

Tea Time: Edward Lear

post by Wende

May 12th is Limerick Day in honor of the British poet, Edward Lear, born in England this day in 1812.



Edward Lear lived during what is known as the Victorian era. He was born into a middle class family and was one of 21 siblings. When Edward was four he went to live with his oldest sister, Ann, whom he had a close relationship with. From the time Edward was six years old he suffered from epilepsy, bronchitis, and asthma. His ailments often led to periods of depression, which he tried to overcome by writing the silly nonsensical verses that he made so popular. He would sometimes use invented words, and his poetry would often lack a punch line or point, it was just plain silly. Edward Lear also became an artist, illustrator, and author. His most famous works include:

- *Book of Nonsense* (1846)
- *The Owl and the Pussycat* (1867)
- *Nonsense Songs and Stories* (1870)
- *More Nonsense Songs, Pictures, etc.* (1872)
- *Laughable Lyrics* (1877)
- *Nonsense Alphabets*
- *Nonsense Botany* (1888)

Lear's nonsense books were quite popular during his lifetime, but a rumor started that "Edward Lear" was merely a pseudonym, and the books' true author was the man to whom Lear had dedicated the works, his patron the Earl of Derby. Promoters of this rumor offered as evidence the facts that both men were named Edward, and that "Lear" is an anagram of "Earl." Edward Lear proved to the accusers who he was by showing his name inside of his hat, and wrote a poem about himself.

"HOW PLEASANT TO KNOW MR. LEAR!"

"How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!"

Who has written such volumes of stuff! Some think him ill-tempered and queer,
But a few think him pleasant enough.

His mind is concrete and fastidious,
His nose is remarkably big; His visage is more or less hideous,
His beard it resembles a wig.

He has ears, and two eyes, and ten fingers,
Leastways if you reckon two thumbs; Long ago he was one of the singers,
But now he is one of the dumbs.

He sits in a beautiful parlor,
With hundreds of books on the wall; He drinks a great deal of Marsala,
But never gets tipsy at all.

He has many friends, lay men and clerical,
Old Foss is the name of his cat; His body is perfectly spherical,
He weareth a runcible hat.

When he walks in waterproof white,
The children run after him so! Calling out, "He's come out in his night-
Gown, that crazy old Englishman, oh!"

He weeps by the side of the ocean,
He weeps on the top of the hill; He purchases pancakes and lotion,
And chocolate shrimps from the mill.

He reads, but he cannot speak, Spanish,
He cannot abide ginger beer: Ere the days of his pilgrimage vanish,
How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!

Edward Lear died in 1888 of heart disease.

Now that you know a bit about Edward Lear, what is a limerick? A limerick is a light, humorous poem of five lines with an *aabba* rhyme scheme. Lines 1, 2 and 5 each consist of 7-10 syllables and rhyme, and lines 3 and 4 each have 5-7 syllables and rhyme. Edward Lear would write his limericks under pictures he drew as space permitted, oftentimes running one line into the next.

Read

The Jumblies and Other Nonsense Verses by Edward Lear [FREEDOWNLOAD](#)

A Book of Nonsense by Edward Lear [FREE DOWNLOAD](#)

The Owl and the Pussycat [FREE DOWNLOAD](#)

Extend the Learning

Learn about Limericks with the study notes provided.

Recite or memorize the poem, “How Pleasant to Know Mr. Lear!”

Record what you learn about Edward Lear on the notebooking page.

Tea Time Treat

In the spirit of Edward Lear's silliness, make these [Silly Cookie Smiles on a Stick](#)

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"HOW PLEASANT TO KNOW MR. LEAR!" by Edward Lear

"How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!"
Who has written such volumes of stuff!
Some think him ill-tempered and queer,
But a few think him pleasant enough.

His mind is concrete and fastidious,
His nose is remarkably big;
His visage is more or less hideous,
His beard it resembles a wig.

He has ears, and two eyes, and ten fingers,
Leastways if you reckon two thumbs;
Long ago he was one of the singers,
But now he is one of the dumbs.

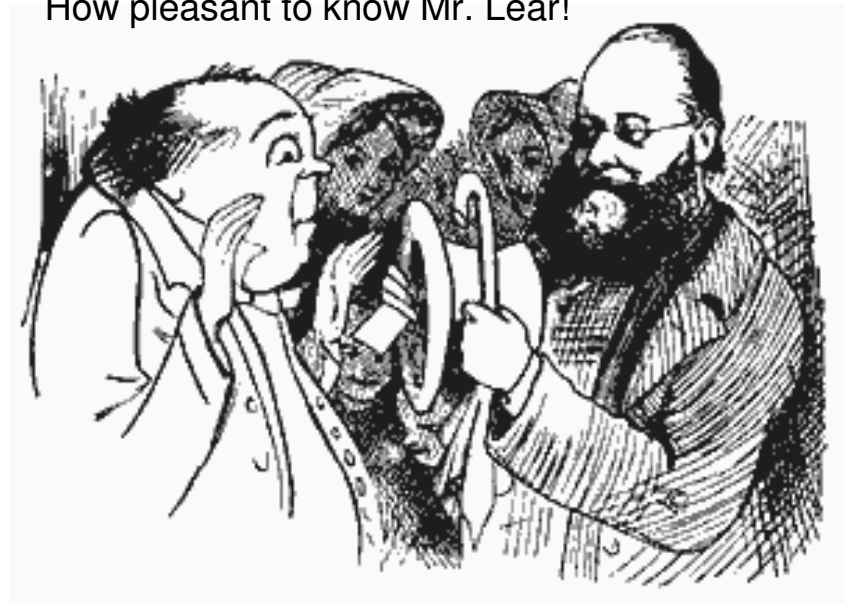
He sits in a beautiful parlor,
With hundreds of books on the wall;
He drinks a great deal of Marsala,
But never gets tipsy at all.

He has many friends, lay men and clerical,
Old Foss is the name of his cat;
His body is perfectly spherical,
He weareth a runcible hat.

When he walks in waterproof white,
The children run after him so!
Calling out, "He's come out in his night-
Gown, that crazy old Englishman, oh!"

He weeps by the side of the ocean,
He weeps on the top of the hill;
He purchases pancakes and lotion,
And chocolate shrimps from the mill.

He reads, but he cannot speak, Spanish,
He cannot abide ginger beer:
Ere the days of his pilgrimage vanish,
How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!



"HOW PLEASANT TO KNOW MR. LEAR!" by Edward Lear

*"How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!"
Who has written such volumes of stuff!
Some think him ill-tempered and queer,
But a few think him pleasant enough.*

*His mind is concrete and fastidious,
His nose is remarkably big;
His visage is more or less hideous,
His beard it resembles a wig.*

*He has ears, and two eyes, and ten fingers,
Leastways if you reckon two thumbs;
Long ago he was one of the singers,
But now he is one of the dumbs.*

*He sits in a beautiful parlor,
With hundreds of books on the wall;
He drinks a great deal of Marsala,
But never gets tipsy at all.*

*He has many friends, lay men and clerical,
Old Foss is the name of his cat;
His body is perfectly spherical,
He weareth a runcible hat.*

*When he walks in waterproof white,
The children run after him so!
Calling out, "He's come out in his night-
Down, that crazy old Englishman, oh!"*

*He weeps by the side of the ocean,
He weeps on the top of the hill;
He purchases pancakes and lotion,
And chocolate shrimps from the mill.*

*He reads, but he cannot speak, Spanish,
He cannot abide ginger beer:
Ere the days of his pilgrimage vanish,
How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!*



Limerick Study Notes

Poems are made up of **lines**. How many lines does a limerick usually have? _____

How many syllables should lines 1, 2 and 5 of a limerick have? _____

How many syllables should lines 3 and 4 of a limerick have? _____

What is a **rhyme**? _____

Poems often have a pattern of rhyming lines. This pattern is called the **rhyme scheme**. Letters are used to label each line that ends with a new sound. The rhyme scheme for a limerick is always: _____ .

Label the rhyme scheme in the following limerick:

There was an Old Man of the Nile, _____
Who sharpened his nails with a file; _____
Till he cut off his thumbs, _____
And said calmly, "This comes— _____
Of sharpening one's nails with a file!" _____

Create your own limerick using this template:

There was a _____ from _____.

Who liked to _____ in _____.

So he _____,

And _____.

That _____ from _____.

Now create your own:

Limerick Study Notes Answers

Poems are made up of **lines**. How many lines does a limerick usually have? **5**

How many syllables should lines 1, 2 and 5 of a limerick have? **7 - 10**

How many syllables should lines 3 and 4 of a limerick have? **5 - 7**

What is a **rhyme**? **A rhyme is a similarity or likeness of sound existing between two words. If the vowel and final consonant sounds are exactly the same, it is called a perfect rhyme, as in *sat* and *cat*.**

Poems often have a pattern of rhyming lines. This pattern is called the **rhyme scheme**. Letters are used to label each line that ends with a new sound. The rhyme scheme for a limerick is always: **a a b b a**

Label the rhyme scheme in the following limerick:

There was an Old Man of the Nile, **a**
Who sharpened his nails with a file; **a**
Till he cut off his thumbs, **b**
And said calmly, "This comes— **b**
Of sharpening one's nails with a file!" **a**

Create your own limerick using this template: **answers will vary**

There was a _____ from _____.
Who liked to _____ in _____.
So he _____,
And _____.
That _____ from _____.

Now create your own: **answers will vary**

"HOW PLEASANT TO KNOW MR. LEAR!" by Edward Lear

First Stanza

"How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!"
Who has written such volumes of stuff!
Some think him ill-tempered and queer,
But a few think him pleasant enough.

Second Stanza

His mind is concrete and fastidious,
His nose is remarkably big;
His visage is more or less hideous,
His beard it resembles a wig.

"HOW PLEASANT TO KNOW MR. LEAR!" by Edward Lear

Third Stanza

He has ears, and two eyes, and ten fingers,
Leastways if you reckon two thumbs;
Long ago he was one of the singers,
But now he is one of the dumbs.

Fourth Stanza

He sits in a beautiful parlor,
With hundreds of books on the wall;
He drinks a great deal of Marsala,
But never gets tipsy at all.

"HOW PLEASANT TO KNOW MR. LEAR!" by Edward Lear

Fifth Stanza

He has many friends, lay men and clerical,
Old Foss is the name of his cat;
His body is perfectly spherical,
He weareth a runcible hat.

Handwriting practice lines for the Fifth Stanza, consisting of four sets of three horizontal lines (top, dashed middle, bottom).

Sixth Stanza

When he walks in waterproof white,
The children run after him so!
Calling out, "He's come out in his night-
Gown, that crazy old Englishman, oh!"

Handwriting practice lines for the Sixth Stanza, consisting of four sets of three horizontal lines (top, dashed middle, bottom).

"HOW PLEASANT TO KNOW MR. LEAR!" by Edward Lear

Seventh Stanza

He weeps by the side of the ocean,
He weeps on the top of the hill;
He purchases pancakes and lotion,
And chocolate shrimps from the mill.

Eighth Stanza

He reads, but he cannot speak, Spanish,
He cannot abide ginger beer:
Ere the days of his pilgrimage vanish,
How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!

"HOW PLEASANT TO KNOW MR. LEAR!" by Edward Lear

First Stanza

*"How pleasant to know Mr. Lear! "
Who has written such volumes of stuff!
Some think him ill-tempered and queer,
But a few think him pleasant enough.*

Handwriting practice lines consisting of four sets of three horizontal lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid).

Second Stanza

*His mind is concrete and fastidious,
His nose is remarkably big;
His visage is more or less hideous,
His beard it resembles a wig.*

Handwriting practice lines consisting of four sets of three horizontal lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid).

"HOW PLEASANT TO KNOW MR. LEAR!" by Edward Lear

Third Stanza

*He has ears, and two eyes, and ten fingers,
Leastways if you reckon two thumbs;
Long ago he was one of the singers,
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Fourth Stanza

*He sits in a beautiful parlor,
With hundreds of books on the wall;
He drinks a great deal of Marsala,
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*When he walks in waterproof white,
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Eighth Stanza

*He reads, but he cannot speak, Spanish,
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How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!*

Handwriting practice lines consisting of four sets of three horizontal lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid).