

Spinster Goose: Twisted Rhymes for Naughty Children
by Lisa Wheeler

ACTIVITIES

POEM: *AN INTRODUCTION FROM MOTHER GOOSE* Pg. 4

Let's think about it: Discussion and Vocabulary

What do you think an “uncouth urchin” is?

Let's look in the text for clues!

Do words like ‘naughty’ and ‘disobedience’ give clues as to what the word ‘uncouth’ might mean?

What type of children attend Spinster Goose’s school?

Do you know any words that mean the same as ‘child’?
Kid, Tot, Rugrat, Etc.

How about a naughty child?
Brat, Ankle-biter, Rascals, Etc.

*Try to get kids to name some colorful alternatives as you introduce the word ‘urchin’ to their vocabulary.

POEM: *SPINSTER GOOSE* Pg. 7

Activity

Let's make a list of Rules for Spinster Goose’s School

Example:
NO lying
NO fighting
NO bullying
Etc

Let's think about it: Discussion

Are these good rules for our class?
How about our school?
Why do we need rules?

POEM: *THE GUM-CHEWER* Pg. 8

Good books to pair with this poem:

POP! THE INVENTION OF BUBBLEGUM by Meghan McCarthy
BUBBLE GUM, BUBBLE GUM by Lisa Wheeler
BUBBLE TROUBLE by Margaret Mahy
BUBBLEMANIA: A CHEWY HISTORY OF BUBBLEGUM by Lee Wardlaw
THE BUBBLEGUM KID by Stu Smith and Julia Woolf

Science Experiment:

Supplies: 6 or more brands of bubble gum

Question: Which brand of gum makes the best bubbles?

Come up with a hypothesis. Do the kids think that more sugary gums make better bubbles? Does the color of the gum make a difference? Etc.

Using at least six brands of popular bubble gum, have teams of students chew and blow bubbles.

Measure bubbles carefully and accurately.

Time the length a bubble lasts before popping or deflating.

Which gums made the strongest bubbles? Biggest bubbles? Longest lasting bubbles?

Chart results and compare with other teams.

POEM: *THE CHALK-EATER* Pg. 12

Science Experiment:

Supplies: White chalk. Vinegar. Clear drinking glass.

Question: How long will it take chalk to dissolve?

Place chalk into the glass half-full of vinegar.
Observe. The chalk will begin dissolving and be completely dissolved within a few days.

Ask students, "Why did the chalk dissolve?"
Research what the vinegar and lemon juice are (acid) and the properties of chalk. (calcium bicarbonate)

Why is chalk 'non-toxic'? (It is made from grounded down limestone, clay, water, and non-toxic dry coloring powder.)
Can we make calcium bicarbonate? (Mix mixing soda water, calcium pills and baking soda)

POEM: *STUDENT OF THE WEEK* Pg. 14-15

Let's think about it: Discussion

Have you ever had a Sunday detention?
What kind of naughty behaviors might get someone a Sunday detention?

Talk about hyperbole and give students permission to exaggerate their examples. Have them write a short story about a day in the classroom using hyperbole.

POEMS: *THE COOKS* Pg. 16 or *THE MENU* Pg. 19

Activity:

Write a faux menu for Gruel or for Peas Porridge. *Use practical math, teach organization and expand the imagination.*

Have the kids make a list of Ingredients and amounts.
Use this exercise to show: pound = lb., cup=C, teaspoon = tsp.,
tablespoon= TBSP etc.

Once Ingredients are in place, students must be sure that each ingredient is used at least once in the faux recipe.

Ex: INGREDIENTS

1 c. Snail slime
2 lbs. beans
1 vat of lard
10 tsp. hot chili pepper

Next, have them give step-by-step instructions on how to prepare the recipe.

Ex:
Heat lard to boiling in large soup pot.
Dump beans into boiling lard.
Stir in snail slime and hot chili pepper.
Simmer for 3 hours on low heat.

*Be sure to have the kids learn active verbs cooking for instructions. Ex: heat, dump, stir, simmer, etc.

POEM: *THE DITCHERS* Pg. 20

Vocabulary

There are some unusual words and word usages in this poem.

Talk about the word 'ditch' in both its noun and verb forms.

In the second stanza, there are two unusual words that both mean 'head'. Can you find them?

In the last stanza, it says that Jack and Jill are 'busted'. This word has two meanings in this poem. Let's talk about that.

POEM: *THE BULLY* Pg. 21

Let's Think About It : Discussion

Bullying is a hot button issue.

Use this poem to open up a discussion about treating others the way we would want to be treated, conflict resolution, bucket-filling, and teasing.

Remember: Words **CAN** hurt!

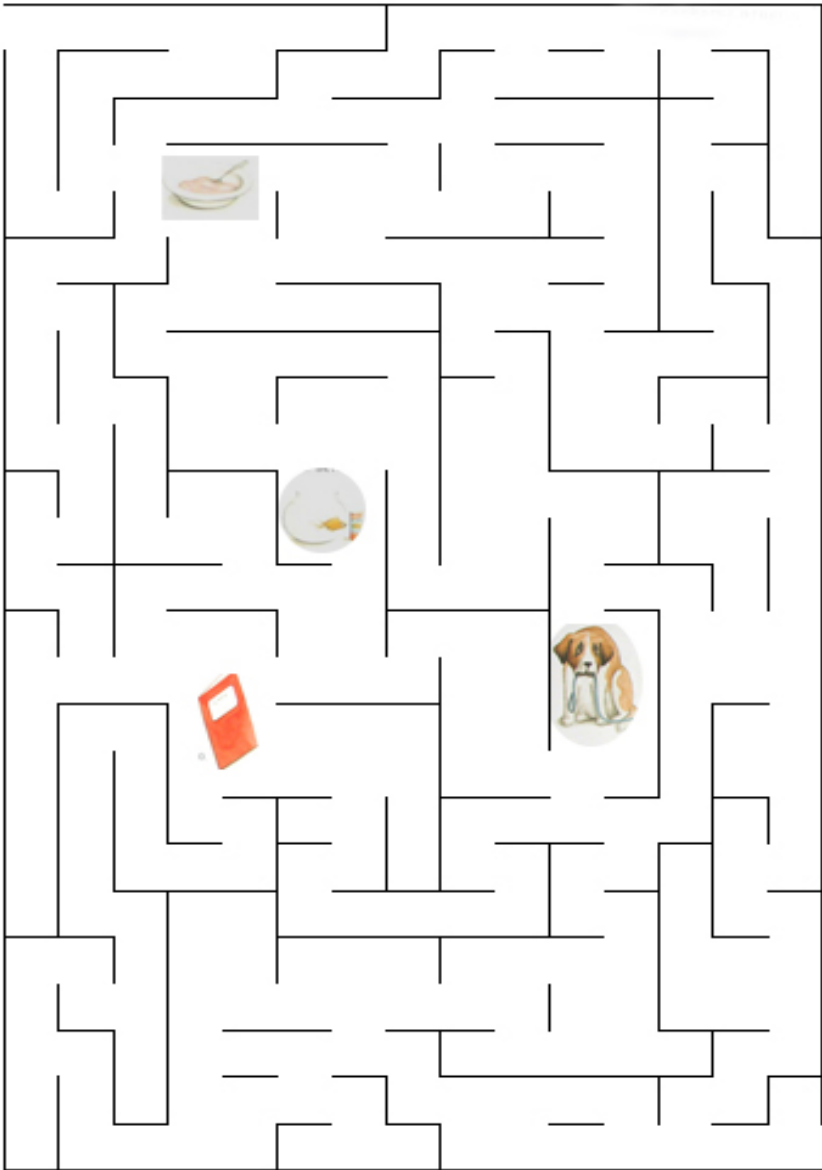
Good Fiction Books on Bullying:

The Recess Queen by Alexis O'Neill

Stand Tall Molly Lou Melon by Patty Lovell

Odd Velvet by Mary Whitcomb

Help Lucy Locket get to school. Can she find her missing items on the way?



POEMS: *THE THUMBSUCKER*, *Sign In The Classroom* and *THE DIRTY KID* Pg. 24-26

Health Discussion

Use these poems as discussion starters.

Hand-washing, germs, and the proper way to take care of basic health needs (nose blowing, sneezing, etc) can be addressed.

Ex:

Do you think Jack Horner might expose himself to germs by putting his thumb in his mouth? When do we wash our hands?

The poem says, "Please use your hanky."

Do you know what a hanky is?

Why do we use tissues when we have a cold?

POEM: *HUMPTY DUMPTY* Pg. 30

Vocabulary

PUN: The humorous way of using a word or phrase so that more than one meaning is suggested

There are lots of puns in this poem. Since Humpty is an egg, the author has used several egg references within the poem.

See if your students can count them.

1. His memory's *scrambled*
2. The Spinster's *hard-boiled*
3. . . .for *grilling* the students. . .
4. and making them *crack*.
5. His *hard shell*
6. is *peeling*

For more examples of puns in Lisa Wheeler's work, see *Sailor Moo: Cow at Sea*, *Wool Gathering: A Sheep Family Reunion* and *Seadogs: An Epic Ocean Operetta*.

POEM: THE CHEATER Pg. 32

Parody: a piece of writing, music, etc., that imitates the style of someone or something else in an amusing way

Compare this parody with the original poem.
Explain the meaning of 'parody'.

Original:

Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater,
Had a wife and couldn't keep her.
He put her in a pumpkin shell,
And there he kept her very well.

*Note that the entire book, *Spinster Goose: Twisted Rhymes for Naughty Children* is a parody of Mother Goose.

POEM: THE FIBBER Pg. 39

Using "Mary Had a Little Lamb" as pattern, write a new poem.

Here is a pattern to follow.

_____ had a little _____
His/her _____ was _____ as _____
Everywhere that _____ went
The _____ was sure to _____

Example:

Justin had a little fish.
Her scales were blue as water.
Everywhere that Justin went
The fish was sure to totter.

POEM: THE TATTLETALE Pg. 40

Let's Think About It: Discussion

What are some other words that mean 'tattletale'?
Snitch, Squealer, Rat, Blabbermouth, Telltale

Discuss tattling.

Is it ever okay to tattle?
When and why?

Talk about reasons when tattling is NOT a good idea.