

LESSON PLAN
GRADE 2-4
The Book of Nonsense Volume 2

LESSON TITLE: Learning about author Edward Lear and Analyzing Limericks

OBJECTIVE: The students will read about the author Edward Lear. Students will analyze the traits of limericks including; nonsense nature, rhymes, and syllables patterns. Students will write their own limerick.

MATERIALS: *The Book of Nonsense Volume 2*, Biography of Edward Lear Printable, Limerick Activity Printable, pencils, crayons

LESSON PLAN

1. **ENGAGE:** The students will view *The Book of Nonsense-Volume 2*. Discuss what a biography is. Arrange students in small groups to take turns reading sections of *The Edward Lear Biography*.

2. **TEACH:** Teacher leads discussion about the life of Edward Lear and poses questions to students:

Higher Order Questions-

- * What does the word “nonsense” mean?
- * Why do you think limericks are described as being nonsense literature?
- * Why do you think Edward Lear wrote “nonsense poems” or limericks?
- * Do you think Edward Lear’s nonsense poems are funny?
- * Do you think limericks are an important form of literature?
- * Do you think a particular age group enjoys limericks more?
- * If you felt sad, do think writing a silly, nonsense poem would cheer you up?
- * Do you think that was why Edward Lear wrote limericks, to cheer himself up or others?
- * Ask students which they prefer, “nonsense poems” or “commonsense poems.”

Comprehension Questions-

- * Review the elements of limericks; 5 lines, AABBA rhyming pattern, 9, 9, 6, 6, 9 syllable pattern.
- * Ask students what a biography is.
- * Ask students to recall the year Edward Lear was born and died. (1812-1888)
- * Ask students to recall the time era Lear lived in. (The Victorian Era)
- * Ask students to recall how many brother and sisters Edward Lear had. (21 siblings)

3. **GUIDED PRACTICE:** Whole group participation. Play the *Book of Nonsense Volume 2 (You Read Version)*. All together, the students will read aloud the limericks and clap the syllables.

4. Review the structural elements of limericks. Call on students to write limericks on the board and write the number of syllables beside each line.

5. INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Hand out the Limerick Activity Sheet. On the Activity Sheet, students will answer the questions, write a limerick and write the number of syllables beside each line.

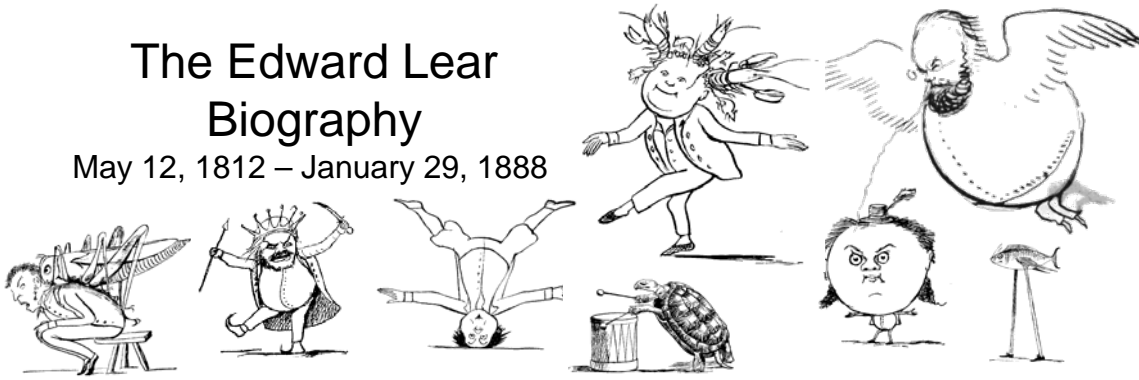
6. CLOSURE: Ask students these series questions, “Who is known as the Father of Limericks? What does nonsense mean? How many lines and what syllable and rhyming pattern do limericks have?” Students may read aloud their limerick to the class.

7. ASSESSMENT: Collect the Limerick Activity Sheet from each student and grade according to completed work, neatness, followed the correct limerick structure and patterns, and answered the activity questions correctly.



The Edward Lear Biography

May 12, 1812 – January 29, 1888



Edward Lear was a man of many talents: illustrator, landscape painter, author, and poet. Lear is best remembered for writing nonsense poetry for children, known today as limericks. Before the writings of Lear, most children's literature was full of "common sense" instruction. Edward Lear's nonsense poems brought fun and laughter to readers during the strict Victorian era in England. Thanks to Edward Lear's silly sense of humor, limericks are still enjoyed by children and adults more than one hundred years after his death. Edward Lear was the pioneering author of short and silly poetic rhymes. For these reasons, Edward Lear has earned the nickname the "Father of Limericks".

Edward Lear was born in Holloway, England, in the year 1812. Edward was the 20th child out of 21 brothers and sisters. At the age of six, little boy Edward began to suffer from epileptic seizures and other health problems that continued for the rest of his life. This caused Edward to feel sad and lonely and different from the other children. Throughout most of his childhood, Edward was raised and educated by his oldest sister Ann. Ann introduced Edward to the exciting world of classical and modern literature, poetry and drawing. Young Edward quickly discovered his own artistic talents, and at the age of 15, he sold his poems and drawing to earn money.

As a young man, Lear earned his living by drawing birds for science books and painting landscapes for the British Museum. Lear's artistic abilities became so well-known that he was asked to give drawing lessons to Queen Victoria! Edward experienced a few awkward moments with the Queen when he forgot to observe proper court protocol during the art lessons. In 1846, at the age of 34, Lear published *A Book of Nonsense*, a collection of limericks he wrote and illustrated for his friend's grandchildren. These silly verses were Lear's favorite poetic format, which contained five lines and followed an AABBA rhyming pattern. However, they were not actually called limericks yet. Lear simply called them "nonsense, pure and absolute." The term "limerick", as we call it today, was finally used around the time of Lear's death.

Edward Lear's nonsense poems and drawings brought a much needed comic relief for the austere Victorian society. Children living in the Victorian times were raised very strictly, and their education did not include humor or laughter. Can you imagine the sheer delight the children felt reading such literature, where the most ridiculous and absurd situations were brought to life in the form of rhymes? Lear's limericks are truly nonsensical and devoid of any punch line or point. Yet, they were a welcome source of amusement and escapism from the restrictive standards of the Victorian society.

Although Edward Lear was born and raised in England, he spent most of his adult life travelling abroad. During his travels he took great pleasure in drawing landscapes and animals. He had a special fondness for birds. Lear cherished his friends and his beloved cat named Sanreno. He eventually built his dream house in Italy, where he died at the age of 75 in the year 1888.

QUIZ KEY
The Book of Nonsense Volume 2
Four More Limericks

1. Who wrote the limericks in *The Book of Nonsense Volume 2*?
 - a. the young lady of Ryde
 - b. the old lady of Chertsey
 - c. the young lady with a bonnet
 - d. Edward Lear**

2. What type of literature are limericks?
 - a. nonsense novels
 - b. nonsense poems**
 - c. nonsense plays
 - d. nonsense music

3. Which adjective best describes limericks?
 - a. serious
 - b. dangerous
 - c. silly**
 - d. sad

4. In the limerick, *A Young Lady of Ryde*, which word rhymes with clogs?
 - a. untied
 - b. walked
 - c. dogs**
 - d. shoe

5. In the limerick, *Old Man with a Nose*, which word rhymes with nose?
 - a. long
 - b. wrong
 - c. man
 - d. suppose**

6. In the limerick, *Young Lady Whose Bonnet*, how many syllables are in the first line?
There was a Young Lady whose bonnet,
 - a. 6
 - b. 7
 - c. 8
 - d. 9**

7. What kind of animal sat upon the young lady's bonnet?

- a. hornets
- b. rabbits
- c. bats
- d. birds**

8. What did the Old Lady of Chertsey do that rhymes with Chertsey?

- a. curtsey**
- b. walk
- c. run
- d. sleep

9. In the limerick, Old Lady of Chertsey, which two words rhyme?

- a. old, lady
- b. remarkable, curtsey
- c. she, sunk
- d. round, underground**

10. How many syllables are in the fourth line of the poem, *Old Lady of Chertsey*?

Till she sunk underground,

- a. 4 syllables
- b. 5 syllables
- c. 6 syllables**
- d. 7 syllables