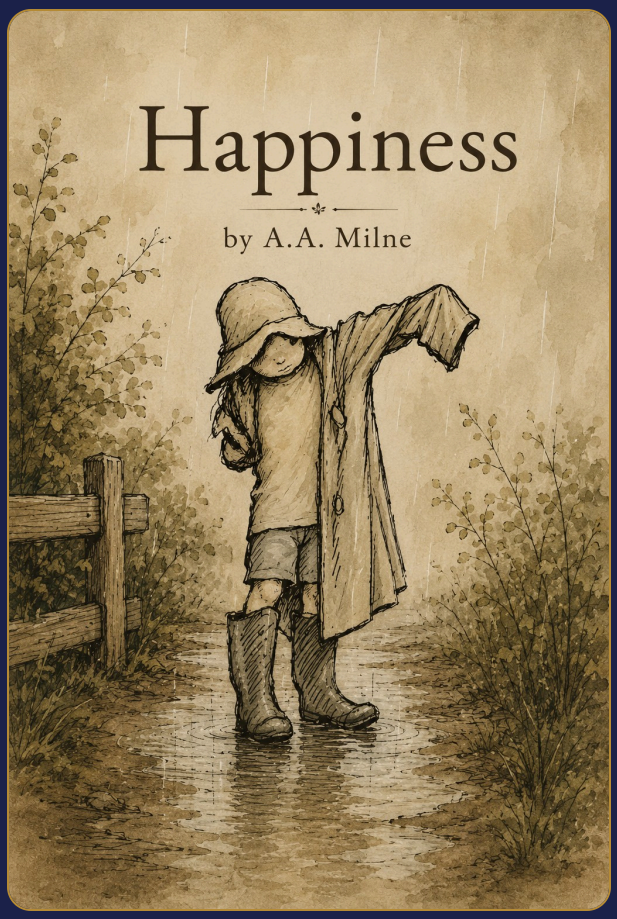
Storyland Classics

FREE POEM GUIDE

From When We Were Very Young (1924)



- ✦ The Poem
- ✦ Try It
- ✦ Missing Words
- ✦ Put It in Order
- ✦ Handwriting
- ✦ Meet the Poet
- ✦ Word Match & Sort
- ✦ Yes or No & ABC Order
- ✦ Read It With Voices
- ✦ Answer Key
- ✦ Let's Talk
- ✦ Word Search
- ✦ Rhyme Hunt & Syllables
- ✦ Learn It by Heart
- ✦ Standards

Ages 4–8 ✦ Pre-K to Grade 2 ✦ Aligned to Common Core

This cover is for your screen. Print from page 2 to save ink.

FOR GROWN-UPS

How to Use This Guide

This free guide goes with the Storyland Classics read-aloud of “Happiness” by A. A. Milne. Every page is ready to print, and no sign-up is needed. Pick the pages that suit your child or class.

ABOUT THE POEM

John is all dressed for the rain: great big waterproof boots, a great big waterproof hat and a great big waterproof mackintosh (a raincoat). That is all he needs to be perfectly happy. The poem is tiny, but its repeating words and short lines make it a joy to say aloud, and the last line is John’s own satisfied little speech.

SKILL FOCUS

Repetition and shape: how words look on the page

A simple routine

1. **Day 1.** Watch the read-aloud together (scan the QR code on the poem page), then read the poem aloud.
2. **Day 2.** Read it again. Meet the poet, then use Let’s Talk and Try It.
3. **Day 3.** Learn the words with the word match, word sort, word search and missing words.
4. **Day 4.** Listen for rhymes and syllables, put the poem in order, and perform it with voices.

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Standards

Every activity is aligned to the Common Core State Standards for kindergarten to grade 2. Codes appear at the bottom of each page, and the full table is on the last page.

Younger children

Children who aren’t writing yet can answer out loud or tell a grown-up what to write.

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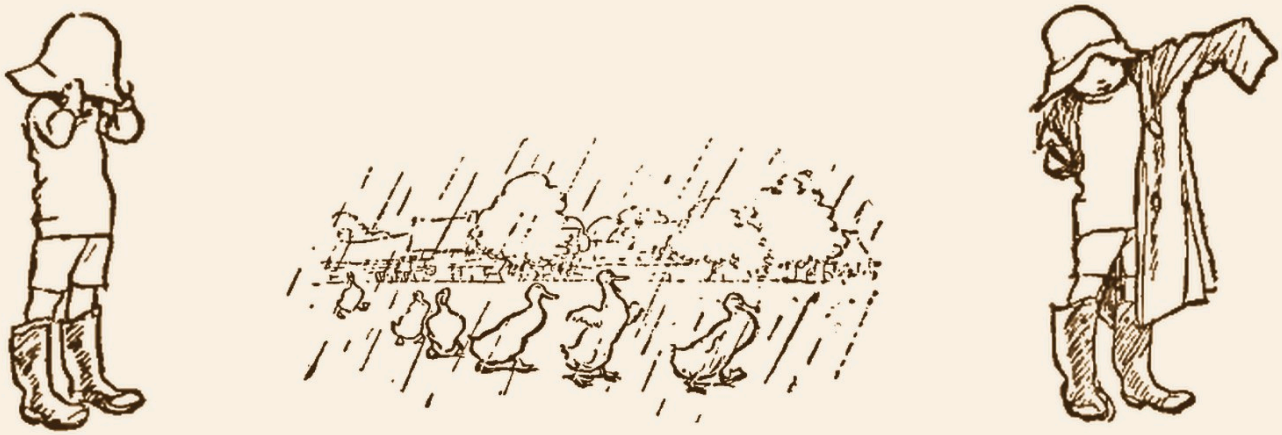
THE POEM

Happiness



John had
Great Big
Waterproof
Boots on;

John had a
Great Big
Waterproof
Hat;

John had a
Great Big
Waterproof
Mackintosh—

And that
(Said John)
Is
That.

▸ Watch the read-aloud

Scan the code to watch "Happiness" read aloud, or visit storylandclassics.com/happiness.

A. A. Milne, When We Were Very Young (1924). Public domain.

Name _____ Date _____

MEET THE POET

A. A. Milne

1882–1956 ✦ The poet who wrote Winnie-the-Pooh

A. A. Milne was born in London, England, in 1882. He wrote plays, stories and funny pieces for magazines. When his son, Christopher Robin, was little, Milne began writing poems about the things a small child sees, wonders about and plays. They were collected in *When We Were Very Young* in 1924, and children have loved them ever since. A few years later he wrote *Winnie-the-Pooh*, about Christopher Robin and his toy bear.

Questions About the Poet

1. In what city was A. A. Milne born?

2. Who was Christopher Robin?

3. What famous bear did Milne write about?

Who Is Talking?

This poem tells us about John, and then John speaks. Read it again, then answer.

1. Which words in the poem does John say himself? How do you know?

2. How do you think John feels at the end of the poem? Which words tell you?

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Name _____ Date _____

LET'S TALK

Happiness

Young children can answer out loud. Older children can write their answers.

REMEMBER

1. What three waterproof things did John have?

2. Which words are repeated again and again in the poem?

3. Who says "And that is that"?

THINK

4. Why do you think having all his rain things makes John so happy?

5. Why do you think the poem is called "Happiness"?

CONNECT

6. What do you like to wear when it rains? What makes you feel happy on a rainy day?

NARRATION

Close the book and tell the poem back in your own words. What did John have, and how did he feel?

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Name _____ Date _____

TRY IT

Happiness

SKILL FOCUS

Repetition and shape: how words look on the page

Write your own “Great Big” poem about your rain clothes. Fill in: “I had / Great Big / _____ / _____ on.”

Name _____ Date _____

WORDS TO KNOW

Word Match

Draw a line from each word to what it means.

waterproof	a raincoat
boots	little drops of falling rain
hat	keeps the water out
mackintosh	a cover you hold over your head in the rain
puddle	something you wear on your head
umbrella	to make water fly up
raindrops	tall shoes that cover your ankles
splash	a small pool of rainwater

Word Sort: Rainy Day or Sunny Day?

Write each word in the right box.

boots · sunglasses · raincoat · sandals · umbrella · sun hat · puddle · sunscreen

Rainy day	Sunny day

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Name _____ Date _____

WORD SEARCH

Happiness

Find the words from the poem. Words go across (left to right) and down (top to bottom). Circle each word, then check it off.

L	G	B	I	G	B	O	O	T	S
J	H	T	R	O	Y	D	M	G	J
C	N	H	K	W	P	L	H	U	W
D	F	A	J	Y	V	U	H	O	C
O	L	T	U	K	R	L	A	D	H
U	R	R	J	O	H	N	T	G	J
M	O	S	Y	N	K	B	U	R	V
V	U	F	G	V	O	L	D	E	I
J	C	I	P	W	O	B	Y	A	G
S	C	K	R	B	U	F	V	T	B

WORD BANK

- ☐ JOHN
- ☐ BOOTS
- ☐ HAT
- ☐ GREAT
- ☐ BIG
- ☐ THAT

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Name _____ Date _____

MISSING WORDS

Happiness

Read each line from the poem. Choose the missing word from the word bank and write it on the line. Then read the whole line aloud.

Big | Boots | Great | Hat | John | that

1. _____ had
2. _____ Big
3. Great _____
4. _____ on;
5. _____ ;
6. And _____

Make New Rhymes

Write a new word that rhymes with each word from the poem. Silly words count too!

john _____ _____ great _____ _____

big _____ _____ boots _____ _____

DID YOU NOTICE?

Read each line with the word you chose. Does it sound right? Check the poem to see if you were right!

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Name _____ Date _____

CHECK YOUR READING

Yes or No?

Read each sentence about the poem. Circle **Yes** if it is true. Circle **No** if it is not.

1. John has great big waterproof boots. Yes No
2. John has a little hat. Yes No
3. John wears a mackintosh. Yes No
4. A mackintosh is a raincoat. Yes No
5. The poem is about a sunny beach. Yes No
6. John is happy with his rain clothes. Yes No

ABC Order

Write these words from the poem in ABC order. Look at the first letter of each word.

john boots hat great that

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

Name _____ Date _____

SOUNDS OF THE POEM

Rhyme Hunt

Find each word's rhyming partner in the word bank and write it on the line.

on · pet · pig · roots · that · train

hat _____ John _____

big _____ boots _____

rain _____ wet _____

LISTEN

Milne saves his rhyme for the end: "Hat" and "That." The other rhymes here are new words that rhyme with words about John's rainy day.

Clap the Syllables

Say each word and clap for every part. Write the number of claps.

John claps: ___	waterproof claps: ___	mackintosh claps: ___
happiness claps: ___	boots claps: ___	great big claps: ___

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Name _____ Date _____

PUT IT IN ORDER

What Happens First?

Read each sentence. Write 1 in the circle next to what happens first, 2 next to what happens next, and so on up to 6.

- ◯ John puts on his great big waterproof hat.
- ◯ Rain starts to fall.
- ◯ John says, “And that is that.”
- ◯ John puts on his great big waterproof boots.
- ◯ John goes out happily into the rain.
- ◯ John puts on his great big waterproof mackintosh.

Retell the Poem

Use the order words to tell the poem in your own words. Say it out loud, or write it.

First, _____

Next, _____

Then, _____

Last, _____

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Name _____ Date _____

PERFORM IT

Read It With Voices

Everyone (Great Big) | Reader | John

The **Reader** says “John had” and “Waterproof.” **Everyone** shouts “Great Big!” each time, stretching their arms out wide. **John** says the last line with a big, proud nod: “And that (said John) is that.”

TIPS FOR READING ALOUD

Act it out! Pull on pretend boots, plop on a pretend hat and shrug into a pretend raincoat as you say each verse. Say each short line on its own beat, like stamping in puddles.

Read It Three Times

Read the poem aloud three times. Color a star each time. Your reading gets smoother every time!



My Favorite Part

Write about your favorite part of the poem.

My favorite part is _____

_____

_____

because _____

_____

_____

_____

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LEARN IT BY HEART

Say It From Memory

Learn this verse by heart. Check off each step as you go.

John had
Great Big
Waterproof
Boots on;

- [ ] Listen to the verse on the read-aloud video.
- [ ] Read it aloud three times with the book.
- [ ] Say it with a grown-up, one line at a time.
- [ ] Say it with the book closed. Peek if you need to!
- [ ] Say it to someone at home or in class.

✦ CERTIFICATE ✦

I can say “Happiness” by heart!

by A. A. Milne

Name _____ Date _____

Heard by _____

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Name _____ Date _____

HANDWRITING PRACTICE

Happiness

Trace the gray words, then write them on your own on the empty lines. Tall letters touch the top line; small letters reach the dotted line.

John had great big waterproof boots on;

John had great big
waterproof boots on;

And that (said John) is that.

And that (said John)
is that.

☐ I started with a capital letter. ☐ I left spaces between words. ☐ I copied the end mark.

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FOR GROWN-UPS

Answer Key & Ideas

Who Is Talking?

John says “And that is that.” The words “(Said John)” tell us. He feels happy, proud and ready: he has everything he needs.

Let’s Talk

1. Great big waterproof boots, a great big waterproof hat and a great big waterproof mackintosh (raincoat). 2. “Great Big” and “Waterproof.” 3. John. 4–6. Answers will vary (he is ready for the rain and has everything he needs, so he feels happy).

Word Sort

Rainy day: boots, raincoat, umbrella, puddle. Sunny day: sunglasses, sandals, sun hat, sunscreen.

Word Search

L	G	**B**	**I**	**G**	**B**	**O**	**O**	**T**	**S**
J	H	**T**	R	O	Y	D	M	G	J
C	N	**H**	K	W	P	L	H	U	W
D	F	**A**	J	Y	V	U	**H**	O	C
O	L	**T**	U	K	R	L	**A**	D	H
U	R	R	**J**	**O**	**H**	**N**	**T**	**G**	J
M	O	S	Y	N	K	B	U	**R**	V
V	U	F	G	V	O	L	D	**E**	I
J	C	I	P	W	O	B	Y	**A**	G
S	C	K	R	B	U	F	V	**T**	B

Word Match

waterproof: keeps the water out · boots: tall shoes that cover your ankles · hat: something you wear on your head · mackintosh: a raincoat · puddle: a small pool of rainwater · umbrella: a cover you hold over your head in the rain · raindrops: little drops of falling rain · splash: to make water fly up

Yes or No? & ABC Order

1. Yes · 2. No · 3. Yes · 4. Yes · 5. No · 6. Yes. ABC order: boots, great, hat, john, that.

Missing Words

John, Great, Big, Boots, Hat, that

Rhyme Hunt & Syllables

hat: that · John: on · big: pig · boots: roots · rain: train · wet: pet. Claps: John 1, waterproof 3, mackintosh 3, happiness 3, boots 1, great big 2.

Put It in Order

rain starts to fall → boots → hat → mackintosh → “And that is that.” → John goes out happily into the rain. (The poem names the boots, hat and mackintosh in that order; the rain and going outside are what the pictures show.)

Ideas to extend the lesson

- Write a new verse: “John had a great big waterproof ____.” What else could John wear or carry?
- Go on a rainy-day walk in boots and a raincoat. Count the puddles you find.
- Read it with “Puppy and I” and talk about Milne’s repeating patterns.

MORE FROM STORYLAND CLASSICS

Find more A. A. Milne poems with free guides at storylandclassics.com and on YouTube at @StorylandClassics.

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FOR TEACHERS

Standards Alignment

Happiness ✦ Common Core State Standards, kindergarten to grade 2

STANDARDS	WHAT CHILDREN PRACTICE	WHERE IN THIS GUIDE
RL.K.1 RL.1.1 RL.2.1	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	Let's Talk and Yes or No?; Let's Talk
RL.K.2 RL.1.2	Retell stories and poems, including key details, and show understanding of their message.	Put It in Order and Retell
RL.K.3 RL.1.3	Identify and describe characters, settings and major events.	Let's Talk and Put It in Order
RL.K.4 RL.2.4	Understand words and phrases, including rhyme, rhythm and words that appeal to the senses.	Word Match; Rhyme Hunt (rhyme and repeated lines)
RL.2.5	Recognize types of texts and describe the overall structure (beginning, middle and end).	Put It in Order: beginning, middle and end
RL.1.6 RL.2.6	Identify who is speaking and use a different voice for each character when reading aloud.	Who Is Talking?; Read It With Voices
RL.K.10 RL.1.10	Engage in group reading of poems and stories with purpose and understanding.	The Poem and Missing Words; The Poem (reading together)
RF.K.1b RF.K.1d	Understand the organization of print (left to right, top to bottom).	Word Search; ABC Order (letters of the alphabet)
RF.K.2a RF.K.2b	Hear and work with spoken words, rhymes and syllables.	Rhyme Hunt and Make New Rhymes; Clap the Syllables
RF.K.3c RF.1.3	Read common high-frequency words by sight.	Word Search and Missing Words; Word Search
RF.1.4a RF.1.4b RF.2.4b	Read aloud with accuracy, appropriate rate and expression.	Missing Words (read with purpose); Read It With Voices and Read It Three Times
SL.K.1 SL.1.1	Take part in conversations about the text with classmates and adults.	Let's Talk and Meet the Poet (discussion); Let's Talk (discussion)
SL.K.2	Ask and answer questions about a text read aloud or presented through media.	Read-aloud video (QR code)
SL.K.6 SL.1.6	Speak audibly and express ideas clearly.	Read It With Voices and Learn It by Heart; Learn It by Heart (recite)
L.K.1a L.1.1 L.1.1a	Print upper- and lowercase letters and use common position words.	Handwriting Practice; ABC Order (alphabetize words)
L.K.2a L.1.2b	Use capital letters and end punctuation.	Handwriting checklist
L.K.4 L.1.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown words and phrases.	Word Match
L.K.5a	Sort words into categories, connect words to real life and act out shades of meaning.	Word Sort
W.K.1 W.1.1	Use drawing and writing to share an opinion and give a reason.	My Favorite Part
W.K.2	Use a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to compose informative texts.	Try It
W.1.8	With guidance and support, recall information from experiences or gather information to answer a question.	Try It

Codes are Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. Find free read-alouds and guides at storylandclassics.com.

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