

## LIMERICKS

A limerick is a five-line poem written with one couplet and one triplet. If a couplet is a two-line rhymed poem, then a triplet would be a three-line rhymed poem.. Some people say that the limerick was invented by soldiers returning from France to the Irish town of Limerick in the 1700's.

Limericks are meant to be funny. They often contain hyperbole, onomatopoeia, dialect, jargon, jokes and other figurative devices. The last line of a good limerick contains the PUNCH LINE or "heart of the joke." As you work with limericks, remember to have fun, I mean FUN! Say the following limericks out loud and clap to the rhythm.

### **A. Read and answer questions on this limerick.**

1. A flea and a fly in a flue
  2. Were caught, so what could they do?
  3. Said the fly, "Let us flee."
  4. "Let us fly," said the flea.
  5. So they flew through a flaw in the flue.
- Anonymous

1. What is the rhyme scheme of this poem?
2. How many syllables are in each line?
3. What is repetitious about the rhymes?
4. What examples of alliteration do you find?
5. How are lines 1, 2 and 5 different from lines 3 and 4?

You will soon hear the distinctive beat pattern or meter of all limericks. The rhythm is just as important in a limerick as the rhyme.

### **B. Try completing this limerick.**

There once was a pauper named Meg

Who accidentally broke her \_\_\_\_\_.

She slipped on the \_\_\_\_\_.

Not once, but twice

Take no pity on her, I \_\_\_\_\_.

### **C. Now write at least three limericks of your own! For extra credit, draw a picture to accompany your limerick.**

1. Practice the rhythm of limericks by clapping your hands or snapping your fingers.
2. Think of some funny names, places, or situations.
3. Using the a a b b a 5-line form, write at least three original limericks.
4. How would you illustrate the page if your poem was published in a book of limericks? What types of art would you use?