

This is a nonsense poem by Lewis Carroll from the book "Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There".

A nonsense poem is said to be the art of speaking sweet nothings in a manner designed to impress and manipulate the audience.

The poem talks about a father narrating a story to his son. The story is about a creature Jabberwocky found in the forest. Since this is a story for a small boy, that is why many gibberish words have been introduced.

The title of the poem is a combination of two words, Jabber and Wocky which mean babble and voice.

These are some of the words used in the poem.

n - noun

adj - adjective

adv - adverb

v - verb

o - onomatopoeia. Words that show the sound made. Like buzz, cuckoo

- brillig (n) - 4 pm in the evening
- slithy (adj) - slimy + lithe. Smooth and active
- toves (n) - a kind of badger that survives on cheese
- gyre (v) - scratch like a dog
- gimble (v) - burrow holes
- wabe (n) - side of a hill which is wet (due to rain)
- mimsy (adj) - miserable + flimsy. Unhappy
- borogoves (n) - extinct parrot species. Has no wings. Beak of this bird is turned up. Made nests under the sundial and lived on veal. Looked like an upturned mop
- mome (n) - from home. Derived from the word solemn
- rath (n) - species of turtle. Some interpretations call it a green pig.
- outgrabe (v) - bellow. Deep sound made by animals. Mixture of a whistle and a sneeze
- Jabberwock (n) - depicts a monster similar to dragon with wings. Breathes out flashes of lightning
- Jubjub (n) - desperate bird that lives in perpetual passion
- frumious (adj) - fuming and furious
- Bandersnatch (n) - swift moving creature with snapping jaws capable of extending its neck
- vorpal (adj) - vortex + portal. Sharp
- manxome (adj) - manly + buxome. Possibly fearsome
- Tumtum (n) - a kind of tree
- uffish (adj) - impatient

- whiffling (v) - moving fast
- tulgey (adj) - grotesque + huge. Grotesque and huge
- burble (v) - bleat + murmur. Growling
- snicker-snack (o) - sound of sword hitting something
- galumphing (v) - gallant + triumph. Move triumphantly
- beamish (adj) - happy, cheerful and beamy
- frabjous (adj) - fabulous + joyous. Fabulous and joyous
- Callooh! Callay! (o) - similar to Yeah!, Hurrah!
- chortled (v) - chuckle + snort. Chuckle and snort at the same time

This poem relies on the distortion of sense rather than nonsense.

The context of the poem is as follows. Alice finds this poem in a book when she has gone through the looking glass. She picks it up to read what is written. It is written in backwards. Alice shows the book to the mirror and the reflection is in normal English. She then reads it out.