

**IT'S ALL**

**ABOUT**

**THE**

**RHYME**

By Ida J. Lewenstein



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# The Poems That I Write

Let me tell you  
A little about me  
I've been writing poems  
Since the age of three.

Come to think of it  
I might have been four  
I really don't remember  
But...who keeps score?

My poems tell stories  
As you will see  
They are often rooted  
In fantasy.

I write for children  
Young and old  
They seem to like how  
My stories unfold.

The poems I write  
Are written in rhyme  
I write this way  
Most of the time.

But rhyming, they say, is now passé  
No longer the status quo  
Yet who can forget the riveting rhymes  
Of Edgar Allen Poe?

Or ask the child jumping rope  
How do you keep in time?  
It's a no brainer, says the child  
It's the rhyme...always the rhyme.

As for me...  
I'm going to keep on rhyming  
That's the way I am.  
Just think...  
If no one ever wrote in rhyme  
There'd be no Mary  
Or her little lamb.

# A Big Fat Rat

A Big Fat Rat  
Sat alone on a mat  
Passing the time away.

A Lean Mean Cat  
Spied this rat.  
Said he –  
This is my lucky day!

The Lean Mean Cat  
Pounced on the mat  
Devoured the rat  
And THAT was THAT!

Now a Big Fat Cat  
Sits on the very same mat,  
Purring the time away.

# My Secret Rocket

Here in my hand  
Is a small rubber band.  
It's small right now  
But watch it  
E...X...P....A.....N.....D.

I pull it...  
I stretch it...  
And then let it go.  
Where it'll land  
I never know.

I like to watch it  
Rise and fall.  
Sometimes it smacks  
Right INTO A WALL!

It's fun to stretch it  
Into this or that angle  
But the one I like best  
Is a BIG RECTANGLE.



To make this shape  
I use ALL MY FORCE.  
Then let go  
And follow its course.

I always keep one  
In my little back pocket.  
And sometimes I pretend  
That it's a ROCKET!

“LIFT OFF!” I yell  
We're headed for the MOON –  
We'll circle the stars  
And be back by noon.

It's fun to pretend that  
This small rubber band  
Will do WHATEVER I want  
On my command.

# A Sad Little Dog

A sad little dog  
Sat down on a log  
And oh, did he  
complain!

“I’m a little dog –  
Such a tiny dog –  
If only I were  
A GREAT DANE!”

Said a wise little frog  
On a nearby log –  
“Little dog, don’t be  
blue.

Look at me  
And you can see  
That I am little too.”

“But I don’t moan  
And I don’t whine.  
In fact, I like being me  
Most of the time.”

Said the sad little dog  
To the wise little frog –  
“That may be all right for you.  
But if I were a Great Dane  
I’d never complain  
Because there’s so much  
More I could do.”

“You see, I could leap and run –  
And have so much fun  
Chasing after a ball,  
But with these little feet  
I can’t compete –  
I can’t do much at all.”

“Little dog,  
So you can’t leap  
Or win a race  
Don’t you worry –  
That’s no disgrace!  
Being small has its place.”

“Little frog, maybe it’s true  
All that you say –  
It's just that I never  
Think of myself that way.”

“But you're right –  
I can fit into a closet  
Meant for a broom.  
Can you imagine a Great Dane  
In such a room?”

“And too, I can sleep under a bed  
Or on a chair.  
I can lay my head down  
Most anywhere.”

“What’s more – I can nap  
On a lap  
Just like a cat.  
I'd like to see a  
Great Dane  
Do THAT!”

“And a little kibble  
Is all I eat.  
I don't need  
Pounds and pounds of meat!”

“I guess I have no reason  
To complain.  
So I think I'll stay  
Just the same.”

“So thank you, little frog  
For making me see  
That it's really OK  
To be LITTLE – like me.”

# The Weary Little Clock

There once was a weary, little  
clock

Who was tired of hearing  
That same – ol’ tick-tock.

Tick-TOCK

Beat the clock on the wall.

Tick-TOCK

Echoed the one down the hall.

Tick-TOCK

Ticked the one near the bed.

Tick-TOCK

Chimed the one overhead.

Tick-tock, tick-tock

Around the clock

Morning, night and noon

Tick-tock, tick-tock

Always the same old tune.

It got to the point

He would cover his ears

And there were times

He just burst into tears.

This poor, weary clock  
Was losing his mind  
So he went out looking  
Determined to find  
Another click,  
Another sound.  
He looked up at the sky  
And put his ear to the ground.

He listened to the birds  
He listened to the bees  
And even to the rustle  
Of the leaves.  
But those sounds were not  
What he had in mind.

So he kept on listening  
Hoping to find  
Something pleasing  
To his ear –  
Something that he  
Would really like to hear.

On hearing THIS  
There arose a loud clatter  
Those other clocks  
Began to chatter.

Said one, “What’s the matter  
With the way I tock?  
After all, I am a clock!  
We’ve been tick-tocking this way  
For a long, long time  
It’s what we like  
IT SUITS US FINE!”

These clocks were so angry –  
So up in arms  
It’s no wonder their loud ticking  
Set off their alarms.

Fortunately for him  
On that very same day  
He saw a boy with a stick  
Tapping away.

He listened closely  
And he could hear  
A tick that was pleasing  
To his ear.



He repeated the sound  
Tock-tick, Tock-tick  
Said he – I like that sound –  
That’s the one I’ll pick.  
It was then he gleefully shouted  
“No more tick-tocks!  
I’ll leave that  
To all those other clocks.”

Thereafter, he would go  
On his merry old way  
Tock-ticking – tock ticking  
Night and Day.

Tock – tick  
Tock – tick  
Tock – tick  
Tock – tick  
I like that sound –  
It’s the one I’ll pick.

# A Little Chair

Once there was a little chair  
Who said to himself – It's just not fair  
While others go here and there  
All I do is SIT and STARE  
At that corner window over there.

This is no life for me –  
There is SO much more I want to see!

Day after day, I see legs come and go  
How they do it, I don't know  
But if it takes legs to get out this door –  
I have – let's see – one, two, three – no, FOUR !

I see mommas come and go  
I see children running to and fro  
I see people moving all about  
It seems so easy – I want to shout  
Hey! Let me try it – Let me out!

One day while she was cleaning the floor,  
The mother put me out the door.  
A gust of wind blew me off my feet  
And sent me rolling down the street.

I rolled so fast, I rolled so hard,  
I rolled right into someone's yard.

Said a little boy who saw me there  
Just what I need – a little chair.  
This will be my wagon seat  
Now my wagon is complete.

A wish came true  
For this little chair  
Now it travels EVERYWHERE.

Down the street and  
Around the block,  
OH! What it would say  
If it could REALLY talk!

# Rain... Rain Go Away

Rain...rain go away  
Come again  
Some other day.

On second thought  
You had better stay  
We need you now  
In every way.

You see, we're having  
A terrible drought  
We beg you please...  
Open wide your water spout.

Our reservoirs are at  
An all-time low  
There is not much water  
In the melting snow.

Without water  
Plants can't grow  
Fish can't swim  
And rivers can't flow.

Rain...rain  
DON'T go 'way  
We need you now  
More than we can say.

# If I Let It... In My Room

My room  
Could be a tomb  
Filled with gloom and doom  
If I let it...

It could also be a stage  
Where I could express  
Love or even rage  
If I let it...

It could become my favorite spot  
To peel back time and  
Reminisce a lot  
If I let it...

And last but not least –  
It could become my Camelot  
Where good things happen and  
Bad things do not  
If I let it...

# Sky Visits Earth

One day

Sky looked down  
And said to himself –

Sky- “I’m tired of being up here  
Alone on this shelf.  
I think I’ll go down  
Way down to the ground  
Visit Earth  
And look all around.”

Earth looked up  
Shaking with fear,

Earth- “Sky, stay up there!  
Don’t come down here!  
Visit a planet  
Or maybe a star  
They are much nearer to you  
Much nearer by far!”

Sky-

“All I want  
Is a closer view.  
I won’t stay long,  
I promise you.

“And besides, I’m so light –  
So full of air  
You won’t know  
That I’m even there.”

Earth-

“OK – OK!  
Just a look and a see,  
Remember, Sky –  
You promised me!”

Sky-

“Oh, all right  
That’s what I’ll do.  
You’ll see – you’ll see –  
I won’t bother you!

“I just want to see  
‘Cause I have no way of knowing  
Are those trees very tall?  
Is that grass really growing?



“Is that blanket of white  
Really snow?  
Are those rivers down there flowing?  
Just where do they go?

“There’s nothing like that  
Way up here.  
Nothing but clouds  
And atmosphere.”

But Earth was still worried  
As she could be.

Earth- “What will I look like  
When he lands on me?

“Will he flatten my mountains?  
Will he fill up my sea?  
Oh, what will I look like  
When he lands on me?”

Give it some thought –  
Just what would you do  
If Sky decides  
To visit you?

# An Immigrant's Dilemma

“Much” is a word  
I've often heard  
But don't know much about.

And then there's "many"  
A word I hear plenty  
But still have many a doubt.

I've given some thought  
To the words "a lot"  
A lot of times I've misused.

And "tree" and "three"  
Sound SO much alike to me –  
No wonder I'm confused.

Now "didja" is a word  
That's really absurd –  
In fact, it makes me wary.

I look and look,  
But it's not in my book  
Nor in any dictionary.

What does it take  
(For heaven's sake)  
To master English lessons?

Even a fool  
Can learn a rule  
But what about those exceptions?

When I was young  
My mother tongue  
Was easy to speak and spell.

I wait for the day  
When someone will say,  
"You speak English good"  
(or is it "well"?)

# Consider the Litter

Consider the litter  
We so willingly disown –  
It keeps right on growing  
With a life of its own.

It's out there!  
It's down there!  
It's around every turn.  
We neglect it –  
We reject it –  
It's not our concern.

It slips from our fingers  
And onto the street.  
But we keep right on walking –  
Never missing a beat.

The wrapper – the bag –  
The Styrofoam cup  
We hope some do-gooder  
Will soon pick it up.

It's curious  
That we humans  
With our superior brain  
Act in ways that are  
Hard to explain.

But deep in the jungle  
And way out of sight  
There's a group of monkeys  
Who do things just right.

They know a good way  
To leave their place clean.  
And under their tree  
They leave no messy scene!

You see, they're the sort  
That eat all of their meal.  
They first eat the banana  
And then eat the peel.

I think from these monkeys  
We can all take our cue  
And eat our snack food  
As these bright creatures do.

Oh, how I wish  
For an edible dish –  
And an edible can and cup.  
Oh, what a treat  
To walk down the street  
And find there's no trash  
To pick up!

# Footprints in the Sand

Footprints in the sand  
Disappear with the rising tide  
But carbon footprints are everywhere  
Those you cannot hide.

They blacken the skies  
They hurt our eyes  
They trap the sun  
Temperatures rise.

They scorch the earth  
Plants can't grow  
People are starving  
Far more than we know.

Does it have to get worse  
Before we take action?  
Or do we consider it simply  
Just another distraction?



# God Also Made The Flea

*Ogden Nash wrote:*

The Lord in his wisdom made the fly.  
And then forgot to tell us why.

*Ida Lewenstein wrote:*

God also made the flea  
Without consulting you or me.  
Why he created this pesky pest  
I don't know, only he knows best.

# Goldilocks and The Bear

Goldilocks met an enormous, bearish bear

Did she worry? Au contraire.

This bear was friendly to little girls

Especially those with golden curls.

This bear liked patting her golden tresses

And hugging her gently with caresses

Did Goldilocks worry? Au contraire.

She was getting to like this huggable bear.

This bear was huge and very hairish

Without a doubt looked very bearish

But yet there was a side of him

Well I'd say...rather...debonairish.

Did Goldilocks worry? Au contraire.

She was quite taken by his eloquent air.

One day, this very hairish bear

Invited Goldilocks to his lair.

There he surprised her with gourmet fare

Berries and honey and a prickly pear

Followed by cheese...a savory gruyere.

Did Goldilocks worry? Au contraire.  
She ate it all...with room to spare  
And then...washed it down  
With vin ordinaire.

What came next?  
I don't know – but for what it's worth  
Glancing at the bear's expanded girth  
He probably ate her...  
For des...serth.

# I Like to Rhyme

I like to rhyme  
It suits me fine.  
In fact, I write this way  
Most of the time.

I like the rhythm.  
I like the beat.  
I like the meter  
I often repeat.

Be it ionic pentameter  
Anapest or trochee  
It doesn't matter  
At all to me.

I like to rhyme.

# It's Not Nice to Fool Mother Nature

It's not nice to fool Mother Nature

So the saying goes.

Yet, we trample her sites –

Create hideous blights.

Each day the problem grows.

We have no right to fool Mother Nature

We're treading on her toes.

We tell her we care

Yet we go on polluting her air.

We've shaken her, heaven knows!

All around us are glaring reminders

But we have on dark blinders

Not realizing what we do.

If it doesn't affect us

Don't expect us

To change our point of view.

It really should alarm us

For eventually it'll harm us

Yet, we don't seem to make much fuss.

There's an enemy out there

But we don't seem to care

I think the enemy is US!

# I've Got Writer's Block!

Writers Block! I've Got Writer's Block!

What on earth should I do?

It would be nice

If I could give you advice

But I'm in the same boat as you!

So you have Writer's Block...

When I think of what

We call Writer's Block

I think of a key

Stuck deep in a lock.

The more you jiggle it –

The more you persist –

It's for certain that

It's going to resist.

My advice to you

For 2 cents plain

Let it all go!

**CLEAR YOUR BRAIN!**

Take a break  
Listen to rock  
Better yet –  
Listen to Bach.

Work a puzzle  
Knit a sweater  
Tomorrow, for sure  
Things will be better.

# Limericks

There once was a girl named Sue  
Who would utter things...untrue  
When they would ask her why?  
She would heave a big sigh  
Saying – I don't know why, I just do.

There once was a parrot named Mush  
Who usually spoke in a hush  
But when they'd cover his cage  
He'd go into a rage, screeching cuss words  
To make a sailor blush.

There once was a girl called a-CHOO  
Who lived in an icy i-GLOO  
It was damp; it was freezing  
She couldn't stop sneezing  
No wonder they called her a-CHOO!

I once met a man called Brett  
Who's someone I cannot forget  
I asked him to dine  
But he had to decline  
Saying – Sorry, I already done et.



# Memory

Memory is a funny thing  
Some people remember it all.  
Then there are those who  
Write it all down and  
Still others who seldom recall.

# Ode to Ogden

Dear Ogden,

My husband tells me

That my poems and rhymes oft times

Remind him of you.

I can't tell you how much this has meant –

After all, it's quite a compliment.

But then, he has a biased view...husbands often do.

For sure, I strive for humor and dash –

But come on – No one can write

Like Ogden Nash.

No, there is no one around like you!

And Ogden,

All of your poems

Are little jewels.

Who cares if you break

Those silly ol' rules.

For instance, we simply love

How you turn a word

Into something

No one's ever heard.

Words like wearance and tearance  
Are in your lexicon.  
They're not British or French  
And certainly not Mexican.

And then, some of your poems  
Are so outlandish,  
I often wonder how  
They would sound in Spanish.

In addition,  
I want to mention.  
It's your two-line verses  
That get my attention.

Candy is dandy  
But liquor is quicker.

Nowadays, blank verse  
Is all the rage.  
Words seem to flow freely  
Across the page.  
There is little need  
For meter or rhyme.  
It's restricting they say –  
A waste of time.

But, it's your whimsical rhymes  
I love to quote,  
The one 'bout the fly  
I wish I had wrote.

The Lord in his wisdom made the fly.  
But then forgot to tell us why.

There are times your phrases  
Are ever so sparsely.  
Who would say –  
Parsley is gharsley.

And who can forget  
Your ode to a tree  
That you write about  
So poignantly.

I think that I shall never see  
A billboard lovely as a tree.  
Perhaps, unless the billboards fall  
I'll never see a tree at all.  
Moreover, the things you say  
'Bout the frailties of men  
Come back to haunt us  
Time and again.

Professional men, they have no cares  
Whatever happens, they get theirs.

# Those More Innocent Days

Remember Rip Van Winkle  
That amiable chap  
Who woke up one day  
After a twenty-year nap?

He was often surprised  
And also distressed  
By the way people acted  
And the way people dressed.

Well, sometimes I feel  
The same as he  
I look in wonderment  
At the strange things I see.

I walk down the street  
And what do you suppose?  
There's a girl walking toward me  
With a ring in her nose.

There's a boy with blue hair  
Wearing pants that hang low  
I ask – Is this for real  
Or just for show?

I see a kid in a car  
The music blaring  
He's bobbing and weaving  
Not looking – not caring.

It is then I look back  
On Those More Innocent Days  
When we all dressed  
In more conservative ways.

Girls in loose-fitting sweaters  
And colorful plaid skirts  
Boys in well-fitting cords  
And checkered shirts.

No one I knew wore a ring in her nose  
No one would be seen with his bottom exposed  
Rarely did one drive with the music blaring  
To be sure – we had fun  
But we weren't THAT DARING!

Nowadays, MELODY is OUT!  
RAP is THE THING!  
But who can follow it –  
Let alone...sing?

I'm so glad I was around  
When melody was king –  
Frank Sinatra, Glenn Miller  
And Oh...that swing!

It seems that each generation  
Has its very own ways  
As for me, I'm glad I grew up  
In Those More Innocent Days.



# The World Is Warming Day By Day

The die is cast  
The experts say  
The world is warming  
Day by day.

We've ignored those warnings  
It's quite alarming  
Glaciers are melting  
Penguins are starving.

Polar bears are losing  
Their hunting ground  
The seas are rising  
All around.

Precious time  
We've frittered away  
Now the piper  
We must pay.

No time to waste  
We must act soon!  
There's  
An Elephant  
Stirring  
In the  
ROOM!

# Un Poco De Spanglish

Los hombres fuman en el autobus

The men smoke on the bus

They smoke all the time.

El letrero dice: NO FUMAR !

The sign (above) says No smoking!

Pero el humo hides the sign.

But the smoke ...

# A Perplexing Poem

I read a perplexing poem  
today.

I'm not really sure  
What it's trying to say.

But someone apparently  
More daring than me  
Decided to print it  
For all to see.

It harps on one word –  
One word, ad infinitum.  
But don't look at me  
I just read 'em  
I don't write 'em.

I just scratch my head  
In serious doubt,  
And leave it to you  
To figure it out.

Tough, tough tough  
tough, tough tough the  
wheels are tough, the  
seats are tough, the  
valves are tough, and  
you're one tough guy  
driving this tough truck

To me...

There's no flashes of Ogden Nash  
Nor hint of Edgar Allen Poe,  
Rather, I find it stuck in neutral  
With simply nowhere to go.

Please help me out  
It's tough to see  
Is this really – poetry?

# A Bird On My Dome

I awoke one morning  
Ready to jump out of bed  
But was stopped by something  
Pressing on my head.

I thought I was dreaming  
But mirrors don't lie  
There was a bird on my dome  
Staring me in the eye.

I called to this bird  
This uninvited guest –  
My head is not a home  
And certainly not your nest!

You there – sitting on my dome  
Is more than I can bear  
You're ruining my good looks  
And mussing up my hair!

I beg you little bird  
Please leave me be  
Fly away now  
And find yourself a tree!

Mama bird – You know I’ve searched and  
searched

For a ready-made nest  
And of all the places  
Your dome looked the best.

I love your hair – so thick and bushy  
Something I love to pat  
What’s more, it’s so soft and cushy  
Who could resist all that?

Gathering leaves and twigs is such a chore  
Just where would I begin?  
Here was a ready-made nest  
Inviting me to move right in.

-

Bewildered, I hurried back to my mirror  
She was still there, all right  
Now I’ll have to think of something  
To keep her out of sight.

Perhaps, I could wear a hat  
To cover up my head  
But what would I do at night  
When I'm ready to go to bed?

Should I keep my window open  
So that she can come and go as she pleases?  
What would happen if suddenly  
I started to sneeze – earth-shaking sneezes?

No one I know has a bird on her dome.  
Oh, why does she pick on me?  
Why can't she be a normal bird  
And build her nest in a tree?

This is some predicament!  
And certainly not fair  
At times, I feel as if I want to  
Tear out all my hair!

Perhaps, if my hair was straight  
And also rather thin  
I'm sure that this little bird  
Would never think of moving in!



# My Poems

(From Jack Prelutsky's poem starters)

## **A Turtle**

Because I am a turtle  
I have no need to roam  
I simply stick my head inside  
And call it “Home Sweet Home”.

## **A Cow**

I moo because I'm happy  
Doing what I do  
And often  
When I feel that way  
I say it with a moo.

# We Are The Cyber Generation

## **We are the CYBER GENERATION**

We want the latest Apps right now!

Sadly, we are hardly aware

And don't much care

Where they are made

Or even how!

## **We are a SMART GENERATION**

We have no time to waste

We walk and talk

Talk and walk

With an iPhone in our face.

(We live in cyberspace.)

## **We are the NOW GENERATION**

We buy and dispose

We buy and dispose

With rarely a thought

To where it ultimately goes

We want the latest Apps right now

**AND HOW!**

# Ida's Commentary

Read about the thoughts behind every poem!

## **The Poems I Write**

I wrote poems in rhyme as a child and have continued to do so throughout my adulthood.

### **Big Fat Rat**

This poem came from my ESL lesson on pronunciation of the letter “a,” as in rat, fat, cat, mat.

### **My Secret Rocket**

This poem is about a little boy and his imagination. He imagines his rubber band is a rocket that takes him to lots of interesting places.

### **Sad Little Dog (two voices – dog and frog)**

This poem came from my ESL lesson on pronunciation of the letter “o,” as in log, dog, frog. The story is also a commentary about accepting who you are, and feeling proud about it.

## **Weary Little Clock**

This poem is about a clock who is not happy with the way things are. He looks for a new sound to replace the tick-tocks of the clocks around him, and also for himself.

## **The Little Chair**

This poem is about a little chair who is envious of all that he sees out the window, such as children moving about. He wants to move about himself.

## **Rain Rain Go Away**

This is a poem to help children understand what a drought is all about. The inspiration comes from the poet having been in a drought in California.

## **If I Let It...**

This poem comes from the fact that I am quarantined in my room during the COVID-19 crisis.

## **Sky Visits Earth**

*Sky Visits Earth* is a story-poem for young children. In a flight-of-fancy, the story attaches human qualities to both Sky and Earth, suggesting the conversation that might take place between the two if Sky decides he wants to come down to visit Earth to take a look around, and how Earth might feel about such a prospect.

## **An Immigrant's Dilemma**

This poem stems from my mother, who had a very hard time speaking English.

## **Consider the Litter**

I wrote this poem in reaction to my experience:

I was sitting in the window of the hairdresser, watching high school students toss onto the sidewalk the paper wrappers from their fast-food lunches as they walked back to school.

## **Footprints in the Sand**

This is an environmental poem that speaks to our changing climate.

## **God Also Made the Flea**

Ogden Nash wrote a famous poem about a fly,  
and I wrote a poem in reaction to his.

## **Goldilocks and the Bear**

I've taken the children's poem, Goldilocks and  
the Three Bears, a step further, featuring an  
encounter between Goldi and a very romantic  
bear. Apparently, the encounter doesn't end  
well for Goldi.

## **I Like to Rhyme**

As a child, I liked to write poems that rhymed,  
and I have continued to do so throughout my  
adulthood.

## **It's Not Nice to Fool Mother Nature**

For too long, we pretended that climate change  
does not exist. Now we're paying the price for  
that.

## **I've Got Writer's Block**

Writer's block is a very common occurrence  
among writers – one I know all too well!



## **Limericks**

I had seen so many limericks, that I decided to try out writing some of my own.

## **Memory**

As we get older, memory becomes a problem for many of us.

## **Ode to Ogden**

Some people say that my poems remind them of Ogden Nash, and I guess they do. Ogden has been my inspiration for whatever I write.

## **Those More Innocent Days**

This poem is a look-back to what life was like in the 1940s and 1950s – a far more innocent time than today.

## **The World Is Warming Day by Day**

This poem calls our attention to climate change.

## **Un poco de Spanglish**

This poem is a fun diversion that combines English and Spanish.

## **A Perplexing Poem**

This is a fun poem that I read about in the SF Chronicle, and I decided to write about it.

## **A Bird on My Dome**

This poem about a stork was inspired by Jack Prelutsky.

## **My Poems**

Jack Prelutsky is a famous writer of children's poems. He was my inspiration for these two short poems, and also for "A Bird on my Dome".

## **We Are the Cyber Generation**

We are the new generation who want all the latest apps, right now. We are not mindful of the waste we are producing.