



Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Writing Limericks

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Want to impress your friends with a poem that's quick, funny, and easy to write? Compose a limerick! These witty poems have entertained people for centuries. Follow our instructions below, then share your limerick with a friend!

I. The King of Limericks

The exact origin of these entertaining poems is not certain, but limericks became popular when a British poet and painter named Edward Lear published *A Book of Nonsense*, a collection of 72 limericks. Here are some examples:

*There was an Old Man with a beard,
Who said, It is just as I feared!
Two Owls and a Hen,
Four Larks and a Wren,
Have all built their nests in my beard!*

*There was a Young Lady whose chin
Resembled the point of a pin;
So she had it made sharp,
And purchased a harp,
And played several tunes with her chin.*

YOUR TURN

With a partner, read the above poems aloud. Note which lines rhyme with one another. Can you figure out a pattern?

II. Rhyme and Rhythm

You probably figured out above that limericks have the rhyme pattern *AABBA*. That is, the first, second, and fifth lines rhyme, and the third and fourth lines rhyme.

Did you notice anything about the rhythm? The first, second, and fifth lines have three stressed beats: *da DUM da da DUM da da DUM*.

The third and fourth lines have two stressed beats: *da DUM da da DUM*.

YOUR TURN

Think of a topic about which to write a limerick. Brainstorm to think of rhyming words having to do with your topic.

III. Write a limerick!

Use your rhyming words to write your own limerick. Make sure you follow the noted patterns for rhythm and rhyme. Don't forget to use your sense of humor!

(3 beats)

(3 beats, rhymes with Line 1)

(2 beats)

(2 beats, rhymes with Line 3)

(3 beats, rhymes with Lines 1 and 2)

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