

Fifth and Sixth Grade Poetry Selections

1. MY MOTHER

I have the finest mother
That any boy could have;
She cleanses all my scratches,
And binds them up with salve.

She fixes all my clothes,
And doesn't mind at all
If I've torn my shirt
Or outgrown it 'cause I'm tall.

She helps me with my lessons,
And takes the greatest pain
To be sure I understand them,
And my interest doesn't wane.

She welcomes all my friends,
And lets us use her stuff;
Poppin' corn and makin' candy,
Till we've had enough.

She teaches me of God,
And helps me understand
The way to live to gain
A home in heaven's land.

No, I wouldn't trade my mother
For all the jewels on earth;
'Cause there is no way to tell,
What an awful lot she's worth.

2. WE PLOW THE FIELDS

by Matthias Claudius

We plow the fields, and scatter
The good seed on the land,
But it is fed and watered
By God's almighty hand;
He sends the snow in winter,
The warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes, and the sunshine,
And soft refreshing rain.

He only is the Maker
Of all things near and far,
He paints the wayside flower,
He lights the evening star,
The winds and waves obey Him-
By Him the birds are fed;
Much more to us the children,
He gives our daily bread.

We thank Thee, then, O Father,
For all things bright and good;
The seedtime and the harvest,
Our life, our health, our food;
Accept the gift we offer
For all Thy love imparts,
And, what Thou most desirest,
Our humble, thankful hearts.

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3. THANKSGIVING

Perhaps we have not counted
Our blessings one by one;
Perhaps we have not bothered
Rememb'ring whence they come;
And maybe we have taken
For granted all the things
The good Lord has created,
And by His hand He brings.

The autumn hills all glorious,
A golden field of grain,
A sunset's dazzling splendor,
The Milky Way's great plain,
The starry sky's sublimity,
The ocean's mighty power,
The wonder of creation in
The petal of a flower.

If we've failed to clearly show
By word or act or deed
A thankful heart unto Him
Who fills our daily need,
May we show our gratitude
Today — and count the sum
Of all the blessings that we have
And name them one by one.

4. HABITS

A habit is a sticky thing;
Much good or evil it can bring;
It binds a victim, holds him fast,
And keeps him in a vise-like grasp.

Bad habits grow with extra speed,
Much like a healthy, growing weed.
The roots grow deep, the stem grows stout; How
difficult to pull it out!

Good habits are a little slow;
They need a lot of care to grow;
If tended well, they grow more fair
Than any bloom a plant can bear.

Good habits help us all through life;
Bad habits bring us pain and strife;
Our habits, whether right or wrong,
Each day will grow more firm and strong.

5. A LITTLE BROTHER FOLLOWS ME

A careful boy I want to be;
A little brother follows me.
I do not dare to go astray
For fear he'll go the selfsame way.

I cannot once escape his eyes;
Whate'er he sees me do, he tries;
Like me he says he's going to be —
That little brother following me.

He thinks that I am good and fine;
Believes in every word of mine.
The bad in me he must not see —
That little brother following me,

I must remember as I go,
Through summer's sun and winter's snow,
I'm building for the years to be
That little brother following me.

6. THE BAREFOOT BOY

by John G. Whittier

Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy with cheeks of tan,
With thy turned-up pantaloons
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lips, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;
From my heart I give thee joy!
I was once a barefoot boy!

All too soon these feet must hide
In the prison cells of pride,
Lose the freedom of the sod,
Like a colt's for work be shod,
Made to tread the mills of toil,
Up and down in ceaseless toil;
Happy, if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy, if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

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7. THE GRUMBLE FAMILY

There's a family nobody likes to meet;
They live, it is said, on Complaining Street
In the city of Never-Are-Satisfied,
The River of Discontent beside.

They growl at that and they growl at this;
Whatever comes, there is something amiss;
And whether their station be high or humble,
They all are known by the name of Grumble.

The weather is always too hot or cold;
Summer and winter alike they scold.
Nothing goes right with the folks you meet
Down on that gloomy Complaining Street.

They growl at the rain and they growl at the sun;
In fact, their growling is never done.
And if everything pleased them, there isn't a doubt
They'd growl that they'd nothing to grumble about!

But the queerest thing is that not one of the same
Can be brought to acknowledge his family name;
For never a Grumbler will own that he
Is connected with it at all, you see.

The worst thing is that if anyone stays
Among them too long, he will learn their ways;
And before he dreams of the terrible jumble
He's adopted into the family of Grumble.

And so it were wisest to keep our feet
From wandering into Complaining Street;
And never to growl, whatever we do,
Lest we be mistaken for Grumblers, too.

Let us learn to walk with a smile and song,
No matter if things do sometimes go wrong;
And then, be our station high or humble,
We'll never belong to the family of Grumble!

8. LANDING OF THE PILGRIMS

by Felicia D. Hemans

The breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed;
And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the truehearted, came;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums
And the trumpet that sings of fame;
Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear,
They shook the depths of the desert gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?
They sought a faith's pure shrine!
Ay, call it holy ground—
The soil where they first trod;
They have left unstained what there they found:
Freedom to worship God

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9. A CHILD'S OFFERING

The wise may bring their learning,
The rich may bring their wealth,
And some may bring their greatness,
And some bring strength and health;
We, too, would bring our treasures
To offer to the King;

We have no wealth or learning:
What shall we children bring?

We'll bring Him hearts that love Him;
We'll bring Him thankful praise,
And young souls meekly striving
To walk in holy ways:
And these shall be the treasures
We offer to the King,
And these are gifts that even
The poorest child may bring.

We'll bring the little duties
We have to do each day;
We'll try our best to please Him
At home, at school, at play.
And better are these treasures
To offer to our King
Than richest gifts without them —
Yet these a child may bring.

10. GOD'S WORLD

I'm glad I am living this morning
Because the day is so fair,
And I feel God's presence so keenly
About me, everywhere.

The heavens declare His glory,
The trees seem to speak of His power,
And I see His matchless beauty
In each small, growing flower.

The rocks all tell of His wonder;
In the hills His strength I see;
And the birds are singing His praises
In the songs that they sing to me.

Oh, I'm glad to be living this morning
In a world of beauty so rare
Where the God of Heaven is hovering
About me, everywhere.

11. JUST SUPPOSE

If all that we say
In a single day,
With never a word left out,
Were printed each night
In clear black and white
'Twould prove queer reading, no doubt.

And then, just suppose,
Ere one's eyes he could close,
He must read the day's record through;
Then wouldn't one sigh,
And wouldn't he try
A great deal less talking to do?

And I more than half think
That many a kink
Would be smoother in life's tangled thread
If one half that we say
In one single day
Were left forever unsaid.

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12. THE NEW TESTAMENT

Saints Matthew, Mark and Luke and John
The holy Gospel wrote,
Describing how the Saviour died,
His life, and how He taught.

The Acts shows God's apostles,
Owned with signs in every place.
Saint Paul in Romans teaches us
How man is saved by grace.

The apostle in Corinthians
Instructs, exhorts, reproves.
Galatians shows that faith in Christ
Alone, the Father loves.

Ephesians and Philippians tell
What Christians ought to be. Colossians
bids us live to God
And for eternity.

In Thessalonians we are taught
The Lord will come from heaven,
In Timothy and Titus
A bishop's rule is given;

Philemon marks a Christian's love,
Which only Christians know.
Hebrews reveals the Gospels
Prefigured by the Law.

James teaches, without holiness
Faith is but vain and dead
Saint Peter points the narrow way
In which the saints are led.

John in his three Epistles
On love delights to dwell.
Saint Jude gives awful warning of
Judgment, wrath, and hell.

The Revelation prophesies
Of that tremendous day
When Christ, and Christ alone shall be
The trembling sinner's stay.

13. SOMEBODY'S MOTHER

The woman was old and ragged and gray,
And bent with the chill of the winter's day;
She stood at the crossing and waited long,
Alone, uncared-for, amid the throng
Of human beings who passed her by,
Not heeding the glance of her anxious eye.

Down the street with laughter and shout,
Glad in the freedom of "school let out,"
Came the boys, like a flock of sheep,
Hailing the snow piled white and deep.

Past the woman so old and gray
Hastened the children on their way,
None offered a helping hand to her,
So meek, so timid, afraid to stir
Lest in the din of traffic, the cars so fleet
Should crowd her down in the slippery street.

At last came one of the merry troop —
The happiest lad of all the group;
He paused beside her, and whispered low,
"I'll help you across, if you wish to go."

He guided the trembling feet along,
Glad that his own were firm and strong.
Then back again to his friends he went,
His young heart happy and well content.

"She's somebody's mother, boys, you know,
Although she's aged and poor and slow;
And I hope some fellow will lend a hand
To help my mother, you understand,
If ever she's poor and old and gray,
When her own dear boy is far away."

And "somebody's mother" bowed her head
In her home that night, and the prayer she said
Was, "God be kind to the noble boy
Who is somebody's son and strength and joy."

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14. IF JESUS CAME TO YOUR HOUSE

by Lois Blanchard

If Jesus came to your house
To spend a day or two,
If He came unexpectedly,
I wonder what you'd do.

I know you'd give your nicest room
To such an honored Guest,
And all the food you'd serve to Him
Would be the very best;

And you would keep assuring Him
You're glad to have Him there,
That serving Him in your own home
Is joy beyond compare!

But when you saw Him coming,
Would you meet Him at the door
With arms outstretched in welcome
To your heavenly Visitor?

Or would you have to change your clothes
Before you let Him in,
Or hide some magazines and put
The Bible where they'd been?

Would you keep right on saying
The things you always say?
Would life for you continue
As it does from day to day?

Would you sing the songs you always sing
And read the books you read,
And let Him know the things on which
Your mind and spirit feed?

Would you take Jesus with you
Everywhere you'd planned to go?
Or would you maybe change your plans
For just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him meet
Your very closest friends?
Or would you hope they'd stay away
Until His visit ends?

Would you be glad to have Him stay
Forever on and on,
Or would you sigh with great relief
When He at last was gone?

It might be interesting to know
The things that you would do,
If Jesus came in person
To spend some time with you,

15. THY WORD

Thy Word is like a garden, Lord,
With flowers bright and fair,
And every one who seeks may pluck
A lovely cluster there.
Thy Word is like a deep, deep mine;
And jewels rich and rare
Are hidden in the mighty depths
For every searcher there.

Thy Word is like a starry host;
A thousand rays of light
Are seen to guide the traveler
And make his pathway bright
Thy Word is like an armory,
Where soldiers may repair,
And find for life's long battle-day
All needful weapons there.

Oh, may I love Thy precious Word;
May I explore the mine;
May I its fragrant flowers glean;
May light upon me shine.
Oh, may I find my armor there;
Thy Word my trusty sword;
I'll learn to fight with every foe
The battle of the Lord.

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16. DARE TO DO RIGHT

by George Lansing Taylor

Dare to do right! dare to be true!
You have a work that no other can do;
Do it so bravely, so kindly, so well,
Angels will hasten the story to tell.

Dare to do right! dare to be true!
God, who created you, cares for you, too;
Treasures the tears that His striving ones shed;
Counts and protects every hair of your head.

Dare to do right! dare to be true!
Keep the great judgment seat always in view;
Look at your work as you'll look at it then —
Scanned by Jehovah, the angels, and men.

Dare to do right! dare to be true!
Cannot Omnipotence carry you through?
City and mansion and throne all in sight —
Can you not dare to be true and do right?

Dare to do right! dare to be true!
Prayerfully, lovingly, firmly pursue
The path by apostles and martyrs once trod —
The path of the just to the city of God.

17. GOD HAS TIME

by Ruth M. Williams

God has time to watch the star fade
And the sun grow dim and cold,
See the endless ages enter
And the centuries unfold.

God has time to watch the redwood
Grow to full maturity,
And to note the ceaseless minutes
Nibbling at eternity.

God has time to shape the sunbeams
And the slanting, silvery rain,
Color every flower that groweth
And to count the amber grain.

God has time to note the falling
Of a sparrow to the ground,
And rejoice with all His angels
When a lost sheep has been found.
And when life's short race is finished,
And we face the setting sun,
He'll have time to smile upon us
And to greet us, one by one!

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18. DO IT NOW!

If you've got a job to do,
Do it now!
If it's one you wish were through,
Do it now!
If you're sure the job's your own,
Do not hem and haw and groan —
Quick, before the time has flown,
Do it now!

Don't put off a bit of work —
Do it now!
For it doesn't pay to shirk —
Do it now!
If you want to fill a place
And be useful to the race,
Just get up and take a brace —
Do it now!

Do not linger by the way —
Do it now!
You will lose if you delay —
Do it now!
If the other fellows wait,
Or postpone until it's late,
You hit up a faster gait —
Do it now!

19. THE ANVIL

by John Clifford D. D.

I paused last eve beside the blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring, the vesper chime;
And looking in I saw upon the floor
Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had?" said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," he answered. Then with twinkling eye:
The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

And so, I thought, the anvil of God's Word
For ages skeptics' blows have beat upon;
But though the noise of falling blows were heard,
The anvil is unchanged; the hammers gone.

20. I WILL GO WITH MY FATHER A-PLOUGHING

by Joseph Campbell

I will go with my Father a-ploughing
To the Green Field by the sea,
And the cocks and crows and seagulls
Will come flocking after me.
I will sing to the patient horses
With the lark in the shine of the air,
And my Father will sing the Plough-Song
That blesses the cleaving share.

I will go with my Father a-sowing
To the Red Field by the sea,
And blackbirds and robins and thrushes
Will come flocking after me.
I will sing to the striding sowers
With the finch on the flowering sloe,
And my Father will sing the Seed-Song
That only the wise men know.

I will go with my Father a-reaping
To the Brown Field by the sea,
And the geese and pigeons and sparrows
Will come flocking after me.
I will sing to the weary reapers
With the wren in the heat of the sun,
And my Father will sing the Scythe-Song
That joys for the harvest done.

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21. JONATHAN BING

by Beatrice Curtis Brown

Poor old Jonathan Bing
Went out in his carriage to visit the King,
But everyone pointed and said,
"Look at that! Jonathan Bing has forgotten his hat!"
(He'd forgotten his hat!)

Poor old Jonathan Bing
Went home and put on a new hat for the King,
But up by the palace a soldier said, "Hi!
You can't see the King; you've forgotten your tie!"
(He'd forgotten his tie!)

Poor old Jonathan Bing,
He put on a beautiful tie for the King,
But when he arrived an Archbishop said, "Ho!
You can't come to court in pajamas, you know!"
Poor old Jonathan Bing
Went home and addressed a short note to the King:

If you please will excuse me
I won't come to tea;
For home's the best place for
All people's like me!

22. THE TWINS

by Henry Sambrooke Leigh

In form and feature, face and limb,
I grew so like my brother
That folks got taking me for him
And each for one another.
It puzzled all our kith and kin,
It reach'd an awful pitch;
For one of us was born a twin
And not a soul knew which.

One day (to make the matter worse),
Before our names were fix'd,
As we were being wash'd by nurse,
We got completely mix'd.
And thus, you see, by Fate's decree,
(Or rather nurse's whim),
My brother John got christen'd me,
And I got christen'd him.

This fatal likeness even dogg'd
My footsteps when at school,
And I was always getting, flogg'd—
For John turn'd out a fool.
I put this question hopelessly
To every one I knew, -
What would you do, if you were me, -
To prove that you were you?

Our closeness turn'd the tide
Of my domestic life;
For somehow my intended bride
Became my brother's wife.
In short, year after year the same
Absurd mistake went on;
And when I died – the neighbors came
And buried brother John!

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23. THE SUGAR-PLUM TREE

by Eugene Field

Have you ever heard of the Sugar-Plum Tree?

'Tis a marvel of great renown!

It blooms on the shore of the Lollipop Sea

In the garden of Shut-Eye Town;

The fruit that it bears is so wondrously sweet

(As those who have tasted it say)

That good little children have only to eat

Of that fruit to be happy next day.

When you've got to the tree, you would have a hard time

To capture the fruit which I sing;

The tree is so tall that no person could climb

To the boughs where the sugar-plums swing!

But up in that tree sits a chocolate cat,

And a gingerbread dog prowls below –

And this is the way you contrive to get at

Those sugar-plums tempting you so:

You say but the word to that gingerbread dog

And he barks with such terrible zest

That the chocolate cat is at once all agog,

As her swelling proportions attest.

And the chocolate cat goes cavorting around

From this leafy limb unto that,

And the sugar-plums tumble, of course, to the ground -

Hurrah for that chocolate cat!

There are marshmallows, gumdrops, and peppermint canes,

With stripings of scarlet, of gold,

And you carry away of the treasure that rains

As much as your apron can hold!

So come, little child, cuddle closer to me

In your dainty white nightcap and gown,

And I'll rock you away to that Sugar-Plum Tree

In the garden of Shut-Eye Town.

24. PROMISED STRENGTH

by Grace Noll Crowett

One day when my burden seemed greater

Than my body and spirit could bear,

Weighed down by the load, I faltered

Beneath my sorrow and care,

And I cried to the heedless silence

As I walked where I could not see:

"Where is the strength that is promised?

Where is the strength for me?"

And suddenly out of the stillness,

A voice came clear and true:

"My child, you are striving to carry

A burden not meant for you,

And the thought of the years outstretching

Before you have darkened the way,

While the only strength I have promised

Is the sure strength day by day."

I took one step - and I found it

Quite easy, indeed, to take,

And the burden slid from my shoulders

And my heart that was ready to break

Gave thanks that my eyes were opened

And my shoulders were eased of their load,

As I say, step by step I was strengthened

To walk on the roughest road!

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25. WHEN FATHER PRAYS

When father prays he doesn't use
The words the preacher does;
There's different things for different days,
But mostly it's for us.

When father prays the house is still,
His voice is slow and deep.
We shut our eyes, the clock ticks loud,
So quiet we must keep.

He prays that we may be good boys,
And later on good men,
And then we squirm, and think we won't
Have any quarrels again.

You'd never think, to look at Dad,
He once had tempers, too.
I guess if father needs to pray,
We youngsters surely do.

Sometimes the prayer gets very long
And hard to understand,
And then I wiggle up quite close,
And let him hold my hand.

I can't remember all of it,
I'm little yet, you see;
But one thing I cannot forget
My father prays for me!

26. CLING TO THE BIBLE

by M.J. Smith

Cling to the Bible, though all else be taken;
Lose not its promises precious and sure,
Souls that are sleeping, its echoes awaken,
Drink from the fountain, so peaceful, so pure.

Cling to the Bible, this jewel, this treasure
Brings to us honor and saves fallen man;
Pearl whose great value no mortal can measure,
Seek and secure it, O soul, while you can.

Lamp for the feet that in byways have wandered,
Guide for the youth that would otherwise fall;
Hope for the sinner whose best days are squandered,
Staff for the aged, and best Book of all.

27. DEARER THAN GOD'S SPARROW

Traveling Toward Sunrise

Just think of that odd little sparrow,
Uncared for by any but God,
It surely must bring thee some comfort
To know that He loves it - though odd.

That one little odd little sparrow,
The object of God's tender care?
Then surely thou art of more value,
Thou need'st not give way to despair.

It may be thou art an "odd sparrow,"
But God's eye of love rests on thee,
And He understands what to others,
Will always a mystery be.

Thou thinkest thy case so peculiar
That nobody can understand,
Take life's tangled skein to Thy Saviour
And leave it in His skillful Hand.

Believe in His love and His pity
Confide in His wisdom and care,
Remember the odd little sparrow,
And never give way to despair.

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28. GOD'S WAY

by Horatius Bonar

Thy way, not mine, O Lord!
 However dark it be;
Lead me by Thine own hand,
 Choose out the path for me.

Smooth let it be, or rough,
 It will be still the best;
Winding or straight, it matters not,
 It leads me to thy rest.

I dare not choose my lot,
 I would not, if I might;
Choose Thou for me, O God!
 So shall I walk aright.

The kingdom that I seek
 Is Thine; so let the way
That leads to it be Thine;
 Else I must surely stray.

Take Thou my cup, and it
 With joy or sorrow fill,
As best to Thee may seem;
 Choose Thou my good or ill.

Not mine, not mine the choice
 In things of great or small;
Be Thou my guide, my strength,
 My wisdom and my all.

29. THANKSGIVING

by LA. Tubbs

I've been countin' up my blessin's,
 I've been summin' up my woes,
But I ain't got the conclusion some would naturally suppose:
 Why, I quit a-countin' troubles 'fore I had a half a score,
While the more I count my blessin's,
 I keep a findin' more and more.
There's been things that wan't exactly as I thought they'd ought to be,
 An' I've often growled at Providence for not a-pettin me!
But I hadn't stopped to reckon what the other side had been—
 How much o' good an' blessin' had been thickly crowded in.
Fer there's been a rift o' sunshine after every shower o' tears,
 An' I found a load o' laughter scattered all along the years.
If thorns have pricked me sometimes,
 I've good reason to suppose
Love has hid 'em often from me,
 'Neath the rapture of the rose!
So I'm goin' to still be thankful fer the sunshine an' the rain,
 Fer the joy that's made me happy, fer me purgin' done by pain;
Fer the love o' little children; fer the friends that have been true;
 Fer the guidin' hand that's led me every threatenin' danger through!

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30. DON'T GIVE UP

by Phoebe Cary

If you've tried and have not won,
Never stop for crying;
All that's good and great is done
Just by patient trying.

Though young birds, in flying, fell,
Still their wings grow stronger,
And the next time they can keep
Up a little longer.

Though the sturdy oak has known
Many a wind that bowed her,
She has ris'n again and grown
Lofier and prouder.

If by easy work you beat,
Who the more will prize you?
Gaining victory from defeat,
That's the test that tries you.

31. STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY
EVENING

by Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village, though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

32. OCCUPIED

by Lois Reynolds Carpenter

Martha in the kitchen, serving with her hands;
Occupied for Jesus, with her pots and pans.
Loving Him, yet fevered, burdened to the brim,
Careful, troubled Martha, occupied for Him.

Mary on the footstool, eyes upon her Lord;
Occupied with Jesus, drinking in His word.
This the one thing needful, all else strangely dim:
Loving, resting Mary, occupied with Him.

So may we, like Mary, choose the better part
Resting in His presence - hands and feet and heart;
Drinking in His Wisdom, strengthened with His Grace;
Waiting for the summons, eyes upon His face.

When it comes, we're ready, spirit, will, and nerve;
Mary's heart to worship, Martha's hands to serve;
This the rightful order, as our lamps we trim, -
Occupied with Jesus, then occupied for Him!

33. FACE LIFE WITH A SMILE

There's a lot of joy in living,
If we face life with a smile;
Take time to do some kindness,
And go the second mile.

For the greatest joy is giving,
And it all comes back to you
When you add a little sunshine
To all you say and do.

Before the day has ended
Try to do some worthwhile thing,
Help to ease another's burden
And make a sad heart sing.

You will find each new tomorrow
Will be happy from the start
If you only will remember,
Keep a smile within your heart!

Fifth and Sixth Grade Poetry Selections

34. THERE IS A GREEN HILL FAR AWAY

by Cecil Frances Alexander

There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all.

We may not know, we cannot tell,
What pains He had to bear,
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there.

He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to heaven,
Saved by His precious blood.

There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin;
He, only, could unlock the gate
Of heaven and let us in.

Oh, dearly, dearly has He loved,
And we must love Him, too,
And trust in His redeeming blood,
And try His works to do.

35. GOD'S CARE

Not a brooklet floweth
Onward toward the sea,
Not a sunbeam gloweth
On its bosom free,
Not a seed unfoldeth
To the glorious air,
But our Father holdeth
It within His care.

Not a flower fadeth,
Not a star grows dim,
Not a cloud o'ershadoweth,
But 'tis marked by Him.
Dream not that thy gladness
God doth fail to see;
Think not in my sadness
He forgetteth thee.

Not a tie is broken,
Not a hope laid low,
Not a farewell spoken,
But our God doth know.
Every hair is numbered,
Every tear is weighed
In the changeless balance
Wisest Love has made.

Power eternal resteth
In His changeless hand;
Love immortal hasteth
Swift at His command;
Faith can firmly trust Him
In the darkest hour,
For the keys she holdeth
To His love and power.

Fifth and Sixth Grade Poetry Selections

36. THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Under a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of this brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And the children coming home from
school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling, - rejoicing, - sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy
friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

37. CONCORD HYMN

Ralph Waldo Emerson

By the rude bridge that arched the
flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the
world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward
creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

38. THE PASTURE

Robert Frost

I'm going out to clean the pasture
spring;
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away
(And wait to watch the water clear, I
may);
I sha'nt be gone long. - You come too.

I'm going out to fetch the little calf
That's standing by the mother. It's so
young
It totters when she licks it with her
tongue.
I sha'nt be gone long. - You come too.

Fifth and Sixth Grade Poetry Selections

39. AMERICA FOR ME

Henry Van Dyke

'Tis fine to see the Old Word, and travel
up and down
Among the famous palaces and cities of
renown,
To admire the crumbly castles and the
statues of the kings, -
But now I think I've had enough of
antiquated things.

So it's home again, and home again,
America for me!
My heart is turning home again, and
there I long to be,
In the land of youth and freedom beyond
the ocean bars,
Where the air is full of sunlight and the
flag is full of stars.

Oh, London is a man's town, there's
power in the air;
And Paris is a woman's town, with
flowers in her hair;
And it's sweet to dream in Venice, and
it's great to study Rome;
But when it comes to living, there is no
place like home.

I like the German fir-woods, in green
battalions drilled;
I like the gardens of Versailles, with
flashing fountains filled;
But, oh, to take your hand, my dear, and
ramble for a day
In the friendly Western woodland where
Nature has her way!

I know that Europe's wonderful, yet
something seems to lack;
The Past is too much with her, and the
people looking back.
But the glory of the Present is to make
the Future free, -
We love our land for what she is and
what she is to be.

Oh, it's home again, and home again,
America for me!
I want a ship that's westward bound to
plough the rolling sea,
To the blessed Land of Room Enough
beyond the ocean bars,
Where the air is full of sunlight and the
flag is full of stars.

40. THE ARROW AND THE SONG

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

41. A CHILD'S THOUGHT OF GOD

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

They say that God lives very high;
But if you look above the pine
You cannot see our God; and why?

And if you dig down in the mines,
You never see Him in the gold,
Though from him all that's glory
shines.

God is so good, he wears a fold
Of heaven and earth across His face,
Like secrets kept, for love, untold.

But still I feel that His embrace
Slides down by thrills, through all
things made,
Through sight and sound of every
place.

As if my tender mother laid
On my shut lids here kisses' pressure,
Half waking me at night, and said,
"Who kissed you through the dark,
dear guesser?"

Fifth and Sixth Grade Poetry Selections

42. WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE PUNKIN

James Whitcomb Riley

When the frost is on the punkin and the
fodder's in the shock,
And you hear the kyouck and gobble of
the struttin' turkey-cock,
And the clackin' of the guineys, and the
cluckin' of the hens,
And the rooster's hallylooyer as he
tiptoes on the fence;
O' it's then's the times a feller is a-
feelin' at his best,
With the risin' sun to greet him from a
night of peaceful rest,
As he leaves the house, bareheaded, and
goes out to feed the stock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the
fodder's in the shock.

They's something kindo' harty-like
about the atmusfere
When the heat of summer's over and the
coolin' fall is here –
Of course we miss the flowers, and the
blossoms on the trees,
And the mumble of the hummin'-birds
and buzzin' of the bees;
But the air's so appetzin'; and the
landscape through the haze
Of a crisp and sunny morning of the
airly autumn days
Is a pictur' that no painter has the
colorin' to mock –
When the frost is on the punkin and the
fodder's in the shock.

The husky, rusty russel of the tossels of
the corn,
And the raspin' of the tangled leaves, as
golden as the morn;
The stubble in the furries – kindo'
lonesome-like, but still
A-preaching sermons to us of the barns
they grewed to fill;

The strawstack in the medder, and the
reaper in the shed;
The hosses in theyr stalls below – the
clover overhead! –
O, it sets my hart a-clickin' like the
tickin' of a clock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the
fodder's in the shock!

43. THE LAND OF BEGINNING AGAIN

Louisa Fletcher

I wish that there were some wonderful
place
Called the "Land of Beginning Again,"
Where all our mistakes, and all our
heartaches,
And all of our poor selfish griefs
Could be dropped like a shabby old
coat at the door,
And never be put on again.

I wish we might come on it all
unawares,
Like a hunter who finds a lost trail,
And I wish that the one whom our
blunders had done
The greatest injustice of all –
Could be at the gates, like a friend who
still waits
For the comrades he's gladdest to hail.

It wouldn't be possible not to be kind,
In the "Land of the Beginning Again,"
And the ones we'd misjudged, and the
ones we had grudged
Their moments of victory there,
Would find in the grasp of our loving
handclasp,
More than penitent lips could explain.

Fifth and Sixth Grade Poetry Selections

44. THE FIRST SNOW-FALL

James Russell Lowell

The snow had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
And the poorest twig on the elm-tree
Was ridged inch deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with Carrara
Came Chanticleer's muffled crow,
The stiff rails softened to swan's-down,
And still fluttered down the snow.

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn
Where a little headstone stood;
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, "Father, who makes it snow?"
And I told her of the good All-father
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snow-fall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar that renewed our woe.

And again to the child I whispered,
"The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall!"

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed
her,
And she, kissing back, could not know
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.

Fifth and Sixth Grade Poetry Selections

45. BARBARA FRIETCHIE

John Greenleaf Whittier

Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,

Fair as the garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall
When Lee marched over the mountain-wall;

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down;

In her attic window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced; the old flag met his sight.

“Halt!” – the dust-brown ranks stood fast.
“Fire!” – out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window-sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

“Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country’s flag,” she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman’s deed and word;

“Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!” he said.

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet:

All day long that free flag tost
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie’s work is o’er,
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall’s bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie’s grave,
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

Fifth and Sixth Grade Poetry Selections

46. THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Half a league, half a league,

Half a league onward,

All in the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

“Forward the Light Brigade!

Charge for the guns!” he said.

Into the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

“Forward, the Light Brigade!”

Was there a man dismayed?

Not though the soldier knew

Someone had blundered.

Theirs not to make reply,

Theirs not to reason why,

Theirs but to do and die.

Into the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,

Cannon to left of them,

Cannon in front of them

Volleyed and thundered;

Stormed at with shot shell

Boldly they rode and well,

Into the jaws of Death,

Into the mouth of Hell

Rode the six hundred.

Flashed all their sabers bare,

Flashed as they turned in air

Sab’ring the gunners there,

Charging an army, while

All the world wonder’d.

Plung’d in the battery-smoke

Right thro’ the line they broke;

Cossack and Russian

Reeled from the saber stroke

Shattered and sundered

Then they rode back, but not,

Not the six hundred.

Cannon to the right of them,

Cannon to the left of them,

Cannon behind them

Volleyed and thundered;

Stormed at with shot and shell,

While horse and hero fell,

They that had fought so well

Came through the jaws of Death,

Back from the mouth of Hell,

All that was left of them,

Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?

O the wild charge they made!

All the world wonder’d.

Honor the charge they made!

Honor the Light Brigade,

Noble six hundred!

Fifth and Sixth Grade Poetry Selections

47. PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-
five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and
year.

He said to his friend, If the British march
By land or sea from the town tonight,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal
light,
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm.

Then he said, "Good night!" and with
muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings
lay
The *Somerset*, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was
magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and
street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barracks door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the
grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the
shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old
North Church,
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy
tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their
perch
On the somber rafters, that round him
made
Masses and moving shapes of shade, -
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral somber and still.
And lo! As he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a
spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet;
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and
the light
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed in his
flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.