

POETRY IN THE PRIMARY GRADES

Winter Nights.

R. L. STEVENSON.

Whenever the moon and stars are set,
Whenever the wind is high,
All night long in the dark and wet,
A man goes riding by.
Late in the night when the fires are out,
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

Whenever the trees are crying aloud,
And ships are tossed at sea,
By, on the highway, low and loud,
By at the gallop goes he.
By at the gallop he goes, and then
By he comes back at the gallop again.

[Read the poem to the children in as spirited a way as possible. Try to make them hear the galloping of the imaginary horse. Tell them something about the writer.]

The man who wrote these verses was a very famous writer. He wrote many books for grown-up people; but he was very fond of children, especially of boys, and he has written some splendid stories for boys, and a whole little book of verses for children. He remembered about the time when he was little better than most older persons do, and he has told us a great deal about it. He lived in Edinburgh, a beautiful old town not far from the sea, and a very windy place. He was a very delicate little boy, and in cold weather had to stay in the house a great deal. Many a night he was too ill to sleep, and as he lay awake, he noticed everything in his room—the fire, the lights, the shadows, and all the sounds out of doors, and he had fancies about them, as sick children will. Let us read the poem again, and see what you can tell me about it. What kind of night was it? What time of night? Why wasn't the boy asleep? Do you ever lie awake at night? If so, do you listen to all the sounds outside? What do you hear? What did this boy hear? Was there really a man riding back and forth all night long? What made the boy think so? Why didn't he hear the man riding earlier, before the fires were out? Could he see out into the dark through his window?

What does he mean by the trees "crying aloud?" What noises have you heard trees make in the wind? Do you ever hear the wind on the telegraph wires? What kind of noise does it make? Why do you think the boy thought about ships tossed at sea? What tosses the ships?

I think that the writer wanted us to fancy that we heard the sound of the galloping horse. Shut your eyes and play that you hear a horse galloping. Then say the word to yourself "gallop, gallop, gallop." Does it sound like the noise the horse makes? Can you think of any other word that when you say it, sounds like the sound it tells about? [tinkle, crash, trickle.] Are there any long or hard words in these verses? Can you think why not? Who is speaking? Would he be likely to use long hard words? Tell in your own words what the boy heard. What line in these verses has the prettiest sound?

HOW TO WRITE LEGIBLY.

Now that the typewriter is in such general use in newspaper offices, it is seldom that the linotype operator gets such copy as used to be prevalent some years ago. But still there are a number of us that could profit well by a few rules that would tend to ward making our writing legible:

1. Keep the letters separate, as half the trouble in poor writing is caused by jamming the letters together.

2. The most difficult letters to form are "i," "e," "m," "n," "u," and "w." Make these perfectly. Let there be a distinct difference between "u" and "n." Try writing "minimum."

3. Almost as difficult are "b," "v," "o," "w." Make the bottoms of your "v's" and "w's" sharp cornered and not rounded.

4. Never loop the tail of the "q," but always do so with "g" and "y."

5. Do not make your "d's" like "ct."

6. Make your "a's" and "o's" radically different.

7. In writing "r" always form it in the same style.

8. Join the hinder part of the "h," "y" and "p" to the stem.

9. Keep your "a's," "d's," "g's" and "q's" "fat."

10. Always loop your "l's" and never loop your "t's."

11. In dotting the "i" and "j" place the dot directly over the letter.—Van V. Boyce, in *The American Printer*.

WORD STUDY — FUNNY, QUEER.

CONVERSATION.—What do you mean when you say you have been having fun? What do you say about things that give you fun?

A thing is funny if it is laughable, or comical.

A thing that is unusual is queer, or strange, or odd.

Many persons say "funny" when they should use one of these other words to tell what they mean. Think what "fun" means.

To see a kitten chasing its own tail is "funny." It would seem "strange" or "queer" if a kitten liked to go into the water.

DRILL EXERCISE.—Decide which of the words you have just studied should be used in each of these sentences:

1. You must have thought it—— that you were not invited to the party.