when bear
came down from the mountain
by the water trap
after cleaning the screen
of branches and gravel

He fell asleep, a hot june morning
above Wapta Lake, the Kicking Horse Pass
When Muskwa came down without a sound
and snuffed at his jeans

Who's this asleep on my mountain?

It's my friend Birnie asleep I said
(in my head)
I didn't hear you coming bear
I was dozing, I looked up
and there you were

You never know said Bear
just where the wind will lead me
when I'll be around
or what beat I'm hunting on

and sniffed at Birnie's collar
at his ear, which he licked tentatively
causing Birnie to moan softly

Nothing doing here he said, nothing doing

"We were just going bear," I said quietly
edging backwards

Don't move too quickly will you, said Bear
when you move, or better still
don't move at all

Are you her often, are you coming again?
he asked, flipping over a stone
licking delicately the underside
"No," I said. good he said, that's good.

I just came down from the pass
the wind blowing up my nose
to see who was sleeping on my mountain
he said, and sniffed at Birnie's armpit
Whoosh whoosh he snorted

and tuned away, clattered down the creek
popping his teeth, his hackles up
Went out of sight
around the shoulder of Mount Hector

as Birnie woke rubbing his eyes
"Too hot to sleep he said." Yeah.

“So over the mountains and over the plains,
Into the muskeg and into the rain.
Up the Saint Lawrence all the way to Gaspé,
Swingin’ our hammers and drawin’ our pay,
Layin’ ‘em in and tyin’ ‘em down,
Away to the bunkhouse and into the town,
A dollar a day and a place for my head
A drink to the living, a toast to the dead!”

“Oh, the song of the future has been sung,
All the battles have been won,
On the mountain tops we stand,
All the world at our command.
We have opened up the soil
With our teardrops—
And our toil.”

For there was a time in this fair land when the railroad did not
run,
When the wild majestic mountains stood alone against the sun,
Long before the white man and long before the wheel,
When the green dark forest was too silent to be real
When the green dark forest was too silent to be real.
And many are the dead men,
Too silent
To be real.

Gordon **Lightfoot** (Sunburst, Thomas Nelson & Sons)

THE DARK STAG

A startled stag, the blue-grey Night,
Leaps down beyond black pines.
Behind—a length of yellow light—
The hunter's arrow shines:
His moccasins are stained with red,
He bends upon his knee,
From covering peaks his shafts are sped,
The blue mists plume his mighty head,—
Well may the swift Night flee!

The pale, pale Moon, a snow-white doe,
Bounds by his dappled flank:
They beat the stars down as they go,
Like wood-bells growing rank.
The winds lift dewlaps from the ground,
Leap from the quaking reeds;
Their hoarse bays shake the forests round,
With keen cries on the track they bound,—
Swift, swift the dark stag speeds!

Away! his white doe, far behind,
Lies wounded on the plain;
Yells at his flank the nimblest wind,
His large tears fall in rain:
Like lily-pads, small clouds grow white
About his darkling way;
From his bald nest upon the height
The red-eyed eagle sees his flight;
He falters, turns, the antlered Night,—
The dark stag stands at bay!

His feet are in the waves of space;
His antlers broad and dun
He lowers; he turns his velvet face
To front the hunter, Sun;
He stamps the lilled clouds, and high
His branches fill the west.
The lean stork sails across the sky,
The shy loon shrieks to see him die,
The winds leap at his breast.

Roar the rent lakes as thro' the wave
Their silver warriors plunge,
As vaults from core of crystal cave
The strong, fierce muskallunge;
Red torches of the sumach glare,
Fall's council-fires are lit;
The bittern, squaw-like, scolds the air;
The wild duck splashes loudly where
The rustling rice-spears knit.

Shaft after shaft the red Sun speeds:
Rent the stag's dappled side,
His breast, fanged by the shrill winds, bleeds,
He staggers on the tide;
He feels the hungry waves of space
Rush at him high and blue;
Their white spray smites his dusky face,
Swifter the Sun's fierce arrows race
And pierce his stout heart thro'.

His antlers fall; once more he spurns
The hoarse hounds of the day;
His blood upon the crisp blue burns,
Reddens the mounting spray;
His branches smite the wave—with cries
The loud winds pause and flag—
He sinks in space—red glow the skies,
The brown earth crimson as he dies,
The strong and dusky stag.

A DESCRIPTION OF LOVE

Now what is love? I pray thee, tell.
It is that fountain and that well,
Where pleasure and repentance dwell.
It is perhaps that sauncing bell,
That tolls all in to heaven or hell:
And this is love, as I hear tell.

Yet what is love? I pray thee say.
It is a work on holy-day;
It is December matched with May;
When lusty bloods, in fresh array,
Hear ten months after of the play:
And this is love, as I hear say.

Yet what is love? I pray thee sayn.
It is a sunshine mixed with rain;
It is a tooth-ache, or like pain;
It is a game where none doth gain;
The lass saith no, and would full fain:
And this is love, as I hear sayn.

Yet what is love? I pray thee say.
It is a yea, it is a nay,
A pretty kind of sporting fray;
It is a thing will soon away;
Then take the vantage while you may:
And this is love, as I hear say.

Yet what is love? I pray thee show.
A thing that creeps, it cannot go;
A prize that passeth to and fro;
A thing for one, a thing for mo;
And he that proves must find it so:
And this is love, sweet friend, I trow.

Sir Walter Raleigh (Oxford Book of 16th Century Verse, Oxford University Press)

CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

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 dismayed?
Not tho’ the soldiers knew
Some one had blundered:
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
Volleyed 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.

Flashed all their sabers bare,
Flashed as they turned in air,
Sab’ring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wondered:
Plunged in the battery smoke,
Right through the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the **sabre**-stroke
Shattered and sundered.
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;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro’ 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.
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade,
Noble Six Hundred!

Alfred Lord Tennyson (Norton Anthology of English Literature, W.W. Norton & Co.)

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

PART I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And through the field the road runs by
 To many-tower'd Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Through the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle embowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
Slide the heavy barges trail'd
By slow horses; and unhail'd
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
 Skimming down to Camelot:
But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot:
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers " 'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott."

PART II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott.

And moving through a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
 Winding down to Camelot:
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
 Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
And abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
 Goes by to tower'd Camelot;
And sometimes through the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often through the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
 And music, went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;—
"I am half sick of shadows," said
 The Lady of Shalott.

Lord Tennyson (Words on Wings I, Thomas Nelson & Sons)

THE TYGER

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare **seize** the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

William Blake ([Themes on the Journey](#), Nelson Canada)

PLEASE HEAR WHAT I AM NOT SAYING

In body – just inches apart
But in our minds, who knows?
Are we united? Are your thoughts my thoughts?
Do you feel what I feel?
Constantly I wonder.
Please hear what I am not saying.

How do I tell you?
With an earnest look, with pleading eyes
I pour my heart out to you.
My eyes reflect the innermost feelings of my heart
Can you not see through them?
Please hear what I am not saying.

How can one go on not knowing?
Not being able to feel for someone.
That need must be fulfilled.
Is there a gleam of hope behind that wry smile?
Or must one search elsewhere, settle for less?
Oh, please hear what I am not saying.

I begin to feel the dreaded fear of defeat
Am I rejected, not wanted, or just not recognized?
Am I defeated before I have risen up?
Where do I begin?
Oh, please hear what I am not saying.

Teardrops from heaven fall softly against the window
My world is lonely, desolate and dark
I feel abandoned, I'm lost and alone
A feeling of emptiness creeps over me.
- Tell me, where do I stand?
- Please hear what I am not saying.

Brenda Stewart ([It's Not Always a Game](#), All About Us Books)

THE GAME

So many **conversations** between
the tall grass and the wind.
A child hides in that sound,
hunched small
as a rabbit, knees tucked
to her chest, head on knees,
yet she's not asleep.

She is waiting with a patience
I had long forgotten,
hair wild with grass seeds,
skin silvery with dust.

It was my brother's game.
He was the one who counted,
and I, seven years younger,
the one who hid.

When I ran from the yard,
he found his gang of friends
and played kick-the-can
or caught soft spotted frogs
at the creek so summer-slow,
who can blame him?

As darkness fell,
from the kitchen door
someone always called my name.
He was there before me
at the supper table;
milk in his glass
and along his upper lip
glowing like moonlight.
You're so good at that, he'd say,
I couldn't find you.

Now I wade through hip-high bearded grass
to where she sits so still,
lay my larger hand
upon her shoulder.

Above the wind I say,
You're it,
then kneel beside her
and with the patience
that has lived so long in this body
clean the dirt from her nose and mouth,
separate the golden speargrass from her hair.

A KITE IS A VICTIM

A kite is a victim you are sure of.
You love it because it pulls
gentle enough to call you master,
strong enough to call you fool;
because it lives
like a desperate trained falcon
in the high sweet air,
and you can always haul it down
to tame it in your drawer.

A kite is a fish you have already caught
in a pool where no fish come,
so you play him carefully and long,
and hope he won't give up,
or the wind die down.

A kite is the last poem you've written;
so you give it to the wind,
but you don't let it go
until someone finds you
something **else** to do.

A kite is a contract of glory
that must be made with the sun,
so you make friends with the field
the river and the wind,
then you pray the whole cold night before
under the traveling cordless moon,
to make you worthy and lyric and pure.

Leonard Cohen (Tribal Drums, McGraw-Hill)

WOODED PATHS

I enter the dark green, cool shade of the woods. A little way off to the side a sparkling stream tinkles and cascades over the pebbles on its sandy bed.
Lush green moss grows abundantly at the edge.

The coolness **envelops** me as I stroll down the path. Sunlight filters through the dense leaves to reach the ground and halo the flowers.

The fragrant smell of spring and flowers is in the air blending with the smell of pine needles. I stoop to kneel on the emerald green grass. There I pick an azure blue-bell and inhale its tender perfume of dew, spring and its own sweet scent.

The birch trees look like young girls talking with young men. Their buds are like tight curls in their hair and their waving branches are their gesticulating arms.

I pick lilies and lilacs and inhale their virginal fragrance. I bind up the flowers and their scent with my hair ribbon.

There on the wooded paths all cares of the world are lost in the delicate perfume of flowers, the potpourri of spring and the calm, cool air of the woods. Reluctantly I re-enter the real world from my haven.

Christianne Rioux (Rapid City Anthology, Compascor Manitoba)

