

JABBERWOCKY

by Lewis Carroll

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outrabe.

5 “Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!”

He took his vorpal sword in hand;
10 Long time the manxome foe he sought—
So rested he by the Tumtum tree
And stood awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
15 Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,
And burred as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
20 He went galumphing back.

“And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!”
He chortled in his joy.

25 'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outrabe.



Answer the following questions about “Jabberwocky.”

- 1. What is the poem about?
 - a. a boy having a strange dream
 - b. a boy playing a childish game
 - c. a boy slaying a fearsome monster
 - d. a boy taking a dangerous journey

- 2. What type of poem is “Jabberwocky”?
 - a. free verse
 - b. ballad
 - c. sonnet
 - d. acrostic

3. In order to help readers comprehend the nonsense language in the poem, Lewis Carroll used the timeless theme of a heroic quest. What other stories do you know that feature this theme?

4. Read the line from the poem.

“He took his vorpal sword in hand”

What might the adjective “vorpal” mean? Write four possible adjectives that could stand in for “vorpal” in this sentence.

- 5. Which of these made-up adjectives means that something is wonderful?
 - a. frumious (line 8)
 - b. frabjous (line 23)
 - c. manxome (line 10)
 - d. tulgey (line 15)

- 6. Which of the following is an example of onomatopoeia used in the poem?
 - a. snicker-snack (line 17)
 - b. Beware (lines 5 and 7)
 - c. Bandersnatch (line 7)
 - d. outgrabe (lines 4 and 27)

- 7. What is the tone of this poem?
 - a. sympathetic
 - b. distressed
 - c. whimsical
 - d. sentimental

- 8. How does Carroll’s use of rhyme affect the tone of the poem?

- 9. How does the alliteration in the second stanza impact the meaning and tone of the stanza?

- 10. Why does Carroll repeat the first stanza at the end of the poem?

- 11. What does the Jabberwock look like? Using details from the poem, draw a picture of the Jabberwock below.

