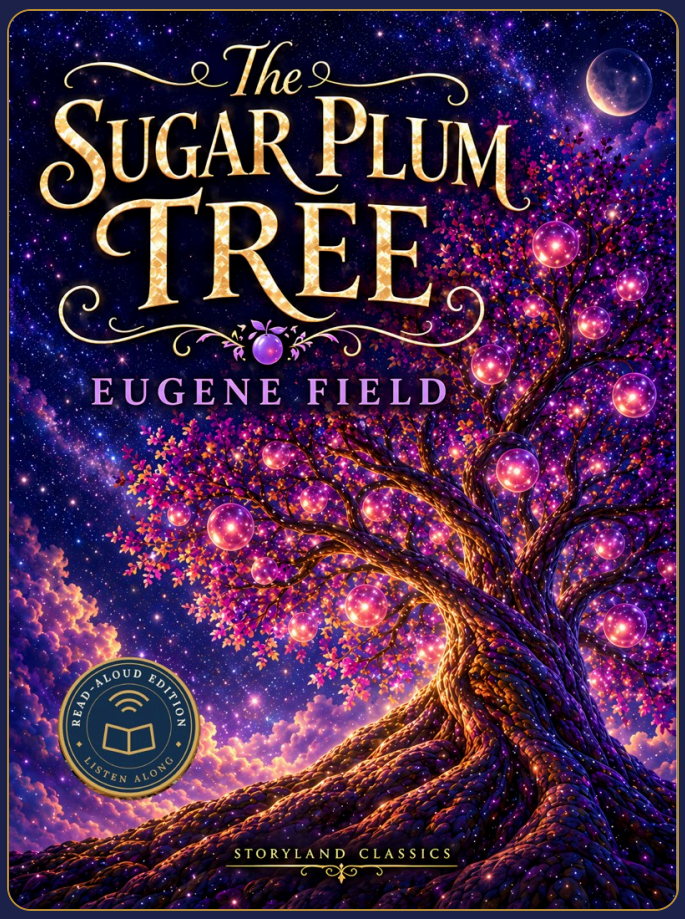
Storyland Classics

FREE POEM GUIDE

From Poems of Childhood (1904)



- ✦ 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 Sugar-Plum Tree” by Eugene Field. Every page is ready to print, and no sign-up is needed. Pick the pages that suit your child or class.

ABOUT THE POEM

In the garden of Shut-Eye Town, on the shore of the Lollipop Sea, grows the Sugar-Plum Tree. It is too tall to climb, but a chocolate cat sits in its branches and a gingerbread dog waits below. Say the word, the dog barks, the cat jumps about, and down tumble the sugar-plums, along with marshmallows, gumdrops and peppermint canes.

SKILL FOCUS

Make-believe: telling real from pretend

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 Sugar-Plum Tree



Have you ever heard of the Sugar-Plum Tree?
'Tis a marvel of great renown!
It blooms on the shore of the Lollipop sea
In the garden of Shut-Eye Town;
The fruit that it bears is so wondrously sweet
(As those who have tasted it say)
That good little children have only to eat
Of that fruit to be happy next day.

When you've got to the tree, you would have a hard time
To capture the fruit which I sing;
The tree is so tall that no person could climb
To the boughs where the sugar-plums swing!
But up in that tree sits a chocolate cat,
And a gingerbread dog prowls below—
And this is the way you contrive to get at
Those sugar-plums tempting you so:

You say but the word to that gingerbread dog
And he barks with such terrible zest
That the chocolate cat is at once all agog,
As her swelling proportions attest.
And the chocolate cat goes cavorting around
From this leafy limb unto that,
And the sugar-plums tumble, of course, to the ground—
Hurrah for that chocolate cat!

There are marshmallows, gumdrops, and peppermint canes,
With stripings of scarlet or gold,
And you carry away of the treasure that rains
As much as your apron can hold!
So come, little child, cuddle closer to me
In your dainty white nightcap and gown,
And I'll rock you away to that Sugar-Plum Tree
In the garden of Shut-Eye Town.

▸ Watch the read-aloud

Scan the code to watch "The Sugar-Plum Tree" read aloud, or visit storylandclassics.com/sugarplum-guide.

Eugene Field, Poems of Childhood (1904). Public domain.

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Name _____ Date _____

MEET THE POET

Eugene Field

1850–1895 ✦ The Poet of Childhood

Eugene Field was born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1850. He became a newspaper writer in Chicago, where he wrote a famous column called “Sharps and Flats.” He loved children, toys and bedtime stories, and he wrote so many poems for children that people called him “the Poet of Childhood.” His lullabies, like “Wynken, Blynken, and Nod” and “The Sugar-Plum Tree,” are still read at bedtime today.

Questions About the Poet

1. In what city was Eugene Field born?

2. What job did he have in Chicago?

3. What did people call him? Why do you think so?

Who Is Talking?

Someone is telling this poem to a child. Read it again, then answer.

1. Who do you think is telling the poem? Who is listening?

2. Where is the person going to take the child at the end?

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Name _____ Date _____

LET'S TALK

The Sugar-Plum Tree

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

REMEMBER

1. Where does the Sugar-Plum Tree grow?

2. Who sits in the tree, and who waits below?

3. What else falls from the tree besides sugar-plums?

THINK

4. How do you get the sugar-plums down?

5. Where is Shut-Eye Town really?

CONNECT

6. If you could have a tree that grew any treat, what would it be?

NARRATION

Close the book and tell the poem back in your own words. How do you get the sugar-plums down from the tree?

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Name _____ Date _____

TRY IT

The Sugar-Plum Tree

SKILL FOCUS

Make-believe: telling real from pretend

Invent your own candy tree. What grows on it, and who guards it? Draw it and write its name.

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Name _____ Date _____

WORDS TO KNOW

Word Match

Draw a line from each word to what it means.

sugar-plum	a spicy brown cookie or cake
renown	jumping and playing
boughs	a small round candy
gingerbread	very excited
prowls	big branches of a tree
agog	a cloth worn over clothes
cavorting	fame; being well known
apron	walks around quietly, looking

Word Sort: Real or Make-Believe?

Write each word in the right box.

chocolate cat · apple tree · gingerbread dog · real dog · Lollipop Sea · garden · Shut-Eye Town · nightcap

Real	Make-believe

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Name _____ Date _____

WORD SEARCH

The Sugar-Plum Tree

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

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

WORD BANK

- ☐ TREE
- ☐ CAT
- ☐ DOG
- ☐ SEA
- ☐ TOWN
- ☐ CANES
- ☐ GOLD
- ☐ GOWN

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Name _____ Date _____

MISSING WORDS

The Sugar-Plum Tree

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.

hold | sea | that | time | Town

1. It blooms on the shore of the Lollipop _____
2. In the garden of Shut-Eye _____ ;
3. When you've got to the tree, you would have a hard _____
4. From this leafy limb unto _____ ,
5. As much as your apron can _____ !

Make New Rhymes

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

sea _____ _____ town _____ _____

time _____ _____ that _____ _____

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 Sugar-Plum Tree grows in Shut-Eye Town. Yes No
2. The tree is very small. Yes No
3. A chocolate cat sits up in the tree. Yes No
4. A gingerbread dog waits below. Yes No
5. The cat throws the plums down on purpose. Yes No
6. You can carry treats away in your apron. Yes No

ABC Order

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

tree cat dog sea gold

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.

hold · sea · so · that · time · town

tree _____ renown _____

climb _____ cat _____

below _____ gold _____

LISTEN

Read the poem aloud and listen for the bouncy rhythm, like a rocking chair. Clap along with the beat.

Clap the Syllables

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

sugar-plum claps: ___	chocolate claps: ___	gingerbread claps: ___
tree claps: ___	lollipop claps: ___	gumdrops 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.

- ◯ The chocolate cat jumps around in the tree.
- ◯ You find the Sugar-Plum Tree in Shut-Eye Town.
- ◯ You fill your apron with treats.
- ◯ You say the word to the gingerbread dog.
- ◯ The sugar-plums tumble to the ground.
- ◯ The dog barks with terrible zest.

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

Reader | The gingerbread dog | Everyone (“Hurrah!”)

One **reader** reads the poem. When the poem says the dog barks, the **gingerbread dog** says “Woof! Woof!” **Everyone** shouts “Hurrah for that chocolate cat!” together.

TIPS FOR READING ALOUD

Read the treats in a yummy, excited voice. Make the last verse soft and cozy, like a goodnight.

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.

Have you ever heard of the Sugar-Plum Tree?
'Tis a marvel of great renown!
It blooms on the shore of the Lollipop sea
In the garden of Shut-Eye Town;
The fruit that it bears is so wondrously sweet
(As those who have tasted it say)
That good little children have only to eat
Of that fruit to be happy next day.

- [ ] 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 Sugar-Plum Tree" by heart!

by Eugene Field

Name _____ Date _____

Heard by _____

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Name _____ Date _____

HANDWRITING PRACTICE

The Sugar-Plum Tree

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.

Have you ever heard of the Sugar-Plum Tree?

Have you ever heard

of the Sugar-Plum Tree?

Hurrah for that chocolate cat!

Hurrah for that

chocolate cat!

☐ 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?

A grown-up (a parent or grandparent) tells it to a child at bedtime. At the end they will rock the child away to the Sugar-Plum Tree in Shut-Eye Town, which means to sleep.

Let's Talk

1. On the shore of the Lollipop Sea, in the garden of Shut-Eye Town. 2. A chocolate cat sits in the tree; a gingerbread dog waits below. 3. Marshmallows, gumdrops and peppermint canes. 4–6. Answers will vary (say the word to the dog; Shut-Eye Town is dreamland).

Word Sort

Real: apple tree, real dog, garden, nightcap. Make-believe: chocolate cat, gingerbread dog, Lollipop Sea, Shut-Eye Town.

Word Search

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

Word Match

sugar-plum: a small round candy · renown: fame; being well known · boughs: big branches of a tree · gingerbread: a spicy brown cookie or cake · prowls: walks around quietly, looking · agog: very excited · cavorting: jumping and playing · apron: a cloth worn over clothes

Yes or No? & ABC Order

1. Yes · 2. No · 3. Yes · 4. Yes · 5. No · 6. Yes. ABC order: cat, dog, gold, sea, tree.

Missing Words

sea, Town, time, that, hold

Rhyme Hunt & Syllables

tree: sea · renown: town · climb: time · cat: that · below: so · gold: hold. Claps: sugar-plum 3, chocolate 3, gingerbread 3, tree 1, lollipop 3, gumdrops 2.

Put It in Order

find the Sugar-Plum Tree → say the word to the gingerbread dog → the dog barks → the chocolate cat jumps around → the sugar-plums tumble down → fill your apron with treats.

Ideas to extend the lesson

- Make a paper Sugar-Plum Tree and hang paper candies on it.
- Draw a map of Shut-Eye Town with the Lollipop Sea.
- Read it with "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod" and "The Shut-Eye Train."

MORE FROM STORYLAND CLASSICS

Find more Eugene Field poems with free guides at storylandclassics.com and on YouTube at @StorylandClassics.

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FOR TEACHERS

Standards Alignment

The Sugar-Plum Tree ✦ 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.5	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.	Try It (drawing to add detail)
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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