



# A WORLD FULL OF POEMS

INSPIRING POETRY  
FOR CHILDREN

Selected by  
**Sylvia M. Vardell**

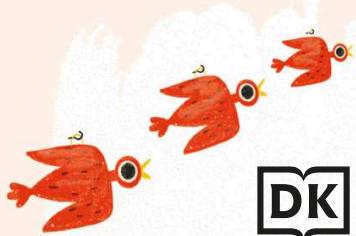


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SELECTED BY  
**SYLVIA M. VARDELL**

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**SONNY ROSS**





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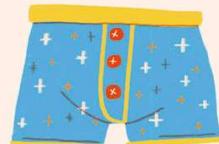
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The poems in this book are presented in exactly the same way as the poets wrote them, including their spelling, punctuation, capitalization, spacing, and indentation.

# INTRODUCTION

by Sylvia Vardell

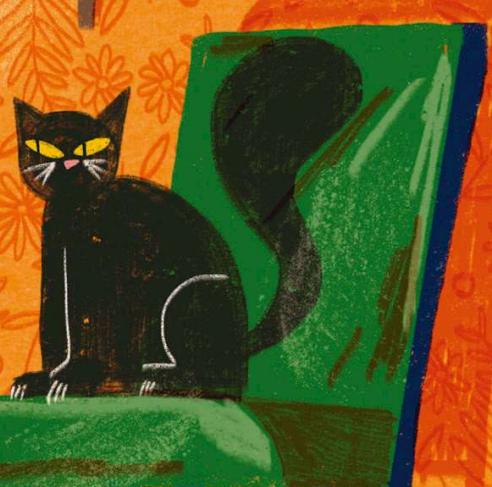
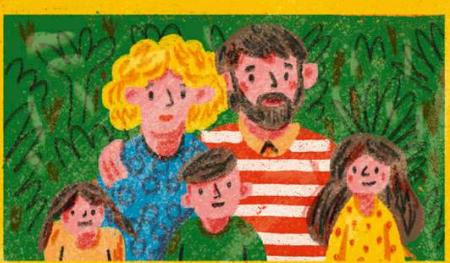
Welcome to a world full of poems—full of rhyme and rhythm, emotion and imagination; poems about everything from friends and families to feet and fish rain, written by poets from around the world. Share a poem out loud with a friend or read a poem quietly alone. Start from the beginning or flip to a surprise page. There are poems here for everyone—humorous, serious, short, long, familiar, or brand-new. Plus, you'll find activities in the back to help you think, draw, write, and share. Let's get started!



Sylvia Vardell is an award-winning professor at Texas Woman's University and the author of many books and articles about children's literature, poetry for children, and teaching.



Sonny Ross is an illustrator based in Manchester, UK. He uses skills gained from editorial illustration to inform his children's book work. He also has two cats that are plotting against him.



# FAMILY AND FRIENDS

---

For many of us, life is all about family and friends.  
Poetry helps us explore these different  
human relationships.



# New Baby

Ralph Fletcher

Soon as the baby gets born  
before she's two hours old  
people start dividing her up.

“She has Daddy’s big ears”  
“Got Grandma’s double chin”  
“She has my olive eyes”

like she’s just a bunch  
of borrowed parts  
stitched together.

Well, I just got to hold her.  
I touched her perfect head  
and I’ll tell you this:

My sister is whole.



# What Will You Choose, Baby?

Linda Sue Park

---

Pen for writer.  
Book for teacher.  
Bowl of rice keeps hunger at bay.

Coins mean riches,  
Thread, long life.  
Cakes for the greedy—push them away!

Mama's laughter,  
Daddy's camera.  
Grandpa, Grandma, clap and cheer.

Hugs abounding.  
Love surrounding.  
Celebration! Your first year!

Note: On a Korean baby's first birthday, many families play the "fortune game." Objects symbolizing various futures are placed in front of the baby: whatever the baby chooses is said to predict its future.

# I'm Bigger

Kristy Dempsey

---

You wobble. and when I do,  
I walk. it makes you grin.  
You babble. I am bigger.  
I talk. You're so small.  
You sit (But I still love you  
and drool best of all.)  
and swing,  
while I draw  
and dance  
and sing.  
I can say my ABCs.  
You just jiggle  
plastic keys.  
I can run  
and jump  
and spin ...

# Happy Adoption Day

Jane Yolen

---

This is the day we celebrate  
Adoption Day, our family date,  
The day that in that faraway year  
I traveled from where I was to here.

By bus, by plane, by train, by car.  
I carried my heart so very far  
To find my place, to find my home,  
The people I could call my own.

So on this day, let's all agree  
To celebrate not only me,  
But family.



# Double the Trouble

Janet Wong

---

My family  
is made up of  
  
two mothers,  
two fathers,  
two sisters,  
two brothers,  
two dogs,  
and two cats  
in two  
different houses

with double  
the shopping  
and double  
the laundry  
and double  
the trouble  
and double  
the noise—

and twice as much  
love for us  
girls and us boys.



# Three

Chrissie Gittins



My best friend has a best friend,  
she is a bester friend than me,  
but when they have a falling out  
my friend is best with me.



# At Our House

Virginia Euwer Wolff

Dad reads to me while he makes me lunch,  
Mom reads to me in bed.  
My little brother wants to hear  
every word that we have read.

Grandpa's learning how to read,  
Grandma hums along.  
Books speak right up in our house,  
and words turn into song.

# Abuelita

Margarita Engle

We called her little grandmother  
even though she was big.

Her house was small  
and the street was muddy.  
Her neighbors rode horses  
and lived in thatched huts.  
She believed in the goodness  
of ladylike manners.  
She taught me how to embroider  
a garden,  
decorating the world  
with a sharp needle,  
one flowery stitch  
at a time.



Note: *Abuelita* is a Spanish term of affection for a grandmother, similar to “grandma” or “granny.”

# A Suitcase of Seaweed

Janet Wong

---

Across the ocean  
from Korea  
my grandmother,  
my Halmoni,  
has come—  
her suitcase  
sealed shut  
with tape,  
packed full  
of sheets  
of shiny black  
seaweed  
and stacks  
of dried squid.

We break it open,  
this old treasure  
chest of hers,  
holding  
our noses  
tight  
as we release  
its ripe  
sea smell.

# Our Blended Family

Doraine Bennett

patchwork family  
stitched together  
by threads of love  
a crazy quilt  
of unexpected color





# Granny's Teapots

Michelle Schaub

---

So prim and proper,  
they perch atop cabinets,  
adorned in party dresses.

Roses,  
pinstripes,  
polka dots.

Some tall and thin,  
some short and squat.

All pose,  
one arm akimbo,  
the other pointing high—  
waiting,  
patient,  
while I choose:  
Which will host  
our tea for two?