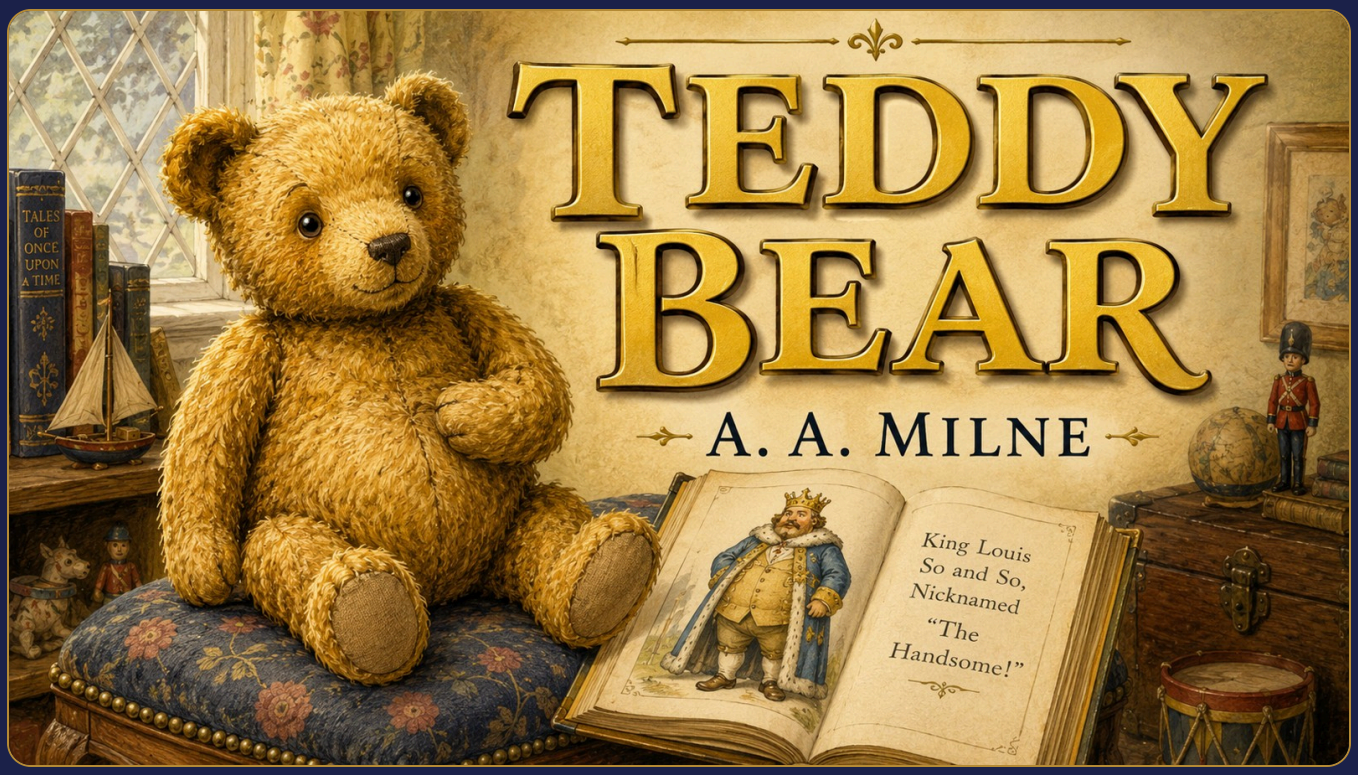
Storyland Classics

FREE POEM GUIDE

From When We Were Very Young (1924)



- ✦ The Poem
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- ✦ Yes or No & ABC Order
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- ✦ Put It in Order
- ✦ Read It With Voices
- ✦ Learn It by Heart
- ✦ Handwriting
- ✦ Answer Key
- ✦ 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 “Teddy Bear” 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

Teddy Bear is short and fat, and he worries about it. Then he finds a picture of a stout King of France who is nicknamed “The Handsome,” and he cheers right up. When Teddy tumbles out of the window, a plump, kind man helps him up, and it turns out to be the King himself! By the end, Teddy is proud of being just the way he is.

SKILL FOCUS

Character: how Teddy feels and how his feelings change

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.

What’s inside

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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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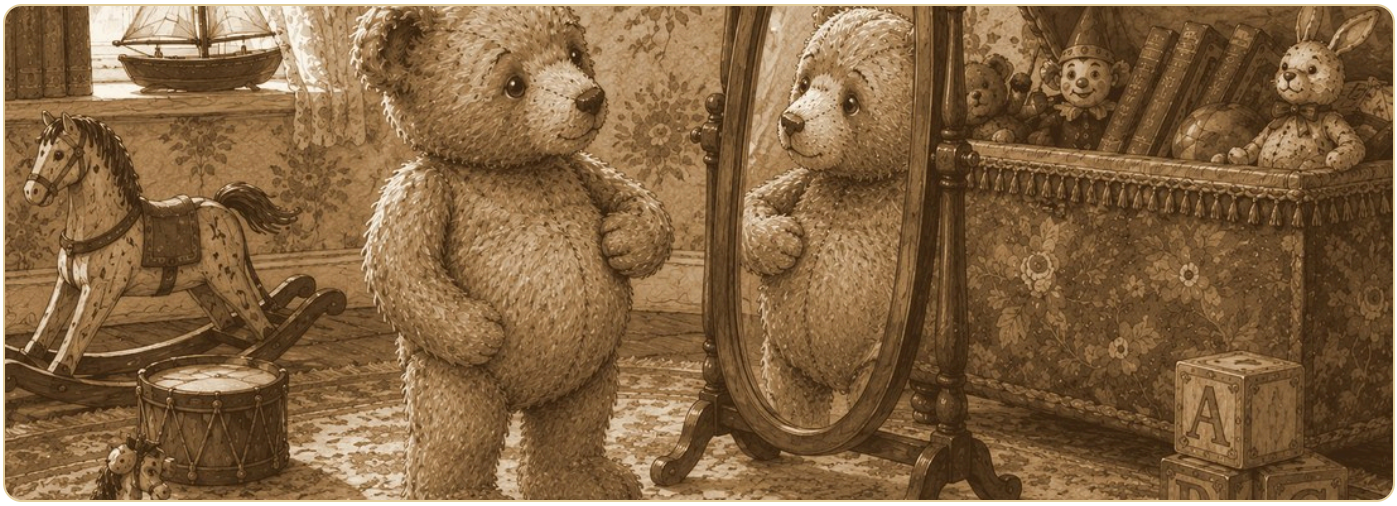
THE POEM

Teddy Bear



A bear, however hard he tries,
Grows tubby without exercise.
Our Teddy Bear is short and fat
Which is not to be wondered at;
He gets what exercise he can
By falling off the ottoman,
But generally seems to lack
The energy to clamber back.

Now tubbiness is just the thing
Which gets a fellow wondering;
And Teddy worried lots about
The fact that he was rather stout.
He thought: “If only I were thin!
But how does anyone begin?”
He thought: “It really isn’t fair
To grudge me exercise and air.”

For many weeks he pressed in vain
His nose against the window-pane,
And envied those who walked about
Reducing their unwanted stout.
None of the people he could see
“Is quite” (he said) “as fat as me!”
Then, with a still more moving sigh,
“I mean” (he said) “as fat as I!”

Now Teddy, as was only right,
Slept in the ottoman at night,
And with him crowded in as well
More animals than I can tell;
Not only these, but books and things,
Such as a kind relation brings—
Old tales of “Once upon a time,”
And history retold in rhyme.

One night it happened that he took
A peep at an old picture-book,
Wherein he came across by chance
The picture of a King of France
(A stoutish man) and, down below,
These words: “King Louis So and So,
Nicknamed ‘The Handsome!’” There he sat,
And (think of it!) the man was fat!

Our bear rejoiced like anything
To read about this famous King,
Nicknamed “The Handsome.” There he sat,
And certainly the man was fat.
Nicknamed “The Handsome.” Not a doubt
The man was definitely stout.
Why then, a bear (for all his tub)
Might yet be named “The Handsome Cub!”

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THE POEM, CONTINUED

"Might yet be named." Or did he mean
That years ago he "might have been"?
For now he felt a slight misgiving:
"Is Louis So and So still living?
Fashions in beauty have a way
Of altering from day to day.
Is 'Handsome Louis' with us yet?
Unfortunately I forget."

Next morning (nose to window-pane)
The doubt occurred to him again.
One question hammered in his head:
"Is he alive or is he dead?"
Thus, nose to pane, he pondered; but
The lattice window, loosely shut,
Swung open. With one startled "Oh!"
Our Teddy disappeared below.

There happened to be passing by
A plump man with a twinkling eye,
Who, seeing Teddy in the street,
Raised him politely to his feet,
And murmured kindly in his ear
Soft words of comfort and of cheer:
"Well, well!" "Allow me!" "Not at all."
"Tut-tut! A very nasty fall."

Our Teddy answered not a word;
It's doubtful if he even heard.
Our bear could only look and look:
The stout man in the picture-book!
That "handsome" King—could this be he,
This man of adiposity?
"Impossible," he thought. "But still,
No harm in asking. Yes I will!"

"Are you," he said, "by any chance
His Majesty the King of France?"
The other answered, "I am that,"
Bowed stiffly, and removed his hat;
Then said, "Excuse me," with an air,
"But is it Mr. Edward Bear?"
And Teddy, bending very low,
Replied politely, "Even so!"

They stood beneath the window there,
The King and Mr. Edward Bear,
And, handsome, if a trifle fat,
Talked carelessly of this and that . . .
Then said His Majesty, "Well, well,
I must get on," and rang the bell.
"Your bear, I think," he smiled. "Good-day!"
And turned, and went upon his way.

A bear, however hard he tries,
Grows tubby without exercise.
Our Teddy Bear is short and fat,
Which is not to be wondered at.
But do you think it worries him
To know that he is far from slim?
No, just the other way about—
He's proud of being short and stout.

▸ Watch the read-aloud

Scan the code to watch "Teddy Bear" read aloud, or visit storylandclassics.com/teddy.

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?

Teddy and the King both speak in this poem. Write **T** for Teddy or **K** for the King next to each line.

"If only I were thin! But how does anyone begin?"	☐
"Is Louis So and So still living?"	☐
"Tut-tut! A very nasty fall."	☐
"Are you by any chance His Majesty the King of France?"	☐
"But is it Mr. Edward Bear?"	☐
"Even so!"	☐

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Name _____ Date _____

LET'S TALK

Teddy Bear

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

REMEMBER

1. Why is Teddy worried at the start of the poem?

2. What does Teddy find in the old picture-book?

3. Who helps Teddy up after he falls out of the window?

THINK

4. Why does the picture of King Louis make Teddy so happy?

5. How has Teddy changed from the beginning of the poem to the end?

CONNECT

6. Teddy learns to be proud of who he is. What is something you like about yourself?

NARRATION

Close the book and tell the poem back in your own words. Why was Teddy worried, what did he find, and how did he feel at the end?

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Name _____ Date _____

TRY IT

Teddy Bear

SKILL FOCUS

Character: how Teddy feels and how his feelings change

Teddy worries that he is too fat. Write a kind note to Teddy telling him why he is just right the way he is.

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Name _____ Date _____

WORDS TO KNOW

Word Match

Draw a line from each word to what it means.

tubby	wished he had what others had
exercise	a soft footstool or box seat
ottoman	in a kind and good-mannered way
clamber	short and round
stout	climb up using hands and feet
envied	thought about something for a long time
pondered	moving your body to keep strong
politely	big and round

Word Sort: Opposites: Round or Slim?

Write each word in the right box.

tubby · thin · stout · slim · plump · skinny · fat · narrow

Round words	Slim words

Name _____ Date _____

WORD SEARCH

Teddy Bear

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

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

WORD BANK

- ☐ TEDDY
- ☐ BEAR
- ☐ KING
- ☐ FRANCE
- ☐ FAT
- ☐ BOOK
- ☐ WINDOW
- ☐ STREET

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Name _____ Date _____

MISSING WORDS

Teddy Bear

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.

anything · begin · exercise · stout · vain

1. Grows tubby without _____ .
2. The fact that he was rather _____ .
3. But how does anyone _____ ?”
4. For many weeks he pressed in _____
5. Our bear rejoiced like _____

Make New Rhymes

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

exercise _____ _____ stout _____ _____

begin _____ _____ vain _____ _____

DID YOU NOTICE?

Every missing word comes at the end of a line, and each one rhymes with another line in the poem. Find its rhyming partner!

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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. Teddy Bear is short and fat. Yes No
2. Teddy gets lots of exercise. Yes No
3. Teddy sees a picture of a King of France in a book. Yes No
4. The King in the book is thin. Yes No
5. Teddy falls out of the window. Yes No
6. A plump man helps Teddy up. Yes No

ABC Order

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

teddy · bear · king · france · window

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

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Name _____ Date _____

SOUNDS OF THE POEM

Rhyme Hunt

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

anything · at · begin · exercise · stout · vain

tries _____ fat _____

thin _____ pane _____

King _____ about _____

LISTEN

This poem rhymes in pairs: every two lines end with rhyming words. Read two lines at a time and listen for the rhyme at the end.

Clap the Syllables

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

Teddy claps: ___	ottoman claps: ___	exercise claps: ___
handsome claps: ___	bear claps: ___	Majesty 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.

- ◯ Teddy falls out of the window into the street.
- ◯ Teddy worries because he is short and fat.
- ◯ Teddy is proud of being short and stout.
- ◯ Teddy finds a picture of a fat King called “The Handsome.”
- ◯ A kind, plump man helps him up. It is the King!
- ◯ Teddy wonders if the King is still alive.

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

Narrator | Teddy | The King

The **Narrator** reads the story lines. **Teddy** reads his worried thoughts and his questions. **The King** reads his kind words to Teddy. Everyone can say the very last line together: "He's proud of being short and stout!"

TIPS FOR READING ALOUD

This is a long poem, so share it over two or three readings. Give Teddy a small, worried voice at the start and a proud voice at the end. Give the King a grand but kind voice, and bow when he says "I am that."

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.

A bear, however hard he tries,
Grows tubby without exercise.
Our Teddy Bear is short and fat
Which is not to be wondered at;
He gets what exercise he can
By falling off the ottoman,
But generally seems to lack
The energy to clamber back.

- [ ] 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 “Teddy Bear” by heart!

by A. A. Milne

Name _____ Date _____

Heard by _____

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CCSS RF.1.4b · SL.K.6 · SL.1.6

Name _____ Date _____

HANDWRITING PRACTICE

Teddy Bear

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.

Our Teddy Bear is short and fat.

Our Teddy Bear
is short and fat.

He’s proud of being short and stout.

He’s proud of being
short and stout.

☐ 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?

Teddy: “If only I were thin!”, “Is Louis So and So still living?”, “Are you… the King of France?” and “Even so!” · The King: “Tut-tut! A very nasty fall.” and “But is it Mr. Edward Bear?”

Let’s Talk

1. He thinks he is too fat. 2. A picture of King Louis, a fat king nicknamed “The Handsome.” 3. A plump man who turns out to be the King of France. 4–6. Answers will vary (Teddy goes from worried to proud of who he is).

Word Sort

Round words: tubby, stout, plump, fat. Slim words: thin, slim, skinny, narrow.

Word Search

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

Word Match

tubby: short and round · exercise: moving your body to keep strong · ottoman: a soft footstool or box seat · clamber: climb up using hands and feet · stout: big and round · envied: wished he had what others had · pondered: thought about something for a long time · politely: in a kind and good-mannered way

Yes or No? & ABC Order

1. Yes · 2. No · 3. Yes · 4. No · 5. Yes · 6. Yes. ABC order: bear, france, king, teddy, window.

Missing Words

exercise, stout, begin, vain, anything

Rhyme Hunt & Syllables

tries: exercise · fat: at · thin: begin · pane: vain · King: anything · about: stout. Claps: Teddy 2, ottoman 3, exercise 3, handsome 2, bear 1, Majesty 3.

Put It in Order

Teddy worries he is fat → finds King Louis “The Handsome” → wonders if the King is still alive → falls out of the window → the King helps him up → Teddy is proud of being short and stout.

Ideas to extend the lesson

- Give Teddy a nickname like the King’s: “Teddy the _____.” Draw him and explain why it fits.
- Read it with “Halfway Down” and talk about how Milne shows a character’s thoughts.
- Find Teddy Bear (Edward Bear) again: he becomes Winnie-the-Pooh in Milne’s later books!

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

Teddy Bear ✦ 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.5b	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.