



I was perusing the book store about a month ago, and I fell into the children's section. Now, I'd sworn NOT to buy any books for the girls, but to actually look for a book for ME! I had my book in hand (Susan Jacoby's *The age of American Unreason*) when I spotted a silver-jacketed jewel: *Where The Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein.

Instantly, I was in the fourth grade again. I picked it up, forcing my hand around the shiny cover. When I opened it, I realized that this book was coming home. It had all of my favorite childhood poems, with all of the images I still remembered.

I was so excited that when the girls found me, I yelled, "look, it's *Where the Sidewalk Ends*!" Asase, of course, gave me a look of complete confusion; Essence laughed, and we sat down together on the floor of Barnes and Noble while I read at least 10 poems.

When was the last time you read poetry to a child? Oftentimes, poetry is something that young people are very unfamiliar with: it requires one to not only read the words on the page, but consider the deeper meanings. With children's poetry, it also encourages them to be silly, to push the edge, and to show their individuality (my girls like poems in that book that I didn't care for, while some of my favorites they didn't necessarily enjoy, either).

You don't need the pretty shiny copy of *Where the Sideawalk Ends*; the white and black cover of the regular edition, two sister's daring to seek what it is that they want to know, and poor, slipping, faithful puppy in tow will do just fine! So, take your young one on a journey through poetry. Start here with Shel Silverstein's *Where the Sidewalk Ends*.