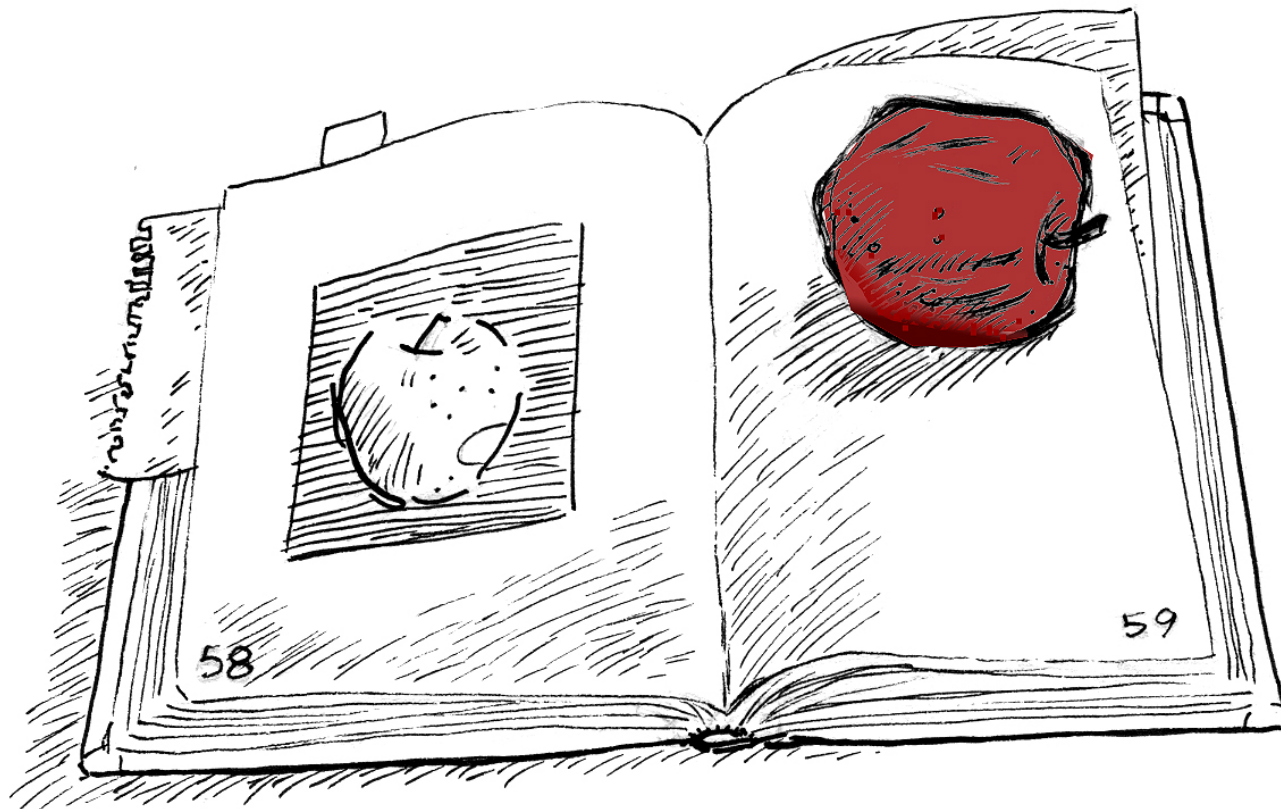


# Limericks

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# *Limericks*

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## **Overview**

- Popular verse form, comprised of four or five rhyming lines: A / A / B / B / A.
- Due to its sing-song rhythms and limited line count, it is often used for humor.
- More often the situations depicted in the verse are intended for adults and can be rather obscene: often colloquial and slang-orientated; in these cases major emphasis is placed on taboo topics.
- It is believed to have developed out of anonymous folk verses from England.
- The value of such work is limited to decorative functions; sometimes the intelligent wit of the poet can be shown, but primarily the intent is to get the reader to chuckle, not reflect on emotional reactions.
- For children's verses, they help increase vocabulary, reading and speech skills.

# Edward Lear

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- popularized the form with the publication of his children's books
- 1845: published *A Book of Nonsense*
- Lear often employed nonsense words with interesting phonetics;

an example from his long poem: *The Scroobius Pip*

*The first ten lines read:*

The Scroobious Pip went out one day  
When the grass was green, and the sky was grey.  
Then all the beasts in the world came round  
When the Scroobious Pip sat down on the ground.  
The cat and the dog and the kangaroo  
The sheep and the cow and the guineapig too—  
The wolf he howled, the horse he neighed  
The little pig squeaked and the donkey brayed,  
And when the lion began to roar  
There never was heard such a noise before.

- an early version of Dr. Seuss (Theodore Seuss Geissel)

# Edward Lear

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- following the nature of the book's name, his poems in the collection they do not have a point, nor are intended to have a point, other than entertainment
- notice he combines lines to contain an internal rhyme

There was an Old Man with a nose,  
Who said, "If you choose to suppose  
That my nose is too long, you are certainly wrong!"  
That remarkable Man with a nose.

•

There was an Old Person of <i>Chili</i> ,	A
Whose conduct was painful and <i>silly</i> ;	A
He sate on the <i>stairs</i> , eating apples and <i>pears</i> ,	B / B
That imprudent Old Person of <i>Chili</i> .	A

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Lear, Edward. *The Complete Nonsense Books of Edward Lear*.  
New York: Barnes and Noble. 2008. Print.