Don't Forget Poetry!
Strategies for Supporting the Common Core Standards

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What can poetry teach students about reading?

- Rich, precise, imaginative language

- Short, sparse, concise format is often more manageable to read especially for struggling or reluctant readers / ESOL student

- Students can practice inferential thinking in text that is short, yet filled with meaning

- Can promote reading accuracy and fluency

- Range of subject matter is varied and can help build children’s interests or create new ones
Provides teachers opportunities to develop skills from the Common Core such as:

- **Reading Fluency**
  - Reads like the way he/she speaks in a manner that reflects solid comprehension of the text

- **Phonological Awareness**
  - Rhyming words/word families

- **Listening and speaking skills**
  - Create audio recordings of poems
  - Recite poetry

- **Vocabulary acquisition**
  - Figurative language (go beyond literal meaning)
  - Word meanings
  - Similes/metaphors/alliteration/hyperbole
In the Common Core Standards, poetry appears in every standard except for the writing standard.

In K-5, poetry appears in:

1. Reading: Literature
2. Reading: Foundational skills
3. Speaking and Listening
4. Language: Vocabulary

And for grades 6-12, reading poetry also has an essential place.
What do we know about children’s perceptions of poetry?

What does this say to us as teachers?
Alligator pie, alligator pie,
If I don’t get some I think I’m gonna die.
Give away the green grass, give away the sky,
But don’t give away my alligator pie.

Alligator stew, alligator stew,
If I don’t get some I don’t know what I’ll do.
Give away my furry hat, give away my shoe,
But don’t give away my alligator stew.

Alligator soup, alligator soup,
If I don’t get some I think I’m gonna droop.
Give away my hockey stick, give away my hoop,
But don’t give away my alligator soup.

Random House Book of Poetry
Jack Prelutsky
Chanting

Any group of words that is recited with a lively beat
Poetry

- Rhythm and rhyme
- Complement or extend the curriculum
- Varied to meet the needs and interests of children
- Selected for any age level
Tips on Getting Started

- Select a verse that contains a definite rhythm, interesting sound patterns, and content that would be appealing to students
- Enlarge the verse so everyone can see it
- Model the verse dramatically
- Invite the children to chant along
- Add physical responses
- Use chanting as a springboard to other activities including written composition
Mix A Pancake

Mix a pancake,
Stir a pancake,
Pop it in the pan;
Fry the pancake,
Toss the pancake-
Catch it if you can.

Christina Rossetti

Read-Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young
Selected by Jack Prelutsky
(Text exemplar grades K-1)
Juba This and Juba That

Juba this and Juba that
Juba saw a yellow cat
Juba up and Juba down
Juba runnin’ all around

*Juba This and Juba That*
Virginia A. Tashjian
Have you ever, ever, ever
In a long-legged life,
Seen a long-legged sailor
With a long-legged wife?

No I never, never, never, never
In a long-legged life,
Saw a long-legged sailor
With a long-legged wife.

Variations:
Pigeon-toed
Short-legged

Shimmy Shimmy Coke-A-Pop
John & Carol Langstaff
Chanting

- Promotes successful language experiences for all children
- Develops self-confidence
- Encourages a spirit of cooperation
Butterscotch Pie

Butterscotch, Butterscotch
Butterscotch pie
For butterscotch flavor
I gladly would die.
I love it in cookies
I love it in cakes
I crave it in candy
Or fudge that I make.
It’s heaven in sauces
Divine in ice cream
I have butterscotch, butterscotch,
butterscotch dreams.

Butterscotch Dreams
Sonja Dunn
Who Has Seen the Wind?

Who has seen the wind?
   Neither I nor you;
But when the leaves are trembling
   The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?
   Neither you nor I;
But when the trees bow down their heads
   The wind is passing by.

Christina Rossetti

_Sing a Song of Popcorn_
Selected by Beatrice Schenk de Regniers
(Text exemplar grades 2-3)
The fog comes on little cat feet.

It sits looking over harbor and city on silent haunches and then moves on.

Carl Sandburg

*Chicago Poems* by Carl Sandburg
(Text exemplar grades 4-5)
Ladies and gentlemen,
Children, too.
The guys and gals
Are gonna boogy for you.
Gonna turn around,
Touch the ground,
And shimmy, shimmy, shimmy
All around.
We do our homework,
Cause we really like school,
But when it comes to boogyin’,
We’re a bunch of dancin’ fools …

Variation on a traditional verse
Can you quickly say this three times?

- Lazy lizards lying like lumps.
- Boil the butter and bring it by the bank.
- Silly Sally swiftly shooed seven silly sheep. The seven silly sheep Silly Sally shooed shilly-shallied south. These sheep shouldn’t sleep in a shack; Sheep should sleep in a shed.
Betty Botter bought some butter
But, she said, "This butter's bitter,
If I bought some better batter
It would make my butter better.

So she bought a bit of butter
Better than her bitter butter,
And she put it in her batter
And the batter was not bitter.

So ‘twas better Betty Botter
Bought a bit of better butter.

*Mother Goose Rhyme*
Fuzzy Wuzzy

Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear,
Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair,
Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't fuzzy wuzzy,
Was he?
Jump Rope Rhymes
Coca-Cola went to town,
Diet Pepsi knocked him down.
Dr. Pepper fixed him up,
Now I’m drinking Seven-Up.
Seven-Up caught the flu,
Now I’m drinking Mountain Dew.
Mountain Dew fell off the mountain,
Now I’m drinking from the water fountain.

Schoolyard Rhymes
Judy Sierra
My mother and your mother
Live across the way.
Every time they go to town,
This is what they say:
Ichabocker, ichabocker, ichabocker, boo!
Ichabocker, soda cracker, out goes you!

Variations:
Hang out clothes
Do their work
Etc.

Traditional Verse
Bubble gum, bubble gum
Penny a packet,
First you chew it,
Then you crack it,
Then you stick it in your jacket,
Then your parents
Kick up a racket!
Bubble gum, bubble gum,
Penny a packet.

Traditional Verse
Down By the Bay / Similes

Down by the bay
Where the watermelons grow
Back to my home
I dare not go
For if I do
My mother will say ….

“Did you ever see a goose
Kissing like a moose?”
Down by the bay.

“Did you ever see a hog
As fast as a frog?”
Down by the bay.

“Did you ever see a dog
_________like a ____________?”
Down by the bay.
Predictable

Poor as a church mouse.
strong as an ox,
cute as a button,
smart as a fox.

thin as a toothpick,
white as a ghost,
fit as a fiddle,
dumb as a post.

bald as a eagle,
neat as a pin,
proud as a peacock,
ugly as sin.

When people are talking
you know what they’ll say
as soon as they start
to use a cliché.

Bruce Lansky
Acrostic Poem using Similes

Bouncy like a beach ball
Runs like a gazelle
Yellow hair as shiny as sunshine
Not as tall as a giant
Nice and sweet like a sugar cookie
My dog is less than one foot tall
And hasn’t any tail
She never answers when I call,

Some possible rhyming words:

- snail
- pale
- nail
- rail
- trail
- pail
- frail
- mail
- stale
Way down south where bananas grow,  
A grasshopper stepped on an elephant’s toe.  
The elephant cried with tears in his eyes,  
“Pick on somebody your own size.”

Way down in Florida where oranges grow,  
Some second graders stepped on an alligator’s toe  
The alligator screamed with tears in his eyes,  
“Pick on somebody your own size.”

Traditional verse
Riddles

• Riddles are one of the oldest forms of poetry
• Build key literacy skills
• Enrich thematic units
• Capture and focuses student attention
• Add FUN to every lesson!
As I was going to St. Ives
I met a man with seven wives,
Each wife had seven sacks,
Each sack had seven kits;
Kits, cats, sacks, and wives
How many were there going to St. Ives?

Anonymous

The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes
Edited by Iona and Peter Opie
(Text exemplar grades K-1)
The Rider

Lanterns glowing just for me.
Two lights warn:
Attack by sea.

Horseback riding through the night
Redcoats coming.
Soon we'll fight.

Who am I?

Yankee Doodle Riddles: American History Fun
Joan Holub
Go, Moon, Glow!

“I’ll hide my face!” says Moon, says she,
“Sun will think I’m gone.”

“Now, where is Moon,” says Sun, says he,
“to shine my light upon?”

Several minutes then go by….
How soon will Moon appear?
Says Moon, “How I enjoy this dark
Celestial atmosphere!”

It’s all because the earth has flown
Between the moon and sun.
But wait a second! There’s a slice
Of Moon for everyone.

Lunar Eclipse

Scien-Trickey
J. Patrick Lewis
Gee!

It keeps you from flying
Off into space.
It's what makes you fall
Flat on your face.
And if it could talk
Like you and I do,
I think it would say,
"I'm pulling for you."

Gravity

Scien-Trickery
J. Patrick Lewis
Can you follow these clever clues?

If you eat it over-under,
Butter dribbles down your chin.
If you eat it sideways, though,
Sometimes you might miss a row.
(Corn on the Cob)

What’s in a song, but not in a tune?
What’s in a star, but not in the moon?
What’s in the sun, but gone in the night,
Out of range, but still in sight?
(The letter “S”)

Riddle-icious
J. Patrick Lewis
The crocodile went to the dentist  
And sat down in the chair,  
Now the dentist said, “Now tell me sir,  
Why does it hurt and where?”  
And the crocodile said, “I’ll tell you the truth,  
I have a terrible ache in my tooth.”  
And he opened his jaws so wide, so wide,  
That the dentist, he climbed right inside,  
And the dentist laughed, “Oh isn’t this fun?”  
As he pulled the teeth out, one by one.  
And the crocodile cried, “You’re hurting me so!  
Please put down your pliers and let me go.”  
But the dentist laughed with a Ho Ho Ho,  
And he said, “I still have twelve to go-  
Oops, that’s the wrong one, I confess,  
But what’s one crocodile’s tooth, more or less?”  
Then suddenly, the jaws went SNAP,  
And the dentist was gone, right off the map.  
And where he went one could only guess …  
To North or South or East or West …  
He left no forwarding address.  
But what’s one dentist, more or less?

Where the Sidewalk Ends  
Shel Silverstein
Rhymes

Rhymes to whisper, rhymes to yell,
Rhymes to chime like a swinging bell.
Rhymes like a jump rope, now let's begin:
Take a turn and jump right in!

Jamboree: Rhymes for All Times
Eve Merriam
In Conclusion . . .

- Poetry can help to build key literacy skills that are part of the Common Core
- Poetry is part of our literary heritage
- Enrich units of study and can be used across the curriculum
- Capture and focus student attention by getting children directly involved
So as you plan your Common Core activities...

Don’t Forget Poetry!