**Tetyana Blyznyuk. Journey into the World of Books: Some Glimpses of English Literature for Children: / навчальний посібник з Англійської літератури / Т. О. Близнюк .– Івано-Франківськ, ІНІН**

**(Готується до друку)**

**INTRODUCTION**

**WHAT THEN IS CHILDREN LITERATURE?
• Children literature is possibly literature written for children.
• Literature written ...**

Why study Children’s Literature? Many strong reasons for studying children’s literature are shaped by the objectives, values, beliefs, skills, etc., of the discipline in which the exam is seated, but all courses across the wide educational spectrum share elements that invite us to the study of children’s literature, and once we choose to accept the invitation, reward us generously for the cleverness of our choice.

First and foremost, a study of children’s literature brings into focus personal taste and beauty. This is true for any course in literature-language cycle and no less true for children’s literature.

Connected with the question of taste is one of cultural privileging. A study of children’s literature introduces students to a body of aesthetically challenging works that are well known but every new time you read you duscover something new drilling your English language abilities.

This dissident aspect of the academic field of children’s literature references its origin. Books and texts for children attracted scholarly attention at a transitional moment in education, during a time of academic debate about the value of hierarchies, such as the literary canon. The field of children’s literature retains in varying degrees some measure of the revolutionary spirit of those teachers who pointed out the inseparability of universal standards and systems of canonization from ideological and historical bias. Through engagement with literary works of outstanding merit that tend to be marginalized by the traditional academic model or in traditionally based curricula, students are introduced to competing narratives of literary history and to divergent views about the social and personal uses of reading.

Children’s literature also offers students a distinctive critical position - a doubled or overlapping perspective consisting of one’s own reactions and impressions and a set of reactions and impressions one simultaneously conceives might belong to a child reader - and this is true, however one understands “the child” or childhood: whether as a cultural construct, a unique existential mode of being with cognitive and conative abilities specific to itself, or as something else. By bringing the paradigm of “the child” into view, a course in children’s literature provides the student with a range of complex, interrelated discourses. Indeed, it invites them to consider and respond to questions at the heart of human culture: what are our responsibilities to children and to the future? What will equip young people for meaningful lives filled with rewarding experiences, enriching relationships, learning, intellectual and emotional growth and self-understanding? What is the best kind of society to enable a healthy and happy future for all children? These are questions that enhance capacity for informed citizenship and critical thought.

The separate disciplines hold out additional powerful reasons for studying children’s literature. A literary approach to children’s literature enables the student to read accomplished works created within a matrix of constraints and procedures otherwise thought inimical to the composition of belles lettres: texts of great virtuosity, moral complexity and emotional force that expressly avoid sophisticated diction, complex sentences, self-conscious connections to a corpus of modern and traditional literature, and appeal to length of experience in the world or the reader’s mature sense of a finished self. It enables students to contemplate the myths that society deems most pressing or most deserving of passing on to the next generation.

Children’s literature also enables students to read and study texts that rely in part or in whole on pictorial narratives, as well as book design, typography and the blurring of distinctions between textual and paratextual elements, thereby encouraging students to cultivate visual and tactile as well as verbal literacies. Students studying to be future primary school teachers learn how books might match up to reading levels and the developmental stages in a child’s life, and how they might impact the lives of children in profound and beneficial ways, while those studying children’s literature within a program in childhood studies examine historical, sociological, psychological and anthropological definitions of childhood, and how they ramify within human culture. Students in a course of this discipline learn the practices and applications by which younger readers might be introduced to the world’s vast and unruly output of reading for children, and how they might be assisted in navigating their own way through a maze of texts or brought with open minds to the frontier of symbolic thought.

Of course, this last area is also of broader interest. While dreams, movies and television relentlessly envelop children in imaginative realities, reading often represents a child’s first opportunity to reflect in a focused way on the means by which symbols are created, how symbolic thought is culturally effectuated and directed. When we study children’s literature, regardless of the discipline in which we are situated, we grasp the many complex avenues through which society reflects on the operations of symbolic thought, and thus perhaps on the origins of being human.

**THE ORIGIN OF BRITISH CHILDREN’S LITERATURE**

British literature for children has got its specific national features such as typical English humor, Kerrol’s nonsense as a style and some others. It is deeply rooted in oral folk arts of England. Many scientists declare that they didn’t have true literature for children in the XIXth century. There were some literary works for adults which later became popular for a child-reader. Firstly we can speak here about British folklore: ballads, legends, fairy-tales, songs, sayings, riddles, charms, tongue twisters, poems, rhymes and other simple poetry, which nowadays are the integral part of classical literature for children.

By the end of the 18th century, children’s literature was a flourishing, separate and secure part of the publishing industry in Britain. Perhaps as many as 50 children’s books were printed each year, mostly in London, but also in regional centres such as Edinburgh, York and Newcastle. By today’s standards, these books can seem pretty dry, and they were often very moralising. But the books were clearly meant to please their readers, whether with entertaining stories and appealing characters, the pleasant tone of writing, or attractive illustrations and eye-catching page layouts.

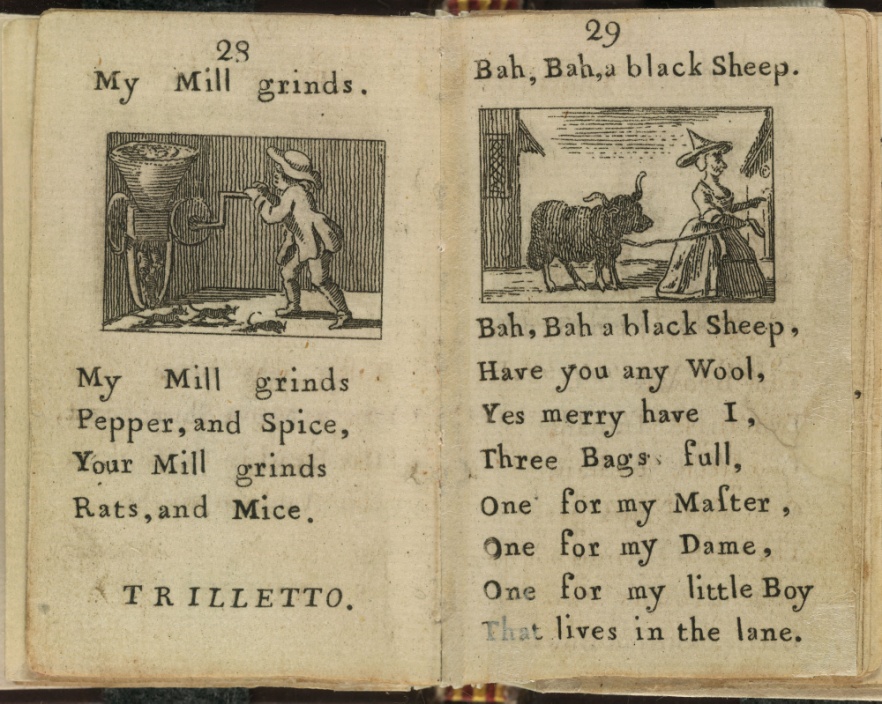
**EARLY WRITING FOR CHILDREN**

This was new. At the beginning of the century very few such enjoyable books for children really existed. Children read, certainly, but the books that they probably enjoyed reading (or hearing) most of all, were not designed especially for them. Fables were available, and fairy stories, lengthy romances, and short, affordable pamphlet tales and ballads called chapbooks, but these were published for children and adults alike. Let’s take Nathaniel Crouch’s *Winter-Evenings Entertainments* (1687). It contains some riddles and pictures, which suggested to some that it should be thought of as an early children’s book. However, its title-page insists that it is ‘excellently suitable to the interests of both old or young’.

### THE 18TH CENTURY WRITING

In the first half of the 18th century a few books were published especially for children, such as A Little Book for Little Children(c.1712), which included riddles and rhymes; A Description of Three Hundred Animals (1730), the second part of which was published ‘particularly for the entertainment of youth’.

But the turning point came in the 1740s, when a cluster of London publishers began to produce new books designed to instruct and delight young readers. For example, Thomas Boreman was one, who followed his Description of Three Hundred Animals with a series of illustrated stories of London landmarks jokily (because they were actually very tiny) called the Gigantick Histories (1740-43). Another was Mary Cooper, whose two-volume Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song Book (1744) is the first known nursery rhyme collection, featuring early versions of well-known classics . This is the earliest surviving collection of nursery rhymes. There is evidence that Volumes I and II were advertised for sale in early 1744, but no copies of the first volume are still in existence, and only two copies of this second volume are known to have survived. The book represents one of the very first attempts to make books in which children would delight. It has been carefully designed to appeal to its young target audience. Many of these 39 rhymes are still familiar to children today, such as “Bah, Bah, a black sheep” and “Girls and Boys, Come out to play”, “Lady Bird, Lady Bird” and “Hickere, Dickere, Dock”. Others have been forgotten.

**Baa, baa, black sheep**,

have you any wool?

Yes sir, yes sir, three bags full!

One for the master,  
One for the dame,  
And one for the little boy  
Who lives down the lane

Baa, baa, black sheep,  
Have you any wool?  
Yes sir, yes sir,  
Three bags full...

Baa, baa, white sheep,  
have you any wool?  
yes sir, yes sir,  
three needles full.

## “Ladybird Ladybird” Lyrics

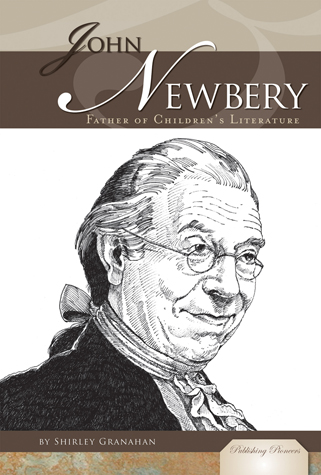
Lady-bird, Lady-bird, fly away home  
the field mouse is gone to her nest  
the daisies have shut up their sleepy red eyes  
and the birds and the bees are at rest  
Lady-bird, Lady-bird, fly away home  
the glow worm is lighting her lamp  
the dew’s falling fast, and your fine speckled wings  
will flag with the close clinging damp  
Lady-bird, Lady-bird, fly away home  
the fairy bells tinkle afar  
make haste or they’ll catch you and harness you fast  
with a cobweb to Oberon’s star.

*Ladybugs, referred as ladybirds in the UK, have been always loved by little children, and not only. These red or yellow colored insects with black dots are very useful bugs for the farmers, as they save many plants from damages eating the aphids. They are also good fire alarms, running away from a place when it starts burning. Ladybirds have also become subject to superstitions, especially for kids.*

*The children are singing the rhyme when a ladybird lands on them, in order to make it fly away, as they believe that if they make a wish and the bug will fly away, the wish will become true. And also, there is a belief that to kill a ladybug brings you bad luck, so they sing this song to make the bug return home. This might have been an educational purpose of the song to teach children to protect the little bugs and not to harm or kill them.*

**THE FATHER OF CHILDREN’S LITERATURE**

But the most celebrated of these pioneers is **John Newbery**. The eighteenth-century publisher John Newbery was the first person to focus on the creation and marketing of books for children. He was called The Father of Children’s Literature. His works reflected the changes in attitudes about children during the eighteenth century and aimed to present entertaining and educational materials designed for a child’s reading level and interests.

His first book for the entertainment of children was *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book Intended for the Instruction and Amusement of Little Master Tommy* and *Pretty Miss Polly* (c.1744). It was indeed a pretty book, small, neat and in brightly coloured paper. Newbery’s books perfectly embodied the educational ideas of John Locke, who had promoted teaching through amusement. But Newbery has become known as the ‘father of children’s literature’ chiefly because he was able to show that publishing children’s books could be a commercial success. Another factor was a changing philosophy about the role and nature of children; rather than being looked upon as miniature adults, children were beginning to be recognized as having interests, energies, and attention spans that were greatly different from those of adults.

Moreover, his children’s book business flourished, and, following his death in 1767, it was taken over by his descendants, surviving into the 19th century. Newbery was a great innovator too. He produced the first children’s periodical for example, called *The Lilliputian Magazine* (1751-52), riddles and chatty editorials. And his most famous work, *The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes* (1765) has a good claim to be called the first children’s novel. It tells the story of a poor orphan, Margery, who makes a career for herself as a teacher before, like a less glamorous Cinderella (with no fairy godmother, balls to attend, or glass slipper), she marries the local landowner whom she has impressed by her honesty, hard work and good manners.

The Newbery Medal was named for eighteenth-century British bookseller John Newbery. It is awarded annually by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children.

### A RAPID EXPANSION OF CHILDREN’S LITERATURE

The reasons for this sudden rise of children's literature have never been fully explained. The genius like Newbery undoubtedly played a big role, but equally significant were structural factors, including the growth of a sizeable middle class, technical developments in book production, the influence of new educational theories, and changing attitudes to childhood. Whatever the causes, the result was a fairly rapid expansion of children’s literature through the second half of the 18th century, so that by the early 1800s, the children’s book business was booming. For the first time it was possible for authors to make a living out of writing only for children, and to become famous for it. Children’s literature, as we know it today, had begun.

**CHILDREN’S BALLADS**

The word `ballad' has developed over the centuries. The modern definition of the ballad was taken, and largely defined, late in the nineteenth century. Francis James describes the ballad as “...a song that tells a story, or a story which is told in a song. More formally... “a short poem, adapted for singing, simple in plot and structure…”.

The Children’s Ballads are 305 traditional [ballads](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ballad) mostly from England and Scotland. Researches normally divide English ballads into three groups: ballads about events of English-Scottish wars, series of ballads about Robin Hood, and romantic ballads. Elements of something fairy are always present in British ballads (elves, kings and queens of fairies etc.). The origin of plots in ballads is different. There could be travel plots, plots taken from classical authors’ creations, middle age poems, Christian legends etc.

The most entertaining for young readers are British folk ballads about historical people in well-known events. A large part of the collection is about [Robin Hood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin_Hood) and some are about [King Arthur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Arthur). They greatly influenced pre-romantic and romantic periods of English literature. The cycle of ballads about Robin Hood accounts over forty stories.

**Robin Hood** is a [heroic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hero) [character](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outlaw) in [English folklore](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_folklore) who, according to numerous legends, was a highly skilled [archer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archery) and [swordsman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swordsman). He was traditionally depicted as being dressed in [Lincoln green](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lincoln_green) clothing, he was often portrayed as “robbing from the rich and giving to the poor”. Robin Hood became a popular folk figure in the late-[medieval](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages) period, and continues to be widely represented in literature, films and television even today.

The first clear reference to “Rhymes of Robin Hood” is from 1377 poem [*Piers Plowman*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piers_Plowman), but the earliest surviving copies of the narrative ballads that tell his story date to the second half of 15th century (i.e. the 1400s), or the first decade of the 16th century (1500s). The earliest surviving text of a Robin Hood ballad is the 15th century “[Robin Hood and the Monk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin_Hood_and_the_Monk)”. It contains many of the elements still associated with the legend, from the Nottingham about two enemies Robin and the local Sheriff. After this comes “[Robin Hood and the Potter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin_Hood_and_the_Potter)”, “The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood”, “Robin Hood and Little John”, “Robin Hood and the Bishop”, “Robin Hood and the Prince of Aragon”, “Robin Hood and the Shepherd”, “A True Tale of Robin Hood” and many others.

Robin became a popular folk hero because of his generosity to the poor and and his hatred of the Sheriff and his suppoters who enforced the oppressive forest laws, made him their champion. Robin’s friends little John, the monk Took and his wife Marion were other popular characters of such ballads who shared their fame with Robin. Scientists suppose that Ronbin was born in 1290 and was a servant of a rich man in Yorkshire, England. In some period of time he served another wealthy man Thomas Landcaster and took part in the rebellion against the king Edward II. After the rebellion was suppressed all the poor servants were announced criminals who were hidden in Sherwood Forest. But those merry men were more skillful archers and inventors than criminals.

Sir Guy of Gisbourne the Sheriff of Nottingham always tried to capture Robin to put him to prison. As he could do nothing about it the Sheriff did some tricky actions. He announced the archers’ competition and promised a golden arrow to the winner. Sir Guy of Gisbourne hoped to arrest Robin in this way as he was a perfect archer. But Robin and his men turned out to be more cunning than the sheriff. They dressed in such clothing that nobody could recognize them won the competition and got the golden arrow.

The other story says that once thesheriff managed to capture Robin in a church were the priest recognized him. Sir Guy put him to prison bu not for long as merry Robin’s men saved him.

Such stories became the main idea of the ballads’ plot about the national hero witty, honest, proud, clever, kind and patriotic.

We may never know for sure whether Robin Hood ever existed outside the verses of ballads and pages of books. And even if we did, fans young and old would still surely go to England’s Nottingham region for a tour of the legend’s in Sherwood Forest.

**King Arthur** was another legendary [British](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celtic_Britons) leader who, according to medieval histories and [romances](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romance_(heroic_literature)), led the defence of Britain against [Saxon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saxon) invaders in the late 5th and early 6th centuries AD. The details of Arthur’s story are mainly composed of [folklore](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folklore) and literary works. But mainly he is the hero of numerous legends.

**CHILDREN’S LEGENDS**

Children should be taught myths and legends at school because they are “models for a way of life”, teaching them values. Traditions, described in legends and myths, should be part of the national curriculum to help children learn “what it is to be civilised humans”.

England, Scotland, and Wales are famous for ancient legends, myths so old that their origins are lost in the mists of time. Legends have different topics as historic for instance ( about Robin Hood, King Arthur and other warriors and kings), Christian (based on the Bible stories about Jesus Christ, Virgin Mary, angles, apostles and other characters), educating legends. The origin of these stories and legends is often not known but they have been around for many centuries often passed down through the generations by the spoken word alone.

Young school children get an idea about the British legend only after they get acquainted with legends about Robin Hood where he is shown as a brave fighter against noble robbers.

The time of early 5th century. As the Roman hold on Britain got much weaker and the Roman Empire turned on into a creaky old power, England was a subject to a fresh crowds of settlers from the area of modern Germany. These settlers are the tribes of Angles, Saxons, Jutes. These Germanic tribes are those to whom the British owe much of their traditions, and cultural heritage. It is during this period of time that the next and greatest British hero was born, the legendary King Arthur.

Arthur was the first born son of King Uther Pendragon. However these were very [difficult times](http://www.caerleon.net/history/arthur/page6.htm) and Merlin, a wise magician, advised that the baby Arthur should be raised in a secret place and that none should know his true identity. When King Uther died there was great conflict over who should be the next king. Merlin used his magic to set a sword in a stone. Of course all the contenders for the throne took their turn and tried to draw the sword, but none could succeed. Arthur, by chance, withdrew the sword in this competition. After that he became the King.

He gathered Knights around him and fought against the Saxons who, since the Romans left Britain, were slowly but surely taking the country over. Arthur's base was at a place called Camelot. Here he built a strong castle. His knights met at a Round Table.

Under the guidance of Merlin, Arthur had got a magical sword from The Lady Of The Lake. This sword was called 'Excalibur" and with this weapon he fought his enemies. Queen Guinevere, Arthur’s beautiful wife brought romance to these legends. Famous among the children are such legends as “Sword of Avalon”, “The Lady of Avalon”, “Knights of the Round Table” and many others.

**HALLOWEEN LEGENDS**

Every October, carved pumpkins look at us from the porches and doorsteps in Britain and the United States and other parts of the world. Big orange fruits inscribed with ugly faces and illuminated by candles are a sure sign of the Halloween season. The practice of decorating “jack-o’-lanterns” - the name comes from an Irish folktale about a man named Stingy Jack — originated in Ireland. Irish immigrants brought the tradition to America, home of the pumpkin, and it became an integral part of Halloween festivities and numerous legends.

Halloween is an ancient festival, which has its roots in the Celtic festival. This was when the Celts (the ancient inhabitants of Great Britain) celebrated their New Year and the day they believed that the souls of those who had died that year progressed to the underworld. It was said to be a night when ghosts, demons and witches walked on the earth and people tried to please them offering sweets, nuts and berries.

Today you can find a hude collection of children’s ghost stories is the perfect way to introduce young readers to the fun of being scared silly. Kids can enter the mysterious world of spirits through the eyes of young characters, and meet ghosts that are more often friendly than frightening.

**TALES**

Ukrainian young readers are well acquainted with some English tales. English short stories for beginners have been collected from different sources. They can be [Animal tales](http://www.english-for-students.com/Animal-Stories.html), [Witty Tales](http://www.english-for-students.com/Witty-Tales.html), [Moral tales](http://www.english-for-students.com/Moral-Stories.html), Humorous tales and others.

**Animal Stories** are about human and non-human animal relationships. Children like to read these short stories about dogs, cats, Brer Rabbit, birds, fish, and other crazy creatures. Some of them are sad, some are funny, and some are both. Others tell of humans turning to God because of the death of a non-human animal. But one thing that all of these tales have in common is that they will touch children heart and soul. Their major principles would be truth, love, mutual respect, righteousness, priority to societal unity, etc… All people, including the old people, would enjoy reading these stories. I’m sure you’ ve heard about such tales as: “[A Town Mouse and A Country Mouse](http://www.english-for-students.com/A-Town-Mouse-and-A-Country-Mouse.html)”, “[Elephant and Friends](http://www.english-for-students.com/Elephant-and-Friends.html)”, “[Hungry Wolf](http://www.english-for-students.com/Hungry-Wolf.html)”, “[The Oak Tree and the Reeds](http://www.english-for-students.com/The-Oak-Tree-and-the-Reeds.html)”, “[The Peacock and The Crane](http://www.english-for-students.com/The-Peacock-and-The-Crane.html)”, and others.

**Moral Tales**. This collection has been made to represent the true spirit of British culture. The main principles are the truth, love, mutual respect, rectitude, etc… Through small stories, the idea is to illustrate the greatness of a human culture. Through the tales kids can learn the various aspects of their lives. For example, “[A wise old owl](http://www.english-for-students.com/a-wise-old-owl.html)”, “[Baa baa black sheep](http://www.english-for-students.com/baa-baa-black-sheep.html)”, “[Beg your pardon Mrs. Hardin](http://www.english-for-students.com/beg-your-pardon-mrs-hardin.html)”, “[Jack and the bean-stalk](http://genkienglish.net/jackandthebeanstalk.htm)”, “The ugly duckling”, “[Three little pigs](http://genkienglish.net/3littlepigs.htm)” and others.

English tales are marked by the diversity of the plot. They can be ballad-tales, legend-tales, fairy-tales, evil-tales, adventure-tales.

The main character of adventure-tales is a hero who demonstrates his/her strong nature and wit. Family tale is very often connected with adventure-tale. Main characters in such tales are normally simple people. Some sense of comism and humour or even strict satire is basically present here. Children can learn to understand conflicts beween the poor and the rich.

So a tale *“Dick Whittington and his Cat”* An English story retold by Niz Smith and Avril Lethbridge is a story of a poor boy called Dick Whittington who had no Mummy and Daddy to look after him so he was often very hungry. He lived in a little village in the country. He’d often heard stories about a far away place called London where everybody was rich and the streets were paved with gold. (In family tales you can always read about the exact place of the action). The tale shows the major detail of national mode of life of the British and the way it is different from othe nations.

Once, Dick met a noble man, Merchant Fitswarren, who offered him a hand. Dick was given a job working in the kitchen. He was very grateful to the Merchant but, alas, the house cook was always very bad tempered and, when no one looked, used to beat and pinch Dick. With this plot children understand how the Good fights against the Evil. Later Dick became famous and married Merchant’s daughter, Alice.

**SMALL FOLKLORE GENRES**

In 1760 John Newbery published English songs and small forms of English folklore. Since then such collections of [fairy tales](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fairy_tale) and [nursery rhymes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nursery_rhyme)often are called *(Old) Mother Goose’s Rhymes.*

The figure of Mother Goose is generally depicted in literature and book illustration as an elderly country woman in a tall hat and shawl, a costume identical to the [peasant costume worn in Wales](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditional_Welsh_costume) in the early 20th century. Sometimes you can see her depicted as a [goose](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goose) (usually wearing a [bonnet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bonnet_(headgear))).

The oldest **children’s songs** of which we have records are [lullabies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lullaby), intended to help a child sleep. Lullabies can be found in every human culture. The [English](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_language) term lullaby is thought to come from “lu, lu” or “la la” sounds made by mothers or nurses to calm children down, and “by by” or “bye bye”, either another lulling sound or a term for good night. The first English collections, [*Tommy Thumb’s Song Book*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tommy_Thumb%27s_Song_Book) and [*Tommy Thumb’s Pretty Song Book*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tommy_Thumb%27s_Pretty_Song_Book), are both thought to have been published before 1744, with such songs becoming known as “Tommy Thumb’s songs”. The publication of [John Newbery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Newbery)’s collection of English rhymes, [*Mother Goose*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mother_Goose)*'s Melody, or, Sonnets for the Cradle* (London, c. 1765), is the first record we have of many classic rhymes, still in use today. These rhymes seem to have come from a variety of sources, including traditional [riddles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riddles), [proverbs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proverb), [ballads](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ballads), plays, drinking songs, historical events. About half of the currently recognised “traditional” English rhymes were known by the mid-18th century.

The brightest examples are such songs as “[Baa, Baa, Black Sheep](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baa,_Baa,_Black_Sheep)”, “[Humpty Dumpty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humpty_Dumpty)”, “[Jack and Jill](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack_and_Jill_(nursery_rhyme))”, “[Little Boy Blue](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Boy_Blue)” (by [Thomas Wolsey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Wolsey)), “[London Bridge Is Falling Down](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London_Bridge_Is_Falling_Down)” (by Vikings).

**“As I was going to St. Ives...”  
*by***[*Mother Goose*](http://www3.amherst.edu/~rjyanco94/literature/mothergoose/menu.html)

As I was going to St. Ives,  
I met a man with seven wives;  
Every wife had seven sacks,  
Every sack had seven cats,  
Every cat had seven kits;  
Kits, cats, sacks, and wives,  
How many were there going to St. Ives?

*(One.)*

**Jack and Jill**Jack and Jill  
Went up the hill  
To fetch a pail of water,  
Jack fell down  
And broke his crown  
And Jill came tumbling after.  
Up Jack got  
And home did trot  
As fast as he could caper,  
Went to bed  
To mend his head  
With vinegar and brown paper.

The following samples of small folklore genres gained strong popularity among young readers as well **rhymes, proverbs, sayings, riddles, tongue twisters** and others. They can be characterized by their conciseness, precision, accuracy of thought and comparisons. They contain ideas of upbringing, experience of the people which is often similar to that of other nations. For example, *“Two wrongs don’t make a right”.* It means when someone has done something bad to you, trying to get revenge will only make things worse; or *“When in Rome, do as the Romans.”* Act the way that the people around you are acting. This phrase might come in handy when you’re travelling abroad notice that people do things differently than you’re used to; or *“Better late than never.”* It’s best to do something on time. But if you can't do it on time, do it late; or *“There's no place like home.”* Your own home is the most comfortable place to be.

**Limerick** is another good example of small folklore genres which became dear to young readers. A limerick is a humorous,silly poem with five lines. They are often funny or nonsensical. Limericks were made famous by Edward Lear, a famous author who wrote the “Book of Nonsense” in the 1800’s. This was an entire book of silly limericks.

The first, second and fifth lines rhyme with each other and have the same number of syllables (typically 8 or 9). The third and fourth lines rhyme with each other and have the same number of syllables (typically 5 or 6) Limericks often start with the line “There once was a...” or “There was a...”. Here are the examples of some limericks:

There once was a wonderful star

Who thought she would go very far

Until she fell down

And looked like a clown

She knew she would never go far.

There was a Young Lady of Ryde,  
Whose shoe-strings were seldom untied.  
She purchased some clogs,  
And some small spotted dogs,  
And frequently walked about Ryde.

There was an Old Man in a tree,  
Who was horribly bored by a Bee;  
When they said, 'Does it buzz?'  
He replied, 'Yes, it does!'  
'It's a regular brute of a Bee!'

There once was a nice Easter bunny   
He hopped around looking very funny  
He injured his leg   
While hiding an egg   
Then he didn't feel very sunny

There once was a jumping monkey  
And jumping he would always be  
He fell off a cliff  
Because he was stiff  
Now jumping he will never be

There are many anonymous limericks, which period of publishing can hardly be known. They all continue the old British tradition of nonsense humour that sometimes is hard to understand. But the features that can combine all small folklore genres are that they are sonorous, clear rhyme and rhythm, and display the simplicity of expression.