

#### Read the Poem



# **Nest Eggs**

by Robert Louis Stevenson

Birds all the summer day Flutter and quarrel Here in the arbor-like Tent of the laurel.

Here in the fork
The brown nest is seated;
For little blue eggs
The mother keeps heated.

While we stand watching her Staring like gabies, Safe in each egg are the Bird's little babies.

Soon the frail eggs they shall Chip, and upspringing Make all the April woods Merry with singing.

Younger than we are,
O children, and frailer,
Soon in the blue air they'll be,
Singer and sailor.

We, so much older, Taller and stronger, We shall look down on the Birdies no longer.

They shall go flying
With musical speeches
High overhead in the
Tops of the beeches.

In spite of our wisdom
And sensible talking,
We on our feet must go
Plodding and walking.

Go on to the next page.



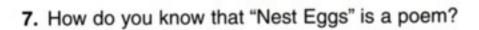
### **Nest Egg: Assessment**



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

- 1. This poem talks about which month?
  - A June
  - B August
  - C May
  - O April
- 2. Before the baby birds hatch,
  - A they learn to fly.
  - B they are in blue eggs.
  - C they sing.
  - they walk.
- 3. The eggs are frail. "Frail" means
  - A easily broken.
  - ® light blue.
  - very young.
  - nearly broken.

- 4. The poem tells about how
  - A birds feed their babies.
  - ® even young birds fly high above people.
  - © birds do not get along.
  - Dirds do not care for their babies.
- The birds in the poem were hatched
  - in the summer.
  - ® in the fall.
  - in the spring.
  - in the winter.
- 6. The poet probably
  - A thinks that birds are happier than people are.
  - ® would like to be able to fly like a bird.
  - O lives in the woods.
  - Sings like a bird.





## **How to Eat a Poem**

#### Poetry Skill: Metaphor

#### Standard

Recognize the use of similes, metaphors, and personification

#### **Explore Metaphors**

Explain to students that a metaphor is a poetic device in which two things that are unlike are compared so that one is said to be another. Metaphors do not use the words like or as. Then discuss the examples, The green grass was a carpet under our feet, and The room was an oven. Challenge students to identify the metaphor in the poem.

#### Vocabulary

juice—the liquid from fruit
napkin—paper or cloth used
to wipe your lips or fingers
polite—acting with manners
rind—the tough outer
covering of a fruit
ripe—fully grown and ready
to eat
pit—the seed of fruit

#### Summary

Eve Merriam, a contemporary poet, encourages readers to enjoy poetry by taking a big, juicy bite of one.

#### Read the Poem

#### Introduce the Poem

Invite students to draw a picture of their favorite food. Then have them form small groups and talk about why they like the food and special things they do as they eat it. Then ask students to review the vocabulary words to predict what food the poem might talk about.

#### Introduce the Vocabulary

Use the graph on page 11 to make a word find puzzle, writing the words students are to find below the puzzle. Duplicate the activity page for students. Have partners circle the words in the puzzle and find the words in a dictionary. Ask them to write a sentence using each word.

#### **During Reading**

Invite a volunteer to read the poem.

#### **After Reading**

#### Activity

Remind students that a metaphor compares two unlike things. Then ask them what two things the poet compares in "How to Eat a Poem." Challenge partners to complete a Venn diagram from page 13 to show the similarities and differences that the poet says exist as well as ones students can identify.

#### Fluency

Lead students in a discussion of the mood of the poem. Ask if the poet is excited or calm, or if she is happy or sad. Then read the poem in several ways: fast and excited, slow and melancholy, and calm and happy. Have students tell which speed and voice reflect the mood of the poem. Point out how the words and images dictate the mood. Finally, have students practice reading the poem expressively.

#### Develop Oral Language

Have partners reread the poem out loud and then explain in their own words the meaning of the poem.

#### Writing

Remind students that they drew a picture of a favorite food. Ask them to compare the food to something else. Then challenge them to use "How to Eat a Poem" as a format guide for writing a metaphor poem of their own.

# Understand the Poem

## How to Eat a Poem: Assessment

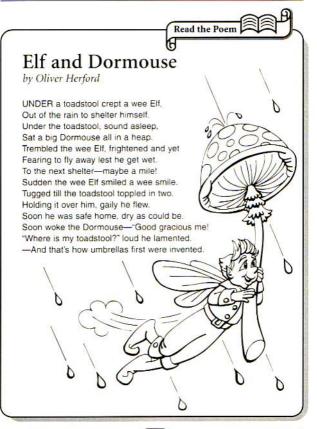
Think about the poem. Then answer the questions. Fill in the circle next to the correct answer.

- 1. What does the poet tell the reader to do with a poem?
  - A Read it.
  - Bite in.
  - C Skin it.
  - Throw it away.
- 2. What does the poet say to do after picking up the poem?
  - A Lick the juice.
  - ® Remove the seeds.
  - C Taste it.
  - O Cut it with a knife.
- 3. Which words from the poem have the same meaning?
  - A skin, rind
  - ® ripe, core
  - polite, bite
  - nind, pit

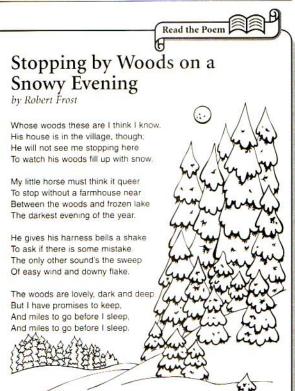


- The poem is called "How to Eat a Poem" because
  - A the poet does not like manners.
  - ® the poet believes poetry should be read with enthusiasm.
  - the poet enjoys fruit.
  - it is less messy than eating fruit.
- 5. Which of the following is NOT a fruit that the poem could be compared to?
  - A pineapple
  - ® an orange
  - a watermelon
  - a banana
- 6. Why did the poet write "How to Eat a Poem"?

  - ® to tell step-by-step the correct way to read a poem
  - to tell readers a funny story
  - to persuade readers to enjoy poetry the way they enjoy fruit
- 7. How are a poem and a juicy fruit alike?



Name Date





#### To Any Reader

by Robert Louis Stevenson

As from the house your mother sees You playing round the garden trees. So you may see, if you will look Through the windows of this book. Another child, far, far away, And in another garden, play. But do not think you can at all, By knocking on the window, call That child to hear you. He intent Is all on his play-business bent. He does not hear, he will not look. Nor yet be lured out of this book. For, long ago, the truth to say, He has grown up and gone away, And it is but a child of air That lingers in the garden there.

