

GRADE R PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

No Pencil

No pencil.
No marker.
No paint brush.
No pen.
No nothing
to draw with
or paint with
again.

No blue paint.
No green paint.
No pink paint.
No red.
Mom takes them
away when
I color
my head.

Mud

I like mud.
I like it on my clothes.
I like it on my fingers.
I like it on my toes.
Dirt's pretty ordinary
And dust's a dud.
For a really good mess-up
I like mud!

John Smith

Now We Are Six

When I was one,
I had just begun.
When I was two,
I was nearly new.
When I was three,
I was hardly me.
When I was four,
I was not much more.
When I was five,
I was just alive.
But now I am six,
I'm as clever as clever.
So I think I'll be six
now and forever.

GRADE 1 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

My Favorite Food Is Broccoli

My favorite food is broccoli.
I eat it every day.
There isn't any other food
that makes me feel this way.

It makes me feel so healthy.
It makes me look so cute.
But, mostly, I like broccoli
because it makes me toot.

The Caterpillar

Brown and furry
Caterpillar in a hurry
Take your walk
To the shady leaf, or stalk.

May no toad spy on you,
May the little bird pass by you;
Spin and die,
To live again a butterfly.

Christina Rossetti

A Happy Child

My house is red - a little house
A happy child am I.
I laugh and play the whole day long,
I hardly ever cry.

I have a tree, a green, green tree,
To shade me from the sun;
And under it I often sit,
When all my play is done.

2 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

The Cough

There was a man who coughed a cough,
a cough so strong his head fell off.

His head fell off. It hit the ground.
It hit the ground and rolled around,

and rolled around and rolled away,
away into a field of hay,

a field of hay that caused a wheeze,
a wheeze that turned into a sneeze,

a sneeze he sneezed from dusk till dawn.
At dawn he sneezed his head back on.

Porridge

Why is there not monument
To porridge in our land?
If it's good enough to eat
It's good enough to stand!

On a plinth in London
A statue we should see
Of porridge made in Scotland
Signed "Oatmeal, O.B.E."

Spike Milligan

The Cupboard

I know a little cupboard,
With a teeny tiny key,
And there's a jar of lollipops
For me,me,me.

It has a little shelf, my dear,
As dark as dark can be,
And there's a dish of Banbury cakes
For me,me,me.

I have a small fat grandmamma,
With a very slippery knee,
And she's keeper of the cupboard,
With the key, key, key.

And when I'm very good, my dear,
As good as good can be,
There's Banbury cakes and lollipops,
For me,me,me.

Walter de la Mare

GRADE 3 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

My Hat Is Full of Rabbits

My hat is full of rabbits.
My cape is full of doves.
A playing card is up my sleeve,
and some are in my gloves.

A wand is in my pocket
with handkerchiefs and flowers.
My coat has things like ropes and rings
with mystifying powers.

I have my staff and juggling clubs,
my mirrors, cups, and dice,
my crystal ball, my smoke machine,
and fancy dancing mice.

I'm ready for my magic show.
There's just one problem here...
My elephant is on my lap
and will not disappear.

Rain

Beautiful rain
Falling so softly
Such a delicate thing

The harvests need you
And some of the flowers
But we too

Because you remind
Of coolness of quiet
Of tenderest words

Come down rain, fall
Not too harshly but give
Your strange sense of peace to us.

Elizabeth Jennings

Migration

Where do birds go
When the ground's covered in snow?
Far, far away,
Where the wild lions play
And the sun's always hot,
Elephants flop,
Baboons howl at night,
The moon's large and bright,
And crickets form choirs
Around evening fires –
That's where they fly,
Through the dark winter sky,
That's where they go
When the ground's covered in snow

GRADE 4 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

The Penny Fiddle

Yesterday I bought a penny fiddle
And put it to my chin to play,
But I found that the strings were painted
So I threw my fiddle away.

A little red man found my fiddle
As it lay abandoned there;
He asked me if he might keep it,
And I told him I did not care.

But he drew such music from the fiddle
With help of a farthing bow.
That I offered five guineas for the secret
But, alas, he would never let it go.

Robert Graves

Two Seeds

I hid a selfish little thought,
To think and think about.
I did not know it would be caught
Or ever be found out;

But it was like a little seed,
And it began to sprout!
It grew into a little weed,
And blossomed in a pout!

Golden Hair

Lean out of the window,
Goldenhair,
I heard you singing
A merry air.

My book is closed;
I read no more,
Watching the fire dance
On the floor.

I have left my book;
I have left my room,
For I heard you singing
Through the gloom.

Singing and singing
A merry air.
Lean out of the window,
Goldenhair.

James Joyce

Two Seeds (continued)

I hid another little thought,
'Twas pleasant, sweet, and kind;
So if this time it should be caught,
I knew I shouldn't mind.

I thought about it, hour by hour;
'Twas growing all the while,
It blossomed in a lovely flower,
A happy little smile!

GRADE 5 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

Wind On The Hill

No one can tell me,
Nobody knows,
Where the wind comes from,
Where the wind goes.

It's flying from somewhere
As fast as it can,
I couldn't keep up with it,
Not if I ran.

But if I stopped holding
The string of my kite,
It would blow with the wind
For a day and a night.

And then when I found it,
Wherever it blew,
I should know that the wind
Had been going there too.

So then I could tell them
Where the wind goes...
But where the wind comes from
Nobody knows.

If I Were King

I often wish I were a King,
And then I could do anything.

If only I were King of Spain,
I'd take my hat off in the rain.

If only I were King of France,
I wouldn't brush my hair for aunts.

I think, if I were King of Greece,
I'd push things off the mantelpiece.

If I were King of Norway,
I'd ask an elephant to stay.

If I were King of Babylon,
I'd leave my button gloves undone.

If I were King of Timbuctoo,
I'd think of lovely things to do.

If I were King of anything,
I'd tell the soldiers, "I'm the King!"

I'd Love to be a Fairy's Child

Children born of fairy stock
Never need for shirt or frock,
Never want for food or fire,
Always get their heart's desire:
Jingle pockets full of gold,
Marry when they're seven years old.
Every fairy child may keep
Two strong ponies and ten sheep;
All have houses, each his own,
Built of brick or granite stone;
They live on cherries, they run wild--
I'd love to be a Fairy's child.

GRADE 6 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

I Tried to Do My Homework

I tried to do my homework
but a show was on TV.
A song was on the radio.
A friend was texting me.

My email chimed, and so, of course,
I had to look at that.
It linked me to a video
of someone's silly cat.

I watched a dozen videos,
and then I played a game.
I almost didn't hear her
when my mother called my name.

I looked up at the clock
and it was time to go to bed.
I didn't get my homework done;
just other stuff instead.

I hope my teacher listens
to the cause of my inaction.
It's really not my fault the world
is just one big distraction.

I Fix My Duck with Duct Tape

I fix my duck with duct tape
when she breaks. That's what I do.
If my gorilla has a crack
I use Gorilla Glue.

My monkey needs a monkey wrench
just every now and then.
And chicken wire is what I use
to mend my broken hen.

I Fix My Duck with Duct Tape (cont)

For snails, I use nails,
and, for penguins, I use pins.
For fish, I'm fond of fish paste
for fixing fractured fins.

So bring your broken beasts;
I'll give them tender loving care,
and make them good as new at my
stuffed animal repair.

Our visit to the Zoo

When we went to the Zoo
We saw a gnu,
And elk and a whelk
And a wild emu.

We saw a hare
And a bear in his lair,
And a seal have a meal
On a high-back chair.

We saw a snake
That was hardly awake,
And a lion eat meat
They'd forgotten to bake.

We saw a coon
And a baby baboon.
The giraffe made us laugh
All afternoon!

We saw a crab
And a long-tailed dab,
And we all went home
In a taxi-cab

Jessie Pope

GRADE 7 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

The Cuckoo

The Cuckoo she's a pretty bird,
She sings as she flies,
She brings us good tidings,
She tells us no lies.

She supbeth white flowers
For to keep her voice clear,
And the more she sings 'Cuckoo'
The summer draws near.

O were I a scholar
And could handle the pen,
I would write to my lover,
And all falsehearted men.

I would bid them remember
The bird as she flies,
I would bid them remember
The flower as it dies.

If all the world were paper

If all the world were paper,
And all the seas were ink;
If all the trees were bread and cheese,
How should we do for drink?

If there had been no heroes,
Nor non that did great wrongs;
If fiddlers should turn farmers all,
How should we do for songs?

If all things were eternal,
And nothing their end bringing;
If this should be, then how should we,
Here make an end of singing?

Lachlan Gorach' Rhyme

First the heel,
And then the toe,
That's the way
The polka goes.

First the toe,
And then the heel,
That's the way
To dance a reel.

Quick about,
And then away,
Lightly dance
The glad Strathspey.

Jump a jump,
And jump it big,
That's the way
To dance a jig.

Slowly, smiling,
As in France,
Follow through
The country dance.

GRADE 8 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

September Butterfly

Summer is fading over hedge and hill;
The night creeps slowly as a closing door,
Last leaves, gold tinged, are swirling down the rill
While granaries are gathering in their store.
Still has the day the brightest, gayest tone,
A child awake that sings before it sleep
Though night and winter stride to claim their own
Till Christmas shepherds guard the resting sheep.
Now, like a light that flickers down the street
Before a town anticipates dusk,
One last one last bright butterfly, trembling and
fleet,
Flirts in late rapture over corn and musk;
To send slim shadows dancing on my heart
Warm form a summer son that must depart.

Robert Armstrong

Somerset

Every day was Sunday
And every month was May
And every girl who came along
Was sure to come your way.
How many years ago was that
Ten, fifteen of more
When we lived at Somerset
In that time before?

That time before we grew so big
Before we grew so tall.
Before our eyes were wide enough
To see beyond the wall.
How many years ago was that
It seems so long ago
When we lived at Somerset
And watched the summer go.

There's a cold wind coming
I can tell.
Blowing back the memories
Of times we loved so well.

Dream

I dreamed a dream and in my hands
A star flashed fire,
It poised there ready for a flight
Of wild desire,
It burned and it was light
And it was fire.

I did not want to hold it
Or to call it mine,
It was enough that would burn
And would shine,
Enough that it could turn
Into a dream of mine.

It poised a minute, steadied
Then away if flew
Over the world out of my dreaming,
Ah! Then I knew
Both with my thoughts and feelings
That the star was you.

Rosemary Bourne

Somerset (continued)

When we lived at Somerset
A life or so away
Every day was Sunday
And every month was May.
How many years ago was that
Ten, fifteen or more
When we lived at Somerset
In that time before?

GRADE 9 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

Thunder and Lightning

The football games
The English brought to men
Were long invented by the angels then;
But angels play them
High up in the sky
And play so hard
They make the tinders fly.
Their racing wings and feet
Up in the clouds
Thunder for joy
Among applauding crowds;
And when they kick the ball
The kick's so swift
It flashes sheets of light
Along the rift;
But when they score a goal
The blow's so fast
Light sizzles earthwards
Like a forked spark;
And when the hurtling ball
Goes out of bounds
It bowls a ball of fire
Round the ground.

That, at least, is how I understand
The matter when the heavens get out of hand.

When angels play at football
On an autumn day
The heaven's spark and thunder
Over Lagos Bay.

Stefan Cedric Potocki

Blessings in shades of green

Jack Frost, isn't it something
Something to be seen
The long tall grass waving in August
Blessings in shades of green.

Jack Frost, soft in the morning
Things aren't what they seem
A long time coming, a long time going
Blessings in shades of green.

If I could fly I'd never sail
I'd trap the moon above the water in a pail.

Jack Frost, where have you gone to
With your midnight dream
Didn't you promise to turn me on to
Blessings in shades of green?

GRADE 9 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

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Cowboys

They wade through beer cans
Piled ankle high in gutters-
The rodeo has moved
Down from the fairground
To the town
And every hotel door's ajar.
Better than the Mardi Gras.
The nights are longer than Alaska now
Until the main event begin
Another afternoon.

But after all the main event is still to be
A cowboy
For ten minutes of ten years, it's all the same.
You don't forget the Levi's
Hugging you all day
And Stetson hats checked in passing windows
Cocked a certain way

Some years later
When the bellies
Flow over the belt loops
There's always mental photographs.
Here the hero in midair.
Now the Dallas hotel room
Now again the gaping tourists
Licking of the Levis with their eyes.
Photographs of feeling
Mirrored in the mind.

GRADE 10 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

New Year's Eve

The snow this morning
perches on the bare branches of trees
Like cherry blossoms.
White confetti picked up by the wind
Falling on the path below the window
Dying under footfall
The way the old year dies tomorrow.

Prisoner of a hundred Sundays
That I never made.
Product of the times
I had no choice about.
I am like the old year dying in the snow.
Not to rise again until the ground goes green.

I have not seen those faces I need yet
Though I know they're here.
In the town
Coming down the slopes to the valley
Behind the curtains in the next room,
Just beyond the rain they wait.
Needing as I need.

In the village this morning
It was raining on The Burtons.
In Gstaad it rains on celebrities
And celebrants alike
I am given to celebrations
So there's hope.

She Walks In Beauty

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

GRADE 10 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

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The word before good-bye

What is the springtime after all?
Only the other side of fall.
Oh, if I could have
I'd have made you a sunny sky.
Hello's the word before good-bye.
Sometimes it rains, sometimes it shines
Yet the things I want are seldom mine.

How much of summer can we hold
Before we turn and find we're old?
The things our mirrors tell us are all lies
Hello's the word before good-bye.
Sometimes it's dark, sometimes it's fair
Yet when I go home at night
Nobody's there.

Perhaps the next wind that blows in
Will bring you back to me again
Till then remembering just makes me want to cry,
Hello's the word before good-bye.
Sometimes you lose, sometimes you win
Yet I can't forget what might have been.

GRADE 11 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

The Art Of Poetry

To gaze at a river made of time and water
And remember Time is another river.
To know we stray like a river
and our faces vanish like water.

To feel that waking is another dream
that dreams of not dreaming and that the death
we fear in our bones is the death
that every night we call a dream.

To see in every day and year a symbol
of all the days of man and his years,
and convert the outrage of the years
into a music, a sound, and a symbol.

To see in death a dream, in the sunset
a golden sadness--such is poetry,
humble and immortal, poetry,
returning, like dawn and the sunset.

Sometimes at evening there's a face
that sees us from the deeps of a mirror.
Art must be that sort of mirror,
disclosing to each of us his face.

They say Ulysses, wearied of wonders,
wept with love on seeing Ithaca,
humble and green. Art is that Ithaca,
a green eternity, not wonders.

Art is endless like a river flowing,
passing, yet remaining, a mirror to the same
inconstant Heraclitus, who is the same
and yet another, like the river flowing.

A Time to Weep

I suppose you could call me heartless
as a dull anvil clanking in a sodden barn,
the damp wood too lazy to echo your pain;
and your limbs twisted like great roots,
your hearts rank melons bursting with fluid,
your tidal headaches, your equatorial fevers
were all grist for my scientific mill,
my hands cold and precise like metallic probes
on your beaded foreheads.

I suppose my brief visits and cryptic prognoses
do little to comfort your collapsing veins.
You ask for a word, I spout statistics.
Your skeletal hands pray for light--
I check your pupils. Do you understand?
It is not that I care not for healing
if only the power would come;
but science is an impotent matchstick
broken in death's fingers.

I have never collected moths
but you are pinned somehow on my mind's wall
several hallways from heart.
Allow me this distance,
allow me not to weep.
Should those dark waves with their thousand eyes
once spill over the dike, I do not know
what sort of god I should become--
most likely a madman
but never again your doctor.

GRADE 12 PRESCRIBED POEMS 2019

CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING POEMS

A Crystalline Awakening

A crystalline awakening on the plateau,
the crisp air as brittle as new celery
snaps with expectancy.
The cold clings like a blanket
mantled across the rigid landscape,
muting stark shapes in antiseptic folds
of thick white hoar frost, absorbing sound,
encircling sleep, cogent in the early, puny light.

Beds of icicles protrude from tussock bare
patches,
needle pointed lances thrusting skyward
as if some new sprung lawn,
awaiting the crushing blows of booted feet,
soon to wilt in the onslaught of day.

The moment is timeless,
the air still and taut, tensed,
awaiting the chorus of dawn.

Awake in a lunatic instant, senses startled, wary,
poised to flee,
tendrils of sleep cold-douched from every
wincing body recess,
cocoon of comforting warmth collapsing in the
biting rudeness
of this unwelcome intrusion.

Nerveless rituals of rising guide disinclined
limbs,
refine the pressure ridges of sleep-autographed
skin,
brace up to the dawn sky and strain at the brisk
air,
yawning copiously as if to say "I wasn't really
asleep,
my eyes were only resting".

There,
echoing from the mountain shouts the dawn,
manacled to the bugle call which demands the
day begin.

Because I could not stop for Death

Because I could not stop for Death
He kindly stopped for me
The Carriage held but just Ourselves
And Immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For his civility.

We passed the School, where Children strove
At recess in the ring
We passed the fields of gazing grain
We passed the setting sun.

Or rather, he passed us
The dews drew quivering and chill
For only Gossamer, my gown
My tippet only tulle.

We paused before a house that seemed
A swelling of the GROUND
The roof was scarcely visible
The cornice in the ground.

Since then 'tis centuries and yet
Feels shorter than the DAY
I first surmised the horses' heads
Were toward eternity.