

# Poetry Comprehension

## Skills

- Easy to use!
- Lessons correlated to state standards
- Ideal preparation for standardized test questions on poetry

# We're Racing, Racing Down the Walk

## Poetry Skill: Onomatopoeia

### Standard

Identify words that develop auditory skills, including alliteration, onomatopoeia, assonance, and consonance

### Explore Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is a sound device often used in poetry to dramatize an event. Introduce the concept by discussing animal sounds and their written forms. Then have children use the web on page 10 to brainstorm things that could make *whish* and *whirr* sounds.

## Vocabulary

**backward**—toward the back  
**pavement**—the hard covering of a sidewalk or road

**porches**—covered areas outside of houses

**roars**—makes a loud sound

**rumble**—make a deep, rolling sound

**sidewalk**—a path beside a road that has a hard covering

## Summary

A group of friends race down a sidewalk on roller skates.

## Read the Poem

### Introduce the Poem

Invite children to share stories of times they roller-skate with friends. Have them discuss how skating makes them feel and how their bodies move. Finally, challenge them to describe the sounds they might hear.

### Introduce the Vocabulary

Write the vocabulary words and the definitions on the board. Lead children in a brief discussion of the words. Then have children create a crossword puzzle with the words using the graph on page 11. Challenge children to write sentences as clues to complete the puzzle.

## During Reading

Invite volunteers to read the poem.

## After Reading

### Questions

1. What are the children in the poem doing? (*roller skating*)
2. What does the poet mean when she says, "We rattle and rock"? (*The skates make those sounds and movements.*)
3. Why are the children shouting at each other? (*The skating makes lots of noise, and they need to shout to hear each other talk.*)
4. Where do you think the children are racing to? (*Answers will vary.*)

### Fluency

Explain that some poems are meant to be read slowly and sadly, while others should be read more quickly and happily. Then read the first line of the poem slowly and sadly. Ask children if the voice reflects the main idea of the poem. Point out that since roller skating is a fast activity and lots of fun, the poem should be read to support the theme. Have partners practice reading the poem with speed and excitement.

### Develop Oral Language

Have partners choral read the poem.

## Writing

Have children choose a favorite activity. Challenge them to list four onomatopoeic words that could be associated with the activity. Ask them to use each word in a sentence that describes the activity.

# We're Racing, Racing Down the Walk

by Phyllis McGinley

We're racing, racing down the walk,  
Over the pavement and round the block.  
We rumble along till the sidewalk ends—  
Felicia and I and half our friends.  
Our hair flies backward. It's whish and whirr!  
She roars at me and I shout at her  
As past the porches and garden gates  
We rattle and rock  
On our roller skates.



 Understand the Poem

# We're Racing, Racing Down the Walk: Assessment



Think about the poem. Then answer the questions.  
Fill in the circle next to the correct answer.

1. What makes a rumbling sound in the poem?  
☐ (A) train  
☐ (B) dog  
☐ (C) skates
2. What happens as the children roller skate?  
☐ (A) Their hair flies backward.  
☐ (B) People wave to them.  
☐ (C) A lion roars.
3. What makes the sound of "whish" and "whirr"?  
☐ (A) turning skates  
☐ (B) flying hair  
☐ (C) clapping hands
4. The poem is mostly about  
☐ (A) children roller-skating.  
☐ (B) playing in a park.  
☐ (C) many kinds of races.
5. In what kind of place does the girl live?  
☐ (A) farm  
☐ (B) beach  
☐ (C) city
6. What do you know about the girl in the poem?  
☐ (A) She does her homework.  
☐ (B) She likes sports.  
☐ (C) She likes to skate fast.
7. Do you think the children in the poem are having fun? How do you know?  
  
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Explore More

## Vocabulary

Some words sound like noises different things make. For example, roller-skating wheels make a “rumble” as they roll on pavement. Hair makes a “whish” as it blows backwards in the wind.



Draw lines to match the thing with its sound word.

1.



pop

2.



moo

3.



buzz

4.



whoosh

5.



sizzle

6.



clang

Read the Poem

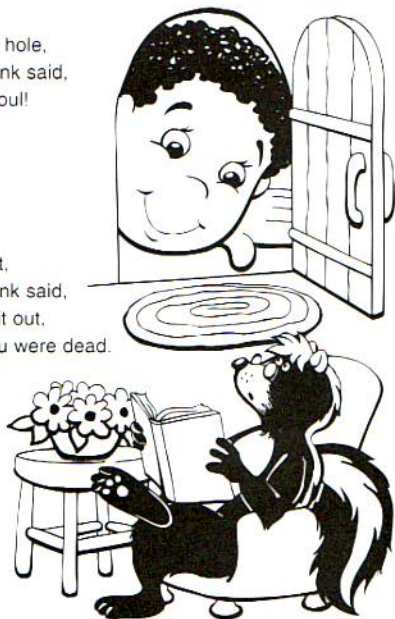


# Little Skunk's Hole

*by Anonymous*

I stuck my head  
In a little skunk's hole,  
And the little skunk said,  
"Well bless my soul!  
Take it out,  
Take it out,  
Take it out,  
Remove it."

I didn't take it out,  
And the little skunk said,  
"You better take it out,  
Or you'll wish you were dead.  
Take it out,  
Take it out."  
Phew!  
I removed it.



## Read the Poem

# The Moon

by Eliza Lee Follen

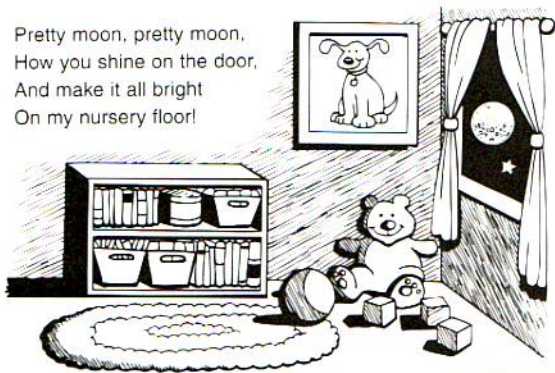
O, look at the moon!  
She is shining up there;  
O mother, she looks  
Like a lamp in the air.

Last week she was smaller,  
And shaped like a bow;  
But now she's grown bigger,  
And round as an O.

Pretty moon, pretty moon,  
How you shine on the door,  
And make it all bright  
On my nursery floor!

You shine on my playthings,  
And show me their place,  
And I love to look up  
At your pretty bright face.

And there is a star  
Close by you, and maybe  
That small twinkling star  
Is your little baby.



Read the Poem 

# Gathering Leaves

by Robert Frost

Spades take up leaves  
No better than spoons,  
And bags full of leaves  
Are light as balloons.

I make a great noise  
Of rustling all day  
Like rabbit and deer  
Running away.

But the mountains I raise  
Elude my embrace,  
Flowing over my arms  
And into my face.

I may load and unload  
Again and again  
Till I fill the whole shed,  
And what have I then?

Next to nothing for weight;  
And since they grow duller  
From contact with earth,  
Next to nothing in color.

Next to nothing for use.  
But a crop is a crop,  
And who's to say where  
The harvest shall stop?

