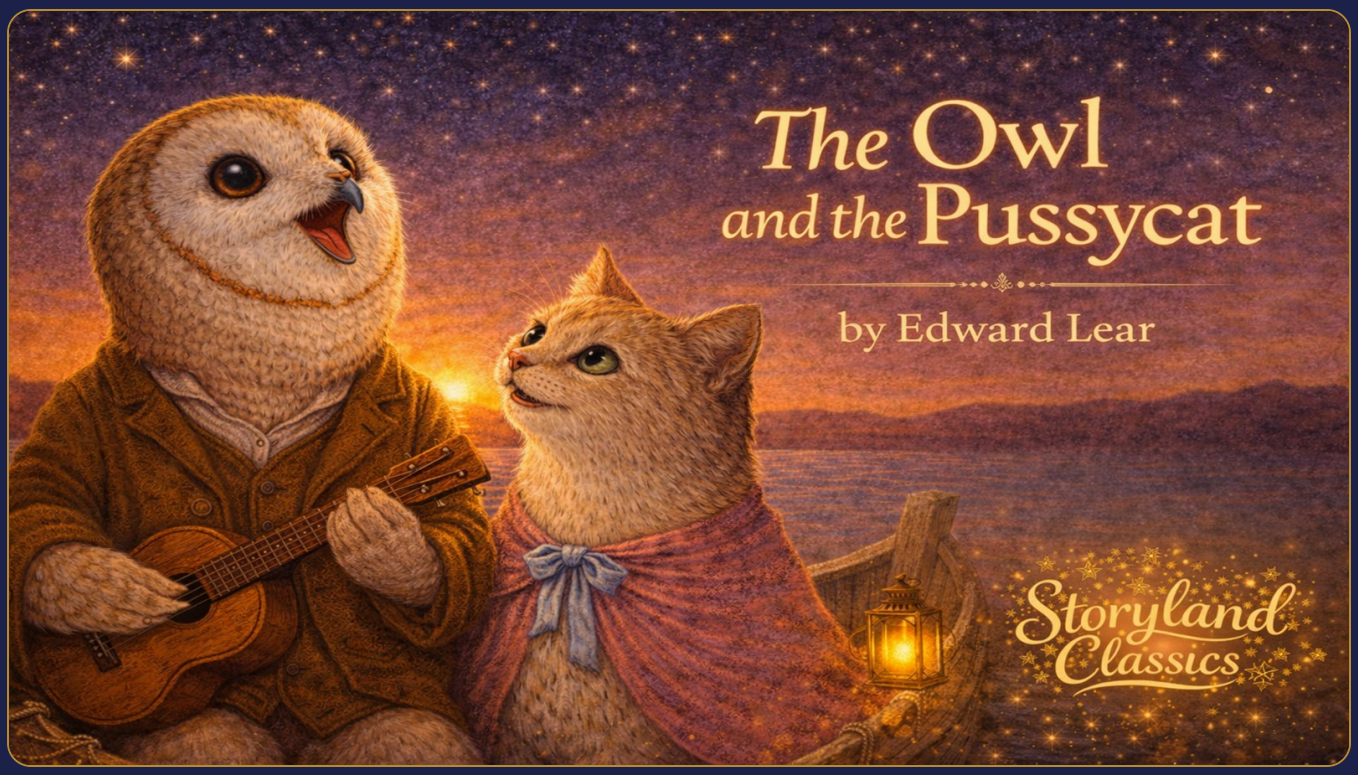
Storyland Classics

FREE POEM GUIDE

From Nonsense Songs (1871)



- ✦ 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 "The Owl and the Pussy-cat" by Edward Lear. Every page is ready to print, and no sign-up is needed. Pick the pages that suit your child or class.

ABOUT THE POEM

An Owl and a Pussy-cat set sail in a pea-green boat with honey and money. The Owl sings a love song to his guitar, and the Pussy-cat says they should get married, but they need a ring! After sailing for a year and a day, they find a Piggy-wig with a ring on his nose. They buy it for one shilling, the Turkey marries them, and they dance by the light of the moon. It is one of the most famous nonsense poems ever written.

SKILL FOCUS

Rhyme and repeated lines

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

The Owl and the Pussy-cat



The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat,
They took some honey, and plenty of money,
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.
The Owl looked up to the stars above,
And sang to a small guitar,
"O lovely Pussy! O Pussy my love,
What a beautiful Pussy you are,
You are,
You are!
What a beautiful Pussy you are!"

Pussy said to the Owl, "You elegant fowl!
How charmingly sweet you sing!
O let us be married! too long we have tarried:
But what shall we do for a ring?"
They sailed away, for a year and a day,
To the land where the Bong-Tree grows
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood
With a ring at the end of his nose,
His nose,
His nose,
With a ring at the end of his nose.

"Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling
Your ring?" Said the Piggy, "I will."
So they took it away, and were married next day
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined on mince, and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon,
The moon,
The moon,
They danced by the light of the moon.

▸ Watch the read-aloud

Scan the code to watch "The Owl and the Pussy-cat" read aloud, or visit storylandclassics.com/owl-pussycat.

Edward Lear, Nonsense Songs (1871). Public domain.

Name _____ Date _____

MEET THE POET

Edward Lear

1812–1888 ✦ The King of Nonsense

Edward Lear was born in London, England, in 1812, the twentieth of twenty-one children! He grew up to be a painter of birds and faraway places, and he traveled all over the world with his sketchbook. He loved to make children laugh, so he wrote funny limericks and nonsense songs full of made-up words like "runcible" and made-up places like the Hills of the Chankly Bore. His first *Book of Nonsense* came out in 1846, and his songs about the Owl and the Pussy-cat, the Jumblies and the Dong are still loved today.

Questions About the Poet

1. Edward Lear had a very big family. How many children were in it?

2. What did Lear like to paint?

3. What kind of poems did Lear write to make children laugh?

Who Is Talking?

Three characters talk in this poem. Write **O** for the Owl, **P** for the Pussy-cat or **G** for the Piggy-wig next to each line.

"O lovely Pussy! O Pussy my love!" ☐

"You elegant fowl! How charmingly sweet you sing!" ☐

"But what shall we do for a ring?" ☐

"I will." ☐

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Name _____ Date _____

LET'S TALK

The Owl and the Pussy-cat

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

REMEMBER

1. What did the Owl and the Pussy-cat take with them in the boat?

2. Where did they find a ring?

3. Who married them?

THINK

4. Which parts of this poem could never really happen? Why is that funny?

5. How do you think the Owl and the Pussy-cat feel at the end? Which words tell you?

CONNECT

6. If you sailed away for a year and a day, what would you take with you?

NARRATION

Close the book and tell the poem back in your own words. How did they travel, what did they need, and how did it end?

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Name _____ Date _____

TRY IT

The Owl and the Pussy-cat

SKILL FOCUS

Rhyme and repeated lines

The Owl and the Pussy-cat danced by the light of the moon. Write about a party you would have on the beach. Who would come?

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Name _____ Date _____

WORDS TO KNOW

Word Match

Draw a line from each word to what it means.

pea-green	waited too long
elegant	a nonsense word Lear made up
fowl	a light green, like peas
tarried	a fruit like a yellow pear
shilling	a bird
quince	ate a meal
runcible	graceful and fancy
dined	an old English coin

Word Sort: Food or Not Food?

Write each word in the right box.

honey · money · mince · guitar · quince · ring · slices · spoon

Food	Not food

Name _____ Date _____

WORD SEARCH

The Owl and the Pussy-cat

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

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

WORD BANK

- ☐ OWL
- ☐ CAT
- ☐ BOAT
- ☐ MONEY
- ☐ HONEY
- ☐ RING
- ☐ PIG
- ☐ MOON

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Name _____ Date _____

MISSING WORDS

The Owl and the Pussy-cat

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.

love moon nose note

1. Wrapped up in a five-pound _____ .
2. “O lovely Pussy! O Pussy my _____ ,
3. With a ring at the end of his _____ ,
4. They danced by the light of the _____ ,

Make New Rhymes

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

note _____ _____ love _____ _____

nose _____ _____ moon _____ _____

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. The Owl and the Pussy-cat go to sea in a pea-green boat. Yes No
2. They take honey and money. Yes No
3. They sail for a year and a day. Yes No
4. The Pig has a ring at the end of his nose. Yes No
5. The Turkey is sad about the wedding. Yes No
6. They dance by the light of the sun. Yes No

ABC Order

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

owl cat boat money honey

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.

Owl · love · moon · nose · note · willing

boat _____ above _____

fowl _____ grows _____

shilling _____ spoon _____

LISTEN

Lear hides rhymes inside his lines: "They took some **honey**, and plenty of **money**" and "And **hand** in hand, on the edge of the **sand**." Find more rhymes in the middle of a line!

Clap the Syllables

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

Owl — claps: ___	Pussy-cat — claps: ___	honey — claps: ___
guitar — claps: ___	runcible — claps: ___	Piggy-wig — 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.

- ◯ They sail for a year and a day to the land where the Bong-Tree grows.
- ◯ The Owl and the Pussy-cat go to sea in a pea-green boat.
- ◯ They dance by the light of the moon.
- ◯ The Pussy-cat says, “O let us be married!”
- ◯ They buy the Piggy-wig’s ring for one shilling.
- ◯ The Turkey who lives on the hill marries them.

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 | Owl | Pussy-cat | Piggy-wig | Everyone (echo lines)

The **Narrator** reads the story lines. The **Owl** sings his love song, the **Pussy-cat** answers, and the **Piggy-wig** says "I will." **Everyone** joins in on the echo lines: "You are, you are!", "His nose, his nose!" and "The moon, the moon!"

TIPS FOR READING ALOUD

This poem is a song! Try singing the Owl's part, or strum a pretend guitar. Hold hands and dance in a circle on the last verse.

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.

The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat,
They took some honey, and plenty of money,
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.

- [ ] 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 “The Owl and the Pussy-cat” by heart!

by Edward Lear

Name _____ Date _____

Heard by _____

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Name _____ Date _____

HANDWRITING PRACTICE

The Owl and the Pussy-cat

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.

The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea

The Owl and the

Pussy-cat went to sea

They danced by the light of the moon.

They danced by the

light of the moon.

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

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CCSS L.K.1a · L.1.1a · L.K.2a

FOR GROWN-UPS

Answer Key & Ideas

Who Is Talking?

Owl: “O lovely Pussy!…” · Pussy-cat: “You elegant fowl!…” and “But what shall we do for a ring?” · Piggy-wig: “I will.”

Let’s Talk

1. Some honey and plenty of money, wrapped up in a five-pound note. 2. On the nose of a Piggy-wig, in the land where the Bong-Tree grows. 3. The Turkey who lives on the hill. 4–6. Answers will vary (owls and cats don’t sail or marry; pigs don’t sell rings; they feel happy as they dance).

Word Sort

Food: honey, mince, quince, slices (of quince). Not food: money, guitar, ring, spoon.

Word Search

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

Word Match

pea-green: a light green, like peas · elegant: graceful and fancy · fowl: a bird · tarried: waited too long · shilling: an old English coin · quince: a fruit like a yellow pear · runcible: a nonsense word Lear made up · dined: ate a meal

Yes or No? & ABC Order

1. Yes · 2. Yes · 3. Yes · 4. Yes · 5. No · 6. No. ABC order: boat, cat, honey, money, owl.

Missing Words

note, love, nose, moon

Rhyme Hunt & Syllables

boat: note · above: love · fowl: Owl · grows: nose · shilling: willing · spoon: moon. Claps: Owl 1, Pussy-cat 3, honey 2, guitar 2, runcible 3, Piggy-wig 3.

Put It in Order

go to sea in a pea-green boat → “O let us be married!” → sail a year and a day → buy the Piggy-wig’s ring → married by the Turkey → dance by the light of the moon.

Ideas to extend the lesson

- Invent your own runcible thing: draw a runcible spoon, cup or hat and tell what it does.
- Make a map of the voyage from home to the land where the Bong-Tree grows.
- Read “The Duck and the Kangaroo,” another Lear poem about two unlikely friends going on a trip.

MORE FROM STORYLAND CLASSICS

Find more Edward Lear poems with free guides at storylandclassics.com and on YouTube at @StorylandClassics.

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FOR TEACHERS

Standards Alignment

The Owl and the Pussy-cat ✦ 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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