

***A Poem To Learn English*** - *A poem a day keeps the mind at play*

By Marianne Raynaud

*Fill in using the words at the end. The first letter is given. It will be easy to find them if you re-member that they should rhyme. Words/syllables to be stressed as the poem is read are in bold.*

Who **am** I, you **ask** and **patiently w** \_\_\_\_\_  
 For **me** to **explain** my **life** and my **f** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Well, for **you**, dear **child**, I'll **tell** you a **t** \_\_\_\_\_  
 You'll forever **recall** every **day** without **f** \_\_\_\_\_

With this **story** and **all** of the **words** that I **c** \_\_\_\_\_  
 You'll **learn** a **language** you **never** will **l** \_\_\_\_\_  
 You'll **find** out **about** all my **joys** and my **p** \_\_\_\_\_  
 And my **verse** will **echo** in your **mind** once a \_\_\_\_\_

I **come** from a **country** where the **flowers** smell **s** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Where **farmers** give **people** fine **crops** they can **e** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Where the **sky** is blue, the **lakes** pure and **c** \_\_\_\_\_  
 The **children** play **games** with nothing to **f** \_\_\_\_\_

The **neighbors** they **hail** you, "How **are** you t \_\_\_\_\_?"  
 "Are you **happy**, **contented**? Are you **planning** to **s** \_\_\_\_\_?"  
 For this is a **land** where the **people** are **f** \_\_\_\_\_  
 The **smiles** on their **faces** is a **joy** to **s** \_\_\_\_\_

But it **isn't** so **easy** to find this **place** in the **s** \_\_\_\_\_  
 For **this** is where **everyone** is **trying** to **c** \_\_\_\_\_  
 You aren't **alone**, and what you **have** you must **s** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your **time** and your **money** plus **all** you can **s** \_\_\_\_\_

I've been through **hardships**, **I** have had **p** \_\_\_\_\_  
 I have felt great **anguish** **over** and **over** a \_\_\_\_\_  
 Have I **suffered** a **lot**? Have I **shed** real **t** \_\_\_\_\_?

Yes, but I **haven't** felt **sorrow** as **much** as my **p**\_\_\_\_\_

When **I** was a **child** just like **you**, my young **m**\_\_\_\_\_

We were **poor**, with no **home**, we **lived** in a **c**\_\_\_\_\_

We couldn't **do** what we **liked**, free **thought** they f\_\_\_\_\_

We were **always** **worried** and **always** a\_\_\_\_\_

We **had** to build **courage** and **decide** we should **f**\_\_\_\_\_

To a **place** where we'd **feel** in **peace** and **h**\_\_\_\_\_

So we **traveled** for **weeks** with no **firm** land in **s**\_\_\_\_\_

Till we **reached** our **journey's end** far into the **n**\_\_\_\_\_

My **parents** there **settled**, worked **hard** all their **l**\_\_\_\_\_

I was **sent** to **school**, and **later** they **found** me a **w**\_\_\_\_\_

They **wanted** for **me**, what they **hadn't** a\_\_\_\_\_

The **learning** and **skills** they hadn't r\_\_\_\_\_

So I **studied** at **high** school and **made** some good **f**\_\_\_\_\_

But **that** is not **where** this **long** story **e**\_\_\_\_\_

I **learned** a **profession**, then found **work** I could **d**\_\_\_\_\_

Became a **carpenter's aid**, I would **saw**, **polish** and **g**\_\_\_\_\_

So I **earned** my **living** and could **make** ends **m**\_\_\_\_\_

We had **food** on the **table** and our **neighbors** we'd **g**\_\_\_\_\_

My **wife** she was **pleased** and our **kids** got a\_\_\_\_\_

I **saw** how they **grew**, became **tall** and so **st**\_\_\_\_\_

They **studied** **Chinese**, **higher** **physics**, and **F**\_\_\_\_\_

Their **thirst** for **knowledge** they **never** could **q**\_\_\_\_\_

They **played** the **piano** and their **parents** did **p**\_\_\_\_\_

They **went** onto **college**, got **prestigious** **d**\_\_\_\_\_

I'm **talking** to **you**, I'm **telling** you **t**\_\_\_\_\_

I **expect** you to **listen**—not a **single** word **m**\_\_\_\_\_

I want **you** to be **quiet**—and **nothing** **d**\_\_\_\_\_

I'd like you to **focus** and my **thoughts** u\_\_\_\_\_

If **you** learn by **heart** just **half** of these **I**\_\_\_\_\_

**Respecting** word **order**, **stress** and all of the **r**\_\_\_\_\_

You'll speak good **English** and wherever you **g**\_\_\_\_\_

You'll be **welcomed** by **people**—acts of **friendship** they'll **s**\_\_\_\_\_

So **isn't** this **poem** worth **trying** to **I**\_\_\_\_\_?

Reciting **complex** **lexis** is not our c\_\_\_\_\_

I don't **ask** you to **know** the **names** of all **b**\_\_\_\_\_

I just **want** you to **speak** well and **use** the right **w**\_\_\_\_\_

Won't **you** make an **attempt**? Yes, **just** do your **b**\_\_\_\_\_

**No** one will **mock** you; we won't **give** you a **t**\_\_\_\_\_

The **effort** you **make**, you will **never** r\_\_\_\_\_

And my **story**, I **daresay**, you'll **never** f\_\_\_\_\_

May you **find** good **fortune** through **work** and through **I**\_\_\_\_\_

I **trust** your **family** will **help** you if **ever** you're **s**\_\_\_\_\_

But I **know** that the **skills** you **learn** when you're **y**\_\_\_\_\_

Are **those** that will **make** you the **man** you'll **b**\_\_\_\_\_

oo

*Below are the words to be placed in the poem. When you transcribe them be sure to mark the stressed syllable, which is indicated in bold lettering. Two words are used twice.*

achieved	concern	forget	lose	regret	sweet
afraid	degrees	free	luck	rhymes	tale
again (2)	demand	French	man	see	tears
along	do	friends	meet	share	test
become	eat	glue	miss	show	this
best	ends	go	night	sight	today
birds	fail	greet	pain (2)	spare	understand
choose	fate	harmony	peers	stay	wait
clan	fear	learn	please	strong	wife
clear	flee	life	quench	stuck	words
come	forbade	lines	received	sun	young

**Exercise on vowel sounds and the IPA International Phonetic Alphabet (with American pronunciation) - Place the same words as above in the right boxes. Mark the stressed syllable.**

**It is indicated in bold.**

Example	Symbol IPA	Words from poem (end of line rhymes) D = Diphthongs
<i>day</i> (D)	/eɪ/	
<i>here</i>	/ɪ/	
<i>bed</i>	/e/	
<i>feet</i>	/i:/	
<i>five</i> (D)	/aɪ/	
<i>no</i>	/oʊ/	
<i>food</i>	/u:/	
<i>cat</i>	/æ/	
<i>heard</i>	/ɜr/	
<i>where</i> (D)	/ər/	
<i>ship</i>	/ɪ/	
<i>hot</i>	/ɒ/	
<i>cup</i>	/ʌ/	
<i>leg</i>	/ə/	