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__________?

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Yes, but I haven’t felt sorrow as much as my parents.

When I was a child just like you, my young mother and father were poor, with no home, we lived in a cottage. We couldn’t do what we liked, free thinking they feared. We were always worried and always afraid.

We had to build courage and decide we should find a place where we’d feel in peace and hope. So we traveled for weeks with no firm land in sight. Till we reached our journey’s end far into the night.

My parents there settled, worked hard all their lives. I was sent to school, and later they found me a wife. They wanted for me, what they hadn’t for me. The learning and skills they hadn’t for me.

So I studied at high school and made some good friends. But that is not where this long story ends. I learned a profession, then found work I could do. Became a carpenter’s aid, I would saw, polish and grind.

So I earned my living and could make ends meet. We had food on the table and our neighbors we’d get along. My wife she was pleased and our kids got a home. I saw how they grew, became tall and so strong.

They studied Chinese, higher physics, and Farsi. Their thirst for knowledge they never could quench. They played the piano and their parents did proud. They went onto college, got prestigious degrees.

I’m talking to you, I’m telling you to listen—not a single word missed. I want you to be quiet—and nothing disturbed.
I’d like you to focus and my thoughts u____________

If you learn by heart just half of these l____________
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 l____________?
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 l____________
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____________

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  meet  share  tears
along  do  friends  miss  show  test
become  eat  glue  night  sight  this
best  ends  go  pain (2)  spare  today
birds  fail  greet  peers  understand
choose  fate  harmony  please  wait
clan  fear  learn  quench  wife
clear  flee  life  stuck  words
come  forbade  lines  received  sun
young

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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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Words from poem (end of line rhymes)</th>
<th>D = Diphthongs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>day (D)</td>
<td>/ei/</td>
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<tr>
<td>here</td>
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<td>feet</td>
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<td>five (D)</td>
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<td>no</td>
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<td>cat</td>
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<td>heard</td>
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<td>where (D)</td>
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