

Parent Guide to

ARROW

Grades 4–6 Your resource for advice, ideas, and more for your preteen

April
2009

Get your
Parent Guide to Arrow
Every Month
at www.scholastic.com/read.

Editors' Picks of the Month

Look for these titles in your
April Book Club flyer.

The Best Poems Ever

Who It's For:

Poetry fans and poetry fans-to-be

Why We Chose It:

It's poetry month! This book has a kid-friendly selection of great poems.

What Parents Say:

"My son has actually memorized some of the poems in this book, he likes them so much."

Jim & Me

by Dan Gutman

Who It's For:

Baseball fans; time travel fans; fans of Baseball Card Adventures.

Why We Chose It:

This story isn't just about baseball, it's about integrity and the value of a reputation.

What Parents Say:

"My kid lives and breathes baseball—and this series is such a winner—he has to read every one!"

The 39 Clues, Book 3 The Sword Thief by Peter Lerangis

Who It's For:

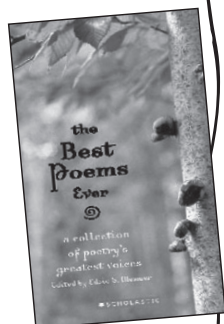
Fans of the series; video gamers; kids who love action.

Why We Chose It:

This series is a huge bestseller, with a game and online component, plus cards.

What Parents Say:

"This series has actually made my video-gamer kid a reader!"



Ode to the Power of Poetry!

Reading with your child is always a wonderful way to encourage literacy. But reading poetry together may be the most powerful way to boost skills. Through poetry, you can:

Introduce new concepts.

Poetry exposes your reader to different types of literature and language. He learns new words, increases his knowledge on a variety of subjects, and may become interested in other genres, such as nonfiction or plays.

Stretch language skills.

Poetic conventions like alliteration, onomatopoeia, simile, and metaphor make reading exciting. They also challenge your child to think about language differently — as something artistic, powerful, and inspiring. As he becomes familiar with poetic conventions, he gains a better understanding of how to use words to set a mood, clarify a point, or persuade his audience.

Hook your child's imagination.

A good poem may have predictable rhythms and patterns, but it has a wild side too. Silly rhymes, exclamations, humorous wordplay, metaphors, and twists turn a poem into an adventure that will grab your child's interest whether he's a book-lover or a reluctant reader.

Connect with emotions.

A poem's rhythm speaks to your child's feelings and gives him a deeper understanding of what's happening beyond what the words say. Conventions of poetry such as relaxed grammar rules, quick phrases, and evocative imagery allow writers to express themselves freely.



Daily Reading Fun

April is National Poetry Month!
Find recommended poetry
books for your reader at
www.scholastic.com/read.

Ask an Expert

What types of poems should I share with my child?

Read a variety of selections to introduce concepts of meter, rhyme, metaphor, and simile, which are important comprehension skills. Take advantage of playful, humorous poems, so she'll learn to enjoy poetry and continue reading it on her own in coming years. Favorite authors like Jack Prelutsky and Shel Silverstein are sure to delight you both. But introduce more complex poems as well with selections by Robert Frost or Emily Dickinson. If your child is reluctant to read poems, try Sharon Creech's *Love That Dog*, a funny novel written in free verse that follows a boy who claims not to like poetry.

Meet Our Expert: Francie Alexander is a vice president at Scholastic, where her focus is on creating materials that help kids learn to read and help teachers teach reading.

Find more expert advice for your reader at www.scholastic.com/read.

What's in a Poem?

Writers use different literary techniques, poetic forms, and sound patterns to create rich imagery and emotional connections with readers. Learn ten new concepts to inspire your budding poet.

Alliteration

Repeating the same initial consonant sound in several words within a line or phrase. For example, alliteration always asks an aspiring author for alike initials again and again.

Blank verse

Poetry that doesn't rhyme but has a set meter and rhythm.

Couplet

A pair of lines that are the same length and usually rhyme and form a complete thought.

Epic

A long, serious poem that tells the story of a heroic figure — the ancient Greeks wrote many, such as Homer's *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad*.

Haiku

A Japanese poem — composed of three unrhymed lines of first five, then seven, and then five syllables — that often reflects on nature.

Limerick

A light, humorous poem of five lines with the rhyme scheme AABBA.

Lyric

A poem that expresses thoughts and feelings and may resemble a song in form or style.

Metaphor

Describing something by comparing it to another object or thing without using "like" or "as."

Onomatopoeia

A word that sounds like the thing it stands for. (Buzz! Pop! Sizzle! Zoom!)

Personification

A type of metaphor where human characteristics or feelings are given to an animal, object, or idea.

Simile

A way of describing something by using "like" or "as" to compare it to something else.

Sonnet

A lyric poem that's 14 lines long and has a deliberate rhyme scheme and rhythm (think Shakespeare).

Kids Read for Kids in Need

Scholastic Book Clubs' ClassroomsCare is a philanthropic literacy campaign designed to teach children the joys and importance of reading and giving. Students in classrooms across America are encouraged to read 100 books in order to trigger a 1MILLION BOOK donation by ClassroomsCare! Since 2001, ClassroomsCare has donated 7 MILLION books through Literacy Partners such as Save the Children, Reach Out and Read, and First Book, among others.

This year, for the first time, participating teachers and students will be able to choose where the books they "earn" go. They will have dozens of charities serving many different populations to choose from. This shift in the donation process is aimed at strengthening the connection between the kids who are reading and the kids who are receiving the books.

You can visit www.scholastic.com/classroomscare to see how a child you know could make a difference by reading. You can also access resources and curriculum aimed at the ClassroomsCare message -- kids have the power to make a difference and there is nothing more worthwhile than helping others, especially when you are offering the gift of reading.



Ode to the Power of Poetry!

1. Take a walk outside and find a topic for your poem using nature. It could be a tree, a bird, a pebble, a leaf — whatever! Write what your topic is here:

2. Think of four words that describe the object. Write them here:

3. Think of something else that can be described with the same four words. Write that object here:

4. Put the ideas into a haiku. Remember, you should have three lines: the first will have five syllables; line two will have seven syllables; the final line will have five.

Beyond Books

Poems make a lovely gift, so next time your child sends out cards for a grandparent's birthday, a holiday, or just for fun, suggest he include a poem. Encourage him to search out a special poem from an anthology, or even come up with an original.

Did You Know?

When you order, your child's class gets FREE books and resources!

Find out more about leveled reading at www.scholastic.com/youreader.

About Your Parent Guide to Arrow

Your Parent Guide to Arrow is produced by the editorial staff at Scholastic.com/parents. For information on how to foster reading at home, age-appropriate booklists, and more, visit www.scholastic.com/read.