

The Grammar

of

*Poetry*

IMITATION IN WRITING

by Matt Whiting

## Imitation In Writing

*The Grammar of Poetry* is the sixth book in a growing series of Imitation in Writing materials designed to teach aspiring writers the art and discipline of crafting delightful prose and poetry.

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Matt Whitling  
Moscow, Idaho

Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,  
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend  
More than cool reason ever comprehends.  
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet  
Are of imagination all compact: –  
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold, –  
That is the madman: the lover, all as frantic,  
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:  
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;  
And, as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.  
Such tricks hath strong imagination,  
That, if it would but apprehend some joy,  
It comprehends some bringer of that joy;  
Or in the night, imagining some fear,  
How easy is a bush supposed a bear!

– Shakespeare (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*)

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**What is Poetry?**

Poetry has been defined in many different ways. For our purposes, we will define poetry as pictures and music. A good poet paints pictures with his words. Much of this painting takes place in figurative language. Specific figures of speech are known as tropes; these are the pictures of poetry. If tropes are the pictures of poetry then what is the music? The music of poetry contains two parts, meter and rhyme. Meter and rhyme work together in order to produce the musical sound that most poems contain. There will be more about that later; for now it is important that you remember the definition of poetry – pictures and music.

**Epiphany Graph**

In order to write a good poem, you will need to have a meaningful topic to write about. Below is an epiphany graph designed to help you organize your topics. The word epiphany means to “show” or “reveal.” By completing the graph, you will be listing items that show or reveal something significant about you.

Directions: In the columns below write down **High Points** – the best things that have ever happened to you (success, honor, happiness, etc.), **Low Points** – the worst things that have ever happened to you (injuries, failures, embarrassing moments, etc.), **Turning Points** – events that have changed you in some way (a lesson you learned, an idea that finally “clicked,” etc.), **Special People** (relatives, friends, heros, historical characters, etc.), **Special Places** (home, vacation spot, etc.), and **Special Possessions** (books, games, toys, weapons, etc.). Write as many ideas as you can in each section.

TOPIC IDEAS FOR POETRY		
HIGH POINT	LOW POINT	TURNING POINT
SPECIAL PEOPLE	SPECIAL PLACES	SPECIAL POSESSIONS

### Thankfulness in Poetry

In order for you to become a good poet, you will need to become an avid reader of poetry. Reading lots of great poetry will not be much fun unless you enjoy it; this brings up a very important point. Whenever you begin to study something for the first time, you have a choice to make. Are you going to like this subject and relish it or will it be sour to your tastes and drive you away? You will find in your study of poetry, as in other subjects, that if you determine to set your affections upon it from the beginning that you will have a delightful time learning to read and write poetry along the way. In order to do this, be thankful for the chance to learn about poetry. When it is time to study poetry during the course of your week, think of it as a time in which you *get* to learn poetry instead of a time when you *have* to. Poetry will not always be easy, but the more thankful and tenacious you are when you study it, the more you will learn and enjoy as you study it. In short, teach yourself to love poetry.

### Reading Poetry

In this lesson you will learn how to read, memorize, and recite poetry that you are interested in. The first thing you should do when you attempt a poem is to read the title. This might seem too obvious to need pointing out, but consider for a moment the importance of the title. Oftentimes in poetry the title contains information that must be understood in order for the reader to comprehend what the poem is about. The title might contain the setting of the poem, the time in which the poem takes place, or the name of a person the poem is describing. After reading the title, make a guess at what the poem is going to be about. Next read the poem quietly to yourself. As you read it, try to figure out how the poem should sound. Do not stop at the end of each line; pay attention to the punctuation as you read. Poetry is very similar to music in that it has a distinct rhythm or beat that you need to detect. Finally, read the poem aloud, this time paying very close attention to what the poem means. Let's review the three steps to go through when reading a poem for the first time:

1. Read the **title** and guess what the poem is about.
2. Read the poem quietly to detect the **rhythm**.
3. Read the poem aloud to determine the **meaning**.

As you think about the meaning of a poem, you will find that it will naturally fall into one of the following categories:

1. Narrative Poetry: poems that tell stories.
2. Nature Poetry: poems about creation.
3. Love Poetry: poems that sing of friendship or romantic love.
4. Descriptive Poetry: poems that explain or describe something.
5. Historical Poetry: poems about countries, peoples, wars, etc.
6. Religious Poetry: poems about God or man's relationship with him.
7. Humorous Poetry: poems to make you laugh.

Of course, some poems that you read will be a combination of the types listed above. Many historical poems tell a story resulting in what is called a historical narrative. If the story is a funny one, it could be described as a humorous historical narrative. The important thing to do is to figure out which type(s) of poetry you are reading so that you are better prepared to understand what it is trying to say.

### Practice

A. Read the following poems. (Remember to go through all three steps: title, rhythm, meaning.) Label what type of poetry it is (narrative, nature, etc.).

---

(type of poetry)

### FRAGMENT

Flower in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies,  
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower – but *if* I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
I should know what God and man is.  
– Alfred Tennyson

---

(type of poetry)

### AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

O beautiful for spacious skies,  
For amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties  
Above the fruited plain!  
America! America!  
God shed His grace on thee  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea!  
– Katherine Lee Bates

---

(type of poetry)

### THE OWL AND THE FOX

There was an old Fox  
That lived under the rocks  
At the foot of the huge oak tree;  
And of all of the foxes  
That ever did live  
There was none so bad as he.  
His step was soft,  
With his padded feet,  
But his claws were sharp beneath;  
And sharp were his eyes,  
And sharp were his ears,  
And sharp were his terrible teeth.

And the dreariest place  
You ever did see,  
Was this old Fox's den;  
It was strewn with the down  
Of the tender Chick,

And the quills of the mother hen,  
Where he dragged them in  
This dismal den  
And piled their bones together,  
And killed them dead,  
And sucked their blood,  
And ate their flesh,  
And picked their bones,  
And warmed his bed with the feathers...  
– Unknown

---

(type of poetry)

### SONNET XVIII

Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And Summer's lease hath all too short a date:  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd:  
But thy eternal Summer shall not fade  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;  
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:  
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.  
– William Shakespeare

---

(type of poetry)

### TRINITY SUNDAY

Lord, who hast form'd me out of the mud,  
And hast redeem'd me through thy blood,  
And sanctifi'd me to do good;  
Purge all my sins done heretofore:  
For I confess my heavy sore,  
And I will strive to sin no more.

Enrich my heart, mouth, hands in me,  
With faith, with hope, with charity;  
That I may run, rise, rest with thee.  
– George Herbert

**SIMILE**

The first trope, or picture, that we will discuss is the simile. A **simile** is a comparison of two dissimilar things using the words *like*, *as*, or *than*. This is called an explicit comparison because it is so obvious that one thing is being compared to another; the words *like*, *as*, or *than* give the comparison away. An important point to remember is that the two items being compared must be very dissimilar in order for it to be a simile. If I were to say, “That hog eats like an animal,” it would not be a simile because a hog is an animal. Whereas, if I said, “That man eats like a hog,” the two things being compared are dissimilar enough to produce an effective picture in our minds, and therein lies the power of a simile.

**Practice and Review**

A. Circle the two dissimilar things being compared and underline *like*, *as*, or *than* in the following similes.

Example: The poorly mannered (schoolboy) ate like a (pig)

1. Her hair drooped round her pallid cheek, like seaweed on a clam.
2. On the abandoned and lifeless rocky island, a single lighthouse guarded the coastline like a loyal, solitary sentry.
3. The staff of his spear was like a weaver’s beam.
4. She had cheeks like roses.
5. A fatal habit settles upon one like a vampire and sucks his blood.
6. A merry heart doeth good like a medicine; but a broken spirit drieth the bones. Prov. 17:22
7. The wrath of a king is as messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it. Prov. 16:14

B. Write three of your own similes.

---



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---

C. This is a poem of similes. Fill in each blank so that the rhyming pattern is not broken.

As wet as a fish-as dry as a <u>bone</u> ;	As gay as a lark-as sick as a _____;
As live as a bird-as dead as a stone;	As savage as tigers-as mild as a dove;
As plump as a partridge-as poor as a rat	As stiff as a poker-as limp as a glove;
As strong as a horse-as weak as a cat;	As blind as a bat-as deaf as a _____;
As hard as a flint-as soft as a mole;	As cool as a cucumber-as warm as toast;
As white as a _____-as black as a coal;	As flat as a flounder-as round as a ball;
As plain as a staff-as rough as a bear;	As blunt as a hammer-as sharp as an awl;
As light as a drum-as free as the _____;	As brittle as glass-as tough as gristle;
As heavy as lead-as light as a feather;	As neat as a pin-as clean as a _____;
As steady as time-uncertain as weather;	As red as a rose-as square as a box;
As hot as an oven-as cold as a frog;	As bold as a thief-as sly as a _____.

D. Label each one of the following sentences as *Simile* or *Other*.

- 1. The rain looks like pearls upon a string \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. My love is like a red, red rose. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. That lion eats like an animal. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Mother smiled as she walked in the room. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. The lips of the adulteress drip honey. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Her speech is as smooth as oil. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Your father's commandment is a lamp. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Your words are sharp as a two-edged sword. \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. He looks like he is hungry. \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. Children are like poppies spread about. \_\_\_\_\_

E. Define the following words in complete sentences.

- 1. poetry \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. trope \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. epiphany \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. simile \_\_\_\_\_

### RIDDLE RENDEZVOUS

From time to time there will be one or two riddles at the bottom of your poetry worksheet. Some are *posers* and others are *chestnuts*, but all are just for fun and should be attempted after the worksheet has been completed!

#1 Runs over fields and woods all day  
Under the bed at night sits not alone,  
With long tongue hanging out,  
A-waiting for a bone.

#2 The beginning of eternity  
The end of time and space  
The beginning of every end,  
And the end of every place.

### RHYME

A **rhyme** is a pair of words which end with the same sounds but begin with different ones. Rhyme is not necessary in poetry; in fact, some of the best poetry is written in what is called **blank verse**, poetry that does not rhyme. However, rhyme does help to cement lines together and to add beauty and meaning to a poem. There are two different types of rhyme that we will initially concern ourselves with. The first is **full rhyme**; it is seen when a pair of words end with exact-sounding vowels and consonants (e.g. spring-wing, cat-hat). The second, **slant rhyme**, is defined as a pair of words which end with approximate-sounding vowels or consonants (e.g. death-earth, lectures-directors). Full rhyme produces a clean and clear effect while slant rhyme causes a feeling of tension or uneasiness. Skillful poets use full and slant rhyme to compliment what they are trying to communicate in their poems.

#### Rhyme Scheme

A rhymed-poem will have a certain rhyme scheme that each stanza follows. (A **stanza** is simply a paragraph of poetry.) A **rhyme scheme** is a combination of letters which represent the rhyming pattern of a poem. These letters are called variables. In order to determine the rhyme scheme of a poem, label the last word of each line with a letter. Lines whose last words rhyme will receive the same letter. It does not matter which letters you use as long as the rhyming words receive the same ones.

#### Practice and Review

A. Determine the rhyme schemes of the following stanzas. Label the last word of each line with a letter of the alphabet. Lines whose last words share the same sound also share the same letter. When you are done, write the rhyme scheme out horizontally on the line above the poem.

Example:

ABABCCCC

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Sweetest Saviour, if my *soul* A  
 Were but worth the *having*, B  
 Quickly should I then *control* A  
 Any thought of *waiving*. B  
 But when all my care and *pains* C  
 Cannot give the name of *gains* C  
 To thy wretch so full of *stains*, C  
 What delight or hope *remains*? C

Triplet: a stanza with three lines.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Winds still work: it is their plot, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Be the season cold, or hot: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hast thou sighs, or hast thou not? \_\_\_\_\_

Quatrain: a stanza with four lines.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 As Robin Hood in the forest strayed, \_\_\_\_\_  
 All under the greenwood tree, \_\_\_\_\_  
 He was aware of a brave young man, \_\_\_\_\_  
 As fine as fine might be. \_\_\_\_\_

Couplet: a stanza with two lines

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Who read a chapter when they rise, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Shall ne're be troubled with ill eyes. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 But that thou art my wisdom, Lord, \_\_\_\_\_  
 And both mine eyes are thine, \_\_\_\_\_  
 My mind would be extremely stirr'd \_\_\_\_\_  
 For missing my design. \_\_\_\_\_

B. Similes are easy to identify because they contain one of the following three words: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_.  
Choose three topics from your epiphany graph and write a simile about each one.

*Example: My father is as strong as a bear.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

C. Define the following words in complete sentences.

1. simile \_\_\_\_\_
2. rhyme \_\_\_\_\_
3. full rhyme \_\_\_\_\_
4. slant rhyme \_\_\_\_\_
5. stanza \_\_\_\_\_

Sample

**RIDDLE RENDEZVOUS**

#3 Without a bridle or a saddle,  
Across a ridge I ride and straddle;  
And every one, by help of me,

Though almost blind, is made to see  
Then tell me pretty dame,  
And witty master, what's my name?

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## **THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB**

George Gordon, Lord Byron

*The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,  
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;  
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,  
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.*

*Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,  
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:  
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,  
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.*

*For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,  
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;  
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,  
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!*

*And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,  
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;  
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,  
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.*

*And there lay the rider distorted and pale,  
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:  
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,  
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.*

*And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,  
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;  
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,  
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!*

## **OVERTHROW OF BELSHAZZAR**

Bryan Waller Procter

*Belshazzar is king! Belshazzar is lord!  
And a thousand dark nobles all bend at his board;  
Fruits glisten, flowers bloom, meats steam, and a flood  
Of the wine that man loveth runs redder than blood:  
Wild dancers are there, and a riot of mirth,  
And the beauty that maddens the passion of earth;  
And the crowds all shout,  
Till the vast roofs ring,  
"All praise to Belshazzar, Belshazzar the king!"*

*"Bring forth," cries the monarch, "the vessels of gold,  
Which my father tore down from the temple of old;  
Bring forth, and we'll drink, while the trumpets are blown,  
To the gods of bright silver, of gold and of stone:  
Bring forth!" - and before him the vessels all shine,*

*And he bows unto Baal, and he drinks the dark wine;  
Whilst the trumpets bray,  
And the cymbals ring,  
"Praise, praise to Belshazzar, Belshazzar the king!"*

*What cometh? - look, look! Without menace or call?  
Who writes, with the lightning's bright hand, on the wall?  
What pierceth the king, like the point of a dart?  
What drives the cold blood from his cheek to his heart?  
"Chaldeans! magicians! the letters expound!"  
They are read - and Belshazzar is dead on the ground!  
Hark! the Persian is come,  
On a conqueror's wing;  
And a Mede's on the throne of Belshazzar the king!*

## **ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA**

William Haines Lytle

*I am Dying, Egypt, dying,  
Ebbs the crimson life-tide fast,  
And the dark Plutonian shadows  
Gather on the evening blast;  
Let thine arms, O Queen, enfold me,  
Hush thy sobs and bow thine ear;  
Listen to the great heart-secrets,  
Thou, and thou alone, must hear.*

*Though my scarr'd and veteran legions  
Bear their eagles high no more,  
And my wreck'd and scatter'd galleys  
Strew dark Actium's fatal shore,  
Though no glittering guards surround me,  
Prompt to do their master's will,  
I must perish like a Roman,  
Die the great Triumvir still.*

*Let not Caesar's servile minions  
Mock the lion thus laid low;  
'Twas no foeman's arm that fell'd him,  
'Twas his own that struck the blow;  
His who, pillow'd on thy bosom,  
Turn'd aside from glory's ray,  
His who, drunk with thy caresses,  
Madly threw a world away.*

*Should the base plebeian rabble  
Dare assail my name at Rome,  
Where my noble spouse, Octavia,  
Weeps within her widow'd home,  
Seek her; say the gods bear witness -  
Altars, augurs, circling wings -*

*That her blood, with mine commingled,  
Yet shall mount the throne of kings.*

*As for thee, star-eyed Egyptian,  
Glorious sorceress of the Nile,  
Light the path to Stygian horrors  
With the splendors of thy smile.  
Give the Caesar crowns and arches,  
Let his brow the laurel twine;  
I can scorn the Senate's triumphs,  
Triumphing in love like thine.*

*I am dying, Egypt, dying;  
Hark! the insulting foeman's cry.  
They are coming! quick, my falchion,  
Let me front them ere I die.  
Ah! no more amid the battle  
Shall my heart exulting swell;  
Isis and Osiris guard thee!  
Cleopatra, Rome, farewell!*

### **ENGLAND'S SOVEREIGNS IN VERSE**

#### *Norman Kings*

*William the Conqueror long did reign;  
William, his son, by an arrow was slain;  
Henry the First was a scholar bright;  
Stephen was king without any right.*

#### *Plantagenet*

*Henry the Second, Plantagenet's scion;  
Richard the First was as brave as a lion  
John, though a tyrant, the Charter signed;  
Henry the Third had a weakly mind.  
Edward the first conquered Cambria dales;  
Edward the Second was born Prince of Whales;  
Edward the third humbled France in its pride;  
Richard the Second in prison died.*

#### *House of Lancaster*

*Henry the Fourth for himself took the crown;  
Henry the Fifth pulled the French king down;  
Henry the Sixth lost his father's gains.*

#### *House of Tudor*

*Edward of York laid hold of the reins;  
Edward the Fifth was killed with his brother;  
Richard the Third soon made way for another.  
Henry the Seventh was frugal of means;  
Henry the Eighth had a great many queens.  
Edward the Sixth reformation began;*

*Cruel Queen Mary prevented the plan.  
Wise and profound were Elizabeth's aims.*

#### *Stuart Line*

*England and Scotland were joined by King James.  
Charles found the people a cruel corrector;  
Oliver Cromwell was called Lord Protector;  
Charles the Second was hid in an oak,  
James the Second took Popery's yoke.  
William and Mary were offered the throne,  
Anne succeeded and reigned alone.*

#### *Hanoverian Kings*

*George the First from Hanover came;  
George the Second kept up the name;  
George the Third was loved in the land,  
George the fourth was polite and grand;  
William the Fourth had no heir of his own,  
So Queen Victoria ascended the Throne.*

*When good Queen Victoria's long reign was o'er  
Edward the Seventh the English crown wore;  
George the fifth rules the vast realm of England today  
And "God Save the King!" all his subjects' hearts say.*

### **KINGS OF FRANCE**

*Mary W. Lincoln*

*The first king was Pharamond; after him came  
The race Merovingian, unworthy of fame;  
Them Pepin the Little, and Charlemagne, great,  
Victorious, kingly, in church and in state.  
First Louis, Charles first, then two Louis more;  
Charles; Endes, count of Paris, whose reign was soon  
o'er;  
Charles the Simple; Raoul de Burgoyne, rarely known,  
One after another ascended the throne.*

*Then Louis the Fourth, who was named "L'Outre Mer,"  
Then Louis the Sluggard came; after Lothaire;  
Hugh Capet, and Robert, and Henry then came;  
First Philip, two Louis, and Philip whose name  
Was Augustus; then Louis the Lion; and one  
Called Louis the Saint, for the good he had done.  
Two Philips, tenth Louis, fifth Philip came on,  
And then Charles the Fourth, the sixth Philip, and John;  
Charles fifth, sixth and seventh, when Joan d'Arc came  
To rescue the country from sorrow and shame.*

*Then Louis Eleventh, perfidious king;  
 Charles Eighth, whose adventures let history sing;  
 Twelfth Louis, first Francis, and then Henry came;  
 Then Francis, whose wife is so well known to fame  
 As Mary of Scotland; Charles Ninth on whose head  
 Is the blood of Bartholemew's Protestant dead.  
 Two Henrys, five Louis, one king but in name,  
 For Terror was monarch till Buonaparte came.  
 Then Louis Eighteenth and Charles Tenth the grandson  
 Of Louis Fifteenth, but his reign was soon done.  
 Then Louis Philippe and Napoleon Third,  
 Who, often successful, more frequently erred.  
 The throne is now vacant, and no one can tell  
 the name of the next, so I'll bid you farewell.*

### **COLUMBUS TO FERDINAND**

*Philip Freneau*

*Illustrious monarch of Iberia's soil,  
 Too long I wait permission to depart;  
 Sick of delays, I beg thy listening ear-  
 Shine forth the patron and the prince of art.  
 While yet Columbus breathes the vital air,  
 Grant his request to pass the western main;  
 Reserve this glory for thy native soil,  
 And what must please thee more-for they own reign.  
 Of this huge globe, how small a part we know-  
 Does heaven their worlds to western suns deny?  
 How disproportioned to the mighty deep  
 The lands that yet in human prospect lie!  
 Does Cynthia, when to western skies arrived,  
 Spend her sweet beam upon the barren main,  
 And ne'er illumine with midnight splendor, she,  
 The native dancing on the lightsome green?  
 Should the vast circuit of the world contain  
 such wastes of ocean, and such scanty land?  
 'Tis reason's voice that bids me think not so;  
 I think more nobly of the Almighty hand.  
 Does yon fair lamp trace half the circle round  
 To light the waves and monsters of the seas?  
 No-be there must beyond the billowy waste  
 Islands, and men, and animals, and trees.  
 An unremitting flame my breast inspires  
 to seek new lands amidst the barren waves,  
 Where falling low, the source of day descends,  
 And the blue sea his evening visage laves.  
 Hear in his tragic lay, Cordova's sage  
 "The time shall come when numerous years are past,  
 The ocean shall dissolve the bands of things,  
 And an extended region rise and last;  
 And Typhis shall disclose the mighty land.*

*Far, far away, where none have roved before;  
 Nor shall the world's remotest regions be Gibraltar's  
 rock, or Thule's savage shore."  
 Fired at the theme, I languish to depart,  
 supply the barque, and bid Columbus sail,  
 He fears no storms upon the untraveled deep;  
 Reason shall steer, and skill disarm the gale,  
 Nor does he dread to lose the intended course,  
 Though far from land the reeling galley stray,  
 And skies above, and gulfy seas below  
 Be the sole object seen for many a day.  
 Think not that nature has unveiled in vain  
 The mystic magnet to the mortal eye,  
 So late have we the guiding needle planned,  
 Only to sail beneath our native sky;  
 Ere this was found, the ruling power of all,  
 Found for our use an ocean in the land,  
 Its breadth so small we could not wander long,  
 Nor long be absent from the neighboring strand.  
 Short was the course, and guided by the stars,  
 But stars no more shall point our daring way;  
 The Bear shall sink, and every guard be drowned,  
 And great Arcturus scarce escape the sea.  
 When southward we shall steer-O grant my wish,  
 Supply the barque, and bid Columbus sail,  
 He dreads no tempest on the untraveled deep,  
 Reason shall steer, and skill disarm the gale.*

### **COLUMBUS**

*Joaquin Miller*

*Behind him lay the gray Azores,  
 Behind the Gates of Hercules;  
 Before him not the ghost of shores,  
 Before him only shoreless seas.  
 The good mate said: "Now must we pray,  
 For lo! the very stars are gone.  
 Brave Admiral, speak, what shall I say?"  
 "Why, say, 'Sail on! sail on! and on!'"  
  
 "My men grow mutinous day by day;  
 My men grow ghastly wan and weak."  
 The stout mate thought of home; a spray  
 Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.  
 "What shall I say, brave Admiral, say,  
 If we sight naught but seas at dawn?"  
 "Why, you shall say, at break of day:  
 'Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!'"  
  
 They sailed and sailed, as winds might blow,  
 Until at last the blanched mate said:*

*“Why, now not even God would know  
Should I and all my men fall dead.  
These very winds forget their way,  
For God from these dread seas is gone.  
Now speak, brave Adm’r’l; speak and say” --  
He said: “Sail on! sail on! and on!”*

*They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate:  
“This mad sea shows his teeth to-night;  
He curls his lips, he lies in wait,  
With lifted teeth, as if to bite;  
Brave Adm’r’l, say but one good word;  
What shall we do when hope is gone?”  
The words leapt like a leaping sword:  
“Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!”*

*Then, pale and worn, he kept his deck,  
And peered through darkness. Ah, that night  
Of all dark nights! And then a speck --  
A light! a light! a light! a light!  
It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!  
It grew to be Time’s burst of dawn.  
He gained a world; he gave that world  
Its grandest lesson: “On! sail on!”*

### **JOHN ROGER’S EXHORTATION TO HIS CHILDREN**

*Mr. John Rogers, minister of the gospel in London, was the first martyr in Queen Mary’s reign, and was burnt at Smithfield, February 14, 1554. His wife with nine small children, and one at her breast following him to the stake; with which sorrowful sight he was not in the least daunted; but with wonderful patience died courageously for the gospel of Jesus Christ. Some few days before his death, he wrote the following advice to his children.*

*- The New England Primer*

*Give ear my children to my words  
whom God had dearly bought.  
Lay up his laws within your heart,  
and print them in your thoughts.  
I leave you here a little book  
for you to look upon  
That you may see your father’s face  
when he is dead and gone,  
Who for the hope of heavenly things,  
while he did here remain,  
Gave over all his golden years  
to prison and to pain.  
Where I among my iron bands,  
enclosed in the dark,  
Not many days before my death,  
I did compose this work,  
And for example to your youth,  
to whom I wish all good.*

*I send you here God’s perfect truth,  
and seal it with my blood.  
To you, my heirs of earthly things,  
which I do leave behind,  
That you may read and understand,  
and keep it in your mind,  
That as you have been heirs of that  
that once shall wear away,  
You also may possess that part  
which never shall decay.  
Keep always God before your eyes,  
with all your whole intent.  
Commit no sin in any wise,  
keep his commandment.  
Abhor that errant whore of Rome,  
and all her blasphemies,  
And drink not of her cursed cup,  
obey not her decrees.  
And recompense her in her age,  
with the like love again.  
Be always ready for her help,  
and let her not decay.  
Remember well your father all,  
who would have been your stay.  
Give of your portion to the poor,  
as riches do arise,  
And from the needy, naked soul  
turn not away your eyes,  
For he that does not hear the cry  
of those that stand in need  
Shall cry himself and not be heard,  
when he does hope to speed.  
If God has given you increase  
and blessed well your store,  
Remember you are put in trust,  
and should relieve the poor.  
Beware of foul and filthy lust,  
let such things have no place.  
Keep clean your vessels in the Lord,  
that He may you embrace.  
You are the temples of the Lord,  
for you are dearly bought,  
and they that do defile the same  
shall surely come to naught.  
be never proud by any means,  
build not your house too high,  
But always have before your eyes  
that you are born to die.  
Defraud not him that hired is,  
your labor to sustain,  
And pay him still without delay,  
his wages for his pain.*

*And as you would another man  
against you should proceed,  
Do you the same to them again  
when they do stand in need.  
Impart you portion to the poor,  
in money and in meat,  
And send the feeble, fainting soul  
of that which you do eat.  
Ask counsel always of the wise,  
give ear unto the end,  
And ne'er refuse the sweet rebuke  
of him that is your friend.  
Be always thankful to the Lord,  
with prayer and with praise,  
Begging of Him to bless your work,  
and to direct your ways.  
Seek first, I say, the living God,  
and always Him adore,  
And then be sure that he will bless  
your basket and your store.  
And I beseech almighty God  
replenish you with grace,  
That I may meet you in the heavens,  
and see you face to face.  
And though the fire my body burns,  
contrary to my kind,  
That I cannot enjoy your love,  
according to my mind,  
Yet I do hope that when the heavens  
shall vanish like a scroll,  
I shall see you in perfect shape,  
in body and in soul.  
And that I may enjoy your love,  
and you enjoy the land,  
I do beseech the living Lord  
to hold you in His hand.  
Though here my body be adjudged  
in flaming fire to fry,  
My soul I trust will straight ascend,  
to live with God on high.  
What though this carcass smart awhile,  
what though this life decay,  
My soul I trust will be with God,  
and live in him for aye.  
I know I am a sinner born,  
from the original,  
And that I do deserve to die  
by my forefather's fall.  
But by Our Savior's precious blood,  
which on the cross was split,  
Who freely offered up His life  
to save our souls from guilt,*

*I hope redemption I shall have,  
and all that in Him trust,  
When I shall see Him face to face,  
and live among the just.  
Why then should I fear death's grim look,  
since Christ for me did die?  
For king and Caesar; rich and poor;  
the force of death must try.  
When I am chained to the stake,  
and faggots gird me round,  
Then pray the Lord my soul in heaven  
may be with glory crowned.  
Come welcome death, the end of fears,  
I am prepared to die;  
Those earthly flames will send my soul  
up to the Lord on high.  
Farewell my children to the world,  
where you must yet remain.  
The Lord of host be your defense  
till we do meet again.  
Farewell my true and loving wife,  
my children and my friends.  
I hope in heaven to see you all,  
when all things have their end.  
If you go on to serve the Lord,  
as you have now begun,  
You shall walk safely all your days,  
until your life be done.  
God grant you so to end your days  
as he shall think it best,  
That I may meet you in the heavens,  
where I do hope to rest.*